

## FACULTY & STAFF LEGACY AWARD- Melissa Martin



**Melissa Martin**, who joined Collegiate’s faculty in 1985, has just completed her 35th year of teaching Lower School Science. She never hesitates to express her gratitude for being part of the Collegiate community — one which has always included bright, dedicated educators, eager students, and supportive parents working together to ensure “academic excellence, extraordinary character, and global citizenship.”

Melissa grew up in a small town in Northern Indiana, where she spent many childhood days playing in the woods close to her home. It was there that her discovery of the wonders of nature began. She relocated from the woods to elementary school and then to the junior high/high school that launched her into a 6-year term cheerleader for the Frankfort High School Hot Dogs, along with memberships in the Pep Club, Student Council, National Honor Society, and Youth for Understanding. Hardly pausing to catch her breath, she continued her education at Purdue University, where she studied Elementary Education. Her particular interest in science courses led to a National Science Foundation grant to further her science education studies at Purdue. She subsequently earned her Master of Fine Arts in Education at Indiana University.

In the years between her undergraduate and master’s degrees, Melissa became a Peace Corps Volunteer in Sierra Leone, West Africa. Upon her return to the states, she taught at a school in Indianapolis which served children in one of the city’s most impoverished parishes. Those varied experiences and her career at Collegiate have been both exciting and rewarding.

She feels especially fortunate that her career at Collegiate has allowed her to focus on children in grades 3, 4, and 5. She is confident that it is during those Lower School years that students become intrigued with science while developing the ability and enthusiasm to explore the wonders of nature that first piqued her interest in those woods back in Indiana.

Melissa values the opportunities she has had to collaborate with colleagues in designing, implementing, and chaperoning special events and field trips such as those to School-at-the Zoo Week, The Falls of the Ohio, Pine Mountain, Tom Sawyer Days, and Camp Piomingo. In addition, she has taught during most summers in Collegiate’s camp programs, has sponsored student councils and environmental clubs, and served on numerous faculty committees.

This outstanding teacher counts her colleagues as treasured friends. She credits some with inspiring her to take on adventures like whitewater rafting the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon and accepting the opportunity for summer teaching at St. Jude’s School in Tanzania (after which she enjoyed a safari). A number of colleagues even participated in events surrounding her marriage to Scotty Martin at a neighborhood church and the reception that followed in Collegiate’s auditorium. Their son, Prescott, graduated from Collegiate in 2002, and through the years Scotty has played the drums for Collegiate’s musicals. It is no wonder that Melissa expresses gratitude for the presence of Louisville Collegiate School in her life and that of her family.