

Forever a

Whitney Davey is the dance team director at Seven Lakes High School

Whitney Davey, a founding Seven Lakes High School dancer, now leads the Sapphire dance team as their director

Written by Kennan Buckner | Select photography by Sara Isola

Lifetime Katyite, Whitney Davey, started dancing when she was just 4 years old. Little did she know, her passion for performing as a child would lead her to a career she loved in the very place she calls home. As one of the founding Sapphire dance team members and colonel,

she now works as the director and shares a special Spartan bond with her students.

Growing Up in Katy

Davey attended Fielder Elementary, Hayes Elementary, Creech Elementary, Beck Junior High, Cinco Ranch High School, and Seven Lakes High School all while living in the same house. "I was part of the first graduating class at Creech and Seven Lakes," she says. After graduating from the University of Central Oklahoma with a bachelor of fine arts in performance, she began a career as a teacher and director of her Seven Lakes Sapphire dance team. In addition, Davey also teaches the Sapphire officers, the junior varsity Spartanaires, Dance I, and Dance II-IV.

First Generation of Spartans

In 2008, as part of the first graduating class of Seven Lakes, Davey was their first colonel, or head dance officer on the dance team. "One of my favorite high school memories was being a part of the

Spartan

Davey was one of the first 11 Sapphires



Davey graduated from Seven Lakes High School in 2008



The Seven Lakes Sapphires still honor the traditions that began with the founding members

original 7/11," says Davey. "We only had seven cheerleaders and 11 Sapphires when the school first opened in 2005."

The dance team became more than friends, they became family. They also helped start many of the traditions still honored by current Seven Lakes students. "Being a part of the Sapphires dance team was an amazing experience. We were able to create many traditions that are still a part of the team today, like the fight song choreography, seven-officer football entrance, and so many other things," says Davey.

Dancing and Directing

Davey says her childhood dreams have come true in the classroom in unexpected ways. "I have always said that I would open my own dance studio when I grew up. Once I became a part of the Sapphire family again, everything changed," she shares. "I decided that I wanted to stick with directing at the high school level, and I absolutely love it."

Davey says the most rewarding part about being a dance teacher and educator is being able to influence students and their future. "They look up to you not only as their teacher and director, but as their second mom," she says.

Inspired to Be an Inspiration

Without those who impacted her own life, Davey says she would not be where she is today. "My parents have been my biggest supporters since day one," she adds. "They never doubted my ability to follow my dreams and pursue dance as a longtime career."

In addition to the loving support of her family, her high school Sapphire director, Lakeisha McGowen, also played a key role. "Lakeisha always pushed me to do my best. She was one of the main reasons I chose to get my teaching certification to work in the high school setting," says Davey. "I wanted to be just like her. The way she influenced so many young ladies made me realize that that was exactly what I wanted to do."



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Davey has found her niche. "One thing I would want all non-teachers to know is that teaching really is one of the most rewarding jobs you could ever have," she says. "There are definitely ups and downs, but in the end it's all worth it."

Orange and True Blue

Davey couldn't believe it when she got the opportunity to come work at her alma mater. "My first year back, it was strange for me to be walking through the halls again, seeing my picture in the main office hallway every time I walked by, and seeing some of my [former] teachers who still worked there," she says. Her students also enjoy looking at the Sapphire composites in the gym and spotting her in the photo. "They always seem so excited to know that I went to Seven Lakes and now I am teaching them," she says. "I love every minute of being back at home." KM



KENNAN BUCKNER is a University of Mary Hardin-Baylor Crusader, wife, and stay-at-home mom to smiley Jaxson.