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Alumni Corner

Terri Trickle: What Forensics Did For Me Concordia College (Moorhead, MN) Forensic Alumni (1990-1994)

Terri Trickle



Terri Trickle is a Memorial Consultant with Dakota Monument in Fargo, ND. She lives in Moorhead, MN with her husband and three children. Terri competed at Concordia College from 1990-1994 and before that was a student of the legendary Kathy Martin and the Glyndon-Felton, MN speech program. Terri was most always an interpreter of other people's prose, drama and poetry and is listed as one of the winningest competitive public speakers in MSHSL history. She currently serves as a judge and guest coach on the high school theater and speech circuit and has recently been guest coaching the Concordia forensics team. In her spare time Terri sings and plays piano professionally in the Red River Valley, is active in local arts and theater agencies, regularly hosts international touring bicyclists and enjoys attending arts and sport events in which her children are participants.

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ALUMNI CORNER: The forensic community is filled with alumni who will tout the benefits they received through their participation in intercollegiate speech and debate activities. As directors of forensics programs face battles for budgets and sometimes for their program's very existence, having a collection of published testimonies about the positive influence of forensics can be a tremendous help. To that end, Speaker & Gavel is setting aside space in each issue for our alumni to talk about how forensics has helped them in their professional life. These are our alumni's stories.

Keywords: forensics, benefits of forensics, Alumni Corner

I arrived at Concordia College as a high school senior in the fall of 1990. I was a post-secondary kid from an extremely humble, subsistence living rural Minnesota family. The post-secondary option in Minnesota afforded me the opportunity to begin my college education at an extremely low cost. I remember my parents saying I could be at Concordia – a private liberal-arts college – for one year, but after that they weren't sure how they would be able to afford the tuition.

I was only seventeen and had yet to graduate from high school, but I was also a full time student, living in the dorm and my roommate didn't show up. Although I was quick to make friends and there were people from my home town on campus, I sure felt scared and alone at times. I remember joining the forensics team as soon as I could and attending squad meetings. I look back on those days now, and boy I sure thought I was something special. I had a been a three-time Minnesota state medalist, two time state champion, was a double ruby or something like that in NFL's all before I was even a high school senior. I can't imagine how smug and silly I must have seemed. But what was wonderful about college forensics is that everyone, without exception, was so incredibly welcoming and supportive. I had instant and lasting success, mostly because my teammate Steve Rohr took me under his mighty wing and taught me so very much. I was an interper. I was his duo partner. I was in love with him. Completely. Everyone was. (Everyone still is...)

But what was wonderful about college forensics is that everyone, without exception, was so incredibly welcoming and supportive.

My second year at Concordia was paid for largely by the scholarships I earned from my high school and my home community. I was a dorm cop too. I always worked upwards of 30 hours a



week. Mom took a second job and we made it but my parents were pretty clear about not knowing how we were going to be able to make it for the following two years. Instead of concerning myself with tuition, I just continued working hard on the speech team and through my second year – with the guidance of my advisor – we hammered out a plan for my education. I was pursuing two majors – Communications and Studio Art – with an Advertising emphasis.

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One day in the spring of my second year, one of our forensics coaches – Cindy Carver – asked to see me. She told me (and I'm weeping as I recall this) the communication faculty had nominated me for a Bush Grant and I was awarded an incredible sum. It was going to essentially pay for my last two years of school. I couldn't believe it. What did college forensics do for me? I can't even put it into words.

In the years I was a part of the Concordia forensics program, I was afforded the opportunity to live in the light cast by not only the incredible coaches – but also all the amazing student speakers I stood beside both on my team and on all the teams we would compete against.

My years as a part of a collegiate forensics program readied me for presenting myself to the world.

I am in my mid-forties now and have a ridiculously beautiful family and have had such a rich, varied, and largely successful career story. My years as a part of a collegiate forensics program readied me for presenting myself to the world. I know now that I cast a

very bright light that was offered to me and cultivated within me. This same light has been offered to all who have the grace to say they spoke at the collegiate level. I do believe we live what we learn. In collegiate forensics I certainly learned excellence – so I lived excellence – not only did I want excellence, but it was what was required. And excellence is what remains.

