



2024
DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI RECIPIENT

LINDY NELSON-PARYAG

Kingwood High School, Class of 1984



Lindy Nelson-Paryag is a proud 1984 graduate of Kingwood High School. She attended Woodland Hills Elementary, Kingwood Middle School and Kingwood High School. Nelson-Paryag attended college at Texas Christian University and was a leader in Alpha Phi Omega, earning the Service Key Award for her service. She chaired the campus Hunger Week efforts, which are recognized as one of the best in the nation. That work with Hunger Week and global poverty sparked her interest in living and teaching in Africa after college graduation.

Lindy began her teaching career overseas, teaching English and Kenyan geography to students at Kakamwe Secondary School in Tongaren, Kenya through a Harvard-based program called WorldTeach. She learned how to love teaching with the most minimal resources and even used Humble ISD grammar modules, sent by friend, mentor and principal, Charlotte Bilderback, to aid in her teaching. She also learned what it was like to teach children who were desperate to learn and get an education, as these high school students had to pass an exam and then pay to go to high school. She and long-time friend Karen Tillett, served together and are most proud of starting a library that is still open today, 35 years later.

After returning to the states, she taught 5th grade for two years in Ft. Worth ISD, where she was trained in the New Jersey Writing Project. It didn't take long for the adventure bug to bite again and she applied to be a US Peace Corps volunteer in Grenada, West Indies. She spent the next two years collaborating with Grenadian teachers through an island-wide language arts program in Grenada, West Indies. It was also here that she met her husband, Ryan.

Her next teaching adventure was at Creekwood Middle School, where she spent nine years teaching 7th Grade GT Language Arts and Texas History, and on-level co-taught language arts. This was where she found her sweet spot, with precious middle schoolers, both gifted ones and those who needed a little extra support. She received her GT certification, wrote curriculum, sponsored Student Council, coordinated the new teacher Mentor Program, was recognized with a PTA Lifetime Achievement Award and was CMS Teacher of the Year and an Humble ISD Teacher of the Year finalist in 2002. Her greatest achievement was getting to know her students through their journaling and projects and creating a strong service-based program for the Student Council.

After 15 years of teaching, Lindy turned in her red pen to manage her family's business, Northpark Business Center & Storage, and served for the next 21 years as facility manager, aiming to provide an excellent and stress-free storage experience for her customers. Her dad sold the 38 year old Kingwood business in May of 2023 and Lindy was able to retire.

Because "once a teacher, always a teacher," Lindy continues her love of teaching with a weekly women's Bible study she has led for the past fifteen years. Lindy has been active in her church, Kingwood Christian Church, since her family moved to Kingwood in the 1970's. She has served in almost every musical capacity by singing in the choir, playing handbells and singing for special events like funerals and weddings. She has served on many committees, coordinated the Women's Ministry for years and has held the leadership roles of Board Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Elder.

After Hurricane Harvey, she helped with the shelter at her church, and created a donation ministry partnership with Kingwood Christian Church and Northpark Business Center & Storage called Hope's Closet. She and her husband, Ryan, have also organized and led five mission trips in the last ten years from Kingwood Christian Church to Grenada, West Indies. With the financial support of the church and the mission team members, as well as local fundraisers, these mission teams have rebuilt pews in a church, refurbished a primary school, provided IT training and support for local primary schools, outfitted a community computer lab and built a gazebo at the Victoria School for Special Education.

While she managed Northpark Business Center, Lindy became very involved with a feral cat community on the property and became an advocate for TNR: trap, neuter, release. Over the last ten years, Lindy and her family have fostered and found loving homes for over 15 litters of kittens. They are currently fostering a newborn kitten and expect to foster another litter of kittens looking for homes.

Lindy's most precious community is that of her family: her husband of 29 years, Ryan, her father, Ron Nelson, and her grown children, Trent (25) and Chloe (19) who are both studying for their own careers. They share their home with two crazy dogs, four "foster fail" cats and an axolotl named Kirby. She is anxiously awaiting her new title of Nana as her granddaughter is expected to make her appearance at the end of May. Lindy continues to look for opportunities to serve and nurture others in her community.