
Honoring
Renee Shindo
Distinguished Educator
in Memoriam

On December 13, 2014, Hilo High School lost Mrs. Rene Shindo, the school's beloved student activities coordinator. Her passing triggered an outpouring of sadness and loving appreciation from both current and former students, who referred to her as their "second mother" because of the way she cared for them.

A 1978 Hilo High School graduate, Mrs. Shindo also chaired Hilo High School's Centennial Celebration in 2006, when graduates converged from far and near to celebrate their beloved alma mater's proud legacy.

However, it is as a science teacher and student activities coordinator that Mrs. Shindo will be best remembered. "Mrs. Shindo devoted most of her time, love and energy to us," her students said. "She was so much more than just an advisor or faculty member; she was our shelter whenever we felt lost, a warm hug when we were vulnerable, and a beacon of light instilling inspiration to keep us going no matter how hard our lives seemed."

Under Mrs. Shindo's guidance, student activities participants gained experiences that would serve them well as they prepared for college and life in general. She used student government as a means of teaching students about leadership and civic responsibility, letting them assume executive positions and chair big events like homecoming, prom, spirit week and more. These experiences gave students a much better idea of what it meant to take a leading role in their community with all the ups and downs that such responsibilities can entail.

Beyond student government affairs, Mrs. Shindo was open and supportive, whether it was helping students through difficulties with schoolwork or even personal issues outside of school. "She was our safe refuge, our protector and anchor," one student said. "Mrs. Shindo radiated warmth and comfort and went out of her way to make sure that everyone was okay. Mrs. Shindo was a friend to many and an inspiration to all."

Mrs. Shindo taught her students how to love, how to learn, and how to make something of themselves. "If there's one of her quotes that all of us will remember it's, 'If you can make a leader out of someone who's not, then you'll know you're a leader.' By that definition, Mrs. Shindo was *the* leader who created us; we students who weren't much more than timid freshmen then are now capable of so much more now."

Mrs. Rene Shindo helped to make Hilo High School more than just a school. She made it exceptional and her legacy will live on in the hearts of the people she touched and the lives she inspired.
