

Emeritus Award 2026: Sue Rexford

The *Nominating Committee* of Potomac and Chesapeake extends “Emeritus membership” to individuals who have retired from their professional responsibilities, have been highly visible for an extended period of time within PCACAC, and have rendered significant contributions and leadership in support of PCACAC's programs and activities. Tonight we recognize and celebrate someone who exemplifies that description.

I served three terms as President of PCACAC (a story for another time), but thankfully only one term as President-elect. I say thankfully because in the days before we had a conference coordinator, organizing the conference was an even bigger undertaking than it is today.

The first decision I made was to find a role on the conference planning committee for every single person who volunteered. I have always believed that PCACAC needs to grow leadership, and there have been times when we haven't done a good job on that front. I know members who have volunteered multiple times and never been tapped, and I think that's unfortunate.

One of the volunteers was a public school counselor from Fairfax County whom I had never met, Sue Rexford. In a moment that in retrospect seems like genius but was in reality pure luck, I asked her to oversee conference sessions. In our very first meeting I saw first-hand the qualities that made Sue such a legendary counselor and leader. She was a creative thinker with a rare ability to find a unique take on topics that are found on every conference program, and had the great combination of being both an idea person with the attention to detail to turn concepts into programs.

During my time as President of PCACAC, Sue chaired the Professional Development Committee. For years PCACAC had sought without success to establish a summer professional development opportunity, and Sue was the person who finally made what has become the Summer Institute a reality.

That was just the beginning of Sue's contributions to PCACAC and NACAC. She is a Past President of PCACAC and was the first chair of the Past Presidents Committee and is currently the historian. I'm sure there is something I'm leaving out. At the national level Sue has been a member of several national committees. She jokes that appointing her to a NACAC committee was a sign that the committee was about to be eliminated. Sue was also recognized as a national leader by being selected as a candidate for NACAC president-elect.

Sue Rexford is one of the few PCACAC members selected to receive both the Apperson Award and the Blackburn Award. She has spent her career at two very different institutions, West Springfield High /School and the Charles E Smith Jewish Day School. She concluded her duties at CES in December, and later this spring will move to Princeton, New Jersey to be closer to her daughter, who serves as provost at Princeton University, and her granddaughter Ursula, who is busy formulating plans for Sue's next chapter. Please join me in welcoming PCACAC newest recipient of Emeritus Membership, Sue Rexford.

Presented by: Jim Jump