

Gary Rhodes 2023 Distinguished Educator

Mr. Rhodes is a 1958 graduate of Altoona High School. He graduated with a degree in Biology and Chemistry from IUP in 1962 and continued on for a Masters in Biology. Mr. Rhodes also earned 55 credits towards a doctorate from Penn State.

Gary has been married to his wife Carole for 57 years and they have 2 children, Gary Jr. and Tiffany. Gary is a Chaplain with the National Guard, stationed in Kuwait and Tiffany is a college professor in Rhode Island. Mr. and Mrs. Rhodes also have 2 grandchildren.

Gary's early career was spent at Mount Union, Keith Junior High and Bishop Guilfoyle. He then spent the remaining 32 years at Hollidaysburg before retiring in 1999. He taught chemistry, physical science, biology, nuclear science and physics. Gary was nominated 7 times for the "Who's Who Among American Teachers" award.

In addition to HASH, Mr. Rhodes taught at PSU Altoona part time for 41 years where he received the PSU Student Government "Excellence in Teaching Award" for 2008-2009. He was also recommended for the "Biltmore Who's Who" in 2012.

During his tenure with Hollidaysburg Area Senior High, Mr. Rhodes was a swimming coach and sophomore class advisor. He served as Scoutmaster for 10 years and taught Sunday school every other week. Gary was chairman and spokesperson for the Blair Senior Olympic Games and chaired three fundraising events for the Rheumatoid Arthritis Foundation.

In his spare time, Gary is an avid runner and completed 956 road races, 270 of which were triathlons! A triathlon includes a 6.2 mile run, a 24.85 mile bike ride and nearly one mile of swimming. He was one of only 37 people in the USA to be given a certificate from the USA Triathlon Federation for completing over 200 triathlons. Over his life, he has run 94 marathons, numerous half marathons, 15K, 10K, 5K and 2 mile races and he has also competed in every single YMCA race/event. The Hollidaysburg YMCA awarded Gary the Mark Sherlock "Enjoy Life" spirit award in 2019.