

## **Colette Silvestri**

### High School Gifted Support Teacher Derry Township School District

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Colette Silvestri is the Gifted Support Teacher at Hershey High School in Hershey, Pennsylvania. She is the coach of the Hershey High School Memory Team and, previously, The East Pennsboro High School Team. She originally entered the public school system to test curriculum designs in arts education, but was required to work with East Pennsboro's newly established 'memory team.' During that first year, one of her students became the first high school student to place among the top three *adult* finalists in the nation. After transferring to Hershey, she established a new program whose various teams and individual students succeeded in winning five national titles, setting three adult national records and one international record. Her students have also represented Pennsylvania at the National Brain Bee, Poetry Out Loud and business design competitions



A native of Pittsburgh, Colette began her studies in voice and piano at Duquesne University at the age of seven. She continued her studies in operatic performance at Carnegie-Mellon where she joined Scotch'n'Soda (the school's original musical writing club). She received her Master of Arts at Penn State Harrisburg American Studies for her work as National Coordinator for final reunion of Roosevelt's Civilian Conservation Corps and Junior Leagues of Pennsylvania as their State Chair for Public Policy. When the Harrisburg Arts Magnet School was dissolved in the mid-1990s, Colette created an integrated, arts/technology workshop called The WIREWorks. With WIREWorks keeping her own artistic skills sharp, Colette's musical, ZELDA, was selected for the New York Musical Theater Festival in 2012 and is presently in professional development.

For her work in government, the arts, community service and education, Colette received The John Kuehl Fellowship from The International F. Scott Fitzgerald Society, The Penn State Humanities Award, Profiles in Excellence Award and a national Lin Wright Professional Teaching Grant for Excellence in Education of the Arts. It is her personal hope to find a 'quiet moment' one day so she can figure out what she actually does for living. Until then, she and her husband, Glenn Parsells, reside in the Harrisburg area with their very spoiled corgi, Miss Polly.