

# Robin Hodges

By Glenn Thompson

Robin Wiley Hodges was raised in the Speake Community of Lawrence County, Alabama. Her parents were Bennett and Mary Dean Wiley, and she graduated from Speake High School in 1975. She later earned a Bachelor of Science in Biology as well as a Master of Science from the University of North Alabama. She is married to Mark Hodges and is the mother of Ben Hodges (Ashley) and Summer Lowery (Brad.) She is the grandmother of Parker, Peyton, and Preston Hodges and Kate, Maddie, and Elle Lowery.



Mrs. Hodges began her teaching career in Lawrence County where she taught Chemistry, Life Science, Psychology, and coached the Scholars Bowl team for seven years. In 1986 she was selected Chemistry Teacher of the Year by the Florence Chapter of the American Chemical Society.

In 1987 Mrs. Hodges began her teaching career at Hartselle High School, where she would, over the next eighteen years, teach Advanced Placement (AP) Biology, Anatomy & Physiology, Honors Chemistry, Honors Biology, Environmental Science, Chemistry and Biology. For thirteen years she served as the Science Department Chairperson, a member of the Faculty Leadership Team, and the State Department Committee for the Development of State Biology Standards. She was the Science Olympiad Coach for eighteen years, Scholars Bowl Coach for seventeen years, and Assistant Varsity Softball Coach for nine years.

Mrs. Hodges' colleagues at Hartselle High School wholeheartedly acknowledge that "no one is more deserving" than Robin to be selected to the Hartselle Educators Hall of Fame. LePage Ward Owens recalls that "Robin always set high expectations for her students and then made sure they had all they needed to meet them. While she did an excellent job in the classroom, she did not stop there. She expanded the science lab experiences by bringing in the Alabama Science in Motion Program." Likewise, Jo Ann Sneed has "many good memories of our interactions with our classes and activities outside of school. Whether planning a chemistry lab, field trip, or science competition, Robin always insured students were well prepared and enjoyed the journey reaching their goals."

Hodges' passionate commitment to her students is clearly reflected in their success. Her Science Olympiad teams won numerous Regional Championships and Individual Championships. In 2000 the Science Olympiad team was the State Runner-up.



Her Scholars Bowl teams won numerous Tournament Championships. During her coaching career Hartselle won three State Championships and three Runner-up trophies in Softball.

In 2007 Mrs. Hodges began teaching in Madison, Alabama, where she taught AP Biology, Pre AP-Biology, Biology, and Forensics. In 2014 her students were recognized by A+ College Ready when 100% of her students passed the AP Biology exam. At James Clemens High School she was the Scholars Bowl Coach and Science Olympiad Coach. She was one of four founding faculty members of the Patriot Academy, which is an alternative school designed to aid students who could not pass the graduation exam. She wrote and received a grant from the National Education Association for the establishment of the Patriot Academy.

Since 2019 Mrs. Hodges has been teaching at Whitesburg Christian Academy in Huntsville where she is teaching Honors Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Forensics. At Whitesburg she started the Science Olympiad Program and the high school level softball program.

In addition to teaching in a school environment, Mrs. Hodges has taught high school seniors in Sunday School, led youth mission trips to Houston, St. Simons Island, and Ethiopia. She also helped lead a youth camp in Budapest, Hungary, emphasizing English language, sports, and Bible. In addition, she has chaperoned a group of students for Student Leadership University to England and France with the goal of developing good Christian leaders.

When former students were asked what set Robin Hodges apart compared to other teachers, a common theme emerged. When you walked into her classroom you knew at once she “meant business.” She “knew her subject,” and she “made sure we learned” that subject and “learned it well.” She had a “zest for teaching.” Her classes were “lively and interactive.” She “enjoyed teaching us.” She wanted us to “be successful.” I “looked forward” to her class. “When I got to college, I appreciated her even more because I was so well prepared, and it showed in my grades.”

In high school Mrs. Hodges took chemistry in the classroom, but never had any laboratory experience. She spent her entire first year of college scrambling to catch up with her classmates who were better prepared to succeed in college. That experience motivated her to do everything in her power to save her students from a similar fate. After 38 years of teaching, one thing is certain, Robin Hodges’ former students were well prepared to be successful in any science class they took when they arrived on a college campus.

