2024 HALL OF FAME IHSSA INDUCTEE

LIESL ROORDA
Montezuma

Liesl was born and raised in the Boone area, graduating from United Community. It was there she was encouraged to explore both sports and the arts. Thanks to two passionate educators, Ruth Ornberg and Ann Cope Johnson, Liesl was exposed to speech and theater as a first-grader, sitting crisscross applesauce on the gym floor, amazed at a touring company of Jesus Christ Superstar. In high school, Liesl found a home on the stage and in the IHSSA.

In college, Liesl became a judge, allowing her to give encouragement and feedback to the next generation of IHSSA participants. Judging became a gateway to meeting some of the greatest IHSSA mentors. When she started teaching elementary students at Grinnell, Liz Hansen encouraged her to become involved with the IHSSA program. She spent three wonderful years developing her coaching abilities and, during this time, Liesl continued to judge and met more incredible mentors and leaders in the IHSSA.

Liesl married a hometown Montezuma boy, Brian, which brought a change in schools and career. She was now a second-grade teacher. Although she had a shift in her work journey, her heart never changed when it came to speech. Liesl was always looking to share her fondness and knowledge for the craft. Through her speech pursuits, Liesl has hosted many LG and IE speech contests, served on the Large Group All-State and Judge Certification Committees, as well as leading the SE as a District Officer. Liesl also has a new passion producing and costuming Montezuma's fall musicals. She continues to teach second grade—loving every second of it—and supporting Montezuma's current coaches and students, while still working with the IHSSA and maintaining her musical roles.

Most importantly family and faith are central to Liesl. She loves her role as wife, mother to Spencer (Katie), Sidney (Sherly), Waverly and Isabella, and grandmother to Maeve and Harlen. Liesl's faith and the love and support she receives from her family continues to play the central role in her journey on and off the stage.

Liesl and Dirk will be honored at a reception and banquet Friday evening of the Coaches Convention.

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DIRK WALLER

Council Bluffs Abraham Lincoln

Dirk got the best of both worlds growing up on a rural farmstead in Northern Madison County with Des Moines 20 minutes away. Dirk received his education from Van Meter and attended one building K-12. He was taught by many exceptional teachers and also by his parents and a loving extended family. All three Waller kids were in high school together. Dirk and his sister followed his older brother in the tradition of doing IHSSA speech. The kids were taught by each other in the living room practice performance area with honest feedback from Mom and an occasional "Nice" comment from Dad. Literature resources ranged from the ever present Reader's Digest, childhood books, and once in a while-- the Edna Means dramatic services.

Dirk graduated from Van Meter in 1988 and was the proud recipient of the John Phillips Sousa outstanding band student. He was the only senior in band his senior year. Dirk attended Northwest Missouri State University graduating with a B.S. in Secondary Education Social Studies. After substitute teaching for a semester, he landed his first job as an extended U.S. History substitute teacher at South Tama. The next year he was hired at North Tama as a social studies teacher and in his third year took over speech after saying, "Oh, I did speech in high school." In 2000, Dirk became a history teacher and speech coach at Council Bluffs Abraham Lincoln. Dirk earned his masters degree in 2014 in Educational leadership from Doane College. In 2022 Dirk, took on the role of New Teacher Mentor and currently serves two middle schools and two high schools mentoring 16 new teachers in the area of special education.

Dirk and his wife Kristi pride themselves on both being educators who are tied to the success of their students. In 2013 they began sponsoring Isaac Ndagijimana from Rwanda and he has become their Rwandan son and is completing his senior year at University of Nebraska Omaha. Dirk's efforts in education have earned him notable honors such as the Abraham Lincoln 2009 Teacher of the Year and the Nelson Award for Outstanding Teaching in 2013. More than anything, Dirk is most honored when former students reconnect.

The IHSSA has been a source of inspiration and growth for Dirk. His IHSSA contributions have included hosting judge certifications and several speech contests. He has also served as a SW District Officer as well as Coaches Convention Committee member. Dirk currently serves on the Judge Certification Committee. Each role has helped him develop a wider appreciation for the IHSSA. He appreciates the amazing coaches he has encountered across the state. Being exposed to speech as a history teacher has truly enriched his life and expanded his view of the world. Being named to the Iowa High School Speech Association Hall of Fame is the honor of his lifetime.