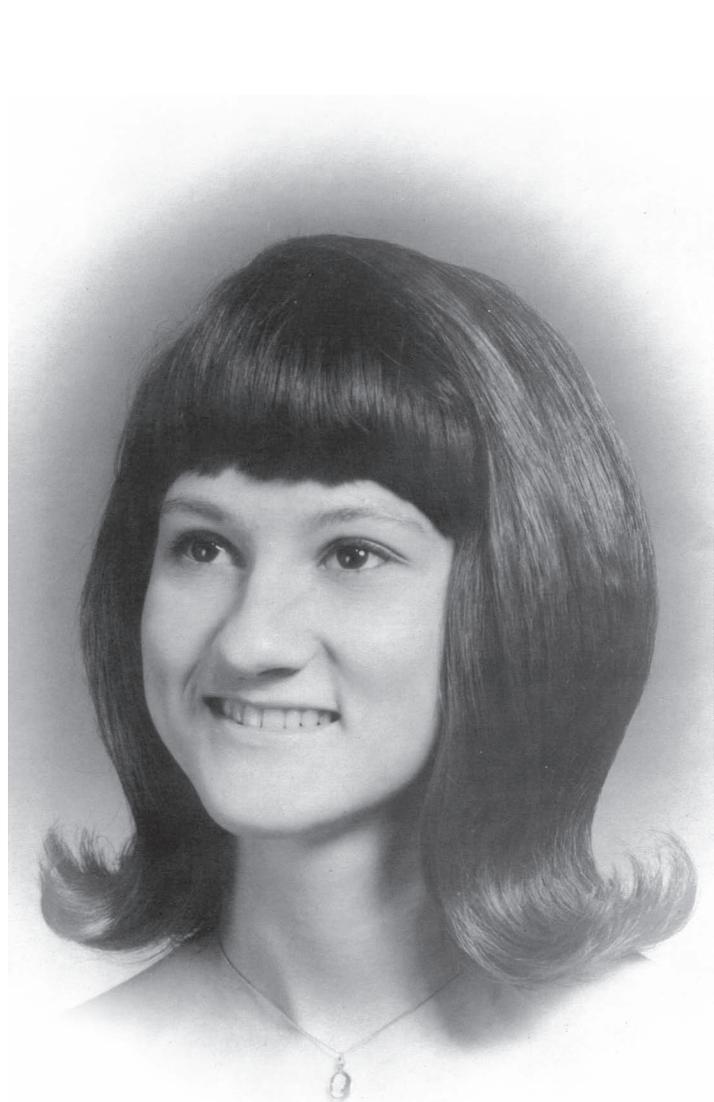


Jill EDWARDS STEELEY

Class of 1963



Dr. Jill Edwards Steeley knows a lot about winning awards. While justifiably proud of all the accolades she has accumulated in four decades as a teacher, this Great Graduate from the Class of 1968 is quick to say her most appreciated recognition comes when one of her students flashes a big smile to show he or she “gets it” and is ready to move on to the next challenge.

Steeley is one of those rare and special people who feel a calling to be an educator. It is something she has done in environments ranging from kindergarten to college, while in the process becoming a paragon of excellence to legions of students, fellow teachers, administrators and parents whose lives she has touched.

One of the secrets of her success is seen in the way she deals with her second grade students at Coweta. “You have got to get to know them well enough to know if there are struggles at home. What is their personality like? You have to get in there and dig out all that about the child,” she said.

While noting that education is the only career she ever wanted, Steeley admits teaching is more difficult than it was when she took over her first classroom in the early 1970’s and part of that rests squarely on the shoulders of the folks in Oklahoma City. “Every lawmaker should be required to spend a full day in a public school

classroom to see what educators deal with daily,” she said.

A life-long learner, Steeley holds reading and elementary principal certifications and is National Board certified in early and middle childhood literacy. She has been honored as a 2009 and 2010 finalist and then 2013 winner of the prestigious Oklahoma Foundation Medal of Excellence Award in Elementary Teaching. She has been recognized in nine Who’s Who publications and was 2012 Coweta Public Schools Teacher of the Year. Earlier, while teaching in Broken Arrow, she was named site teacher of the year at Arrowhead Elementary School.

At Oral Roberts University, she was twice named outstanding faculty member in the School of Education and also received the university’s award for outstanding faculty service.

On the home front, she is wife to husband Clyde, mom to two adult children and grandma to three grandchildren.

“Strong character,” “integrity,” “spiritual,” “loving,” “compassionate,” “intuitive,” “intelligent” and “humble” are a few of the words friends, associates and former students use to describe Dr. Jill Steeley. Now another set of well-deserved words can be added to that list: “Great Graduate.”

