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School News

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Covering the Tustin Unified School District



Volume 11, Issue 53

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JUNE–AUGUST 2015



Currie Middle School



Hewes Middle School

There's Gold in Tustin Unified!



Orchard Hills School



Tustin High School

Seven TUSD schools have been named 2015 Gold Ribbon Schools by the California Department of Education: Currie, Hewes and Pioneer Middle Schools; Orchard Hills School; and Beckman, Foothill and Tustin high schools. (Please see page 4.)

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TUSD is a Role Model for School Leaders



Gregory A. Franklin, Ed. D.
Superintendent

In Touch with TUSD

Collaboration is the key to most successful endeavors, and the Tustin Unified School District is doing its part to facilitate improved instruction throughout all of California. In February, the Tustin Public Schools Foundation and the District hosted 170 educators from 35 school districts throughout the state at its inaugural Connect Institute 2015 to share our progress and lessons learned through the implementation

of the TUSD Connect initiative that combines rigorous standards with engaging instructional strategies, supported by technology. Attendees came from as far away as San Jose and included neighboring districts such as Irvine and Orange.

The Connect Institute 2015 provided seminars in three strands – one for board members and superintendents, one for instructional leaders such as principals and teachers, and a third for IT leaders. Topics included how to teach with technology, how to fund technology, how to support teachers through the process, and how to manage the technology. Attendees appreciated the openness of the TUSD presenters and learning from our experiences.

By far, the highlight of the Institute was the classroom visits. Each of the attendees boarded busses for classroom tours of Hicks Canyon Elementary School, Pioneer Middle School and Tustin High School. The unanimous reaction among the visitors was shock and awe at the high quality and rigorous instruction, the high level of student engagement and collaboration, and the fluid use of the



Connect Institute attendee visits with Hicks Canyon Elementary School students.

technology by teachers and students. The TUSD teachers, principals and students knocked the ball out of the park by doing what they do every day. The classroom visits became the hot topic for the rest of the Institute, and many of the district teams are making arrangements to return to TUSD for additional visits.

The old saying, “None of us is as smart as ALL of us,” continues to be borne out in TUSD. Our best results happen when staff collaborate and learn with, and from, one another. As TUSD continues to learn and grow with the use of our new tools and instructional strategies, we have a unique opportunity to share with others who are on similar paths. I can’t think of any better role models!

Go TUSD!



Mark Eliot

Director of Communications & Public Information
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Seven TUSD Secondary Schools Named 2015 Gold Ribbon Schools

By Mark Eliot

Director of Communications and Public Information

Seven secondary schools in the Tustin Unified School District have been named 2015 Gold Ribbon Schools by the California Department of Education. They are A.G. Currie, Hewes and Pioneer middle schools; Orchard Hills School; and Beckman, Foothill and Tustin high schools. These are the most middle and high schools ever selected for state recognition in one year in the history of TUSD.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson announced that 193 middle schools and 180 high schools have been honored under the state's new Gold Ribbon Schools Awards Program, which is temporarily taking the place of the California Distinguished Schools Program.

"These schools are academically successful, vibrant and innovative centers of learning and teaching," Torlakson said. "They provide great examples of the things educators are doing right—embracing rigorous academic standards, providing excellence and creativity in teaching, and creating a positive school climate."

The California Gold Ribbon Schools Award was created to honor schools in place of the California Distinguished Schools Program, which is on hiatus while California creates new assessment and accountability systems.

Schools applied for the award based on a model program their school has adopted that includes standards-based activities, projects, strategies and practices that can be replicated by other local educational agencies. The new award is recognizing middle and high schools this year and elementary schools in 2016.

The Gold Ribbon awards recognize California schools that have made gains in implementing the academic content and performance standards adopted by the State Board of Education. These include the California Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics, California English Language Development Standards and Next Generation Science Standards.

"It is an incredible accomplishment to have seven schools in one district named California Gold Ribbon Schools," TUSD Superintendent Dr. Gregory Franklin said.

"I am very proud of the leaders and staff members at these schools. They are doing an outstanding job of preparing successful students through rigorous instruction and engaging assignments that are supported by technology. The seven schools embody the District's 'TUSD Connect' instructional model and 21st century learning."

Gold Ribbon awardees that are also Title I schools were selected as Academic Achieving Schools. Currie Middle School was recognized in this group for meeting the educational needs of its students.

In addition to being chosen as Gold Ribbon Schools, Orchard Hills School and Beckman High School are two of 38 schools in the state given an additional honor of being selected as having an Exemplary Program. Both schools



Beckman High School students Magnus Kim, Erik Rocha, Clara Dinh Lu, Marguerite Nguyen and Kevin Davila are all smiles about the Gold Ribbon School award.

were chosen for their visual/performing arts program.

Tustin Unified's seven schools are among 45 Orange County secondary schools selected for the award. The District's schools were honored at the state's Gold Ribbon School awards ceremony on May 22 in San Diego and the TUSD Board of Education meeting on June 8.

For more information, visit the California Gold Ribbon Schools Program on the California Department of Education's Web site.



Evelin Farias, M.A.Ed. '12
School Psychologist
San Jacinto Unified School District

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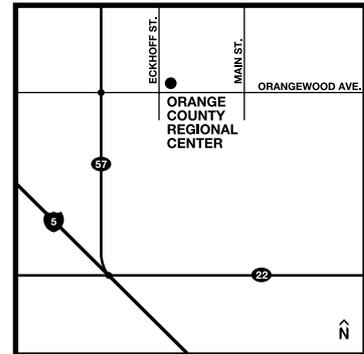
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Kay Coop
Founder/Publisher

The last days of school are here. It has been an eventful year filled with many student accomplishments both in the classrooms and on the athletic fields. As I enjoy my grandchildren's various athletic events they are often competing against Tustin schools. I am always so proud of the behavior of the Tustin students and parents. Win or lose they are respectful and make their families, schools and community proud.

Our next issue is September 23rd. Until then have a wonderful summer and please remember to include reading among your summer activities. Our AHA Section pages 28-31 offer many choices to fill your summer hours with fun and learning. Please let our advertisers know you saw their ad in *School News*. They make it possible for us to publish.

Thank you to the dedicated teachers, Superintendent Dr. Franklin, administrators & classified employees for all they do. A special thanks to Mark Eliot, Dir. of Public Info. for his efforts working with us each issue.

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Carol Burby Garrett

Executive Director

A Hole In One!

The Tustin Public Schools Foundation had its 2nd annual Golf Classic & Dinner on April 23, 2015. Due to an overwhelming amount of support, we were able to raise over \$100,000 – a 40% increase over last year's event! The following are a few examples of how proceeds from the event will directly benefit TUSD.



Students having fun in STEAM class at Summer Academy!

We will be able to provide 85 students with scholarship funding to attend our Summer Academy's STEAM, Robotics, or enrichment classes. Additionally, proceeds will be used to expand the robotics program to include elementary and high school students, beginning this summer. Proceeds will also be used to provide underserved students with support and guidance through the college application process. We have granted over \$200,000 this school year for grants involving 3D printing, balanced literacy, culture and cooking, go green initiatives, video and photography, STEAM, and much more. Proceeds will continue to fund innovative and engaging projects across TUSD.

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Arroyo Elementary School

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



Amy Jones
Principal

Taking Pride in His Work

We are excited to announce that Arroyo's Classified Employee of the Year for 2015 is Jose Nava, our head custodian!

Jose has been with Arroyo since 2012. He works every day to keep our campus clean and safe, and this isn't an easy task with over 600 students and 20 classroom teachers!

Jose is a conscientious employee who takes pride in his work. He does a great job of keeping our school clean, but one of the reasons that he is so deserving of this award is because of his attitude. He has a constant smile on his face and always finds ways to interact with our students, staff, and parents in a positive manner.



Arroyo head custodian Jose Nava keeps the school clean and safe.

We are so fortunate to have such a dedicated employee as Jose. His enthusiasm and energy is contagious, and we couldn't do it without him. Thanks for all that you do, Jose!

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Arnold O. Beckman *High School*

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



Adele Heuer
Principal

Tru Blu Patriot

Nina Muñoz is Beckman High School's counseling secretary. She has many jobs, including enrolling new students, scheduling appointments for four counselors, and answering the many questions of students and parents, both in person and over the phone. Nina always has a smile, creates a welcoming environment in the counseling office, and maintains a helpful and calm

demeanor, even when she has a long line of students and the phone is ringing. She takes the time necessary to help each individual student or family.



Beckman celebrates Nina Muñoz as its Classified Employee of the Year.

Nina sells tickets to football, basketball, and volleyball games and helps chaperone dances. She quietly pays for Grad Night tickets and dance tickets for students who have difficulty earning the money. Nina genuinely cares for our students and is always available to help her colleagues whenever they need her assistance. Nina is a Tru Blu Patriot and Beckman's 2015 Classified Employee of the Year!

Barbara Benson *Elementary School*

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



Deena Vela
Principal

A Special Gift

Kind, loving, and gentle are the best words to describe Benson Elementary School's Classified Employee of the Year. Nuha Qushair has been a part of the Benson family for nine years, serving the moderate to severe special needs students as a paraeducator. Her warm smile and kind heart bring laughter to all the Benson students every day!



Benson paraeducator Nuha Qushair goes above and beyond for her students.

Not only does she work with Special Education students, but Nuha goes above and beyond her job responsibilities. You can find her helping in other classrooms, making treats for staff, writing grants, attending district meetings, attending school family events, reading professional books, and much more. Nuha is a gift to Benson. Her kindness and positive attitude create a positive learning environment for all students and staff.

Congratulations to Nuha Qushair on her recognition as the school's 2015 Classified Employee of the Year!

Benjamin Beswick *Elementary School*

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



Eileen Delaney
Principal

Patience, Empathy, Love

Alvaro Sosa is a paraeducator behavioral interventionist in a special day class at Beswick Elementary. Mr. Sosa provides dedicated care to students, teaching them communication, functional, living, social/emotional and academic skills. Additionally, he communicates effectively with families and his team.



Alvaro Sosa and his teammates, Elizabeth Massey, Kiran Dara and Berenice Toledano, catch up on some reading.

Mr. Sosa is an amazing example of patience, love and empathy. He watches over all the students in the special day class, always trying to figure out how best to support them. He has an incredibly demanding job, but he treats every child and adult on our campus with kindness and respect. He lifts up his team with encouragement, his gentle smile and thoughtful treats. He also brings his amazing talent as an artist to the classroom; he is responsible for the children's yearlong photography project, which is inspirational as well as practical.

Mr. Sosa treats students and staff as if they were members of his own family. Congratulations to Alvaro Sosa, Beswick's 2015 Classified Employee of the Year!

Columbus Tustin *Middle School*

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



Jose' Luis Pedroza
Acting Principal

Dedication, Commitment & Focus

The Columbus Tustin Middle School community is honored to have among them two superstars, paraeducator Lily Kozai and leadership teacher-advisor Karen Minnie! They represent the dedication, commitment and focus on student success that our staff works toward every day.



Lily Kozai and Karen Minnie work as a team to make Columbus Tustin students successful.

Lily was recognized for her outstanding contribution to our school and was named Columbus Tustin's Classified Employee of the Year. She was also selected as the Tustin Unified School District's 2015 Classified Employee of the Year.

Karen Minnie was recognized as Outstanding Peer Assistance Leadership (PAL) Advisor by the Orange County Department of Education for the leadership she provides to our PAL students. We are so proud of them and the work they do each and every day for the students of Columbus Tustin School.



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A.G. Currie *Middle School*

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



Erick Fineberg
Principal

Serving With a Smile

Currie Middle School's 2015 Classified Employee of the Year, Joe Lagasse, is a paraeducator behavior interventionist in our Moderate/Severe Special Day classes. Joe's assignment requires him to work with students with significant behavior challenges. In this role, he modifies and molds students' maladaptive behavior to a more socially acceptable behavior by using research-based interventions, his knowledge of the student, and an infectious dynamic personality. If that's not enough, Joe volunteers to support the residents of Skid Row and is currently pursuing an advanced degree to further his career.

Joe inspires the staff members and students. He always has a smile on his face and never waivers in his positive attitude and commitment to the students. No challenge is too large for Joe, and he does his job as he approaches life with gusto and pizzazz.



Joe Lagasse hangs out with students Emily Gonzalez and Vanessa Soto.

Helen Estock *Elementary School*

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



Beth Rabel Blackman
Principal

A Can-Do Attitude

Helen Estock Elementary School is proud to announce custodian Luis Guerrero, affectionately called Mr. Luis by the students, as our 2015 Classified Employee of the Year. Mr. Luis is a positive and professional member of

the Estock community. He is unique in his passion to contribute to the betterment of our students' lives, his ability to communicate, and his pursuit of continuous improvement as a professional.

Mr. Luis is flexible, positive, cheerful, and forward thinking. No job is too big or too small for Luis – he always responds to requests with a “can-do” attitude and is an outstanding team member. In addition to his regular job duties, Luis often comes early to school to play catch with our fifth-graders at lunch and mentors students in our Check In Check Out Program.

Mr. Luis is a true Estock Eagle, and we are very happy to have him on our staff.



Luis Guerrero takes time to get to know the students at Estock School.

Foothill High School

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



Dr. Nick Stephany
Principal

Looking Out for Students

Foothill High School's attendance clerk, Sharon Smith, is our 2015 Classified Employee of the Year! Sharon fields phone calls from parents, meets and greets students and family members, locates students for early dismissals, and communicates

with staff and faculty regarding attendance information. She is always available and has a wonderful disposition when working with students, staff, and parents.

Sharon constantly seeks new ways to make attendance more streamlined and student friendly. She understands that improving student attendance is the goal, and she works with all stakeholders to better serve our students. She is always

helpful and will do anything she can to help people. Sharon also takes an active interest in our students. She develops relationships with the teachers' assistants, and, if a student seems down or depressed, she will make sure that a counselor sees that student as soon as possible.

Sharon is a Knight in shining armor!



Sharon Smith stands in front of Foothill's 2015 California Gold Ribbon School sign.



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Guin Foss *Elementary School*

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Kelly Fresch
Principal

Promoting a Positive Vibe

Congratulations to Stephanie Baker, our Guin Foss 2015 Classified Employee of the Year!

Stephanie Baker is an office assistant and former health clerk at our school. She takes on the office responsibilities that support our school secretary, school principal, and the entire school community. She can always be counted on to be efficient, professional, responsive, positive, and thorough in everything she does.



It's a banner day for Stephanie Baker, Guin Foss Classified Employee of the Year.

Stephanie is also trained to support the medically fragile students at Guin Foss. She creates student awards, sets up after-school programs, and facilitates our Wellness Week activities. She also assists with our annual Spring Fling. Stephanie has attended many family events in the evening too, and participates in staff functions and contests which promote camaraderie and cheer.

Stephanie was previously a parent at Guin Foss. She continues to support our PTO, knowing full well how important a role our parents play in the success of their school. We just love Stephanie!

Robert Heideman *Elementary School*

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



Sean Lindsay
Principal

Above and Beyond

Julio Alonso is Heideman Elementary School's Classified Employee of the Year. He has worked as Heideman's night custodian for the last two years. He achieved this honor by not only being a great custodian, but by going above and beyond what the job requires. While being the consummate professional, he brings his whole light-filled being to the job. He does everything with a friendly and outgoing attitude, always greeting everyone with a smile on his face. He is famous for going out of his way to assist a teacher with a special project in the classroom, move some furniture, or walk them to their car after dark. This year, he read Dr. Seuss to students for Read Across America.



Custodian Julio Alonso keeps the campus clean and secure.

Congratulations, Julio! We are so thankful for your contribution to our school community!

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Hewes Middle School

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



Eric Kilian
Principal

A Healthy Outlook!

Hewes Middle School is proud to announce that Michelle Larson has been selected as our 2015 Classified Employee of the Year. Currently serving as our health clerk, Ms. Larson has worked at Hewes for over 12 years. She initially began working at Hewes as a campus supervisor.

In her daily excellence, Ms. Larson assists all students on campus with health needs or illness, maintains impeccable student records, and works cooperatively with our school nurse. Ms. Larson cares for each student as if he or she were her own child and, in her warm calming way, helps students be more comfortable when they are in her presence. Additionally, she supports school registration and office interactions and communicates exceptionally with all staff, students and parents.

Hewes Middle School is proud of the exemplary work that Ms. Larson does and the strong representation that she is of our dedicated staff.



Hewes staff surprises Michelle Larson as Classified Employee of the Year, including Cindy McCarthy, JoAnne Motter, Cheryl Bell, Julie Hamer, Karen Fox, Sonia Fernandez, Susie Burgess and Diana Carroll.

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Hicks Canyon *Elementary School*

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



Cindy Agopian
Principal

Always Ready to Serve

Hicks Canyon School is proud to celebrate library media technician Kelli Dykman as its 2015 Classified Employee of the Year!

Since 2004, Kelli has quietly and efficiently served students and staff during her many action-packed hours each week in the school library. Not only does she check out, check in, and research books for active patrons, she also bills, inventories, and tracks over 12,000 books and e-books. She also handles almost 4,000 textbooks and teacher materials, as well as approximately 800 technology devices.

Kelli's knowledgeable and friendly manner – along with her dedication, passion, flexibility, and warm smile – are always most evident, and recognized as a valuable contribution to the community. The welcoming environment she has created also serves as a place for meetings, after-school programs, and music activities.

After class, Kelli tirelessly devotes herself to the many academic and athletic activities that her three active Tustin Unified children are involved in. We're appreciative and honored to have Kelli on the Hicks Canyon team!



Library media technician Kelli Dykman is booked solid each day serving the students and staff at Hicks Canyon.

Hillview *High School*

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



Tim O'Donoghue
Principal

A California Model School

I am pleased to announce that Hillview has been selected as a "California Model School" by the California Department of Education. We are the only Orange County School, and one of only 28 schools in the entire state, to be receiving this honor!

The visiting committee cited Hillview's exemplary programs, and our staff's ability to "connect" with students, as our great strengths. I certainly am proud of the various programs we offer, such as job shadowing, senior exit interviews, financial literacy, and college awareness, to name just a few.

The programs and curriculum are important, but it is the people who make it happen. I witness on a daily basis the good work that our entire staff displays in motivating our students and showing true concern and compassion.

I know the students feel the same way, because every senior in their exit interview stated that the best thing about Hillview is how much the staff cares. We are a "model school" because our students have great "role models."



Hillview counselor Nubia Barcelo assists student Victoria Basulto.

Ladera *Elementary School*

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



Derek Pinto
Principal

An Exceptional Teacher

Rebecca Indvik is a 13-year TUSD veteran and serves as a paraeducator at Ladera. She assists the classroom teacher with two

special day classes (SDC): a medically fragile class and a noncategorical class. Ms. Indvik cares for children

who have gastrostomy tubes and diapers those who require this level of care.

Ms. Indvik does a wonderful job of teaching the fine-motor/art activities. She stays late to put up artwork on classroom walls and hallway bulletin boards. She also collects student artwork and makes memory books for children to present to their parents on Open House Night. She has done this for years on her own time.

Ms. Indvik is always cheerful,

kind and loving to each child. Her assistance with learning activities and class preparation has made her an invaluable team member, and she has positively impacted the lives of our highest-needs students. What a Leopard!



Ladera paraeducator Rebecca Indvik takes special care of her students.

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C.C. Lambert *Elementary School*

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



Deanna Parks
Principal

Learning and Growing

If you come on the Lambert Elementary School campus, the first thing you will notice is a clean, well-kept learning environment and beautiful gardens filled with a variety of flora and fauna. This is thanks to our incredible head

custodian, Joaquin Cabrera, our 2015 Classified Employee of the Year. Not only does Joaquin keep our campus immaculate, he keeps everything in working order and helps prepare for daily events.

He also puts his efforts into an incredible garden filled with tomatoes, zucchini, peppers and more. One day he offered a tour and science lesson to a fifth-grade class, and now everyone wants a turn! So, in between his many duties, you will find Joaquin serving as a tour guide

in the garden with classes of students, clipboards in hand, taking notes on an on-campus field trip.

We are very lucky to have Joaquin and appreciate all he does!



Head custodian Joaquin Cabrera gives a garden tour to teacher Karen Porterfield's fifth-grade class.

Loma Vista *Elementary School*

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



Katy Sheyka
Principal

Hats Off, Andres!

Loma Vista proudly recognizes Andres Guerrero, our night custodian, as our 2015 Classified Employee of the Year. A kind, responsible and respectful man, Mr. Guerrero has served Tustin Unified for 20 years!

Mr. Guerrero is very conscientious of what he needs to do every day to keep our school safe and clean. Joan Painter, our health clerk, has worked with him for over 15 years and describes him as being "extremely friendly and cooperative." School secretary Nancy Torres said, "I love how Mr. Guerrero greets everyone with a smile when he arrives to work."

Mr. Guerrero has a very positive attitude. Whenever called upon, he is quick to respond and help out. Margie Wright, a fifth-grade teacher, describes him as being extremely hardworking.

"I appreciate how he always takes a moment to acknowledge and greet the staff as he works his way around the school," Mrs. Wright said. Way to go, Mr. Guerrero!



Students Cassidy Esquivel, Jeremy Brown and Jonathan Fobear surprise custodian Andres Guerrero.

Myford *Elementary School*

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



Rena Fairchild
Principal

Whatever It Takes!

Tina Borders is a paraeducator who supports our fourth/fifth-grade special day class (SDC). She is dedicated to the students and does whatever it takes to help them succeed. When the classroom teacher was out on leave this year, the class didn't miss a beat because of Ms. Borders! She works closely with substitutes and all teachers so that the students in her class continue to get the best education possible. She supports the students both academically and behaviorally with passion, kindness and commitment.

SDC teacher Michelle Dang says, "She is always behind the scenes and doesn't like the attention, but she does so much—she always puts them first. She comes in early to prep and works through her lunch. She really tries to relate to the kids and finds a way to communicate and help them through issues."

Myford agrees that Ms. Borders is an amazing employee who goes above and beyond. Congratulations to Tina Borders, Myford's 2015 Classified Employee of the Year!



Paraeducator Tina Borders goes above and beyond for her students.

W.R. Nelson *Elementary School*

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



John Laurich
Principal

Supporting Student Reading

The Tigers of W.R. Nelson Elementary School are pleased to recognize Aida Nunez as our 2015 Classified Employee of the Year. Mrs. Nunez is a Special Education paraeducator who helps all students at Nelson, not just the one or two students she is assigned to assist.

In the picture, Mrs. Nunez is seen reading *The One and Only Ivan*. Nelson is currently celebrating One School, One Book, a program where every student, staff member, and parent reads the same book. We have videotaped district and community leaders reading each night's assignment and posting it on our *The One and Only Ivan* Haiku site, so parents who are not fluent in English can watch each evening with their children. Our first reader was Tustin Police Chief Charlie Celano, who was followed by such notables as Superintendent Dr. Gregory Franklin and district office administrators Dr. Crystal Turner, Dr. Charles Lewis, Kathie Nielsen,

and Maggie Villegas, among others. Our goal is to promote literacy throughout the school and in the homes of all Nelson Tigers.



Aida Nunez, Nelson's 2015 Classified Employee of the Year, reads *The One and Only Ivan*.

Orchard Hills School

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



Rich Montgomery
Principal

World-Class Service

We are proud to announce Jackie Finazzo as our 2015 Classified Employee of the Year. As our office assistant, Jackie has become our customer-service specialist, whose warm smile and contagiously positive attitude help “make the day” for anyone who comes into our front office. She works with teachers, administrators, staff, and students as the ultimate school utility player.



Jackie Finazzo named 2015 Classified Employee of the Year at Orchard Hills School.

Much teamwork has been needed to accomplish our goals as a new school, and Jackie has contributed her time and talents since joining our team. She goes above and beyond her job duties, even to the point of performing as a staff cheerleader in the staff versus students basketball game. If a helping hand is needed, Jackie Finazzo is the person we can count on. Her enthusiasm and passion for our school make her an invaluable asset to the Orchard Hills School team.

Jackie is truly a world-class individual and is appreciated at Orchard Hills!

Peters Canyon Elementary School

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



Brooke Carreras
Principal

Dynamic Duo!

Dana Quebbemann, Teacher of the Year and Nancy Argo, Classified Employee of the Year at Peters Canyon Elementary School, exemplify all that is great about our school.

Mrs. Quebbemann brings excitement and energy to her kindergarten class each day. Whether students are singing, acting in a play, or demonstrating their authorship abilities, “Mrs. Q,” as her students affectionately refer to her, always makes learning fun. She loves watching her students’ progress throughout the year and discover their own passion for learning new things.



Peters Canyon paraeducator Nancy Argo and teacher Dana Quebbemann help students grow into PCE scholars.

Mrs. Argo, kindergarten paraeducator, enjoys the opportunity she gets each day to interact with her students. From teaching small groups to supervising on the playground, Mrs. Argo always finds ways to make students smile. Her warm, caring and playful personality makes her the perfect fit for our kindergarten team. We at PCE are proud to honor both Mrs. Argo and Mrs. Quebbemann!

Pioneer Middle School

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



Tracey Vander Hayden
Principal

Positive, Meaningful Relationships

Pioneer Middle School recognizes campus supervisor Darius Durham as our 2015 Classified Employee of the Year! Mr. Durham is the first and probably the last person you will see in Pioneer's parking lot. He joyfully greets all who enter and exit the grounds

of Pioneer, ensuring that students, parents, and

teachers arrive and leave safely. "Good morning! How are you doing?" and "Good afternoon!" are common greetings heard by all who come into contact with Mr. Durham.

His presence is very large on the Pioneer campus. Literally, his 6'2" height, and strong athletic build can seem very intimidating, however the Pioneer students

simply love Mr. Darius! His genuine conviction that there is "good" in all people makes him the perfect person to work with middle school students. His careful words of encouragement and his suggestions for making things right are turning Pioneer students in the right direction for their future.

Thank you for being a real Wildcat, Mr. Durham!



Pioneer campus supervisor Darius Durham is appreciated by Pioneer students.

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Red Hill *Elementary School*

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



Will Neddersen
Principal

Kind to the Community

Red Hill Elementary School was charged by students Kate Zelko and McKenzie Siudzinski and the student council to complete the Great Kindness Challenge school project. The challenge was to have every student complete as many kind acts as they

could from a kindness checklist in one week. During the week of February 23–27, Red Hill students completed over 7,000 acts of kindness! The Tustin City Council was made aware of our accomplishment and awarded Red Hill a city proclamation on May 5.

Congratulations to school secretary Jan Belanger for being selected as Red Hill's 2015 Classified Employee of the Year! Mrs. Belanger has been a part of the Red Hill team since it reopened in 2001. Mrs. Belanger is someone that everyone depends on daily. She has

a proactive organization to support students, teachers, parents, and the principal. The Red Hill community appreciates all that Mrs. Belanger does for us!



Tustin Mayor Chuck Puckett presents a city proclamation to Red Hill students and staff, first grade teacher Debbie Ludes, students Kate Zelko and McKenzie Siudzinski, Principal Will Neddersen and fourth grade teacher Janelle Crain for the school's Great Kindness Challenge project.

Jeane Thorman *Elementary School*

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



Erick Fineberg
Principal

Putting Her Heart into Her Work

Thorman Elementary School is honored to recognize para-educator Patricia Fernandez, a special lady with a huge heart, as its 2015 Classified Employee of the Year.

Mrs. Fernandez has spent the past six-and-a-half years in TUSD

both supporting our kindergarten classrooms and working with families, teachers, and students to make sure that everyone at Thorman has the resources and instruction they need to become successful scholars.

Whether it's supporting student learning within the classrooms, or facilitating and translating meetings between parents and teachers, Mrs. Fernandez is all about student learning. Her goal is to see that all Thorman students have the

opportunity to be successful in everything they do.

She also regularly attends after-school events, and is a willing translator at our Kindergarten Readiness Nights, or whenever called upon. Thorman feels so lucky to have Mrs. Fernandez as part of its Family.



Patricia Fernandez finishes up some small group time as she poses with students.

Tustin Connect Academy *Online School*

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



Dr. Dustin O'Malley
Administrator

Meet the Teachers!

I am pleased to introduce Kristy Andre and Emily McCourtney as the new Tustin Connect Academy lead teachers for the 2015–16 school year.

Mrs. Andre, the lead middle school teacher, has worked as an elementary and middle school teacher since 2005 and has spent the past two years as a digital learning coach in Tustin Unified. Mrs. Andre is a Google Educator and has been named an Emerging Leader by the International Society for Technology in Education.

Mrs. McCourtney, the lead elementary teacher, has worked as a Digital Learning Coach and an elementary teacher in Tustin Unified. In addition to mentoring teachers in Tustin Unified, Mrs. McCourtney has shared her expertise with teachers throughout California as an associate director at the UCI Writing Project and as a

popular presenter at educational conferences.

We are excited to have these exceptional educators to provide a world-class education for Tustin Connect Academy students.



Lead teachers Emily McCourtney and Kristy Andre get ready for the Tustin Connect Academy.

Tustin *High School*

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



Christine Matos
Principal

Super-Athlete, and More

As the 2015 Empire League Athlete of the Year, Amy Albus has earned 11 varsity letters in water polo, swimming and volleyball; maintained a 4.5 grade-point average; and has been involved in Tiller programs and clubs, including Art Club, Students Against Drunk Driving Club, and T-Tech Academy of Technology and Engineering. Amy has traveled the world with THS Model United Nations, participating in two world conferences—one in the Czech Republic and the other in Ireland. Her Model United Nations Capstone Project, To Inspire Students to Volunteer, is appropriate, as she volunteers within our community, including in the Dinosaur Dash, Senior Center Dance and Tustin Easter Egg Hunt. She has also been on the National Honors Society Superintendent Honor Roll for seven semesters so far.

Amy loves to draw, is taking Advanced Placement Studio Art, and will be attending San Jose State for a Bachelor of Fine Arts, majoring in animation and illustration. Congratulations, Amy!



Tustin High student-athlete Amy Albus displays her Award of Excellence from the school.

Tustin Memorial Academy

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



Wendy Hudson
Principal

Queen of TLC

Tustin Memorial Academy is proud to recognize Sophie Han as our 2015 Classified Employee of the Year!

Sophie began her work with us as a para-educator, and provided language support to students who have English as their second language. Two years ago she became our health clerk, and now patiently provides band aids, cold compresses, thermometers, lost tooth boxes and sometimes just a quiet place to rest.



Nolan and Noelle Han helped surprise their mother, Sophie Han, as TMA Classified Employee of the Year.

Sophie is always hardworking, caring, and compassionate with the students. She is also always cheerful, friendly, and encouraging to her co-workers and staff members. She follows up with parents when a child is hurt and manages all of her duties with patience and kindness.

Mrs. Han also volunteers at TMA in her spare time, and is involved in her children's sport programs as well. She is an avid youth baseball supporter, and spends countless hours volunteering with our own TMA volleyball team. Congratulations, Mrs. Han!

Tustin Ranch Elementary School

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



Tracy Barquer
Principal

Wild About Kathy Pasmore

Our Tustin Ranch Elementary School staff and students are thrilled to recognize Kathy Pasmore as their 2015 Classified Employee of the Year.

As library media technician, Mrs. Pasmore has created a warm and inviting learning space this year in our school library. She also recently spearheaded an "extreme makeover" of the library that enlisted the help of volunteers to redesign the reading area, convert an unused corner into a book nook, establish a book recommendation wall, revitalize the birthday book club, inventory hundreds of new book titles, and that's not all!



School library media technician Kathy Pasmore helps student Juan Jaimes check out a book.

This dedicated and enthusiastic Cool Coyote also volunteered at the Book Fair as a guest reader. She is a super shopper at discount book warehouses, and closely collaborates with classroom teachers on lessons that entertain and engage students in the joy of reading.

Mrs. Pasmore is a self-described "book lover." Tustin Ranch loves her enthusiasm and appreciates her wild enthusiasm about books.

C.E. Utt *Middle School*

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



Dean Jennings
Principal

Gilberto to the Rescue

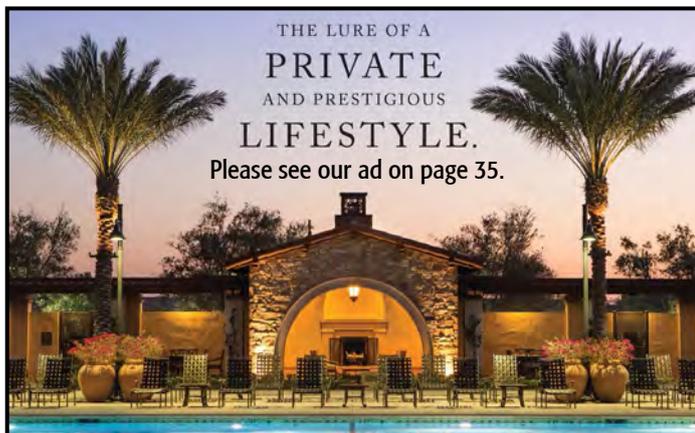
Congratulations to custodian Gilberto Calleros, C.E. Utt Middle School's 2015 Classified Employee of the Year! Gilberto is a very diligent and hardworking member of our staff. He goes above and beyond, arriving to work early every day, always with a smile on his face. He is kind and gracious with staff and students alike.



Gilberto Calleros and his wife, Elizabeth, enjoy a celebratory Classified Employee of the Year dinner.

Being the consummate gentleman, Gilberto is always ready to open a door or lend a hand to staff and community members. On several occasions, he has even gone as far as coming to the school in the middle of the night during a rainstorm to sandbag the buildings, so the school will not be flooded for the following day.

Gilberto receives high praise from staff, parents, and district employees for his amazing work. He is an asset to our campus. Because of his hard work and dedication, our campus continues to be an excellent place for our students to learn.



Marjorie Veeh *Elementary School*

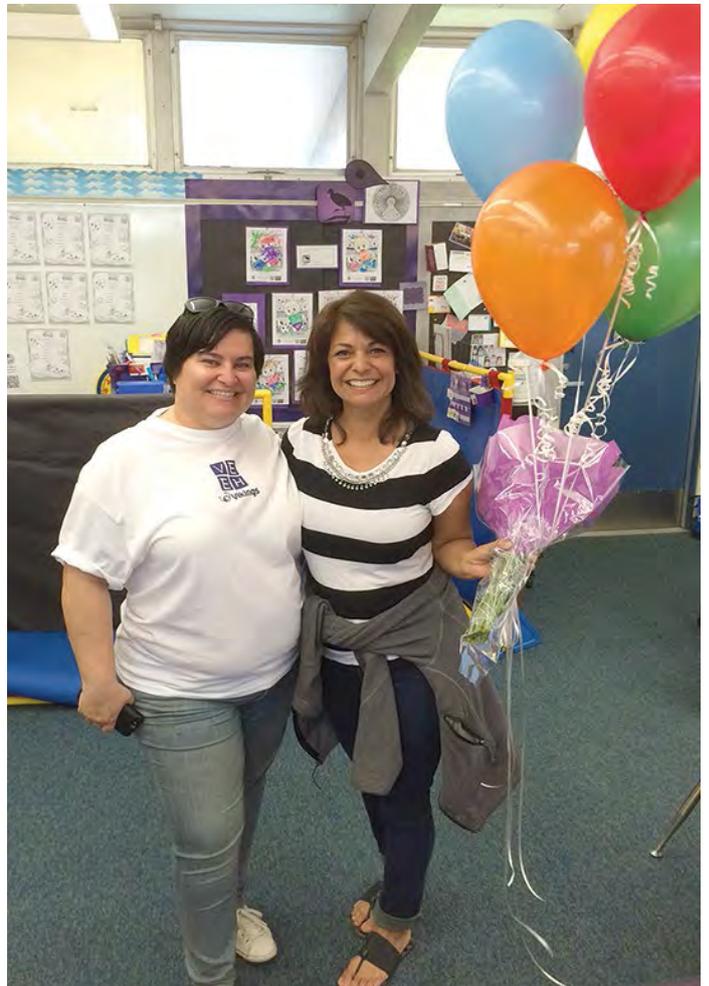
1701 San Juan St., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7544



Ryan Bollenbach
Principal

Head of the Class!

In the five years that Christine Oh has been in teacher Jennifer Dorkin's class, she has been a phenomenal assistant. She takes it upon herself to design projects for art/fine-motor skills that go along with the themes, lessons and stories in the class. At times when Mrs. Dorkin has been out for extended periods, Ms. Oh has pitched in to move and set up the classroom on her own time. She visited Mrs. Dorkin in the hospital to discuss schedules and plans for the class when there was not a long-term sub to keep things running smoothly until her return.



Christine Oh celebrates her 2015 Veeh Classified Employee of the Year Award with teacher Jennifer Dorkin.

Subs have also reported what a great help Ms. Oh is to them. She is a calm and professional team member who counsels others when they are frustrated, trains new incoming staff, and guides younger staff. Congratulations, Ms. Oh!

Business Services

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



Anthony Soria
Chief Financial
Officer

Construction Update

Construction on the administration office renovation at Tustin High is officially underway. The project began over spring break and is scheduled for completion this summer. The scope of work consists of

an interior-space reconfiguration, a new office entry off the parking lot, and new electrical, mechanical, flooring, painting and furniture. This project was master-planned as part of the Tustin High Measure L improvements.

Other Tustin High projects currently in the design phase include a new humanities building, a new weight-training center, a campus entry expansion and field renovations, and upgrades to the little theater, library and T-Tech facilities.

The new 17-classroom Beckman High Humanities building remains on track for completion this summer. Classrooms will be open for student and staff use at the start of the 2015-16



Construction workers renovate the Administration building at Tustin High.

school year. Finally, the heating-, ventilating- and air-conditioning-system replacement on the 100 building at Foothill High is now complete.

Educational Services

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



Kathie Nielsen
Chief Academic
Officer

AVID: The How

The mission of the Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) program is “to close the achievement gap by preparing all students for college readiness and success in a global society.” The Tustin Unified School District began AVID 19 years ago and has grown to serve 1,285 AVID students. Out of 4,812 AVID schools internationally, only 140 have earned recognition as AVID National Demonstration Schools. Tustin

Unified is proud to have two demonstration schools: Columbus Tustin Middle School and Tustin High School, both earning this status for being exemplary models of the AVID College Readiness System as well as developing schoolwide programs that extend strategies beyond the AVID classroom.

AVID’s engaging strategies in writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization and reading (WICOR), although developed over three decades ago, are being recognized today as the perfect partners for Common Core State Standards (CCSS). CCSS is the what that students will learn, and the AVID College Readiness System is how students will master the knowledge and skills.

National, state and district data overwhelmingly demonstrate AVID’s success in promoting student achievement. Additionally, recent figures detailing college-persistence rates of graduating seniors show that AVID students continue each year in college at a higher rate nationally than non-AVID students. The data also reveals that TUSD students are persisting at a higher rate than California or national averages.

Tustin Unified’s AVID program continues to grow each year since its onset, expanding strategies districtwide and shaping more and more students for college and career success!

Nutrition Services

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



Teresa Squibb
Director

Healthy Meal Challenge

The TUSD Wellness Committee held its seventh annual “Get Your Health On!” Healthy Meal Challenge. The highlight of the contest is serving the winning menu to the students at each school. Contest winners were:

- Ashton Kanegae, 4th grade, Peters Canyon: “The Feast” featuring Teriyaki chicken bowls.
- Milan Khatib, 1st grade, Hicks Canyon “YumTum” featuring roasted chicken breast and sweet potatoes.
- Juliette Holdsworth, 4th grade, Arroyo: “Healthy Lunch” featuring turkey meatloaf.
- Angela Garcia, 4th grade, Thorman: “Thorman Healthy Meal” featuring lowfat chicken Alfredo and broccoli.

In other news, Currie, Pioneer and Utt middle schools; Orchard Hills School and Beckman High School have received the Award of Excellence from the Environmental Health Division of Orange County. This award is given to establishments in recognition of excellence in food safety and sanitation.

Nutrition Service’s new My School Menu app is now available to download for both Apple and Android devices. The new app allows parents and students to view the menu for their school and view the nutritional for each menu item.



Peters Canyon student Ashton Kaneage displays his winning healthy meal while nutrition assistant Ludmila Potter looks on.

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*

TECHstravaganza!

The Tustin Unified School District is near the end of its second year of having digital-learning coaches support Digital Learning Fellows, or teachers who have applied and are being coached on a weekly basis to integrate more technology into their curriculum.

TECHstravaganza 2015 was held in May at Hicks Canyon

Elementary School to culminate the second year of coaching. With tremendous effort and enthusiasm, 24 different Fellows shared about their experience, new favorite technology tools, student engagement and successes. The sessions included Twitter for teachers, Padlet for performers and Wiki projects in math class.

Approximately 250 teachers were in attendance, along with

TUSD administrators and classified personnel. The positive feedback was overwhelming! All Fellows received a shirt and a certificate of completion. The shirt reads, “I’m #TUSDconnectED.” It is a proud moment to watch colleagues who have worked very hard share their success and inspire others.



TUSD teachers participate in TECHstravaganza.



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LOMA VISTA YMCA

(714) 730-0541
ymcaoc.org/loma-vista



Orange County PAL Advisor of the Year

By Mark Eliot

Director of Communications and Public Information

Columbus Tustin Middle School Peer Assistance Leadership (PAL) teacher-advisor Karen Minnie has been named 2015 Orange County PAL Advisor of the Year by the Orange County Department of Education. Under her guidance, the PAL class has spearheaded numerous schoolwide and community service projects and activities.

Minnie's PAL students lead and started an Anti-Bullying Program called Peers Against Harassment (PAH). The group meets weekly to talk about bullying,

created an anti-bullying video and designed posters for the classrooms. Other PAL projects include collecting canned goods for Second Harvest, raising funds for UNICEF and providing craft items for patients at Children's Hospital of Orange County.

This is the second OCDE award for the Columbus Tustin PAL program. In 2013, the school's PAL program was selected as Orange County Outstanding PAL Program of the Year. Minnie has served as advisor of the school's PAL program for the past four years.



PAL Advisor Karen Minnie, far left, holds the award while her students display the Outstanding PAL Advisor banner.

Bicycle Parts Word Search Contest

Entries must be received by July 15, 2015
From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win
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Rules!

One word in the list is NOT in the word search.
When you have completed the word search,
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**Congratulations to Mary Birks and Arnav Reddy
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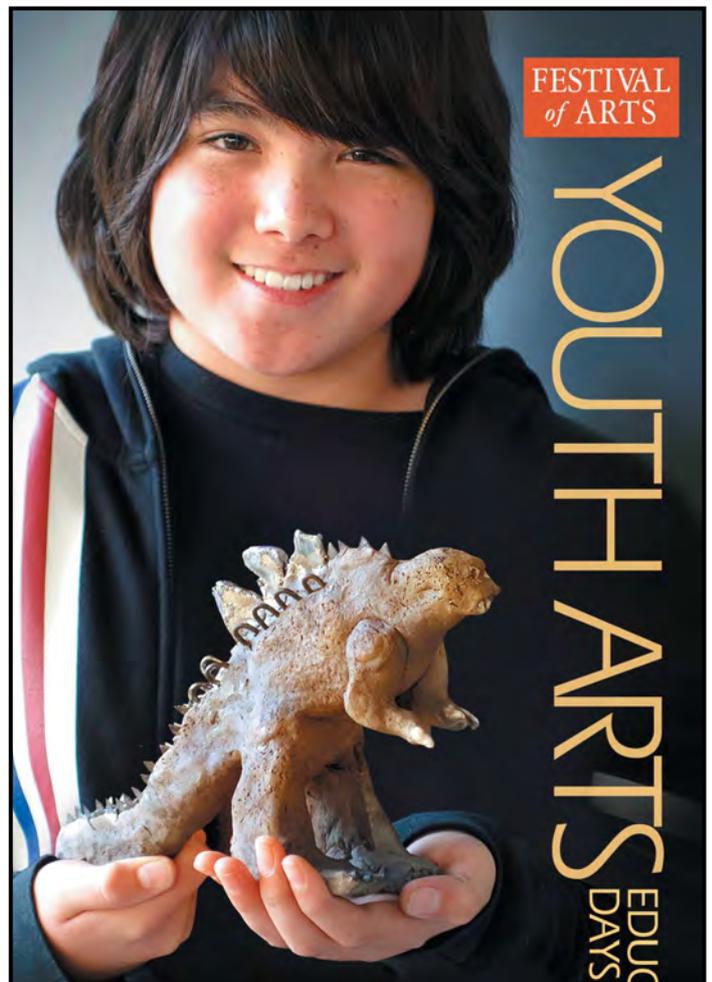
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TUSD Selects 2015 Classified Employee of the Year

By Mark Eliot
Director of Communications and Public Information

Columbus Tustin Middle School special education paraeducator Lily Kozai been selected as the 2015 Classified Employee of the Year by the Tustin Unified School District. She was chosen based on her significant contributions to the District and school community.

The 18th annual awards program recognizes classified or support services employees who provide valuable services to schools and staff, and contribute to a positive instructional environment.

Kozai was chosen for “going above and beyond” for the students, teachers and staff at Columbus Tustin School. She has also supported the school’s award-winning Peer Assistance Leadership (PAL) program, volunteered at school activities and helped organize several community projects.



TUSD Superintendent Gregory Franklin congratulates Columbus Tustin School paraeducator Lily Kozai for being selected as TUSD's 2015 Classified Employee of the Year.

“It’s an honor to be chosen as the District’s Classified Employee of the Year and represent the dedicated and hard-working staff members in TUSD,” Kozai said.

Beyond her duties assisting special education students with their schoolwork and medical needs, Kozai supports the Columbus Tustin teachers and staff on many projects and activities during her free time. She has coordinated

the distribution of “Leaders of the PACK” (Pride, Achievement, Character and Knowledge) bracelets for students, volunteered and supervised PAL students at the Pancreatic Cancer Purple Stride Walk, put together a Haiku page for a special education student and helped organized Mitochondrial Disease Awareness Week at the school.

“Lily is highly regarded and respected by the Columbus School staff for all the work she does on behalf of our students and school community,” said Acting Principal José Luis Pedroza.

The other TUSD school/work site nominees include:

District Administration Center: Raquel Pineira, administrative secretary, Special Education Department.

Maintenance and Operations: Jason Elder, painter.

Elementary Schools: Jose Nava, head custodian, Arroyo; Nuha Qushair, paraeducator, Benson; Alvaro Sosa, paraeducator behavior interventionist, Beswick;

Luis Guerrero, night custodian, Estock; Stephanie Baker, office assistant, Guin Foss; Julio Alonso, night custodian, Heideman; Kelli Dykman, library media technician, Hicks Canyon; Rebecca Indvik, paraeducator, Ladera; Joaquin Cabrera, head custodian, Lambert; Andres Guerrero, night custodian, Loma Vista; Tina Borders, paraeducator, Myford; Aida Nunez, paraeducator, Nelson; Nancy Argo, paraeducator, Peters Canyon; Jan Belanger, school secretary, Red Hill; Patricia Fernandez, paraeducator, Thorman; Sophie Han, Health Services clerk, Tustin Memorial Academy; Kathy Pasmore, library media technician, Tustin Ranch; and Christine Oh, paraeducator behavior interventionist, Veeh.

Orchard Hills School: Jackie Finazzo, office assistant.

Middle Schools: Joseph Lagasse, paraeducator behavior interventionist, Currie; Michelle Larson, Health Services clerk, Hewes; Darius Durham, campus supervisor, Pioneer; and Gilberto Calleros, night custodian, Utt.

High Schools: Nina Muñoz, secretary, Beckman; Sharon Smith, office assistant, Foothill; Irene Garcia, campus supervisor, Hillview; and Patty Velasquez Lee, school secretary, Tustin.

Kozai and all school/work site winners were honored at the Tustin Unified School District Board of Education meeting on May 18.

Orange County Administrators of the Year

By Mark Eliot

Director of Communications and Public Information

Pioneer Middle School Principal Tracey Vander Hayden, Pioneer Assistant Principal Troy Fresch and Jeane Thorman Elementary School Assistant Principal Kim Thompson have been named 2015 Orange County Administrators of the Year by the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA), Region 17.

ACSA annually recognizes outstanding administrators for their leadership skills, professionalism, creativity, innovation, and commitment to a quality education.

Vander Hayden was named Middle Grades Principal of the Year. She has been involved in public education for 31 years – 16 in the Tustin Unified School District. She has served as principal of Pioneer School for the past five years. Under her leadership, Pioneer has been named a national and California Schools to Watch—Taking Center Stage School, a California

Distinguished School, an AVID Highly Certified School and a National Model Professional Learning Community Middle School. Vander Hayden was recognized as an outstanding principal, educator and leader, and for her commitment to fully prepare all students for the future.

Fresch was selected as Secondary Co-Administrator of the Year. He has been involved in public education for 13 years – 12 in the Tustin Unified School District. As assistant principal at Pioneer, Fresch has continued to work closely with students, families and community members to positively impact the educational experience. Fresch was recognized for his leadership and guidance, promoting student achievement, rigorous standards and engaging instructional strategies, technology and parent involvement in schools that are diverse in multiple aspects: academically, socio-economically and ethnically.



TUSD Superintendent Gregory Franklin and Board President Francine Scinto, far right, recognize Orange County Administrators of the Year Kim Thompson, Troy Fresch and Tracey Vander Hayden at a recent school board meeting.

Thompson was named Elementary Co-Administrator of the Year. She has been involved in public education for 10 years. She joined TUSD in 2013 as assistant principal at Thorman School. Thompson was recognized for her contributions and effort in transforming both Thorman and Currie Middle School under the leadership of one administration, and for her outstanding leadership and work in curriculum and instruction, college and goal setting for students, technology, student discipline, professional development and parent involvement in the Thorman/Currie community.

All three administrators were honored at the 42nd annual ACSA “Administrator of the Year and Friends of Education Awards” Dinner on May 11 at the Irvine Marriott. Region 17 represents 28 school districts in Orange County.



Tustin High Robotics and T-Tech Teams Win Top Honors

By Mark Eliot

Director of Communications and Public Information

Tustin High School's Robotics and T-Tech programs scored big at several competitions in Orange County.

The Tustin High Robotics Team, under the advisement of science teacher Dr. Brian Leslie, won first place in the Vital Link Robotics competition. Team members include Bryan Martinez, Timothy Nguyen, Jamie Ramirez, Sunny Sharma and Hugo Virgen.

The Tustin T-Tech program, under the direction of engineering teacher Ed Hernandez, won awards at the annual Orange County Imaginology STEAM Expo held at the Orange County Fairgrounds. T-Tech Motorsports students participated in the UCI Energy Invitational Vehicle Engineering Design competition. T-Tech won first place in the Standard category with "Big Red," a full size electric vehicle, and second place in the Light Weight division with "Little Red," an electric go kart. Tustin's Big Red was also named the "Overall Winner" in the competition, beating out 15 other high school entries. Both vehicles also participated at the UCI Energy Invitational at U.C. Irvine.

Additionally, a team from T-Tech's senior EDD class won first place and a \$300 cash award in the advanced division of the annual OC Maker Challenge with their "Wounded Warrior Electric Guitar" project. Team Wounded Warrior included students Kristina Barrett, Tristan Beadles and Jonathan Deprosse. The OC Maker Challenge was sponsored by the Orange County Department of Education.



Team Big Red
Students Mitchell Spear, teacher Ed Hernandez, Salvador Alvizar, Orion Perez and Robert Macias.



Team Little Red
Students Derek Weaver, Jennifer Gensler, Angelica Verde, Cara Chipman, teacher Ed Hernandez, Hugo Virgen, Emily Wendt and Michael Keelin. Forrester Sherrick is not pictured.

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