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# School News

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**Covering the Tustin Unified School District**



Volume 12, Issue 57

April / May 2016

## TUSD Announces 2016 Teachers of the Year



TUSD Elementary Teacher of the Year Courtney Smith is surrounded by her kindergarten students.



TUSD Secondary Teacher of the Year Zachariah Samarin poses with students in his entrepreneurship class.

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# Collaboration Makes a World of Difference in the Lives of Students



**Gregory A. Franklin, Ed. D.**  
*Superintendent*

## In Touch with TUSD

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has. – Margaret Mead

Throughout our school district, I am constantly reminded that most of our successes are a result of dedicated people working together to make things better. Collaboration among passionate and capable individuals creates a synergy that

leads to results that are far beyond our ability to achieve individually. Some of this work occurs in formalized committees, task forces, and work teams, but it can also be the result of informal cooperation between colleagues, parents and community members.

In Tustin Unified, collaboration has become the default method for getting things done. Among the most obvious examples are the high-performing grade-level teams, Professional Learning Communities, departments and course-alike teams in our schools that work together to increase student achievement through better lessons, engaging strategies and the integration of technology. Instruction in TUSD has never been better and I appreciate everyone who works with colleagues to spread the best practices that we have seen work throughout the District.

Perhaps less obvious, but incredibly important are the groups of staff who work behind the scenes. For example, I recently had an opportunity to spend a few minutes with our New Teacher Induction Committee – veteran TUSD teachers who plan the formal induction of new teachers into TUSD and the profession. Their dedication and passion for ensuring that new teachers have powerful and practical experiences are inspiring. As a result of their work, new teachers gain valuable expertise and confidence in the process of collaboration and reflection. Teachers who complete the TUSD Induction process earn their clear credential – a process that many of us had to complete at the university. Thanks to the Induction team for their great work!

The teams of staff who bargain on behalf of the District, such as the Tustin Educators Association (TEA), Classified School Employees Association (CSEA) and Classified Supervisory Management Association (CSMA), are also outstanding examples of the power of collaboration. Through the Interest-Based approach, these teams of teachers, classified staff and administrators address issues that are important to everyone in the District. They operate on the belief that “none of us are as smart as all of us.” As a result, issues are addressed in a productive, respectful and positive manner. I appreciate their work.



**Beckman special education paraeducator Trisha Primrose, left, and special education teacher Misty Moon worked together to ensure Kelsey, seated, could have a typical high school experience.**

Collaboration has also changed the lives of individual students. At the February school board meeting, a parent shared a very emotional story of his daughter's experience at Beckman High School. Kelsey started high school in honors courses and playing on the school soccer team. Unfortunately, she developed Lafora disease which resulted in her rapid physical and cognitive decline. One of Kelsey's greatest desires was to continue attending Beckman High – the school she loved. Most students who have this rare disease are unable to continue attending school; however, Kelsey's special education teacher, counselor, psychologist, administrators and others worked together to ensure that Kelsey could continue at Beckman. Kelsey passed away two months before her graduation date, but the care and compassion of the Beckman team changed how Kelsey experienced the last few years of her life. Kelsey's incredibly moving story touched everyone in attendance, and as shared by her father, touched the lives of their family forever.

Collaboration matters. It's not an add-on – it is a core practice. It's not done just to make people feel good, it's serious work in pursuit of our most important goals – the education and preparation of our students to have productive lives and lead our community and the world. Thanks to all of you who work together to make it happen!

# TUSD Announces 2016 Teachers of the Year

By Mark Eliot

Director of Communications and Public Information

Courtney Smith, kindergarten teacher at Tustin Memorial Academy, and Zachariah Samarin, seventh grade Core/entrepreneurship/leadership teacher at A.G. Currie Middle School, have been selected as the 2016 Teachers of the Year by the Tustin Unified School District. They will represent the District in the 2016-17 Orange County Teachers of the Year program.

The Orange County Department of Education will interview the selected candidates and announce winners in May. The county finalists will then go on to the California and National Teacher of the Year programs.

Tustin Unified's annual awards program recognizes outstanding teachers who have displayed extraordinary teaching, creativity and excellence at their school and community.

Smith and Samarin were chosen from a field of 28 candidates. Additionally, Smith was named Elementary (grades K-5) Teacher of the Year and Samarin was selected as Secondary (grades 6-12) Teacher of the Year.

"It was an incredible surprise to see so many District representatives and family members come into my classroom the morning of the Teacher of the Year announcement," Smith said. "The icing on the cake was when many of my colleagues burst into the room cheering and offering their congratulations. The news was so much sweeter because I was surrounded by people who believe in me and encourage me to be the best teacher possible."



**TMA Principal Wendy Hudson and Superintendent Dr. Gregory Franklin congratulate TUSD Elementary Teacher of the Year Courtney Smith, center.**

Smith has taught in education for 18 years – all at Tustin Memorial Academy (TMA). She has taught kindergarten and first grade, and fundamental and Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) classes. During her time at TMA, the school has been named a National Blue Ribbon School in 2007 and California Distinguished School twice in 2014 and 2006. Tustin Memorial has also been nominated as a 2016 Exemplary High Performing School in the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program.

"My greatest accomplishment as a teacher is that I'm able to make a difference in the lives of my students," Smith said. "My goal is to instill in my students a love for learning, to challenge them to grow academically, and to develop their skills and talents in order to be the best they can be."

Smith has received numerous grants from the Cotsen Art of Teaching Foundation, Tustin Public Schools Foundation and Tustin-Santa Ana Rotary Club Good Idea Awards program. She is a Cotsen and Technology fellow, participates in Family Reading Night and Dinosaur Dash, and organizes Teacher Share Fairs as well as book study groups.

"Courtney is exceptionally caring and optimistic," Tustin Memorial Principal Wendy Hudson said. "She wears a smile on her face every single day and excels at bringing students and staff together to learn or play."

Outside of school, Smith is actively involved in community charity work. She sponsors children through humanitarian aid organizations, adopts families and provides them with meals during the holiday season, serves as a collection volunteer for the Second Harvest Food Bank and creates care packages containing personal hygiene items and supplies for the homeless. She is also involved in theater productions and stages an elaborate neighborhood play each summer involving 20 or more children, which she nicknames "The Community Garage Theater."

"I'm very honored and humbled to receive the District's Teacher of the Year award and excited to promote Currie and my students," said Samarin, who has been a teacher for 16 years – 10 in the Tustin school district. "It is pleasure watching them shine and take initiative in higher levels of learning. This award is for them and I am so thrilled that they are making me a better teacher every day."

At Currie, Samarin serves as the Team Leader for seventh grade Core and advisor for the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program, oversees the ASB class and encourages his students to participate in debates and Socratic seminars. He also conducts a mentor program, coaches the school's volleyball team and organizes student trips to Washington, D.C.

"Zachariah is a passionate teacher who cares deeply for his students," Currie Principal Erick Fineberg said. "He brings his life experiences to the classroom and uses them as motivation and inspiration for his students."

Samarin developed an entrepreneurship class at the middle school level for the first time in the history of the District. With his background as a marketing major in college, Samarin brought the principles and innovation of entrepreneurship to Currie where students are engaged in analyzing data and starting a business. Most recently, his entrepreneur class presented business plans for vacant space in Tustin to City Council members and the city's Economic Development Department.

*Continued • Page 5*

**TUSD ANNOUNCES 2016 TEACHERS OF THE YEAR • From Page 4**

Under Samarín's leadership, Currie students have raised over \$4,000 for various local charities, collected thousands of pounds of food and clothing, volunteered at the Orange County Rescue Mission, provided books and supplies to Children's Hospital of Orange County and cleaned the streets of Tustin on a monthly basis.



**Currie Principal Erick Fineberg and Superintendent Dr. Gregory Franklin commend TUSD Secondary Teacher of the Year Zachariah Samarín, center.**

"My teaching philosophy is simple – love the kids and have a strong work ethic," Samarín said. "Students need to see and feel that they are loved and cared for while being taught that hard work will pay off for them in the future."

The other 2016 School Site Teachers of the Year include:

Elementary School: Aimee Johnson, second grade teacher at Arroyo School; Lori Boyer-Pro, second grade teacher at Barbara Benson School; Jennah Shmuckler, second/third grade teacher at Benjamin Beswick School; Constance Seymour, first grade teacher at Helen Estock School; Jennifer Titterud, transitional kindergarten teacher at Guin Foss School; Annette Cuccarese, transitional kindergarten teacher at Robert Heideman School; Annie Pacelli, kindergarten teacher at Hicks Canyon School; Kathy Okajima, second/third grade teacher at Ladera School; Jennifer Trinh, second grade teacher at C.C. Lambert School; Joshua Helpert, fifth grade teacher

at Loma Vista School; Danielle Clawson, kindergarten teacher at Myford School; Mary Ann Spragle, transitional kindergarten teacher at W.R. Nelson School; Rebecca Pieplow, fifth grade teacher at Orchard Hills School; Tracey Smith, third grade teacher at Peters Canyon School; Julie Young, fifth grade teacher at Red Hill School; Lisa Hickman, second grade teacher at Jeane Thorman School; Linda Chaplin, kindergarten teacher at Tustin Ranch School; and Maureen Melstrom, second grade teacher at Marjorie Veeh School.

Middle School: Monica Azimioara, mathematics and Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) teacher at Columbus Tustin School; Tami Bailey, mathematics/Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) teacher at Hewes School; Christine Kieran, Resource Specialist Program (RSP) teacher at Pioneer School; and Barbara Valentine, mathematics teacher at C.E. Utt School.

High School: Joy Havrisik, RSP teacher at Beckman; Josh Hermanson, International Baccalaureate/Theory of Knowledge and English Honors teacher at Foothill; Bobby Ray Buckles, science teacher at Hillview; and Martin Ureno, mathematics teacher at Tustin High.

The two winners and all the District's nominees will be honored at the 22nd annual Teachers of the Year Dinner at 5 p.m. on Friday, May 13 at the Irvine Marriott Hotel. The event is co-sponsored by the Tustin Public Schools Foundation and Tustin Unified School District.

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**Kay Coop**  
Founder/Publisher



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**FOUNDER/PUBLISHER:** Kay Coop  
562/493-3193 [kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com](mailto:kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com)

**ADVERTISING SALES:** Leslie Rawlings  
714/856-9884 [leslie@schoolnewsrollcall.com](mailto:leslie@schoolnewsrollcall.com)

**CONTENT COORDINATOR:** Barbra Longiny

**GRAPHIC DESIGNER:** Tim DeLacy

**COPY EDITORS:**

Lisa Brock, Kate Karp & Anna Zappia



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**Carol Burby Garrett**  
Executive Director

## Celebrating Teachers

One of our community's most exciting events is just around the corner. The 22nd Annual Teacher of the Year Dinner will be held Friday, May 13, 2016, and honors teachers

nominated by each of our Tustin Unified Schools. This event is hosted by the Tustin Public Schools Foundation. It's a night of celebration and inspiration as we hear the accomplishments of those who help our children reach their potential. It's also a chance to get together with friends, neighbors, staff, and our local business community. Tickets are \$65 (reservations/adoption close May 3). From in-kind support to table sponsors, we have a variety of ways to get involved. We can offer exposure to



### 2015 Teacher of the Year honorees having fun!

thousands of Tustin area residents that receive our printed announcements and the over 700 people expected to attend the dinner. If you or someone you know is interested, please visit <http://www.tpsf.net/toy/> for more information and tickets.



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# Arroyo Elementary School

11112 Coronel Rd., Santa Ana, CA 92705 • 714/730-7381



**Amy Jones**  
Principal

## Above and Beyond!

We are so proud to announce Aimee Johnson as Arroyo's Teacher of the Year! Ms. Johnson has been teaching for 12 years, with all of those years here in Tustin.

Ms. Johnson is an outstanding teacher with a heart of gold. She goes above and beyond to provide an engaging and safe learning environment for students. Whether

it's reading aloud to students or posing a challenging CGI math problem to her second-graders, you can see that Ms. Johnson is committed to meeting all of her students' needs.

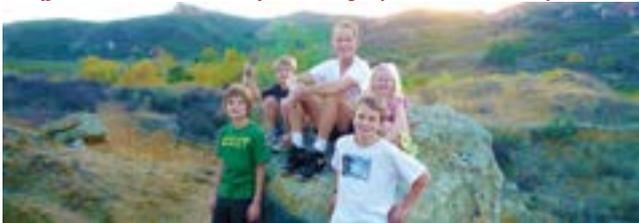
Ms. Johnson exemplifies kindness, and that is modeled each and every day through her interactions with students, staff and families. She is viewed by all members of the Arroyo community as a team player with a positive attitude that is quite contagious! We couldn't be more proud of Arroyo's Teacher of the Year. Way to go, Ms. Johnson!



**Aimee Johnson's students are proud of their Teacher of the Year.**

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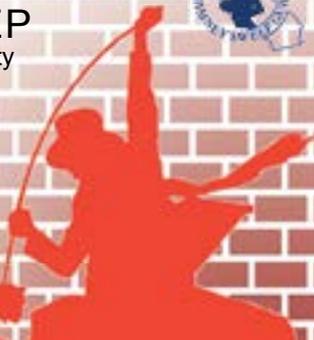
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# Arnold O. Beckman *High School*

3588 Bryan Ave., Irvine, CA 92602 • 714/734-2900



**Adele Heuer**  
*Principal*

## CubeSat STEM Program

The high school space race is on! Beckman High School will join with the four other Irvine high schools to work on becoming the first high school group to successfully launch a CubeSat into orbit.

The five high schools are joining forces with industry partners and experts to assemble, test, and launch a CubeSat (nano-satellite) into low Earth orbit. Each high school team has a focus area and Beckman has been assigned avionics.

A CubeSat is a type of miniaturized satellite intended for space research that performs a number of scientific research functions that will be conducted by our students. Avionics are the electronic systems of the satellite including the writing of software that control the functions.

We are excited about our participation in this innovative program and look forward to a launch in early 2017.



**Beckman High physics teacher Dr. Paul Lewanski displays a photo of the CubeSat, which will be launched into low Earth orbit.**

# Barbara Benson *Elementary School*

12712 Elizabeth Way, Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7531



**Deena Vela**  
*Principal*

## Committed to Her Students

We are very proud to recognize Lori Pro as Benson's 2016 Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Pro's passion and love for teaching is a gift to our Benson students. She has been an educator for over 15 years.

When you walk into Mrs. Pro's classroom you will see innovative teaching and learning. Her 21st-century instructional practices inspire students to strive to do their Benson Best.

In addition to teaching, Mrs. Pro also goes above and beyond to support the Benson community by leading school-wide literacy events such as Read Across America, One Book One School, and Camp Read. These family events foster a love for reading in our

students. She works closely with our staff and children to make Benson a special learning environment for all.

At Benson, she is known as the "Super Teacher." We look forward to celebrating Mrs. Pro at the annual Teacher of the Year dinner!



**Teacher Lori Pro joins her "super" fans at the school playground.**

# Benjamin Beswick *Elementary School*

1362 Mitchell Ave., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7385



**Eileen Delaney**  
*Principal*

## **Innovation Is Her Middle Name!**

Jennah Shmuckler, Beswick Elementary School's Teacher of the Year, is amazing! Jennah integrates technology into her daily teaching practices, designs engaging lessons, locates additional resources and materials to help solidify concepts for students, and always shares her ideas.

Jennah passionately pursues excellence and higher expectations for her students and for herself. She is respected by her peers and is the epitome of a lifelong learner. She is constantly engaged in developing and extending her teaching skills.

Jennah is self-motivated to always do her best, and her confidence, support, and energy inspire those around her. This year, Jennah embarked upon a fellowship with the Cotsen Foundation, which allows her to continue to build upon her expertise in teaching and learning with innovation and style. Her teaching style is inherently project-based and interactive. She makes a difference in her second- and third-grade classroom and across the campus.

We love Jennah!



**Beswick teacher Jennah Shmuckler makes a difference in the lives of her students.**



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## Columbus Tustin *Middle School*

17952 Beneta Way, Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7352



**Maggie Burdette**  
*Principal*

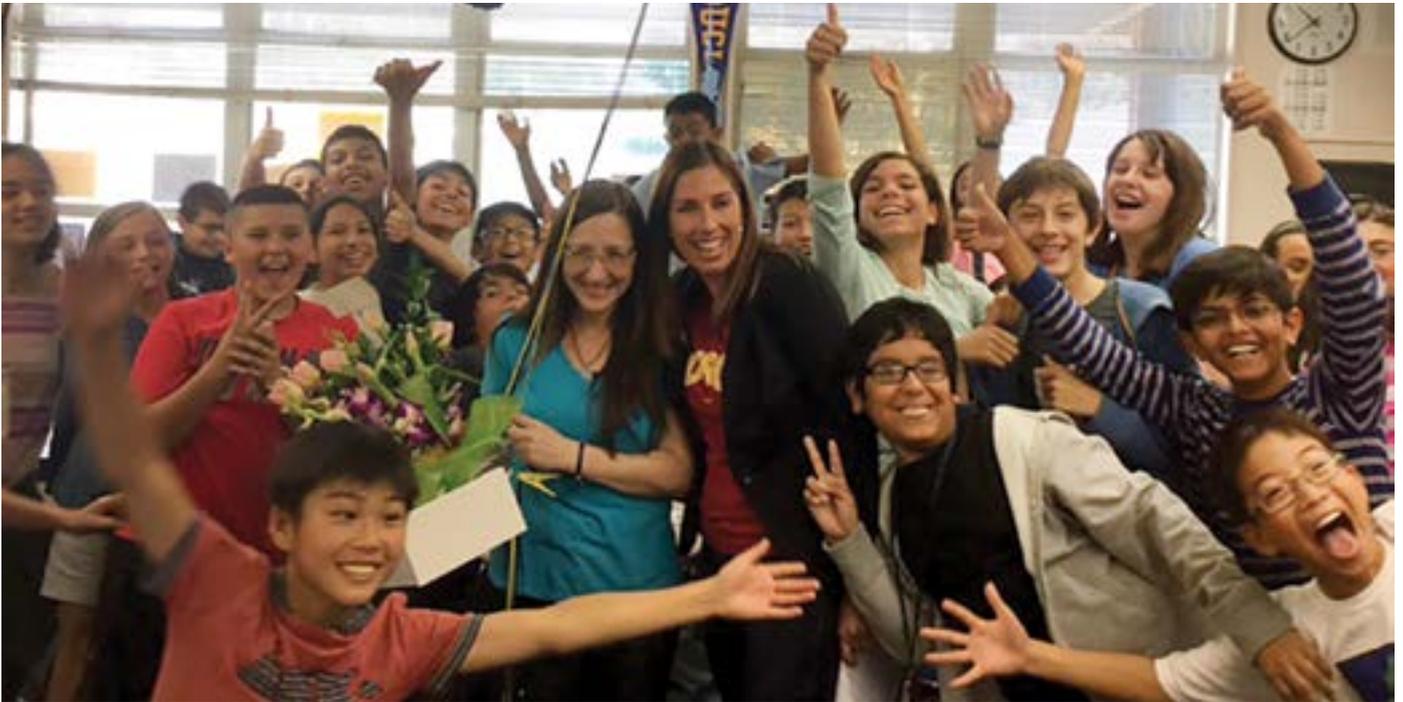
### Calling Forth Student Greatness

Monica Azimioara is a magnet math teacher at Columbus Tustin and has a Ph.D. in mathematics and science curriculum and instruction. With 22 years of teaching experience, Ms. Azimioara is one of the main reasons that the math-and-science magnet program at Columbus Tustin not only exists but is also thriving today after 15 years of development! She created and ran

the program for its first five years and continues to be an integral part of its success.

Ms. Azimioara believes that all children are geniuses and possess tremendous gifts waiting to be discovered, affirmed, and strengthened. Ms. Azimioara's particular strength lies in supporting our English learners. She infuses every lesson with critical strategies that not only support all types of learners but also challenge them to reach new levels.

Ms. Azimioara is always positive and teaches with a conviction to bring out the greatness in all of her students. Congratulations on being Columbus Tustin's 2016 Teacher of the Year!



**Monica Azimioara celebrates with her students and Principal Burdette the announcement that she is the 2016 Teacher of the Year!**

## A.G. Currie *Middle School*

1402 Sycamore Ave., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7360



**Erick Fineberg**  
*Principal*

### Amazing Teacher, Mentor and Innovator

Currie is honored to celebrate a very special teacher and mentor in Zachariah Samarin as the school's Teacher of the Year. Mr. Samarin is a passionate teacher who cares deeply for his students. He has taken on the role of advisor to our ASB/Leadership class and has brought a sense of service and community to the program.

Under Mr. Samarin's guidance, Currie Leadership students have raised over \$4,000 for various local multiple-service charities, collected thousands

of pounds of food and clothing, and spent many more thousands of volunteer hours at the local mission and community-service-based projects in our area.

In addition, Mr. Samarin has incorporated his unique background as a marketing major with his training as a classroom teacher to create an entrepreneur pathway at the middle school level. He has brought the principles and innovative spirit of entrepreneurship to not only Currie but also to the district as a whole.

All this, and we have not even mentioned his talents and expertise as an English and social studies Core teacher! Currie Middle School is honored to recognize Zachariah Samarin as its 2016 Teacher of the Year.

## Helen Estock *Elementary School*

14741 North B St., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7390



**Beth Rabel Blackman**  
*Principal*

### **Excited and Ready to Learn**

Estock Elementary is proud to announce first-grade teacher Connie Seymour as its Teacher of the Year. Connie has been teaching for 30 years, with 22 at Tustin Unified.

Through her careful planning, strategic teaching, and passion for excellence, Connie's scholars are always excited and ready to learn.

Connie is a team player, and is always willing to help out others. She supports her colleagues, mentors, and coaches, and always offers thoughtful suggestions. Connie serves on our Leadership Team as well, and is a founding member of the Positive Behavior Support Team. She also chaired Estock's 50th anniversary celebration.

Connie is extremely dedicated in everything she does, and always goes the extra mile to support her students, which includes spending countless hours outside the classroom. She is caring and loving and always puts her students and their needs first. We are proud to have her on our Estock team.

Again, congratulations to Connie Seymour as Estock's 2016 Teacher of the Year!



**Teacher Connie Seymour gathers her first grade students to support their growth as young readers.**

## Foothill *High School*

19251 Dodge Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92705 • 714/ 730-7464



**Dr. Nick Stephany**  
*Principal*

### **Foothill's King of All Trades**

Foothill High teacher Josh Hermanson is committed to promoting the success of all students, and as such, he celebrates a culture of very high expectations.

Josh consistently reevaluates his instructional practices to encourage academic excellence and technological innovation. However, perhaps his greatest strength is his ability to communicate

and connect with students as both an educator and on a personal level. Many of his former students keep in touch with him about their success in college and beyond.

In addition to tirelessly serving the Foothill English Department as its co-chairperson, this year Josh is also co-coordinating the Western Association of School and Colleges (WASC) school-wide action plan and visitation. He is also the co-mock trial coach whose enthusiasm inspires students to pursue their interests in the law.

Josh even takes his commitment to education to a global level, and acts as a Theory of Knowledge Examiner through the International Baccalaureate (IB) headquarters in Wales.

Outside of academics, Josh has been coaching the FHS Girls' Tennis Team since 2005.



**Mr. Hermanson goes the extra mile to help a student.**

# Guin Foss *Elementary School*

18492 Vanderlip Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92705 • 714/730-7552



**Kelly Fresch**  
*Principal*

## Magical Teacher of the Year!

We are excited to announce that Jennifer Titterud has been selected as Guin Foss' 2016 Teacher of the Year! She is an incredibly talented teacher and role model for all.

Ms. Titterud teaches transitional kindergarten and in years past taught kinder and first grade, laying the foundation for successful lifelong readers. She serves on the school site council and superintendent's advisory committee, and she provides a family literacy course in her free time, supporting new parents in their endeavor to ensure that their children are successful while reading at home. As a primary teacher, she focuses on the development of fine- and gross-motor skills, letters, numbers and social-emotional skills.

She works hard day-in and day-out to see that all her students are reading before even entering kindergarten. She offers her students real-life experiences in their dramatic play centers and



**Students celebrate Guin Foss Teacher of the Year Jennifer Titterud.**

even produces a musical performance each year that culminates her "Zoo" unit. To observe Ms. Titterud teach is magical!

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## Robert Heideman *Elementary School*

15571 Williams St., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7521



**Sean Lindsay**  
*Principal*

### All Teaching. All Learning

Our Teacher of the Year for 2016 is Annette Cuccarese. She teaches transitional kindergarten, and her work embodies one of our profession's most profound truths: In the best classrooms, it's sometimes difficult to determine who is teaching and who is learning! The teacher's skill and love allow the classroom to become a community where all members present, engaged and alive are both teaching and learning.



**Teacher Annette Cuccarese is always on the go like the school's mascot – Heideman Roadrunner.**

“Even at the age of five these kids are big thinkers,” Ms. Cuccarese said. “There is a time and a place for them to listen to instruction, yet there is also a time for us to step back and listen to them. They have taught me to take the time to listen. When I do, they blow me away with their understanding of the world. And I am humbled by their intelligence. They make me a better person.”

You should see Room 1 in action—seriously.

## Hewes *Middle School*

13232 Hewes Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92705 • 714/730-7348



**Eric Kilian**  
*Principal*

### A Force in the Classroom

Congratulations go to Tami Bailey, who was recently nominated by her Hewes peers as our Teacher of the Year!

As both a math and Advancement Via Individual Determination teacher (AVID), Mrs. Bailey fully embodies an undying passion to reach each and every one of her students. Whether dynamically leading students to engage in collaborative real-world math problems – or setting goals and supporting her AVID

students to help them reach new heights – her passion is worn on her sleeves. And the students sense it.

As she is literally available for additional support all day, from early in the morning until 4:30 p.m. after school, her students are able to overcome many of their academic obstacles. Not only that, but she also co-leads our school's Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports program (PBIS), and is an active participant in the Math Department's regular collaboration and planning.

We are proud of Mrs. Bailey as an excellent representation of Hewes teachers, and as a “Jedi Mathster.”



**Math/AVID teacher Tami Bailey is a “star” at Hewes Middle School.**

## Hicks Canyon *Elementary School*

3817 Viewpark Ave., Irvine, CA 92602 • 714/734-1878



**Cindy Agopian**  
*Principal*

### **Achieving Their Personal Best**

*By Kimberly Cunningham,  
Teacher – Kindergarten*

Hicks Canyon Elementary School is proud to recognize Annie Pacelli as our 2016 Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Pacelli is passionate about providing each of her students with challenges and opportunities to grow. She consistently focuses on how she can push her students to achieve their personal best while finding ways to integrate and promote creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration into her lessons.



**Teacher Annie Pacelli is joined by her family in the classroom celebration.**

Having a growth mindset isn't just a philosophy she teaches her students; it is something she practices as well. As a Cotsen fellow, Mrs. Pacelli looks at each day for new opportunities to improve her practice. Through reflection, she works to perfect her art of teaching by striving to take her lessons to the next level.

Our Hicks Canyon community can always count on Mrs. Pacelli to bring enthusiasm, positive energy, and a love of learning into the classroom each day. It is because of these things and many more that Hicks Canyon celebrates her excellence!



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## Hillview High School

15400 Lansdowne Rd., Tustin, CA 92782 • 714/730-7356



**Tim O'Donoghue**  
*Principal*

### Getting Students Back On Track

Bob Buckles has been selected as Hillview High School's Teacher of the Year!

Mr. Buckles has been a science instructor for 17 years, and all at Hillview. During his tenure he has taught science and physical education. He is also the lead teacher in the evening for the Adult

Education program. Mr. Buckles is an excellent classroom teacher who is always working hard to improve. He is a real leader on our staff!

What most people don't know is that Mr. Buckles is actually Dr. Buckles, as he worked for eight years as a chiropractor before becoming a teacher. He was born in Idaho and spent most of his life there.

Each summer he travels back to Idaho to spend time with his family and enjoy the outdoors. All of Mr. Buckles' hobbies revolve around the outdoors. He enjoys skiing, hiking, fishing, and motorcycle riding.

The Hillview students are fortunate to have Mr. Buckles working with them.



**Principal Tim O'Donoghue, right, congratulates Bob Buckles for being named Hillview Teacher of the Year.**

## Ladera Elementary School

2515 Rawlings Way, Tustin, CA 92782 • 714/730-7505



**Dr. Jennifer Harrison**  
*Principal*

### 100th Day of School

On February 18, Ladera Elementary School students celebrated the 100th day of school. The celebration began with students entering under banners proclaiming, "You Are 100 Days Smarter Today!"

Music was played throughout the day over a public-address system, giving students 100-second dance breaks. Throughout the week,

library media technician Christina Rigney read aloud 100th Day Worries, and Ladera set a Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) goal of capturing a minimum of 100 acts of kindness.

In each classroom, teachers conducted activities appropriate for their grade levels. In Erin Neuer's class, students challenged themselves using their Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI) inquiry skills, with a goal of finding 100 each of 30 different items. The students had to get creative. When they were only able to find 50 pairs of scissors, they counted finger holes (two per pair) and came up with 100! One student proudly stated, "That's 3,000 things!"



**Teacher Erin Neuer's first grade students proudly share their math collection.**

## C.C. Lambert *Elementary School*

1151 San Juan St., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7457



**Deanna Parks**  
*Principal*

### Jennifer Trinh and Her Detectives

Do you have an inquiring mind? Put on a detective hat and join Jennifer Trinh's second-grade class of "sleuths" to get the answers!

Jennifer teaches problem solving, not answers. She respects students with her calm demeanor and captivating delivery of each word. Her systems set the students up for success by using every learning minute, right down to the constantly changing names for table groups that teach new vocabulary.

Jennifer's teaching craft is expertly skilled, yet she masterfully synthesizes the quality training she participates in as a Cotsen fellow, and then she builds on what is already working. Jennifer collects data on her students daily and uses it to thread learning throughout the day.

She does this so well that when

asked to share her know-how to the entire staff, she left everyone in awe and wanting to adopt her systems!

We are so excited to have Jennifer Trinh represent the excellent teaching at Lambert as our 2016 Teacher of the Year.



**Jennifer Trinh and her sleuths in their detective caps that they acquired through their own persuasive plan.**

## Loma Vista *Elementary School*

13822 Prospect Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92705 • 714/730-7528



**Katy Sheyka**  
*Principal*

### Cougars Roar for Josh Helpern

Loma Vista Elementary School is extremely proud to recognize Josh Helpern as our 2016 Teacher of the Year. Mr. Helpern has contributed to making our school and the Tustin Unified School District (TUSD) an excellent place to learn and grow for over a decade. He is a generous teacher who always goes above and beyond for our students, staff, and community.

A former Cotsen fellow, Mr. Helpern serves on our TUSD Tech Task Force Committee, is our co-Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) coach, and serves as a member of the Superintendent Advisory Council. Recently earning a master's degree in educational technology, Mr. Helpern is our go-to guy for technology support and has taken on the role of our Robotics/Engineering Club teacher. Actively involved with our PTO, Mr. Helpern is passionate about the development of our Outdoor Garden Learning Center and is eager to engage students in rich, hands-on learning experiences.

Cougars roar for Mr. Helpern!



**Principal Katy Sheyka and teacher Cathy Fortier celebrate with Loma Vista Teacher of the Year, Josh Helpern.**

# Myford *Elementary School*

3181 Trevino Dr., Irvine, CA 92602 • 714/734-1875



**Rena Fairchild**  
*Principal*

## A Lifelong Learner

Danielle Clawson is a phenomenal kindergarten teacher who dedicates herself to her students and the Myford Elementary School community. She embraces new learning and does so with a positive attitude. She sees the value unique to all children

and is dedicated to bringing out their best. Mrs. Clawson studies her teaching craft, always looking for ways to reach every student. She is a team player and goes above and beyond for her colleagues.

Mrs. Clawson is a lifelong learner who has challenged herself for the past 15 years. She has participated in numerous trainings in writing, art, technology, math, physical education, science, Gifted And Talented Education (GATE), and language arts. She served as a Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) provider, and, as a Cotsen fellow, she immersed herself in learning about Cognitively Guided



**Myford Teacher of the Year, Danielle Clawson, is surprised by her family, husband David and children Ethan, McKenna and Lily.**

Instruction in math. In addition, she often opens her classroom to teachers from other schools to observe her reading and writing instruction.

# Orchard Hills *School*

11555 Culver Dr., Irvine, CA 92602 • 714/730-2078



**Dr. Michael Williams**  
*Principal*

## Leading Students to New Heights

Rebecca Pieplow is one of Orchard Hills School's superstar teachers. She is part of a wonderful fifth-grade team that puts students and parents first. She continually has a sparkling attitude, unending energy, and a willingness to extend herself beyond the four walls of the classroom.

Not only is she an outstanding teacher on our campus, but she also serves as the fifth-grade team lead, Outdoor Education coordinator, Gifted And Talented Education (GATE) lead for fifth grade, and the physical education coordinator. She creates and shares amazing instructional lessons that really push all of our students' learning forward. She is well organized and holds her students accountable for their personal schoolwork and assignments, and she also encourages her students' critical-thinking skills and ideas.

All in all, we are very proud and honored to have Rebecca Pieplow represent Orchard Hills as our 2016 Teacher of the Year!



**Orchard Hills teacher Rebecca Pieplow's helps her students score in academic success.**

## W.R. Nelson *Elementary School*

14392 Browning Ave., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7536



**Melinda Smith**  
*Principal*

### **Celebrating Excellence**

W.R. Nelson Elementary School's Teacher of the Year, Mary Ann Spragle, has been teaching for 24 years. She has taught at Nelson since 1999. Inspired by her parents, who are both teachers, and her brother, who had cerebral palsy,

Mary Ann finds the best in every student, teaching to their strengths.

She currently teaches transitional kindergarten, and she is actively involved in the school community. She has served



**Mary Ann Spragle is a transitional kindergarten teacher at Nelson.**

on nearly every adjunct duty, but she gravitates to leadership roles like School Site Council, Tustin Educators Association representative, and the Nelson fourth- and fifth-grade robotics team. She has also served as a master teacher and induction support provider. Recently, Mary Ann was selected to be on the committee that developed the transitional kindergarten curriculum, and she is piloting STEMScopes, the Next Generation Science Standards material.

We are proud to have Mary Ann represent Nelson as the school's Teacher of the Year!

## Peters Canyon *Elementary School*

26900 Peters Canyon Rd., Tustin, CA 92782 • 714/730-7540



**Brooke Carreras**  
*Principal*

### **Tropical Learning Paradise!**

Peters Canyon is proud to announce Tracey Smith as our Teacher of the Year! Ms. Smith began teaching in 1993 and joined Tustin Unified in 1998. She taught at Lambert and Veeh before joining the Peters Canyon family in 2014.

Ms. Smith has endless energy and always has a smile on her face. She loves inspiring her scholars to be inquisitive, have a

voracious appetite for reading, and think deeply about their learning. Walking into her room, students feel as though they have entered a tropical learning paradise!

Ms. Smith is a leader on the Peters Canyon campus, organizing our Social Committee, serving as the Positive Behavior Intervention and support coach for her colleagues, and recently giving the staff patio a makeover, creating an inviting place for staff to relax.

We applaud Ms. Smith for her dedication and commitment to our children!



**Teacher Tracey Smith loves inspiring her third grade class to think and learn.**

## Pioneer *Middle School*

2700 Pioneer Rd., Tustin, CA 92782 • 714/730-7534



**Tracey  
Vander Hayden**  
*Principal*

### **A Gift for Bettering Lives**

Congratulations to Christine Kieran, our 2016 Pioneer Teacher of the Year!

Mrs. Kieran's passion is to help people. In fact, her compassion for others guided her decision to become a special education teacher. Her love for solving problems, and desire to work with challenged teenagers in an educational setting, is definitely a gift.

Everyone who nominated Mrs. Kieran for this award commented on her gift of patience, resilience, and stability for

special education students. It is not uncommon to hear her cheering them on, pushing them ever so lightly (and sometimes very directly) to achieve their very best.

Mrs. Kieran also models the importance of staying committed to the education of all students. As the leader of Pioneer's Special Education Department, she consistently practices differentiated instruction, scaffolding, interventions, and enrichment through the integration of TUSD Connect's mission of rigorous standards and engaging lessons; all supported with 21st-century technology.

The entire Pioneer staff is proud to work with a teacher of this caliber.



**Pioneer students cheer for their school's Teacher of the Year, Christine Kieran, who is holding a bouquet of flowers.**

## Red Hill *Elementary School*

11911 Red Hill Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92705 • 714/730-7543



**Will Neddersen**  
*Principal*

### **A Driving Force**

*By Janelle Crain, Teacher*

Red Hill Elementary School's 2016 Teacher of the Year is Julie Young.

Mrs. Young has been a part of the Red Hill staff for two years. She was nominated by her peers because she is a

living example of giving power to gain influence. She empowers her students and colleagues to be reflective in their practice. She is innovative with her classroom environment and curricular delivery.

Walking into her classroom you can see the power in her students. They drive her instruction, and she is always



**Red Hill teacher Julie Young empowers her fifth-grade students in the classroom.**

willing to research, create, and modify whatever it takes to bring them to the next level.

Julie is a driving force on campus with her encouragement, endless resources, and many smiles. She is a risk taker, and models this in her involvement with the Leadership Academy, NGSS implementation/Pilot, and Science School Advisory Committee. Red Hill is a better place because of her commitment.

Congratulations, Mrs. Young!

## Jeane Thorman *Elementary School*

1402 Sycamore Ave., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7364



### **The Path to Success**

One visit to Lisa Hickman's classroom and you will feel like you're in the greatest classroom library you have

ever seen! With thousands of titles, her library is a reading fairytale world where anything is possible.

Miss Hickman's passion for reading is evident. Her students know that reading is definitely No. 1 in her room. She believes that her greatest contribution has been in how every student in her room becomes a lifelong reader.



**Second grade students in teacher Lisa Hickman's class get set to pick out their favorite books.**

Miss Hickman does not allow the words "can't" or "don't" in her room either, as she instills in her students the belief that they can achieve anything they want, and that they all have the ability to pursue their dreams.

With over 12 years of teaching experience, Miss Hickman has shown her dedication to the profession through a strong commitment to student learning and the support of her peers. Congratulations, Miss Hickman, on being Thorman Elementary School's 2016 Teacher of the Year!

## Tustin Connect Center *Online School*

15400 Lansdowne Rd., Tustin, CA 92782 • 714/730-7395



### **20 Percent Time, 100 Percent Engagement**

Tustin Connect students have recently embarked on 20 percent projects, which means that they are dedicating 20 percent of their learning time to accomplish a meaningful self-driven project. The 20 percent projects empower students to go above and beyond typical learning standards while

providing a conduit for their passions and interests.

Some of the student projects include producing an action film, creating step-by-step computer-coding tutorials, organizing park clean-ups, starting a business, organizing a toy drive, creating an original board game, and starting a school newspaper. Emily McCourtney, the lead elementary teacher, works closely with each student and provides structure, deadlines, and feedback to ensure that every student has a successful and meaningful learning experience. Students also create an interactive website for their project to document their learning experience.



**Tustin Connect students Delaney Manna, Bethany Ng, Liam Raney and Devin Petrus share ideas and discuss their 20% projects with each other.**

The 20 percent projects will culminate with a presentation showcase in which students will proudly display and share what they have accomplished.

## Tustin High School

1171 El Camino Real, Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7414



### It All Adds Up

We are honored to announce algebra and geometry teacher Martin Ureno as our Tustin High 2016 Teacher of the Year!

From the very first day of class, Mr. Ureno does his best to win his students over.

He spends the time to get to know and understand his students because he believes that if they cannot relate to you, you have nothing to work with. Mr. Ureno treats his students with respect, and inspires and challenges them to always do their best.

**Christine Matos**  
Principal



**Teacher Martin Ureno inspires and challenges his math students on a daily basis.**

Former students describe him as inspirational, relatable, personable, and a great communicator. His department team members also appreciate how he is always willing to try different strategies. He uses the latest technology, is a strong team player, and regularly assigns his students to work in collaborative groups.

Mr. Ureno's commitment and dedication to his students is commendable. We are fortunate to have him on our staff.

## Tustin Memorial Academy

12712 Browning Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92705 • 714/730-7546



### Putting Students at Center Stage

We are thrilled to announce Courtney Smith as Tustin Memorial Elementary School's 2016 Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Smith has taught for 18 years, all of them at our school.

In addition to her work in the classroom, Courtney excels at bringing staff together to learn or play. She organizes afterschool technology sessions, our own Teacher Share Fair, and book study groups.

Courtney is exceptionally caring and optimistic—she wears a smile on her face every single day. Outside of school, Courtney is involved in theater productions and stages an elaborate neighborhood play each summer involving more than 20 children, which she has nicknamed Community Garage Theater.

Courtney and her family are actively involved in community charity work. They sponsor three children through worldwide organizations, and they adopt families at Christmas. They also create blessing bags containing needed toiletries for homeless individuals in the surrounding community.

**Wendy Hudson**  
Principal



**Courtney Smith is named Teacher of the Year at Tustin Memorial Academy.**

## Tustin Ranch *Elementary School*

12950 Robinson Dr., Tustin, CA 92782 • 714/730-7580



**Tracy Barquer**  
Principal

### Helping Each Child Grow

Tustin Ranch is celebrating Linda Chaplin as its Teacher of the Year!

Ms. Chaplin began her teaching career a little over 20 years ago. She was part of the original staff that opened Tustin Ranch Elementary, and fondly remembers “picking my classroom off of the blueprints!”

This loving kindergarten teacher has a bachelor's degree from California State University,

Fullerton. She is a model lifelong learner too, as she also has a master's degree in curriculum with an emphasis on reading, and from the same university. She is currently pursuing her doctorate in educational technology.

Ms. Chaplin says, “Passion is what drives me to continue my education and refine my teaching skills every day. I want to do my best to help each child to grow, not only academically, but socially and emotionally.” All of our students and teachers here are lucky that Ms. Chaplin chose a classroom at Tustin Ranch!



Teacher Linda Chaplin with her kindergarten friends.

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## C.E. Utt *Middle School*

13601 Browning ave., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7573



**Dean Jennings**  
*Principal*

### Putting Her Heart into Teaching

Congratulations to Barbara Valentine, Utt Middle School's Teacher of the Year! Mrs. Valentine has been teaching for 26 years, with 20 of those years at TUSD. She is a school site and district-level lead teacher, as well as a mentor to new teachers.

Mrs. Valentine is passionate about the belief that each of her students will learn if they have the right support. She inspires us all as she spends her breaks, lunch, and after-school hours working with her students to ensure that they will understand their math concepts.

One of her students had this to say about having Mrs. Valentine as his teacher: "With all the teachers I've had, she is the most helpful. For example, when you miss a day

of school, she has already put the notes from the lesson on her website. If you need help, you can always go to her class at lunch. She cares about our math grade and how well we understand."

You make us proud, Mrs. Valentine!



**Teacher Barbara Valentine is Number 1 to her math students at Utt School.**

## Marjorie Veeh *Elementary School*

1701 San Juan St., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7544



**Ryan Bollenbach**  
*Principal*

### The Greatest Gift of All

Veeh Elementary School is thrilled to recognize Maureen Melstrom as our Teacher of the Year. This is Mrs. Melstrom's fifth year at Veeh. Her first four years she taught first grade, and this year she has moved to second grade.

Mrs. Melstrom believes that every child deserves the right to learn in a safe, nurturing, and positive classroom environment. She strives to make her classroom an inviting and motivating place where children feel comfortable to take risks with their learning and learn from their mistakes. You will frequently hear Maureen telling her students, "Mistakes are proof that you are trying" or "It's okay not to know. It's not okay not to try."

The students are not the only ones who are learning in Mrs. Melstrom's classroom. Maureen believes that learning along with her students is the greatest gift of all.



**Teacher Maureen Melstrom's second grade students display their leprechaun boxes on St. Patrick's Day.**

## Business Services

Tustin Unified School District, 300 South C St., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7301 Ext. 302



**Anthony Soria**  
Chief Financial  
Officer

### Construction Teams Gear Up for Summer

Construction of the new Humanities Building at Tustin High School is officially underway. The project consists of 12 new classrooms, new furniture, state of the art technology, restrooms, elevator, and a workroom. The work kicks off a slate of projects as part of the Measure L campus modernization plan that includes a renovated entry/courtyard, minor library and little theater remodel, new weight training complex, and athletic field upgrades.

Also, the District is preparing to complete many summer

projects outside of the bond program, using deferred maintenance and facilities funding. The list of summer projects includes:

- Carpet replacement at Estock, Guin Foss, Ladera and Foothill High
- Roof replacement at Heideman, Red Hill and Support Services Facility
- Exterior painting at Heideman
- Interior painting at Guin Foss
- Removal and replacement of playgrounds at Tustin Ranch and Veeh
- Slurry and striping at Benson, Loma Vista, Tustin Memorial Academy, Veeh, Columbus Tustin, Currie, Hewes, and Utt



**Construction worker prepares site for the new Humanities Building at Tustin High School.**

## Educational Services

Tustin Unified School District, 300 South C St., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7301 Ext. 309



**Kathie Nielsen**  
Chief Academic  
Officer

### Dual Language Immersion Program

The Tustin Unified School District is excited to be offering a new Spanish Dual Language Immersion Program at Marjorie Veeh Elementary School next year. These classes will be open in the fall for students in the transitional kindergarten, kindergarten, and first grades.

Each student will learn to read, write, and communicate effectively in both Spanish and English. Students will develop the bilingual skills and cross-cultural competencies they need to be successful in a multicultural society and global economy.

The program will offer our English-speaking and Spanish-speaking students an exciting, enriching, and challenging educational opportunity. Dual Language Immersion Programs have been used successfully in

California for more than 25 years. Research shows an impressive development of both second-language fluency and academic achievement.

The program goals include students achieving success in all academic subjects according to district and state guidelines. They will develop fluency in communication, and literacy in both Spanish and English, and without compromising either language. Furthermore, they will also cultivate understanding and appreciation of other cultures, gain self-esteem, and strengthen positive attitudes towards their fellow students, families, and the larger Tustin community.

Applications are now being accepted for students interested in enrolling in the program. Parents can find the application on the TUSD homepage, at [www.tustin.k12.ca.us](http://www.tustin.k12.ca.us). For more information, call (714) 730-7301, ext. 318.

## Nutrition Services

Tustin Unified School District, 300 South C St., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7301 Ext. 342



**Teresa Squibb**  
*Director*

### Healthy Choices for Students

The Tustin Unified School District kitchens will be joining the California Thursdays network by launching new freshly prepared menu items at the school sites. California Thursdays is collaboration between the Center for Ecoliteracy and a network of school districts committed to serving healthy, freshly prepared school meals featuring California-grown foods.

The Tiller Kitchen hosted the kick-off event in March. Students and staff enjoyed a variety of samples, such as tandoori jidori chicken with a new Sacramento Valley rice blend, turkey meatballs with marinara, and California fruits and vegetables.



**Beckman High cook Debbie Montejano prepares a new grilled vegetable wrap on whole grain lavash bread.**

The Nutrition Services Department will continue to spotlight California Thursdays throughout the school year by featuring new menu items with California ingredients. High school menus will feature fish tacos with local fish, antibiotic-free spicy turkey burgers, al pastor, and lavash wraps with grilled vegetables and hummus or turkey and black beans. Elementary and middle schools will add antibiotic-free teriyaki drumsticks to their menus.

## Technology in TUSD Schools

Tustin Unified School District, 300 South C St., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7301 Ext. 306



**Crystal Turner**  
*Assistant Superintendent Administrative Services*

### Showcasing Future-Ready Schools

The Tustin Unified School District partnered with the Tustin Public Schools Foundation to host the second Connect Institute in February. The Institute provided time for 20 school districts from around California to come together and learn about TUSD Connect, which centers on rigorous standards and engaging strategies for students. It is all supported by integrated technology.

Keynotes were presented by TUSD superintendent Dr. Gregory Franklin and

John Couch, vice president of the educational-technology arm of an international tech corporation. These keynotes set the tone for innovation, sharing among districts, and the goal of future-ready schools for all students. Other sessions during the conference were given by teachers, digital-learning coaches, principals, district staff and members of the executive cabinet.

The highlight of the Institute was the site tours to Barbara Benson Elementary School, C.E. Utt Middle School and Beckman High School. The students, teachers and leadership team at each site gave the visitors a terrific view of TUSD. Innovation, creativity and incredible student learning were on display



**Beckman High School Senior Justin Reyes shows his work to campus visitors.**

# Keira's Book Nook

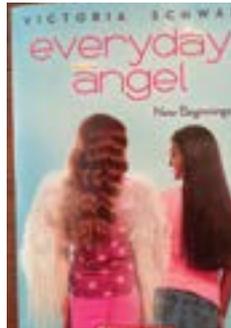


Keira

## First Book of a Series

*Everyday Angel: New Beginnings*

By Victoria Schwab



This great emotion filled book is about two girls named Aria (a guardian angel) and Gabby Torres (whose brother is sick). Gabby is so worried about school, because she doesn't want anyone to discover her secret life. Then, Aria shows up! Aria knows exactly how to help make Gabby feel better. Gabby is a normal girl except for the fact she keeps half her life a secret—even from her mom! This book talks about why sometimes it's good to reveal your secrets. It's an example of how difficult things in your life don't have to be negative. Gabby is so worried about her brother that she forgets who she is. The story is about problems and solutions that came for Gabby in seventh grade. I can't wait to read the second book! I rate this book 5 apples.

Keira Fukuwa is a fourth grader. Besides reading, she enjoys soccer, jazz dance, crafts and cooking. Keira rates books 1-5 apples with 5 the best.



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# VBS

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K-6th Grade | \$15 | 9 AM-Noon | July 18th-22nd



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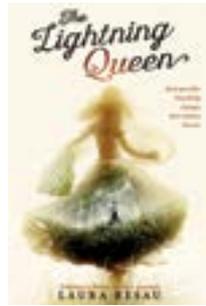
## Lucy's Book Review

### Nothing is Impossible!



Lucy Davis

*The Lightning Queen*  
Author: Laura Resau  
Mateo spends his summers at the Hill of Dust, a small, rural town in Mexico. His grandfather tells him tales of the old town. When Mateo is transported into a story



of his grandfather's childhood, he learns about Esma, the Queen of Lightning. Esma is a Romani girl who, with her tribe, came to the Hill of Dust and became lifelong friends with Mateo's grandfather.

The two friends go through a lot together, and when something seems it cannot be done, Esma always says, "Nothing is impossible, my friend for life."

This book gets four bookworms out of five because it shows the readers the power of hope, and it is a great example of the importance of telling family history. I recommend the story for grades 4 and up. I hope this book inspires you to ask about your own family's history.

Lucy Davis is a 4th grade student. Besides reading, she enjoys riding her bike, theatre, and playing guitar. Lucy will rate the books 1 to 5 bookworms with 5 being the best.

## Note-ables

### Smiles Ahead



Kate Karp

You may have heard the term *indie music* and not thought about the meaning because what's played on indie stations sounds so good. Accomplished indie musicians are in fact artists who opt to transport their performances to eager ears through small labels and the Internet instead of recording with big, largely commercial corporations.

This gives these artists more room for creativity, self-expression and their own "heart." If you've heard bands like Wilco and Radiohead, you'll agree that it all works really well.

And if you and the children around you also know the names Okee Dokee Brothers, Rissi Palmer, the Pop-Ups and the 10 other artists and bands on this new multigenre collection, you'll also agree that a flourishing, delightful bunch of indie artists exists for the very young. *Smiles Ahead* is a project of Mighty Mo Productions, a small label founded by award-winning children's entertainer Jim "Mr. Stinky Feet" Cosgrove, who appears in this collection as a producer only. This happy, tuneful CD includes songs that all children will enjoy and that could also be on your own hit parade. Secret Agent 23 Skidoo, aka King of Kid Hop, raps about self-confidence in the hippy-hoppy "You're It." Grandparents and sixties-music aficionados will recall the English Invasion in The Verve Pipes' "Get Happy." Spring and bluegrass go together, and the Okee Dokee Brothers pair them well on "Walking with Spring." And Brady Rhymer and the Little Band That Could have the best CD opener ever—the catchy "Jump Up."

There are definitely smiles ahead for everyone here!

Kate Karp is an editor for *School News Roll Call* and a freelance writer and editor.

## Isabella's Book Review



Isabella A.

### Get Lost in the Pages

*Stranded* is the first book and the best in the series. When Carter and Jane's mother marries Vanessa and Buzz's father, uncle Dexter a boat captain takes the new four siblings on



a bonding trip. However, it doesn't exactly turn out that way. A storm sinks the boat. They try to get in the life boat, but Dexter gets in first.

The storm takes the life boat away from the young kids. Fortunately, they make it to a close by island that is rocky and full of jungle. They were starting get along and now they are in the middle of the South Pacific! This could be good or horrible. Will these kids survive each other?

I give this book three and half stars because it can be fun, exciting and adventurous, but also a bit long in some parts.

Isabella is a fourth grader who loves to write based on her experiences fictionalizing them into stories that relate to young readers. Isabella wants to be an author of realistic fiction when she grows up. She will rate the books 1 to 5 with 5 being the best.

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leslie@schoolnewsrollcall.com**

**Thank you for reading  
School News!**

# Orange County Department of Education



**Dr. Al Mijares**  
Superintendent

## A Single Act of Kindness

It's been said that a single act of kindness can grow roots in all directions. If that's true, what would happen if we pledged to commit a million acts of kindness? Or even a billion?

We intend to find out. Beginning in May, the Orange County Department of Education will launch a new initiative asking the citizens of Orange County to pursue the goal of performing 1 billion acts of kindness throughout the county.

This is admittedly an ambitious undertaking, perhaps even audacious in its scope. But the current climate of social fragmentation and political polarization calls for something big, and between our local school districts and community partners, I believe we have all the pieces in place to make it happen.

What constitutes an act of kindness? Well, that's somewhat subjective. It could be as simple as picking up a discarded cup along the sidewalk or allowing a car to merge in front of you on a busy interchange. Or it could be more involved, like visiting a home for senior citizens, joining a beach clean-up or volunteering at a local animal shelter. No matter the size, it's about doing something kind with no expectations of reciprocity.

In 2013, the Anaheim Elementary School District joined a citywide effort to carry out a "Million Acts of Kindness," and the results were remarkable. The students of Anaheim were inspired by the challenge, and they continued to embrace the premise even after their goal was met.

By scaling up to include a county of more than 3 million residents, we have the potential to build a positive social and cultural infrastructure by connecting our shared values and enhancing our relationships with one another. And there are critical lessons for our students as well. Beyond the emphasis on the "the four Cs" of communication, collaboration, critical thinking and creativity, we have an extraordinary opportunity to promote the fifth C -- character.

Starting May 5, you will be invited to share each act of kindness on your computer or smartphone at [Ockindness.org](http://Ockindness.org). I would also encourage you to post your good deeds on social media, using a hashtag to be announced soon. Each entry will be counted toward our total.

Once again, the "how" is entirely up to you. But the benefits will extend to all of us.

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## TUSTIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOUNDATION

### Summer Academy

Kindergarten through 9th-grade students



### Summer Academy

June 27 – July 21, 2016

Monday - Thursday  
8:30 am to 12:30 pm

No class Monday, July 4  
makeup day is Friday, July 8

The Summer Academy is an enrichment (not remedial) program operated by the Tustin Public Schools Foundation and taught by Tustin Unified credentialed teachers.

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# 10 STUDY TIPS

To be more productive in 2016

Your children's teachers, as a part of a 1050 member strong professional union, appreciate the ongoing support of the Tustin Unified School District education community. We all play an important part in our students' success!



**1.** Good lighting can increase your productivity. An overhead light might not be enough—consider a desk or floor lamp with direct light.

**2.** Get enough sleep, especially the night before your exam. Have regular short breaks every 50-90 minutes to help you focus better.

**3.** Start studying early and plan your study time in advance. Use a calendar and write down what you're planning to do each day.

**4.** Use a color code to break down your topics. Use markers and post-it notes to group relevant information together. It will help you memorize everything faster.

**5.** Eat healthy food that fuels your brain. Food like apples, walnuts, and blueberries can improve your ability to focus, retain information and remain mentally alert.

**6.** Avoid any distraction. Turn off your phone and the television, and check your social media updates only during the break time.

**7.** Use mind maps to visualize your topics better, improve your memory and prioritize information.

**8.** During high intensity study periods, it is recommended you take breaks to exercise. It will make you feel more energized and refreshed.

**9.** Some people find that listening to music while studying helps them be more productive. If that is your case, keep the volume low and play songs that you don't find yourself singing along to!

**10.** Treat yourself! After taking an exam, meet a friend for coffee, go to the movies, or just take a well deserved break before starting to study for your next assignment.



www.tustinea.org

## Ask Dr. Shari



### A Case of the Grumpies!

**Q.** Our seven year old son has a case of the grumpies. We are really frustrated with his attitude in the morning before school. He barks at all of us, he stomps around doing all of his morning tasks and walks out the door with a frown. We are at our wits end with this! Is there anything we can do?! —Loise P.

**Dr. Shari Sweetnam**

**A.** Not only are there things you can do, but there are things you must do. Tolerating negative behavior, perpetuates it and makes it more difficult to overcome in the long run. If you let this go, your son will cement this habit and very likely carry this behavior into the future. Consider the following factors in determining causes and roots of this behavior::

**Sleeping/Eating Habits:** First of all, make sure your son is getting enough restful sleep and that his diet is conducive to this. Avoid sugar or even mildly caffeinated foods or drinks right before bed. Also, make sure his bedtime is appropriate.

**Environment:** What is your morning environment like? Does your son wake up to a loud clanging alarm? Are the lights a bright, intrusive fluorescent? Are people yelling or is a TV blaring? Create a soft, easy environment for the first waking minutes. No one likes being jolted out of bed. Keep the lights dimmed, keep the house warm, and provide enough time to ease into the morning routine.

**Circumstances:** Is there negativity at school that you should be addressing? Is there a chance the attitude relates to the day he is dreadfully anticipates? Be familiar with his feelings about going to school and what occurs there.

**What are You Tolerating?** As attentive as you need to be, it is almost equally important that you do not tolerate bad behavior. It is important for a child to understand self control in this manner. Set the rule: "You can talk about how you feel, but you are not allowed to bring everyone down, because you are crabby." Explain that bringing a "bad attitude" into the room is pollution of the environment and that you will not tolerate that any more than you would tolerate a person throwing garbage all over your floor!

**Role Model:** Do you ever claim, "I am not a morning person" and tolerate your own crabbiness? Do you allow yourself a bad attitude even if it *is* only until that first cup of coffee? If so, you are setting a strong negative example that is likely being followed!

Finally, please consider one of my favorite mood enhancers of all time: Music! Invest in an ipod and some speakers. Create an upbeat morning playlist that either eases him into his day or jazzes up the atmosphere. It is amazing what putting a little "swing in your step" can do for your mood. It is a wonderful way to start the day.

Motivational Speaker, Founder of *The Brainpower Programs for Schools*, Author, Consultant, Radio Host contact: info@doctorshari.com, www.doctorshari.com, twitter: DrShariS, Youtube: Dr. ShariS, LinkedIN: Dr. Shari Sweetnam

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## Remember When?



**Charlene Ashendorf**

### Loyalty

If you are like me, you have a wallet or drawer filled with plastic. No, I don't mean credit cards. I am referring to those cards for everything from grocery and drug stores, to movie theaters and specialty shops. I use them, but I find them annoying. They take up space on my key chain and often hold up the check-out lines as I fumble around in search of the correct card. Those cards are linked to my phone, my email and identification numbers, all of which I lose from time to time; and all for the love of loyalty points.

Recently my elderly mother and I were reminiscing about the good old days. She asked, "Do you remember green stamps?" You know the ones mother is referring to. The bright green S & H stamps the size of postage that were prominently marked with bold red italic S & H, each assigned a number value? Of course, I did remember...

There was a "telephone" desk in our kitchen where a shoebox that was wrapped in Christmas paper held loose stamps and Quick Saver Books. Like millions of middleclass Americans in the 1950's and 1960's, saving Sperry & Hutchinson stamps was more than a pass time, it was a family activity.

Mother would specifically shop at stores wherever earning stamps for purchases was possible; primarily grocery stores like Kroger. But dad would be rewarded with green stamps at the Sinclair gas station as well. The ritual began with bringing home the stamps. My job was to lick the stamps. One by one my tongue turned green (from licking to sticking) filling the pages in the special books. White pages would soon turn green, which was as good as gold for us. After my task was completed, the family would gather around the table and pour over the redemption catalogue. We would be rewarded for our shopping loyalty with gifts! From toasters to trips or toys, the possibilities were endless. 1200 stamps and the book was filled. Valued at approximately \$3.00 book, each of us had our green stamp wish list. The results were tangible, like my first Eastman Kodak Brownie 1962 Camera!

As the checker at Von's hands me my receipt, she forces a smile, struggles to pronounce my difficult last name and says in a rote manner, "Mrs. Ashendorf, You have saved \$2.67 today." I can't help thinking about green stamps and remembering when...

Charlene remembers growing up in Chicago with hot and humid summers, leaves that turned colors in the fall and endless winters. Active in her community and church, she advocates for seniors, affordable housing, literacy and libraries. Her hobbies include reading, writing and visiting art galleries. Charlene resides in Costa Mesa with her husband, Dennis who is a teacher in the Newport Mesa Unified School District. <http://about.me/cmash>



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- Affordable pricing - financial assistance is available for those who qualify.



### WHAT'S NEW FOR 2016?

**Grades K-8**  
Session A: June 20-July 8\*  
Session B: July 11-July 29  
Session C: June 20-July 15\*

**Grades 9-12**  
June 13-July 22\*

\*No classes July 4, 2016  
Classes held at various schools in Irvine, California



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## CHECK IT OUT

Do some research on the camp. Is it reputable? How long have they been in business? Do you know anyone who has attended there? What is the staff to child ratio? Are staff personnel trained in a particular skill or hired simply as bodies to watch kids? These are important “first questions” to answer. If you’re looking for a launching point for finding a camp, peruse the ones listed in this issue, check your local parks and recreation departments, museums, zoos, and parenting publications. Check out the American Camping Association at [www.acacamps.org](http://www.acacamps.org) and the National Camping Association at [www.summercamp.org](http://www.summercamp.org) for accreditation and more information on camps.

## AFFORDABLE

What’s in your budget for a camp? They range from fairly inexpensive to the thousands of dollars. Day camps are usually less expensive, while sleep overs can add a whole different level of financial commitment. Find out if there are “extras” such as an amusement park excursion that could easily add on an extra \$40. As parents we want to invest in our children, but not go into debt. Choose a camp you can afford.

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## MOTIVE

Are you sending your kids to camp so they can have fun, to get them out of the house, or so they can learn something new, such as horseback riding, archaeology, or sailing? Do your kids want to go to camp because all their friends are going, or to make new friends? Those are all good reasons! Discerning motivation for wanting your children to attend camp and finding out their reasons for wanting to go will aid you in selecting the most appropriate one.

## PERSONALITY

Know your kids and what type of camp would appeal to them. Think twice about sending your kids to a camp that offers activities so vastly different from their own interests, even if you're hoping to expand their horizons. Our kids should be gently encouraged to try new experiences, but not at the expense of them feeling uncomfortable, or completely out of their element.

**NOTE:** *If you ask your kids first about their choice, they may be disappointed if it's too expensive, if it isn't somewhere you approve of, or if the timing just wouldn't work out. May you be richly rewarded for all your efforts when your children exclaim that camp was the highlight of their summer!*



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## A Bit of History

### Music to the Ears

By D.H. Coop

I do not know exactly when music became important to me. It may have been on the ride in the car back from Valley Forge in 1949 with my mother, uncle, aunt and grandparents singing "Home on the Range." Or it may have been the radio shows of the day, such as *The Lone Ranger*, whose theme was from the *William Tell Overture*, or *The Green Hornet* and the theme "Flight of the Bumblebee." It could have been the two blocks of wood with sandpaper on them that I made music with in the first grade.

I do know that music made life enjoyable and that it became markers for events in my life. Elvis takes me back to the mid-fifties, Hank Williams to the lonely mornings in the fields, and Jack Benny to radio and television when families sat listening together to the same shows. Jack Benny would always get a laugh with his poor violin playing when in reality he was an accomplished violinist.

The truth is, music is good for our soul. For many of us, our music studio is in our bathtub or shower. What would humanity be without music and the teachers that pass the knowledge on to others? It is difficult to imagine a world without music.

D.H. Coop is a retired history teacher having taught IB and AP for 30 years. He currently tutors students and consults with teachers. [www.targetedhistorytutoring.com](http://www.targetedhistorytutoring.com)

## Animals Word Search Contest

**Rules!** One word in the list is NOT in the word search.

When you have completed the word search, one word will be left and that word you email to: [Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com](mailto:Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com) (Please put Tustin in the subject line)

Entries must be received by May 5, 2016

From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win a \$20 gift certificate redeemable at Barnes & Noble.

- |            |            |
|------------|------------|
| BLUE JAY   | ORANGUTAN  |
| CHEETAH    | OWL        |
| DOLPHIN    | PANTHER    |
| DUCK       | PARROT     |
| FLAMINGO   | PEACOCK    |
| FROG       | POLAR BEAR |
| GRAY WHALE | RABBIT     |
| KOALA      | SLOTH      |
| LEMUR      | TIGER      |
| LION       | TORTOISE   |
| MARMOSET   |            |



Congratulations to **Nicholas Kim** Winner of the February Word Search Contest!

## TUSD Breaks Ground on New Humanities Building at Tustin High

The Tustin Unified School District held a groundbreaking ceremony for the new Humanities Building at Tustin High School on February 19.

The two-story building is approximately 14,000 square feet and features 12 state-of-the-art classrooms with interactive projectors and whiteboards, classroom audio amplification systems, new furniture for students. There will also be a conference room, restrooms and an elevator. Classes will include history and social sciences, and the Model United Nations (MUN) program.



Rendering of new Tustin High Humanities Building

“Currently, the Humanities Department is spread across the campus and this facility will provide a common location for greater collaboration and project-based learning,” Tustin High Principal Christine Matos said.

The project is being funded through the Measure L campus modernization program. It is scheduled to be completed by the end of summer when students and staff return for the new school year.



TUSD Board President Lynn Davis, Tustin High Principal Christine Matos, Tustin High ASB President Angie Nguyen, TUSD Board Member Francine Scinto and Superintendent Gregory Franklin participate in the Tustin High Humanities Building groundbreaking ceremony.

## Beckman Student Receives Perfect Score on AP Spanish Exam

Andrea Lopez, a junior at Beckman High School, has received a perfect score on the Advanced Placement (AP) Spanish Language and Culture Exam.

AP Exams are based and reported on a five-point scale, where five is equivalent to a grade A in the corresponding college course. Andrea not only received the top score of five, but was one of 55 students in the world to earn every point possible on the AP Spanish Language and Culture Exam, receiving the maximum score on each portion of the exam.

According to the College Board, approximately 4.5 million AP exams were taken by 2.5 million U.S. public high school students in spring 2015, yet only 322 students earned every point possible on an AP exam – a rare accomplishment.

The TUSD Board of Education recognized Andrea for her hard work and acknowledged AP Spanish teacher Graciela Valdez, who is responsible for engaging students and enabling them to excel in a college-level course.



Superintendent Gregory Franklin, Beckman High AP Spanish teacher Graciela Valdez and TUSD Board President Lynn Davis recognize Beckman junior Andrea Lopez at a school board meeting for receiving a perfect score on her AP Spanish Language and Culture Exam.

## TUSD Has Two Orange County Administrators of the Year

Two administrators in the Tustin Unified School District have been named 2016 Orange County Administrators of the Year by the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA), Region 17:

Secondary Co-Administrator of the Year: Tustin High School Assistant Principal Michele Boudreaux

Career Technical Education Administrator of the Year: Beckman High School Assistant Principal Donnie Rafter

ACSA annually recognizes outstanding administrators for their leadership skills, professionalism, creativity, innovation and commitment to a quality education. The 43rd annual ACSA "Administrators of the Year and Friends of Education Awards" Dinner will be held on Monday, May 9, at the Irvine Marriott. Region 17 represents 28 school districts in Orange County.

## TMA Nominated as a National Blue Ribbon School

Tustin Memorial Academy has been nominated by the California Department of Education as a 2016 National Blue Ribbon School. Tustin Memorial, under the leadership of Principal Wendy Hudson, is one of 35 outstanding public schools nominated from California for the National Blue Ribbon Schools award. The school submitted its application to the U.S. Department of Education in March.

National Blue Ribbon Schools are public and non-public elementary, middle and high schools that are producing outstanding results for all students. They have

demonstrated consistent excellence and made progress in closing gaps in student achievement. The National Blue Ribbon Schools program recognizes effective school leadership and promising instructional practices.

Tustin Memorial Academy was nominated as a 2016 Exemplary High Performing School in the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program. In the past, Tustin Memorial was named National Blue Ribbon School in 2007 and California Distinguished School in 2006 and 2014.

## TUSD Elementary Schools Go for the Gold

Eight TUSD elementary schools out of 58 elementary schools in Orange County are moving forward in the 2016 California Gold Ribbon School Program. Nine other elementary schools in TUSD among 80 elementary schools

in Orange County are receiving site visitations to determine Gold Ribbon School status. All Gold Ribbon School winners will be announced in April.

## Pioneer Redesignated as Schools to Watch-Taking Center Stage School

Pioneer Middle School has been redesignated as a 2016 California Schools to Watch-Taking Center Stage (STW-TCS) School. The official announcement was made in February.

Having been selected as both a California and National STW-TCS school in 2012, Pioneer is required to reapply every three years to maintain its status as a national model

middle school. The focus of the re-designation visit is to determine if Pioneer continues making trajectory growth within four criteria: academic excellence, developmental responsiveness, social equity, and organizational structures and processes.

Pioneer was recognized on February 26 in Sacramento at the California League of Middle Schools Conference.



**tustin**

Unified School District

Mark Eliot

Director of Communications & Public Information

300 South C St., Tustin, CA 92780 • (714) 730-7339



For the latest information:



@TUSDschools and @SuptFranklin



TUSDschools

[www.tustin.k12.ca.us](http://www.tustin.k12.ca.us)

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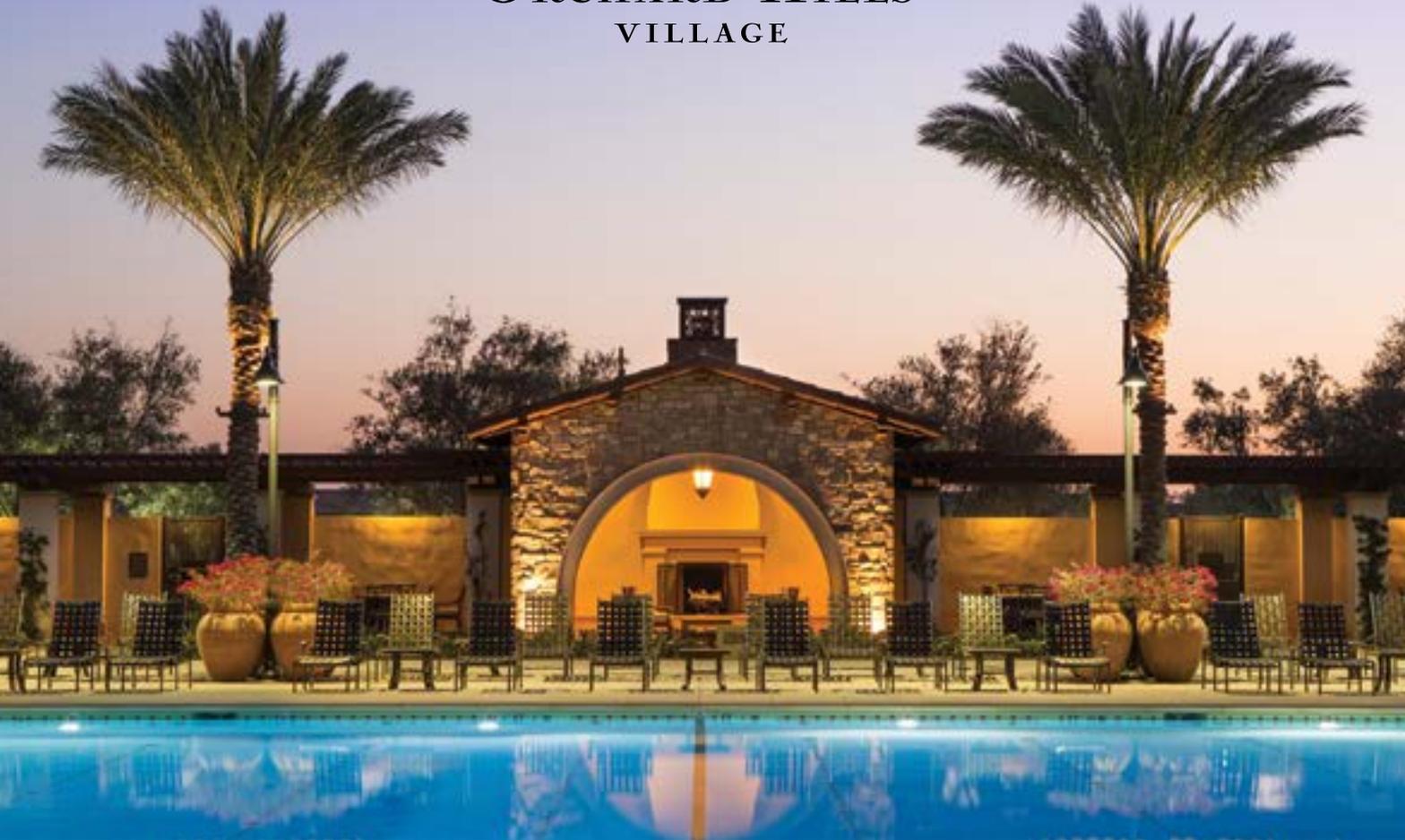


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