Shirley Dean was born August 2, 1935, in Cottage Grove, Oregon to the Rev. and Mrs. James F. Tindall. She grew up in New Plymouth, Idaho, graduating from high school in 1953. In 1957 Shirley graduated from Northwest Nazarene College with a major in English education.

Shortly after college graduation, Shirley married Mick Dean, a fellow NNC student. While completing graduate school and following, the Dean's served on the faculty of NNC (now NNU) for sixteen years, Shirley as an English professor and Mick in Biology. They then sensed God's leading to continue their teaching ministry through two mission assignments, first in Belize, Central America, and then in South Africa. Upon their return from South Africa, Mick accepted the pastorate at the Nyssa, Oregon, Church of the Nazarene. Shirley soon was hired by the Nyssa Middle School, where she taught for the last eleven years of her life.

Shirley had a passion for teaching English, and loved all of her students. She was the year 2000 recipient of Northwest Nazarene University's highest honor for excellence in teaching, the Lilburn Wesche Outstanding Educator Award.

The strength of Shirley's life came through her faith in the Lord Jesus as she sought to share His love with everyone she met. This scholarship was established by family and friends of Shirley Dean to celebrate not only the quality of her teaching and dedication to her students, but also her kindness and compassion to all.

Criteria for the Award

1. Recipients are to be students who meet general scholastic requirements and show potential for academic success and degree completion;
2. Financial need shall be a consideration in the awarding of this scholarship;
3. Preference in awarding shall be given to students planning to teach English;
4. Recipients may receive the award in successive years, not to exceed four years;
5. Nominations for this award are to be made through the Department of English and the Office of Financial Aid.