

Podmore Honored as Distinguished Centralia College Alum

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Ron Podmore

Ron Podmore, a 1987 graduate of Centralia College, was recently announced as the 2016 Distinguished Alumnus by his old school.

Podmore, who is deaf, has been selected as the featured speaker for Centralia College's commencement ceremony in June.

Podmore, who resides in Federal Way, graduated from W.F. West High School in 1985, then used his two-year stint at Centralia College to springboard into the wide world of academia. After leaving the Hub City with his high school diploma and associate's degree in hand, Podmore made a stop at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C, before attaining his bachelor's degree at Western Washington University. Later, Podmore added a master's degree in education from Lewis and Clark College Law School and an administrative license from Pacific Lutheran University.

"The very foundation of my post-secondary success lies in what seeds were planted while I was at Centralia College," said Podmore in a news release from Centralia College. "For that, I am ever grateful for the instruction I received. Without it, I would not have gotten where I am today. Centralia College played a pivotal role in unlocking my academic potential. I realized for the first time that maybe I could achieve beyond high school. "

Podmore was the recipient of a Golden Apple Award in 1999. According to the website for KCTS, which presents the award in conjunction with PBS, "The Golden Apple Awards honors educators, programs and schools making a positive difference in Washington state education." Podmore was the first deaf teacher to receive the award, and in 2009 he became the first deaf American to garner National Board Professional Teaching Standards certification.

During the past 20 years Podmore has taught college-prep classes in science, technology, engineering and math, as well as American Sign Language, in Federal Way public schools. In

the last four years he has been employed as an arts and humanities professor at Bellevue College.

Additionally, Podmore been back to Washington, D.C., on occasion in order to work with the Professional Teaching Standards Foundation. Podmore works with a small group responsible for drafting the standards for the exacting national board exams.

In the face of his lengthy academic commitments, Podmore has also found time to get two books published, including an authorized biography on Academy Award winning actress Marlee Matlin. He has also traveled to Guatemala on multiple occasions as part of humanitarian missions, during which he worked with the Mayan deaf population in the UNESCO village of Antigua.