

DARLENE THOMAS SANDERS

Darlene entered Columbia High School in 1968 after participating in volleyball, basketball, and track at the Junior High and was recognized as Best All-Around Student and Girl's Best Athlete as a senior.

She lettered basketball and was named to several all – tournament teams. However, Darlene made her significant historical mark in track.

In 1969 she made the varsity track team as a freshman year where she participated with her sister Doris, making the state meet as a member of the relay team

In 1970 she was part of the “Triple Threat Sisters” as she ran with sisters Doris and Joanne, again making the state meet as a member of the relay team.

In 1971 she won District in the 80-yard hurdles, triple jump, and the 440 and 880 yard relays. Won Regional in the triple jump and 80-yard hurdles. Won State in the 80-yard hurdles with a record time of 10.5.

In 1972 won District and Regional in the 60-yard dash, 80-yard hurdles, long jump, triple jump, and the 440 relay.

At the 1972 Girls State Track Meet - the first sponsored by the UIL in Austin.

Darlene won gold medals in both the 60-yard dash with a time of 7.0 and the 80-yard hurdles with a time of 10.5 and set state and national records in both.

She won a gold medal in the Long Jump with a distance of 18 ft.-3.5 inches.

She won a gold medal as part of the 440 relay team with Sister Joanne, Donna Campbell, and Margo Diggs.

Darlene won her 5th gold medal as Columbia also won the team title with a total of 60 points, of which Darlene individually earned 35 and was recognized as the high point individual.

After graduation Darlene earned degrees from Wharton County Junior College and Prairie View A&M University and currently teaches Physical Education for Columbia-Brazoria ISD at Barrow Elementary.

Darlene has three children – Shaconda, Jackie, and Shawnda and four grandchildren – Mariah, Marissa, Amaya, and Asiah.

Darlene would like to thank her parents for encouraging her to be the best she could be, Coach Lois Knipling Peel for her inspiration, and her sisters Doris and Joanne for being a part of her success in school.