

## Mary Beth's Autobiography

My name is Mary Beth Salinas. I have been married for almost 23 years. My husband is a retired Marine and so I have spent most of my married life living in many different places. We have three children. Our oldest, a son, is a senior at James Madison University, our oldest daughter is a junior at the U.S. Naval Academy, and our youngest daughter is a 6<sup>th</sup> grader in Stafford. We also have two Bichon puppies that require almost as much work as a child! My husband and I both originally hail from Colorado and still consider it our “real home.”



I enjoy watching sports, especially my children’s teams and those from Colorado such as the Denver Broncos and Colorado Rockies. I also like to participate in sports, read, and scrapbook. I love to travel and have visited 49 of the 50 states and 28 countries in Europe, Asia and the Caribbean. There are many more places that I’d like to see! In the future, when my dogs are old enough, I hope to become involved with them in pet therapy for hospital patients.

For as long as I can remember, I have always wanted to be a teacher. My mother is a retired teacher, my father a retired high school principal, and two of my three sisters are teachers. My home while growing up was one filled with the love of learning and a strong emphasis on education. When I went to college in the late seventies there was a glut of teachers and women were encouraged to major in Business. I graduated from the University of Northern Colorado with a degree in Business Administration. I enjoyed the work that I did in the business world and definitely feel that those experiences will contribute to success in the classroom. Since my

children were born, most of my work experiences have come from employment or volunteerism in preschools and K-12 school systems. The experiences that I have had working with diverse populations of students, especially those with special needs, confirmed to me that teaching was definitely the career that I want to pursue. I feel blessed to have the opportunity to pursue a Master's degree in Special Education and hope to teach in this capacity in the near future.

Like Abraham Maslow, I agree that children need to be nourished, feel safe, have a sense of belonging, and feel confident in their abilities to fulfill their potentials. My classroom will be a welcoming and accepting place where each student will be a contributing member in the classroom community. Like John Dewey, I feel that children learn best when they are actively engaged in "hands on" activities and interactions with each other. With proper supports, scaffolding, strategic teaching and an emphasis placed on abilities and not disabilities, I truly believe that all students can experience success.

