



Superintendent Seeks Staff Nominations for Service Award

Dr. Doug Otto is seeking nominations through March 10 for his Ninth Annual Superintendent's Service Award, which will be presented to members of the school district's support staff at Plano ISD's 43rd Annual Salute to Service event to be held on April 17 at Southfork Ranch.

Rewarding Exceptional Service

This prestigious award recognizes members of the Plano ISD support staff whose dedication, commitment and effort rise above and beyond expectations. Eligible nominees include paraprofessionals, CTAs, library assistants, technology support and several employee classifications in FANS, transportation, warehouse, purchasing and facility services.

Nominations Due March 10

A nomination form, which includes information about eligibility, the nomination process, criteria, judging and recognition, may be downloaded from the district website: www.pisd.edu/superaward Nominations must be received by noon on Monday, March 10, in the district's communications department.

V-Soft System Helps Track School Visitors

Plano ISD has installed the "V-Soft" system in each school as an additional security measure. V-Soft tracks visitors, students, faculty, contractors, and volunteers. School guests must present a valid state-issued photo ID for entering into the system. V-Soft provides alerts regarding people who may jeopardize the safety of the campus, and the system can also produce information such as volunteer hours, print visitor name badges and monitor the number of guests who visit campuses.

Students, Staff, & Community Leaders Honored at Plano ISD's Annual MLK Event

The Plano ISD Board of Trustees hosted its annual Martin Luther King, Jr., Tribute "Let Freedom Sing!" on January 24 at Plano Centre. Attended by approximately 1,500 guests, the event spotlighted students, staff and community leaders. Emcees included Dr. Myrtle Hightower, Superintendent Doug Otto, Deputy Superintendent Jeff Bailey, Executive Director Karla Oliver and Mayor Pat Evans.

A Parade of Nations featured students from middle schools, AVID and other special programs. MLK Writing Contest winners from district elementary schools read their original essays in honor of Dr. King. Performing were the Plano Children's Chorale and Plano West Wind Ensemble and Mixed Choir.



Donna Hartman won an individual award.



McCall's Parents United Around the World captured a group award.

Online Feature: www.pisd.edu

Visit our website to read more about the MLK event and awards for art, writing and diversity leadership.



(Above) Sigler Elementary School Staff received a group honorable mention award.

(Below) The Plano Senior High Multicultural Club received special recognition.



(Above, l-r) Jimmy Moses and Uzma Siddiqui were each presented with individual honorable mention awards.

(Left) Frances A. Griffin Brown received special recognition as founder of Club Generation Success.



Community Hero, Diversity Leadership Recognized



Ben Thomas

The family of Ben Thomas was honored at the MLK celebration by Dr. Myrtle Hightower, chairwoman of the MLK event steering committee. Well known for his outstanding work with the Douglass Community and the City of Plano, Mr. Thomas was the first recipient of the YMCA Strong Community Award in 2004 and received a State Certificate for his volunteer service. He was named Citizen of the Year by the Plano Chamber of Commerce in 1998, and he was among Plano ISD's "100 Heroes" named during the school district's 1999 centennial celebration. Sadly, Mr. Thomas and his wife Frances passed away in 2007. However, their memories will live on forever.

Also at the MLK event, Plano ISD's Diversity Advocacy Committee presented Diversity Leadership Awards to individual and group winners (pictured above). Individual winner Donna Hartman serves as Plano ISD academic diversity specialist, conducting cultural sensitivity meetings with faculty and staff across the school district to promote tolerance, acceptance and understanding of different ethnic groups. She has initiated this in addition to her role of organizing and developing programs to encourage and challenge minority students to excel academically. Group winner "Parents United Around the World" has increased parent involvement at McCall Elementary School. Leaders Margie Flores, Ginny Kivel, MaryLynn Pick and Blanca Saenz have organized ice cream socials, game nights, literacy nights, multicultural events and adult ESOL classes at the school to promote parent/staff communication.

Board Briefs...

Trustees discussed the following items at their February 19 work session.

Facilities & Technology Bond Task Force Update

Trustees heard a report from Phil Dyer, chairman of the 2008 Plano ISD Facilities & Technology Study Task Force, and Richard Matkin, associate superintendent for business services, who outlined details of a \$490 million bond proposal for trustees to consider adopting at their March 4 business meeting in anticipation of a May 10, 2008, bond election.

If the bond proposal is adopted, a series of bond articles will appear in upcoming issues of *District Digest* and *eNews*. Updates can also be found on the district website: www.pisd.edu/2008bond.

Student & Family Services

Cathy Galloway, executive director of student and family services, provided an update regarding the district's initiative to incorporate family services into all existing student services program components.

Board Member Orientation

Trustees discussed several desired components of an orientation program for new school board members.

The next meeting of the board of trustees will be a business meeting at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 4, at the Plano ISD Administration Building, 2700 W. 15th Street. Meeting agendas and minutes are posted on the district website: www.pisd.edu.

March 1 Pre-Retirement Seminar Site Changed

The site for the March 1 pre-retirement seminar, sponsored by the Plano Retired Teachers Association, has been changed from the Plano ISD Administration Building on 15th Street to the Vines High School presentation room, 1401 Highedge Drive. The seminar will be held from 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

District Digest

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www.pisd.edu/news

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Achievements & Honors

Children's Advocacy Center Awards Plano ISD Director & Foundation Officer ~

Dorothy Shaw, Plano ISD assistant director of family and social services, and Beth Webb, Plano ISD Education Foundation director and officer, were awarded for dedicated service to the community at the 14th Annual Collin County Children's Advocacy Center Appreciation Luncheon held on February 12 in Frisco.



Beth Webb

During Ms. Shaw's 33 years of experience in education, she has served as teacher, mentor and friend. Her hard work ethic and hands on problem solving approach sets her apart when it comes to helping students and families be successful in Plano schools. She is a "rare jewel" who has dedicated her life to others.

In addition to outstanding service on the Plano ISD Education Foundation board, Beth Webb has served as a phenomenal volunteer in the Junior League of Plano. While serving as League president, she established what is now known as the Collin County Council on Family Violence. Once a League task force, the council is now a countywide collaboration of 55 agencies and organizations from business, education, social services, faith communities, healthcare, law enforcement, local government and the District Attorney General's Office.



Dorothy Shaw

Principals Association Presents Scholarships to Three Teaching Assistants ~ Three Plano ISD education assistants were presented with scholarships by the Plano Principals Association at the general principals' meeting in December, 2007. Congratulations to recipients Maphara Soomro, Beverly Elementary School special education assistant, who is pursuing a master's degree with the goal of teaching high school math; Shirah Martinez, Shepton High School library assistant, whose goal is to teach elementary school and create leadership programs for students; and Carol Truscott, Memorial Elementary School special education assistant, who will complete her degree while continuing to educate children with autism at Memorial.



PSHS Orchestra Director Named TexASTA Young Teacher of the Year ~ Brian Coatney, Plano Senior High School Orchestra director, accepted the Marjorie Keller Young Teacher of the Year Award from the Texas Chapter of the American String Teachers Association (TexASTA) at the chapter's annual meeting held during the Texas Music Educators Association State Convention February 13-17 in San Antonio. The award is for meritorious service and outstanding promise in string and orchestra education. A native of Arlington, Texas, Mr. Coatney began studying cello at age five. In high school, he participated in orchestra and played percussion in numerous ensembles. He graduated summa cum laude from Northwestern State University, and he earned a master's degree in orchestra conducting at James Madison University. In 2003, he directed the Klein High School Orchestra and was conductor of the Houston Youth Symphony Sinfonietta Orchestra. He joined the PSHS faculty fall of 2007.

Jaydon McCullough Recommended for Central Athletic Director Post ~ Superintendent of Schools Dr. Doug Otto announced recently that he will recommend Jaydon McCullough as central cluster athletic director and head football coach at Plano Senior High School. Coach McCullough currently serves as the offensive coordinator and assistant head coach at PSHS and central cluster schools. He will be recommended to the Plano ISD Board of Trustees at their March 4 meeting. A 1981 graduate of PSHS, McCullough has served as a coach at PSHS since 1993. He has also served as assistant varsity soccer coach. His academic contributions have included teaching U.S. History and head master duties for social studies and summer school.



Notable Notes...

Congratulations to faculty members who have earned professional recognitions:

□ **Lynne Jackson**, Robinson Middle School Band director, received the HOPE (Honoring Our Professor's Excellence) Award in recognition of valuable contributions to the students of Southern Methodist University, where she is an adjunct lecturer in music education at the Meadows School of the Arts.

□ **Kyle Clark**, Plano Senior High School visual arts department chair and central cluster team leader, announced recently that one of his student's Advanced Placement Art Drawing was featured on the College Board's AP website. **Julia Phillips'** drawing portfolio was featured as the example for the breadth section.

□ **Merrilee Kick**, Plano West Senior High School teacher, won a \$1,080 mini-grant from Global Edge Tech Prep Consortium, which allowed her to purchase a new laser printer and two DVDs for her students - "Gameheadz" for BCIS students and "A World Without Borders" for her international business students.

Congratulations to these proud parents and grandparents:

□ **Kitty Schieck**, Jackson Elementary School PACE teacher, welcomed grandson **Jackson Henry** on January 31. Proud parents are **Kristen and Alan Etheridge** of Jacksonville, Florida; **Lacey Harkins**, Dooley Elementary School special education teacher, and her husband **Zach** welcomed their first child **Austin Garrett** (9 lbs. 4 ozs.) on February 1; **Teresa Martinez**, Frankford Middle School FANS employee, became the proud grandmother of **Miguel Angel Martinez** on February 13.

□ **Shannon Reeves**, athletic department secretary, and **Brook Reeves**, Memorial Elementary School PE teacher and Plano East Senior High School coach, became proud grandparents of **Aubrey Faith Reeves** on February 6; **Amanda Jackson**, Stinson Elementary School second grade teacher, announced the birth of daughter **Isabelle Lee** (7 lbs. 3 ozs.) on February 15; **Jennifer Barker**, west cluster substance abuse specialist, and her husband **Bobby** announced the birth of daughter **Brooke** (6 lbs. 10 ozs.) on February 20.

Sympathy is extended to the following employees:

□ **Sylvia Maldonado**, Head Start PPCD bilingual teaching assistant, whose husband **Macario "Mac"** died on February 4; **Danice Johnson**, Jasper High School registrar, whose grandfather **Ret. Lt. Col. Ernest "Jack" Bennett** died on February 16; and **Jennifer Jordan**, Schimelpfenig Middle School health and PE teacher, whose mother **Madalene Sue Chivers** passed away February 13 in Arizona.

Thought for the Week:

"We are each other's magnitude and bond."

~Gwendolyn Brooks