

Remembering Mr. Steve Whitley

George Walton Academy students, alumni, faculty and staff are sharing fond memories of a beloved member of the school family who passed away this week. Steve Whitley made a lasting impact on thousands of lives during his 23 years of service to the school.

“Mr. Whitley’s love and devotion for GWA’s students, faculty and staff will always be unparalleled,” said faculty member Sandra Richardson. “His acts of kindness and service to us all are his legacy. I will remember his sense of honor and his compassion for everyone, especially teenagers. A man of profound faith, Mr. Whitley had the gentlest of hearts.”



Mr. Whitley will be fondly remembered. He is pictured above on his last day at school.

Mr. Whitley enthusiastically embraced opportunities to serve the school and held a variety of roles throughout the years, including Associate Headmaster, Middle and High School Principal, and Athletic Director. He also coached track, cross country and softball.

He is remembered as a man of deep faith who always made time for others. “Mr. Whitley was my principal for all 14 years I was a student at GWA. He helped mold me into the person I am today. I will forever be grateful for this man and he will always hold a special place in my heart. I'll never forget when he and our headmaster came to the hospital when I couldn't make it for graduation,” said alumna Macall Brown.

In any conversation about Mr. Whitley, one is bound to hear a story of his compassion and heart for others “Mr. Whitley always thought of us GWA kids as his own. I am so happy to have had such a great principal to guide me down the right path and inspire me, above all else, to be kind.”

After 37 years in education, Mr. Whitley retired in 2016. He remained devoted to the school and visited often, encouraging and supporting his GWA family.

GWA Counselor Linda Smith worked alongside Mr. Whitley for many years and witnessed countless acts of kindness he quietly performed. “Mr. Whitley was one of God’s servants who lived his Christian beliefs and showed his love for George Walton’s students on a daily basis. As he stated many times, these students were his family. The small gestures that he made resulted in mountains of influence for generations of students. From stopping students in the hall to chat to attending sports and literary events and band and drama performances, the students would always see his face in the audience. As much as we mourn his passing, his own words may sum up his life the best: “I have lived a good and healthy life and no matter what happens I am at peace with God.” God’s servant has gone home, and he will be missed by all of us.”



Mr. Whitley is pictured with his family, including his nephew Matt Whitley, GWA '08, at his graduation from West Point.