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CUSD Today

February 2019

Clovis Unified School District — WHERE CHARACTER COUNTS! Volume 21, No. 7

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LOOSE PARTS

HELP EXPAND YOUNG HORIZONS

Photos special to *CUSD Today* by Ron Webb.

Nelson Elementary preschoolers Jude Rockwell, left, and Dominic Moreno are using tiny seashells to create letters on their chalkboard. ***Below right,*** *classmate Amelia Lehman chooses from baskets of beads and buttons to string together her creation.*

■ Preschool staff use shells, buttons to grow imaginations through new program

By Carol Lawson-Swezey
Special to CUSD Today

Tiny hands search through bins of nature's bounty to create their own world and give life to creativity.

In Shera Scott's preschool class at Nelson Elementary, curious pint-sized scholars thrive at thematic workstations with numbers, letters and building structures.

Sebastian Ferry, 5, and Dominic Sais, 4, work on an elaborate six-story animal condominium, complete with a ground-level party area. Dominic even recreates the howl of his favorite coyote.

In another corner, Sydney Stevenson and Haven Ramirez, both 4, let handfuls of sparkling colorful glass and seashells cascade through their fingers, using the treasures to trace large numbers.

"My favorite of all activities is the letter board," Haven said. Although she has never been to the beach, the brittle, delicate shells bring her one step closer to that experience.

For the past six months, preschoolers at Clovis Unified have

➤ Please see ***Imaginations,*** Page 8

Proposed boundaries released for new school

■ Shields-Locan site readying for construction

CUSD Today

A recommended attendance boundary for Clovis Unified's new elementary school near Shields and Locan avenues has been released.

This follows a months-long process to study residential development in the Clovis East Area, resulting enrollment trends and neighborhood growth.

➤ Info:
More information and a map of the proposed attendance boundaries are available at cusd.com.

The proposed boundaries will be an information item considered by the CUSD Governing Board at its Feb. 6 meeting, with the board scheduled to take action on the proposal at the Feb. 20 board meeting. If approved, the boundaries would become effective when the new school opens for the 2020-21 school year.

The recommended attendance area is the result of careful study of feedback gathered from residents in the Clovis East Area collected since November, as well as analysis of city planning data of the area.

The final recommendation differs from draft options first studied after consideration of feedback from the community and aligned to criteria used by the district to develop attendance lines. These criteria include:

- Using existing school design capacity whenever possible
- Keeping neighborhoods together
- Creating long lasting boundaries (7-10 years)
- Developing contiguous boundaries that minimize gerrymandering

➤ Please see ***Boundary,*** Page 8

Check it out!

On Jan. 4 Clovis Unified launched a redesigned cusd.com that now incorporates additional news and information for the community. In addition to carrying over much of the content previously found on the website, users can now interact with the district's social media channels, watch video content, and directly access every school site in Clovis Unified.

The launch concludes a six-month project that first saw the redesign of all school websites, the introduction of a mobile app and a new phone messaging system. The mobile app now includes district-level content and is directly connected to school websites and the district's phone/text/email notification system.

"We want to stay engaged in conversation with parents, students, employees and the greater community," said Chief Communication Officer Kelly Avants. "Information travels quickly in the world today, and we recognize the need to be able to get news into the hands of our community fast. That's what these new systems allow us to do, and we're excited about the possibilities we now have to remain in close communication with families." Check out cusd.com and share your feedback with us at info@cusd.com.

Celebrating TOGETHER

Clovis Unified students were the keynote speakers at the Community Martin Luther King Jr. Breakfast in January at the Clovis Veterans Memorial Building. Standing with CUSD Superintendent Dr. Eimear O'Farrell, from left, are Clovis High senior Faith McKesson, Clovis North High freshman Trisha Prajapati and Buchanan High junior Abbi Akande who spoke about Dr. King's pivotal role in the civil rights movement and his lasting influence today.

Two African American leadership conferences are in February, which is Black History Month, that are open to all students. *(**See Page 8 for details.**)* This edition of *CUSD Today* also features a special section contributed by CUSD students that celebrates African Americans. ***See Page 3.***

Thirty-two of Clovis Unified's very best employees will receive the district's highest award at The Crystals on Feb. 27 at the Performing Arts Center. The gala event begins with an appetizer reception at 6:30 p.m. followed by the presentation ceremony of the Crystal Awards at 7:30 p.m. The celebration is open to the public and admission is free.

In this edition of *CUSD Today*, we begin a series that profiles each of this year's recipients. For a list of winners and profiles, please see *Page 5*.

INSIDE:

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Kindergarten registration for the 2019-20 school year begins March 6. This year parents may pre-register their child online starting Feb. 27. ***Page 2***

CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION
CTE showcase night Feb. 21
Students, grades 8 to 11, and their parents are invited to attend and gather information about the many opportunities that are available. ***Page 4***

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE
We depend upon partnership, community
Our schools belong to each of you, and we are proud to be your partner in building a bright future for our community. ***Page 5***

➤ ANNOUNCEMENTS

Online kindergarten pre-registration, Feb. 27

Kindergarten registration for the 2019-20 school year begins March 6 at all Clovis Unified elementary schools, and this year parents may pre-register their child online starting Feb. 27. The new online process will allow parents to fill out their child's registration form and make an appointment to drop off the enrollment documents to their resident school.

Parents unable to utilize the online process may go directly to their school site during regular hours beginning March 6.

At the time of registration, parents will need to provide a birth certificate or other birth record; proof of residency; and written evidence of up-to-date immunizations. California law also allows parents to use their place of work address for school enrollment.

For complete details or to access the online pre-registration, visit cusd.com.

Native American Indian Family Night, Feb. 21 open to all CUSD families

"Destined for Excellence" will be the theme of Clovis Unified's sixth annual Native American Indian Family Night to be held from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Feb. 21 at the Clovis Veterans Memorial Building, 808 Fourth St., Clovis.

This free event is open for all CUSD families and will include dinner, drumming, dancers, activities and the presentation "Journeys from the Past," by master story teller Jacque Nunez.

For more information or to RSVP, contact Krista Cortez in CUSD Supplemental Services at 327-0667 or krista cortez@cusd.com.

CUSD to benefit from Granville Home of Hope 2019 fundraiser

The Foundation for Clovis Schools has been selected as a beneficiary of the 2019 Granville Home of Hope fundraiser.

Granville Homes, along with help from its trade partners, donates a new home each year as the grand prize awarded to one lucky winner from a limited-ticket sales drawing. Participants can also win other prizes, including a 24-month lease on a Lexus SUV. Tickets are $100 each, and 100 percent of proceeds raised benefit nine local nonprofits. All proceeds from tickets purchased through the Foundation stay in Clovis Unified. The Foundation for Clovis Schools is a nonprofit organization that awards student scholarships, new teacher grants and classroom grants each year.

For more information or tickets, contact Sara Almaraz at 327-9095 or saraalmaraz@cusd.com.

Clovis High musical comedy "Sugar" starts March 8

Clovis High will be performing "Sugar" – the "Some Like It Hot" musical – which is based on two unemployed musicians, Joe and Jerry, who witness the Saint Valentine's Day Massacre in Chicago in the late 1920s. They must run for their lives and disguise themselves as women in order to join a traveling all-female band to get out of town. The antics get going when Joe (Josephine) begins to fall in love with the lead singer, Sugar, and Jerry (Daphne) has to fend off the advances of a big fan.

Shows are at 7:30 p.m. March 8, 9 and 14-16 at the Mercedes Edwards Theatre, 902 Fifth St., Clovis. Tickets are $10 for students and $12 for adults.

Parent Academy workshop, March 19

Clovis Unified offers Parent Academy workshops throughout the school year at no cost to attendees. The workshops are designed to inform and empower parents with information, understanding and resources to support their student at home and at school.

The next workshop will be "Technology in Our Classrooms and Homes – The New Future" on March 19. How technology is being integrated in classrooms and ways parents can assist at home will be discussed. The workshop will also explore the effects of social media on students and review various websites that students access and how parents can help their children navigate this virtual world.

The workshop will be held at the Clovis Unified Professional Learning Center, 362 N. Clovis Ave., #101, in Clovis. (Southwest corner of Herndon and Clovis avenues, behind In-N-Out). Dinner and childcare are offered for each event. There is no cost. Dinner begins at 5:30 p.m. and the program will be from 6 to 8 p.m.

For more information or to RSVP, contact Krista Cortez in CUSD Supplemental Services at 327-0667 or krista cortez@cusd.com.

CUSD holiday closures

Clovis Unified schools and district office will be closed Feb. 11 in honor of Lincoln's birthday and Feb. 18 in honor of Washington's birthday. Spring break will be taken by schools April 15 to 22.

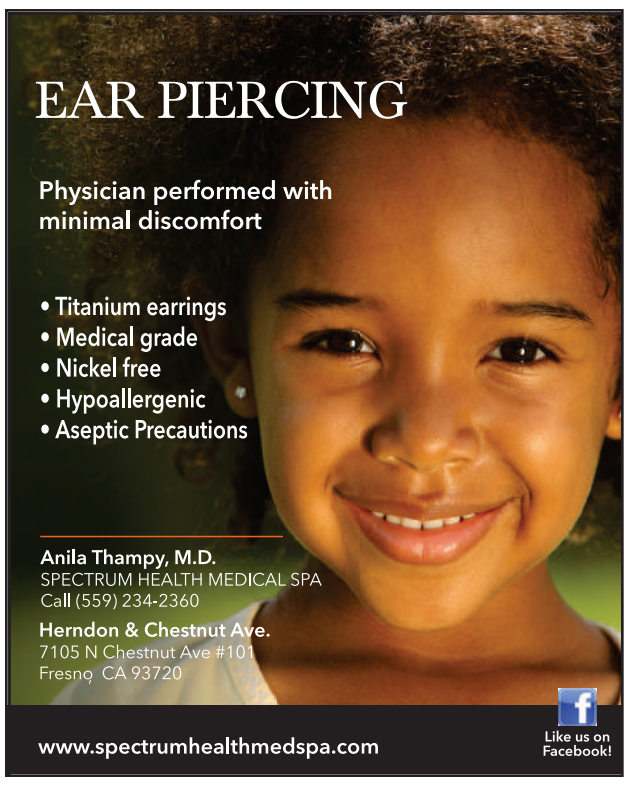
Special Education upcoming workshops

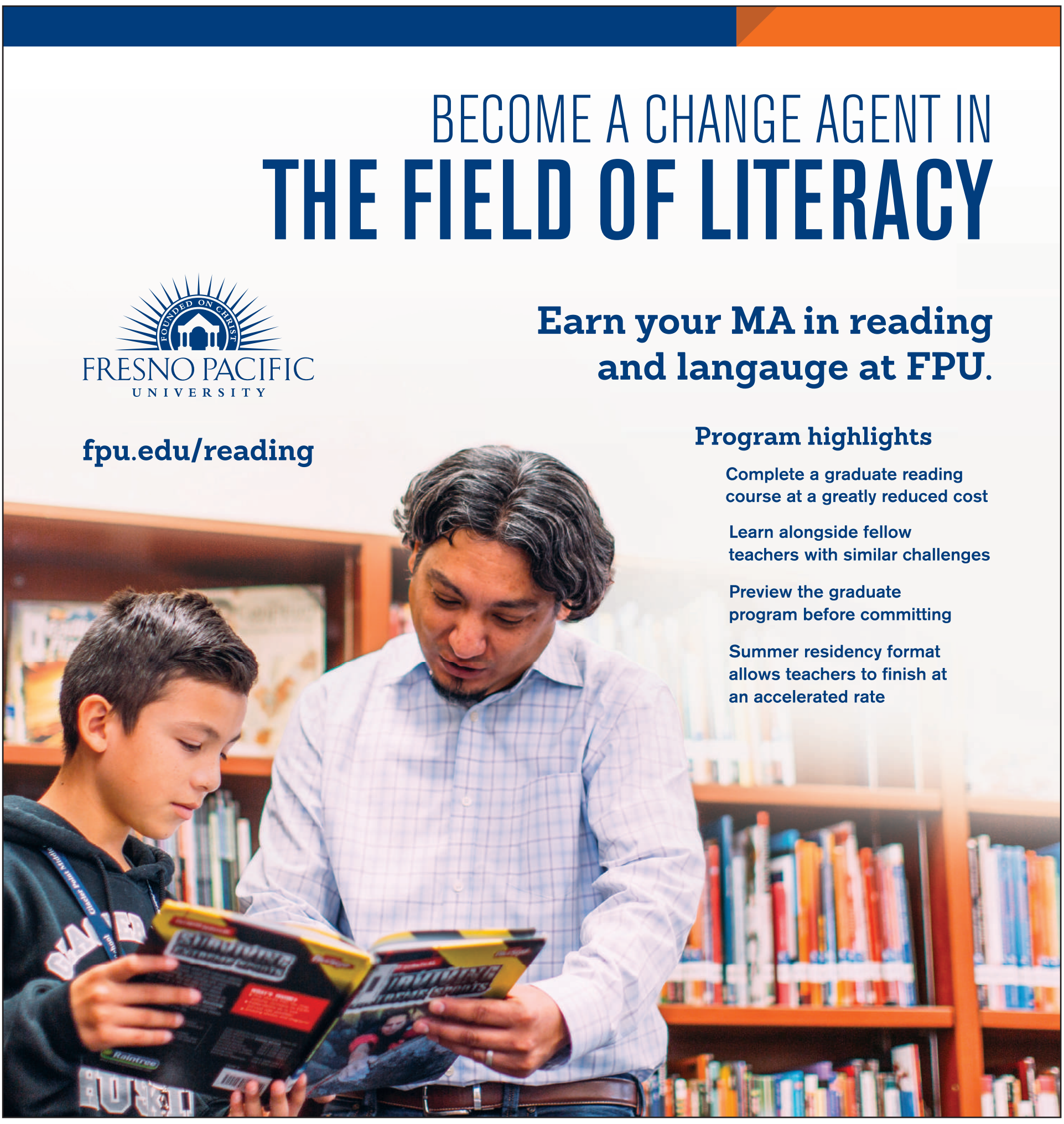
The following upcoming workshop and events will be offered by the CUSD Special Education Department's Family Resource Center. For more information or to inquire about an interpreter, please call 327-8455.

■ **"Planning the Future for Your Student with an IEP,"** 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., Feb. 5, Professional Development Building (PDB), 1680 David E. Cook Way, Clovis. Free. If your student has an IEP but will graduate with a diploma and you are wondering what is next, this workshop can help. Presenters will be from Clovis and Fresno city colleges, the Department of Rehabilitation, high school counselors and program specialists, Resources for Independence Central Valley, and ResCare – Youth Workforce Program. RSVP: Eventbrite at https://tinyurl.com/Future-planning2-5-18.

■ **"Come Play! Why It's So Important,"** 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., Feb. 26, PDB, 1680 David E. Cook Way, Clovis. Free. A practical, hands-on workshop where attendees will learn the purpose and power of play. This is designed for parents of children birth to 5 years old. Social interaction is the foundation and an essential prerequisite for the development of speech and language skills. Presented by Clovis Infant Toddler Intervention (CITI Kids) teachers. RSVP: Eventbrite at https://tinyurl.com/Play-2-5-18.

■ Nominations are being accepted for the **Special Education Exceptional Person of the 2018-19** school year. Families, staff, students and volunteers who have been exceptional in helping students with special needs may be nominated through March 1. Those chosen will be honored at a reception April 23. The nomination form can be found at: https://tinyurl.com/ExPerson2019.



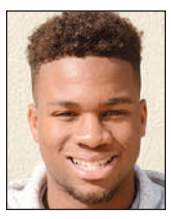


BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Celebrating TOGETHER

Q "Martin Luther King Jr. said, 'I have a dream…' What is your dream for the future of America?"

"My dream for the future of America includes freedom and opportunity for everyone. I want to see less poverty and more union within minority communities."
Leah Moment
Clovis High



"My dream for the future of America is to nurture the youth into future leaders who will bring peace and stability to our nation."
Ahmad Kirkland
Clovis West

"My dream for America is complete equality for different races, genders, sexualities, etc. It would be an America where we focus on humanitarian issues and everyone wanted to be involved in change. I want America to be a country where we are not so caught up in our own lives that we ignore people in need."
Abbi Akande
Buchanan

"I dream of a society where we can live without racism, but also without hatred towards any group no matter race, religion, sexual orientation or any other unique trait that makes us human. We as a nation thrive with diversity, and our differences are what enables us to strive towards a more prosperous civilization."
Alex Jenkins
Clovis North

"If the US wants to help the world and contribute to the advancement of the world in the future, we need to have youth that are educated on what is becoming more important. In a world where technology is king, the United States lacks. That's why I have a dream that our education system can be reformed to help the future world."
Mariah Stennis
Clovis East

Q Do you know these figures in U.S. history?

Clovis Unified AASU students created this list of African Americans they felt everyone should know about.

- **Robert Abbott,** founded the *Chicago Defender* and paved the way for black newspapers, magazines and books.
- **Maya Angelou,** poet who touched millions and taught us how to write our stories.
- **Ella Baker,** civil rights activist, inspired young people to join the civil rights movement while encouraging non-violent protest.
- **Shirley Chisholm**, first black woman elected to the U.S. Congress, served seven terms, coined the phrase, "If they don't give you a seat at the table bring a folding chair."

- **Benjamin Oliver Davis Sr.,** first African American general/colonel for the U.S. Army.
- **Frederick Douglass,** abolitionist who documented the horrors of slavery and implored the country to abolish the institution.
- **Charles Drew**, African American physician who discovered how to separate plasma; medical director of the American Red Cross' National Blood Donor Service.
- **W.E.B. Du Bois,** a sociologist, historian, civil rights activist, Pan-Africanist, author, writer and editor.
- **Aretha Louise Franklin**, singer, songwriter, civil rights activist, actress and pianist.
- **Jesse Jackson,** civil rights activist, climbed the ranks of the Democratic Party and increased African American participation in politics.
- **Katherine Johnson,** mathematician and physicist who helped launch the first use of electronic digital computers at NASA and helped calculate the orbit for the 1969 Apollo II flight to the moon.
- **Martin Luther King Jr.,** minister and activist considered the most visible spokesperson and leader in the civil rights movement
- **Mary Bethune McLeod,** advisor to five U.S. presidents, founded Bethune-Cookman University and the National Council of Negro Women, and was one of the first female African American college presidents.
- **Barack and Michelle Obama**, first African American U.S. president and first lady, serving from 2009 to 2017.
- **Rosa Parks,** activist in the civil rights movement best known for her pivotal role in the Montgomery bus boycott.
- **Oprah Winfrey,** media executive, actress, talk show host, television producer and philanthropist.
- **Carter Godwin Woodson,** historian, author, journalist and the founder of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History.
- **Malcom X,** American Muslim minister and human rights activist.

What is Black History Month?

By Sonja Wilson
Clovis High Counselor/AASU advisor ***and***
Ronda Turney
Buchanan AASU advisor, math teacher

February is Black History Month, a time to celebrate the history, lives and accomplishments of African Americans past, present and future. It was originally established by Carter G. Woodson as Negro History Week in 1926. Woodson believed black people should know their past so that they could intelligently participate in the affairs of our country. Woodson was the first historian to pioneer the study of African American history. He later set the foundation along with James Baldwin for what is now known as Black History Month.

Schools in Clovis Unified honor the month with activities to educate and celebrate the role African Americans play in U.S. history. The following Buchanan High activity list is a sample of CUSD events.

■ List of quotes by African Americans – one quote per day is included in morning announcements over the intercom.

■ Art gallery decorated by students with posters of the most influential African Americans in history who have paved the way for others. Our freshman and sophomore classes take turns touring the art gallery with their teachers.

■ Students annually perform a Black History Month Assembly for all History, AP History and Economics classes, made up mainly of juniors and seniors.

■ Students visit elementary schools and Alta Sierra Intermediate to give presentations about the richness of African American history.

■ Students attend the African American Student Leadership Conference.

■ AASU club officers educate one another on historical figures. For example, the lesson this week was on W.E.B Du Bois.

■ AASU club officers attended the Community Martin Luther King Jr. Breakfast in January and also participate in the march in downtown Fresno that symbolizes the struggles African Americans have endured for equality.

Browder Scholars Program looks at African history

By Saul Salinas
Coordinator of Community Relations

Clovis Unified School District is excited to offer CUSD high school students across the district a free and voluntary cultural immersion opportunity through the Browder Scholars Program. This is a chance for students to get to know one another while participating in a fun, yet rigorous learning environment on Saturdays over a five-month period.

Renowned cultural historian, professor and author, Dr. Anthony Browder developed the program that guides students on a journey to learn the history of the African experience in the United States and abroad.

Clovis Unified launched the Browder Scholars Program Feb. 2, with more sessions to follow once a month. The program creates academic, social and emotional connections to African history, defines African American history with positive imagery and is available to students of all races. Geared for high school students, the program's primary goal is improving academic success for African American students.

Participating students engage in cultural awareness activities that incorporate reading, writing and critical thinking skills. The program aims to enhance a student's motivation and inspiration for learning. At the conclusion of the sessions, students may have the opportunity to visit Washington, D.C., and continue to learn about ancient Egyptian influence on the U.S. Founding Fathers. In past years, this field trip was conducted by Dr. Browder himself and was titled, "Egypt on the Potomac."

Learn more about the program and future sessions by contacting your school's AASU advisor or contacting Browder Scholars instructors Sonja Wilson or Demetra Vincent-Walker at Clovis High 327-1350, or Ronda Turney at Buchanan 327-3000.

Students join Martin Luther Kings Jr.'s dream

Clovis North High freshman Trisha Prajapati won first place in this year's Fresno County Office of Education's Martin Luther King Jr., Speech Contest. She and two other CUSD students delivered speeches during the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Breakfast held Jan. 19 at the Clovis Veterans Memorial Building. Excerpts of their speeches are below. Full speeches and those from other CUSD students appear online at cusd.com.

Informed Action in a Democracy

…Today, everyone above the age of 18, no matter the race or gender, is allowed to vote. Together we are fulfilling Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s dream through informed action. Being educated, many people today are taking advantage of their right to vote. Voting is an important action that many Americans are given the right to do, achieved with the help of civil rights fighters. Even today, however, over 50 years after the passage of the Voting Rights Act, we must remain vigilant. There are places in America where there are attempts to turn back some of these hard-fought protections. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. had a dream that one day everyone will have equal rights no matter the color of skin and that everyone will use this advantage to take informed action to help not only ourselves but our country and our future as well.

– Trisha Prajapati, Clovis North freshman

■■■

What would MLK do?

… As the product of an interracial marriage, I was born with the mindset that my surroundings would reflect the melting pot of the beautiful family from which I was raised and through this existence I would someday see a peaceful existence. I have yet to see the world that I desire.

Sadly, our country isn't always like the home that I grew up in. There are bouts of racial injustice still plaguing our nation.

…As we exist together – all races, genders, and backgrounds in a world filled with unpredictable events and circumstances let's reminisce in the beautiful legacy and life of the great civil rights pioneer. I encourage everyone to go forward on our journey thinking: what would Martin Luther King do?

– Faith McKesson, Clovis High senior

■■■

Beacon of Hope

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr was a prime example of what happens when belief is merged with activism. In a day and age where he faced animosity and hatred at every turn, Dr. King was never derailed from his goal of equality for all men. His work was a call to action for the American people.

Using the practice of non-violence, he was able to achieve something no one had before him. He started a discussion about race and discrimination on a global level and held the American government accountable for the mistreatment of people of color. He was a catalyst for a movement that forever altered race relations in this country.

– Abigail Akande, Buchanan junior

AASU lets students share, learn

AASU: ***Our purpose is to show respect for African American heritage while creating a positive influence in the community. We strive to reach out and lend a helping hand so others might have an opportunity to experience a better perspective and future. The goal of AASU is to become active in the community, form academic mentoring groups and promote college education.***

By Jalen Stafford
Clovis East freshman

The African American Student Union (AASU) is a resource for African Americans and other students to enjoy, communicate and learn about the history of African culture.

In 1968, five African Americans, Clifford E. Darden, E. Theodore Lewis Jr., Lillian Lincoln Lambert, George R. Price, and A. Leroy Willis, created the African American Student Union. Their commitment became a driving force behind the enrollment of multiple African American college students of the Harvard University Business School, shaping the AASU's future.

The African American Student Union provides social, cultural and spiritual events throughout many communities within the United States. Furthermore, the corporation also ensured that the AASU Black Student Union clubs in high schools or colleges were to improve relationships between African American students themselves, and students of other ethnic or cultural backgrounds.

AASU hosts different events throughout the year from national or state conferences to events for family and friends.

Students' experience

"AASU has immersed me into a new understanding of how I can apply myself into school and anything I feel passionate about."

Lauren Fowler, sophomore

■■■

"I have learned how to take on big responsibilities and learned to be a leader on my campus and community. I love being around people that look like me because they understand the struggles I go through. Most importantly, I have learned that I am a smart, beautiful, talented and powerful black young woman."

Sanaa Scott, senior

■■■

"AASU has encouraged me to be the change I want to see and perform my very best in my classes. By being a successful student, I break the stereotypes society puts on me. I also, gain more knowledge of my history and culture through AASU to educate myself and others."

Madii Frazier, senior

Finance, ag, teaching part of CTE classes

■ **CUSD Career Technical Education Night**
Feb. 21, 6 to 8 p.m.
Clovis Veterans Memorial Building

Showcasing CUSD CTE pathways and courses – enrollment for the 2019-20 school year is underway.

Students, grades 8 to 11, and their parents are invited to attend and get a look at the many opportunities that are available. Currently enrolled students and staff will discuss course information and demonstrate exciting work-based learning projects.

Buchanan, Clovis, Clovis East, Clovis North, Clovis West high schools and the Center for Advanced Research and Technology (CART) will have information booths related to their specific CTE pathways.

Details: Chuck Sandoval, CTE director, 327-0664.

CTE programs have something for every student

CUSD Today

Career Technical Education (CTE) programs continue to grow in the Clovis Unified School District, and student applications for these courses for the 2019-20 school year are currently underway. The district will hold its first CTE Night Feb. 21 providing interested students a close-up look at the kinds of programs available, with current students conducting demonstrations and staff on hand to provide information.

CTE classes offer content-rich programs containing both academics and hands-on skills that prepare students for college and career. Students apply their learning to real-world application, and the skills acquired will continue to follow them through life. CTE programs have a literal connection to the field being studied.

Clovis Unified offers 18 CTE pathways where students are engaged in course-related profession-based activities such as harvesting crops of lettuce and almonds, observing a knee surgery or interning in a banking facility.

"Students are learning to think like real professionals in their fields of interest. This can be seen on a daily basis in a CTE classroom. For example, students now learning to assemble an electrical car might one day get a job for Tesla Motor Co., or students learning in their classes how to frame walls might go on to have a construction job during the day while attending college in the evening to pursue a life-long goal of becoming an architect," said Chuck Sandoval, CUSD's director of CTE as of this school year.

Sandoval has been visiting schools throughout the district this year in his new role, speaking with students about their interests in taking CTE courses.

"Students have told me how CTE courses help them learn about their career interest first-hand from a teacher who has previously worked in the field. The experiences help them in making decisions about their future," Sandoval said. "CTE is making a difference in the lives of our students allowing them to see the connection between college and career."

Programs offered in CUSD

The California Department of Education identified 15 Career Technical Education industry sectors that provide the framework for college and career exploration and attainment. Clovis has developed 18 separate pathways within these industry sectors. The following lists pathways by school site, but students are able to participate in CTE pathways not on their home campus. They are:

Photos special to *CUSD Today* by Ron Webb.

***Top:** Students in the CTE Agricultural program at Clovis East harvest lettuce they have grown that will be sold to local restaurants.* ***Above:** In the CTE Financial Services pathway at Clovis West, some students intern and learn in the EECU branch located on the campus.*

■ **Buchanan High:** Design, Visual and Media Arts; Education; Engineering Design; Environmental Resources; Food Service and Hospitality; Patient Care; Performing Arts; and Production and Managerial Arts.

■ **Clovis East High:** Agricultural Mechanics; Agricultural Science; Animal Science; Plant and Soil Science; Education; Emergency Response; Public Safety; and Patient Care.

■ **Clovis High:** Design, Visual and Media Arts; Education; Residential and Commercial Construction; and Systems Diagnostics, Service and Repair.

■ **Clovis North High:** Education; Patient Care; and Software and Systems Development.

■ **Clovis West High:** Education; Financial Services; Systems, Diagnostics, Service and Repair; and Performing Arts.

Many of the pathway courses are UC approved, and dual enrollment courses are offered in partnership with Clovis Community College, Fresno City College, Reedley College, and CSU Fresno. These partnerships serve to promote strong post-secondary academic skills, while at the same time provide opportunities for students to deepen their knowledge of selected occupations. College and Career readiness comes to life in these post-secondary partnerships.

Students interested in learning more or enrolling in CTE pathway courses can visit their high school counseling center or schedule an appointment to speak with a counselor regarding occupational interests and opportunities.

NOW ACCEPTING NEW PATIENTS!

CMP Care Center-Pediatrics
1570 E. Herndon Ave.
(559) 437-7300

Veronica Ramirez, MD
Board Certified
Pediatrics

Quinton Young, DO
Board Certified
Pediatrics

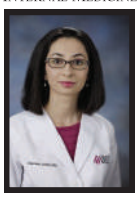
Mercedes Chapa, MD
Board Certified
Pediatrics

CMP Peachwood Medical Group
275 W. Herndon Ave.
(559) 324-6200

William Van Beever, DO
Board Certified
Pediatrics

Amitasha Mann , MD
Board Certified
Internal Medicine

Naveen Alam, MD
Board Certified
Internal Medicine

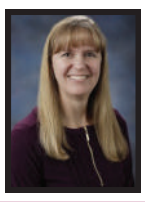


CMP West
5715 N. West Ave., #102
(559) 438-0800

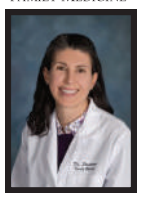
CMP Northwest Medical Group
7355 N. Palm Ave., #100
(559) 271-6302

John Kim, MD
Board Certified
Pediatrics

Laurie Dahlberg, CPNP
Pediatrics



Kristen Stockamp, MD
Board Certified
Family Medicine



CMP Copeland
7145 N. Chestnut Ave. #101
(559) 299-1178

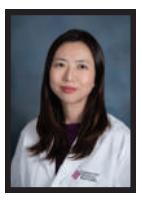
Jay Downey, MD
Board Certified
Family Medicine

CMP Clovis
681 Med. Ctr. Dr. W., #103
(559) 299-2200

Peter Zaki, MD
Board Certfied
Family Medicine

CMP Care Center North
1570 E. Herndon Ave.
(559) 437-7380

Ji Young Park, MD
Board Certified
Family Medicine



CMP Woodward Park
6331 N. Fresno St., #104
(559) 437-2700

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We depend upon partnership, community

By Eimear O'Farrell, Ed.D.
Superintendent

OUR first and long-time Superintendent "Doc" Buchanan often reminded us that "the schools belong to the people," and it's a truth that we have lived out in Clovis Unified where we processed 44,000 community facility use requests last school year alone. We are partners with you, a community that is heavily invested in our local schools, and we want to be transparent and inclusive in our stewardship of our community's children and their finances.

Eimear O'Farrell, Ed.D.

To that end, we devoted an entire issue of *CUSD Today* in January to the topic of our budget and finance, and we sent that issue to every resident in our district boundary (whether or not they have students in our schools). Since that issue arrived in homes, I have received many positive comments from individuals who expressed appreciation for learning about the funding structure of CUSD especially in comparison to other valley and state school districts that receive significantly higher funding than Clovis Unified.

We welcome a conversation about how we make decisions related to finances and our budget, and our team of dedicated employees in our business services division wake up every day thinking about how we can stretch every dollar to meet the needs of our students. A great example of these types of conversations is the recent convening of both our Local Control Accountability Plan citizens planning committee of over 300 people. Another example is the recent convening of a 40-plus person committee of local citizens who will spend the next several months studying capital facilities needs in Clovis Unified as we continue to serve our ever-expanding community.

This group is made up of parents, retired citizens, local business leaders, city planning staff, various taxpayer and citizen interest groups, and classified and certificated employees of the district. Each member of this committee brings a different lens to the conversation, and each has a valuable perspective for us to hear as we look to the future of our district.

The citizens committee will spend the next several months closely studying our school facilities program; modernization, maintenance and renovation needs of each campus; and available resources for ensuring that every school in our district remains in good repair and is kept updated to standards of excellence for students.

Part of their conversation will be about whether or not to recommend that our Governing Board consider placing a facility bond measure on the ballot in the future. Their voices are critically important.

Historically, facility bonds have been difference-makers in Clovis Unified. It's through these local dollars that we have been able to build new schools and facilities, and keep every campus (no matter its age) a state-of-the-art learning environment of which our students and community can be proud. When considering the strain that our lower-than-average-per-pupil funding creates on our operating budget, we are constantly mindful that it is our facility bonds that have helped balance this inequity by providing resources to protect the school facilities that our community highly values.

Our Committee on Capital Facility Needs is just one of many different groups that help us remain in touch with the needs and wants of our community. We recently counted more than 120 different groups of students, parents and community members that meet regularly across the district to discuss issues of importance to our schools. From student groups meeting with their school principals, to parents meeting to discuss our Local Control Accountability Plan priorities, every one of these groups influences our decision making.

Every week I am in classrooms around the district, observing our teachers and school leaders in action. During these visits I witness ample proof that even as we balance the business of running the state's 15th largest school district, we are keeping the "main thing" the main thing – the success of our students.

In our classrooms I see enthusiastic teachers who creatively engage students in learning. Whether it was the Clark Intermediate teacher who recently had her entire class reciting the U.S. Constitution during their history lesson, the students in our special education class at Clovis East High learning how to run their own "East Side Café" coffee shop, or the students at Sierra Vista Elementary school who didn't notice me in the room because they were so engaged in an ordering of decimals activity.

The phrase I hear most around the district is employees telling me how much they LOVE their jobs! From plant supervisors to catering managers, to our office staff and teachers, our team loves our kids and takes pride in their progress and success. Our team values providing an exemplary learning environment in facilities that reflect a community's priority on education, and truly exemplifies our theme "Better Together" as we strive to educate the next generation of citizens and civic leaders.

Our schools belong to each of you, and we are proud to be your partner in building a bright future for our community.

Photo special to *CUSD Today*.
Nelson Elementary preschooler Sergio Coronado makes a letter "8" into a mask.

LESSONS

Inspirations by, for and from our CUSD students

"When children pretend, they're using their imaginations to move beyond the bounds of reality. A stick can be a magic wand. A sock can be a puppet. A small child can be a superhero."

FRED ROGERS
(AMERICAN CHILDREN'S TELEVISION HOST)

Crystal Award winners make a difference in CUSD

Phenomenal. Passionate. Dedicated. Humble.

These are just a few of the words describing the 32 exceptional Clovis Unified employees who are the 2017-18 school-year Crystal Award recipients who will be celebrated at The Crystals Feb. 27 at the Performing Arts Center.

A gala reception begins at 6:30 p.m. and the ceremony gets underway in the Paul Shaghoian Concert Hall at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are not required and attendance is free. All district employees, family and friends of the recipients are invited to attend.

The Crystal Award is Clovis Unified's highest employee recognition. It is given to those employees whose passion, innovation, dedication and dynamic work ethic far surpasses their job description. These are people who in tangible, measurable ways selflessly help students reach their full potential in mind, body and spirit. They go above and beyond what is expected, and they do so without prompting. They lead and inspire others by their humble nature and heart-felt examples. Employees are nominated for the award by their peers or supervisor, and judging panels made up of Clovis Unified employees follow a strict rubric that outlines criteria in selecting the year's recipients.

This year's Crystal Award winners are each, in their own way, a testament to the exceptional work employees are doing across the district daily.

In this issue of *CUSD Today*, nine winners are profiled in alphabetical order. The remaining recipients will be profiled in upcoming editions of *CUSD Today*.

By Kathleen Coates
Special to CUSD Today

➤ Show your support

- The Crystals
- 7:30 p.m.
- Feb. 27
- CUSD Performing Arts Center
  2770 E. International Ave., Fresno
- The public is invited to help us celebrate the year's top employees. No tickets required.

Kirsten Aguilar
English Teacher, Clovis North High

One word keeps popping up when folks talk about Kirsten Aguilar: "passionate."

From her role as English teacher at Clovis North High, to a department head, to a club advisor, Aguilar is dedicated to doing what's best for students. And she goes to extreme lengths, burning the midnight oil, not just grading, but giving feedback that helps each student write better than the previous time.

One can see concrete evidence of Aguilar's passion in the scores her students achieve. For example, from 2017-18 her students' test scores rose from 96 percent to a 99 percent passing rate on the SBAC. Overseeing a new reading apprenticeship program, her team brought up reading scores from 55 percent to 70 percent in the Above Standard category. Aguilar is responsible for teaching three curriculums, English 11, AP Composition and Contemporary issues, yet she finds time to supervise four clubs. One student called Kirsten a "mother figure," because she cares so much for her students, helping them academically and socially.

Fellow teachers praise her for her collaboration and are "astonished at the time she gives" to help them succeed. While she was Professional Learning Community (PLC) lead, she found a way to bring together teachers from different walks of life to create common lesson plans and assessments. "The mark of a great leader" said one colleague of this top educator.

Shelley Arakelian
Fourth-Grade Teacher, Garfield Elementary

Shelley Arakelian, a fourth-grade teacher and coach at Garfield Elementary, is all about educating the WHOLE child in mind, body and spirit, and educating ALL children, per two important "Doc'isms."

Her principal calls Shelley "a winner" who also makes her students winners.

The 16-year teaching veteran is particularly efficient at helping her students earn Garfield's prestigious Block G awards. Last year 77 percent of fourth-graders who won the award were Arakelian's students.

Arakelian is always eager to volunteer for extra duties. Teachers are required to commit to two adjunct duties – this year she signed up for nine… of which only two are stipend. They included Benchmark Lead, Master Teacher, Red Ribbon Week Coordinator and Cross-Country Coach.

Inside the classroom, she teaches students that "math is your friend," and increases students' self-confidence. Arakelian is known for setting high standards for herself and her students.

As fourth-grade PLC lead, she created a culture in which teachers prioritized the needs of students. She also jumps at the chance to further her professional education, and after trainings, shares her knowledge with all teachers, benefitting kids outside her classroom. As cross-country teacher and coach, Arakelian does everything she can to help them run better and faster – including running right alongside them.

Jaime Arredondo
English Teacher, Clovis East High

Clovis East English teacher Jaime Arredondo is one of those CUSD employees who is dedicated to the max and is always volunteering.

As English lead teacher and department chairman, he works with other teachers on curriculum. He volunteered to remain faculty senate adviser, class adviser and Academic Senate member because of his proven effectiveness.

Arredondo is known for taking over the school canned food drive, having students make a video and trying to best the number of cans collected year after year. Arredondo works with students who are academically gifted and those who are academically challenged. He even makes breakfast for students about to take the Advanced Placement exam for college.

When the school was impacted by tragic suicides, he started Timberwolf Territory, co-opting teachers to open their doors during lunch for students, providing them a place to hang out and talk about their frustrations and concerns. Arredondo is committed to excellence, mastering his teaching craft through humor, calmness and high expectations. Students are encouraged to seek out a personal writing style and take pride in their work! His colleagues say his classroom isn't just effective, but it serves as a seminar from which they can learn, as many have observed his methods and tremendous educator techniques.

➤ Please see *Awards,* Page 9

— ABOUT US —

CUSD Today, Clovis Unified's good news publication, is sent directly to the homes of all CUSD parents and staff, as well as district supporters. In an effort to unify the CUSD community, the newspaper highlights the achievements of Clovis Unified students and staff; profiles new and updated Governing Board policies; and shares general news and information happening within the district.

Circulation: 33,000.

Funding: All costs associated with producing, printing and mailing *CUSD Today* are entirely funded by our advertisers. To show your appreciation of their support, we ask you to consider patronizing these businesses and services as the need arises.

Story submissions: Please submit all ideas to the Site Coordinator at your school. Please contact your school to find out who your Site Coordinator is. Editorial deadlines are two weeks before the publication date. We do our best to include as many submissions in each issue as our editorial space will allow.

***CUSD Today* Staff**

Publishing & Editorial
Clovis Unified School District
1450 Herndon Avenue
Clovis, CA 93611
Telephone (559) 327-9094
Fax (559) 327-2957
cusdtoday@cusd.com
Kelly Avants, APR
Chief Communication Officer
327-9092
Patti J. Lippert
Managing Editor
327-9094
Sara Almaraz
Advertising
327-9095
Verna Garcia
Graphic Designer
224-9711

CUSD Governing Board

Brian Heryford, *President*, 299-4586
Christopher Casado, *Vice-President*, 908-9953
Steven G. Fogg, M.D., *Clerk*, 269-7000
Susan Hatmaker, 288-2743
Ginny L. Hovsepian, 434-8272
Elizabeth J. Sandoval, 291-7564
Tiffany Stoker Madsen, 392-1014

CUSD Administration

Eimear O'Farrell, Ed.D.
Superintendent
327-9100
Don Ulrich, Ed.D.
Deputy Superintendent
327-9107
Norm Anderson
Associate Superintendent, School Leadership
327-9350
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Michael Johnston
Associate Superintendent, Administrative Services
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➤ **BOARD BRIEFS**

Four new principals named for 2019-20 school year

By Kelly Avants
Chief Communications Officer

Jan. 16

Clovis Unified's Governing Board appointed four new elementary school principals to positions vacant in the 2019-20 school year because of upcoming retirements or moves. The new appointments, which are effective July 1:

Donelle Kellom

Andrew Bolls

Michael Olson

Pamela Hoffhaus

Donelle Kellom, from Sr. GIS at Cedarwood Elementary to the position of Principal at Clovis Elementary School following the retirement of current Principal Isabel Facio.

Andrew Bolls, from learning director at Clovis High School to the position of Principal at Jefferson Elementary School following the retirement of current Principal Jeff Tiftick.

Michael Olson, from the position of learning director at the Reagan Educational Center, to the position of Principal at Fugman Elementary following the appointment of current Principal Jennifer Thomas to the position of Deputy Principal at the Reagan Educational Center.

Pamela Hoffhaus, from the position of learning director at the Reagan Educational Center, to the position of Principal at Reagan Elementary following the transfer of current Principal Kacey Gibson to lead efforts to open a new school at Shields and Locan avenues (opening August 2020).

Before the start of the meeting, members of the Governing Board participated in a workshop to take a close look at student achievement data and discuss instructional strategies to support continued growth in student achievement. This hour-and-a-half long workshop was conducted by members of the Curriculum Instruction and Accountability department.

Employees who were nominees to the Fresno County Educator of the Year awards in 2018 were also recognized during the meeting. Last November, Fresno County Office of Education honored Director of the Sierra Outdoor School Mike Olenchalk, bus driver Larry Crayne, and Clovis West math teacher Denise DenHartog for their outstanding work to support students. Members of the board thanked the trio for regularly going well "above and beyond" for their students and colleagues.

The board also recognized the district's 2018 Golden Bell Award-winning preschool inclusion programs at Copper Hills, Jefferson and Reagan elementary schools; CSBA Golden Quill honoree Clovis Roundup Reporter Paul Meadors who was nominated by the district for his quality reporting on school athletics; and welcomed three newly appointed administrators (General Legal Counsel Maiya Yang; Clovis West Deputy Principal May Moua; and Reagan Educational Center Deputy Principal Jennifer Thomas) to their new roles.

In other action, the board:

■ Accepted the annual report on the district's After School Education and Safety (ASES) program.

■ Approved new courses of study for use in the district's secondary schools for the 2019-20 school year. The nine new courses were reviewed by members of the board's Curriculum Subcommittee before being presented to the board for consideration. New courses include: Building Information Modeling – CTE (CHS), Engineering America (BHS), Honors Computer Integrated Manufacturing – CTE (BHS), Honors Engineering Design and Development – CTE (BHS), Honors Environmental Sustainability – CTE (BHS), Integrated Physical Science (BHS, CHS, CEHS, CNHS, CWHS), Introduction to Musical Theater (CNHS), Introduction to Design 1 & 2 – CTE (BHS), and Introduction to Education (Granite Ridge Intermediate).

■ Held public hearings regarding the Preliminary Environmental Assessment, the Suitability of Real Property, and the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the proposed Fowler and McKinley elementary school site, and later adopted resolutions in each of these three areas.

■ Authorized the submission grant requests for Part I of the annual Indian Education Grant, and the Electric School Bus Replacement Program.

■ Authorized the placement of a Special Education student in a non-public school as identified in their individualized education plan (IEP).

■ Adopted the annual Student Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) and the categorical budget for each school for the current school year.

■ Approved construction costs for the new elementary school at Shields and Locan avenues as outlined in the lease-lease back agreement.

■ Approved bids for construction projects (the BHS culinary arts CTE classroom remodel) and Campus Catering Specialty Food supplies, and the use of a piggyback bid with Glendale Unified School District to purchase computer products, services and related items.

■ Approved an agreement with Raptor Visitor Management, a visitor and volunteer management system to assist in ensuring that visitors meet expectations outlined in board policy.

Dec. 12

The Dec. 12 Governing Board meeting included the annual organizational meeting. After board members Betsy Sandoval, Tiffany Stoker Madsen and Susan Hatmaker took the oath of office, members then selected Brian Heryford as president, Chris Casado to vice president and Dr. Steven Fogg as clerk.

Subcommittee appointments were also decided as follows:

- **Budget Subcommittee:** Casado, Hovsepian and Hatmaker
- **Facilities Subcommittee:** Sandoval, Fogg and Heryford
- **Curriculum Subcommittee:** Hovsepian, Madsen and Hatmaker
- **CART:** Sandoval (representing the CUSD Board)
- **Joint CUSD and City of Fresno:** Madsen and Fogg
- **Joint CUSD and City of Clovis:** Heryford and Sandoval
- **Fresno County Committee on School District Organization:** Sandoval
- **CSBA Delegate Assembly Subregion 10-B:** Heryford

Board members heard a report from Clovis North Area Superintendent Darin Tockey on a grant award under consideration. Clovis North has been awarded a one-year pilot program for mobile security systems offered to the school by Knightscope Security. The company has offered three mobile security devices for use up to a two-year period to study their usefulness in augmenting existing security systems on campus. The district is evaluating the offer and the potential long-term impact of the use of these systems on the campus.

❑

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Governing Board is 6:30 p.m. Feb. 6 at the Professional Development Building, 1680 David E. Cook Way, Clovis. Complete minutes, agendas and videos of board meetings are available online at cusd.com.

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Photo special to *CUSD Today.*

Member of the Army Reserve's 109th Medical Detachment Veterinary Services Support open care packages they received from Valley Oak Elementary sixth-graders.

Army veterinary unit gets treats from Valley Oak

Valley Oak Elementary sixth-grade families recently donated items filling 10 boxes that were sent to the Army Reserve's 109th Medical Detachment Veterinary Services Support currently serving in Afghanistan. Valley Oak father Matthew Conlan serves in the unit, and his twin sons Casey and Parker are in Andrea Gregory's sixth-grade class at the school.

"The care packages that we received for the holidays were great," wrote Major Conlan. "It means so much to each and every one of us that [Valley Oak Elementary students] would take the time and energy to think about us. I know it must have been quite a task to collect everything and get it shipped. Everyone at Valley Oak is amazing."

According to Conlan, the 109th Medical Detachment Veterinary Services Support provides veterinary medical support to military working dogs and also ensures that a wholesome food supply is delivered to all US military personnel in the country. Military dogs have saved many U.S. soldiers' lives by being able to smell things that might have been placed to cause harm. If soldiers are sick because they have been exposed to something like ticks or mosquitos that cause disease, they can't perform their duty. Same thing if soldiers get sick because they have eaten spoiled food, they can't perform their duties. The unit has a veterinarian, veterinary technician and food inspectors.

The care packages contained some of the unit's favorite treats, including peppermint bark, dried fruit, chocolate covered raisins and kettle corn microwave popcorn, and also some practical items like lotion, dryer sheets and food-storage bags.

Shipping for the 10 boxes overseas was kindly paid for by Louie Brosi, owner of Field House, and David and Leslie Miller, owners of the Royal Flush.

Photo special to *CUSD Today.*

Students at Clark Intermediate explore various parts of the world using Virtual Reality Google Daydream headsets.

New technology opens the world to Clark students

Clark Intermediate students in Matt Berry's AB and technology classes took a quick field trip recently to the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History – and then China, and then some went on to the Great Pyramids. Impossible? Not with the new Virtual Reality Google Daydream headsets that were recently on loan to the classroom.

"Our students are amazed," Berry said. "The few short tours we have taken correspond with our history unit of Medieval China. Students immediately felt a deeper connection and more knowledgeable in regard to the Great Wall and the Silk Road. Seeing the actual location in 360 degree imaging really aided my instruction. No longer do we just read and look at some pictures, but we go there."

About 175 students and other curious staff members experienced the headsets.

Broncos in space

Not one but two Clovis North High teams won the "NASA Let Your Invention Fly" Engineering Design Challenge at Fresno State in October. Their designs will be printed on the International Space Station and used by the astronauts to keep tools from floating away.

The teams are:

9th/10th-grade team: "Screw Driving," **Sofia Guitron, Dylan Plunkett, Ryen Reher, Nathan Maldonado** and advisor Steve Elsberry

11th/12th-grade team: "Space M.A.T.S.," **Arya Desai, Ting Guo, Mullairathinam Velappan, Saajid Ahmed** and advisor Mary Allen.

Historical medicine given examination

Clovis East science teacher Trevor Reis, who was part of the annual Civil War Revisited in Kearney Park, dropped into his character as Civil War surgeon Dr. Crawford Long at school recently. He showed students the medical practices of that time and spoke about the use of leaches, tourniquets and the frequency of amputations as cures.

Golden Eagle Burrito, 'celebrities' part of School Lunch Week

A student-created lunch item – the Clovis West Golden Eagle Burrito – was on the Clovis West High School menu as part of the celebration of National School Lunch Week. Students in Clovis West's Transition Program were part of a special nutrition education and meal preparation class hosted by Clovis West's Campus Catering Supervisor Kristy LeBeouf. During the class, students developed their own recipe for an entrée that meets the National School Lunch Program Guidelines. Students also discussed the many factors that Clovis Unified's Campus Catering Department considers when planning meals, including USDA nutritional regulations requiring whole grains, lean protein, low fat and low sodium meals in school.

The students returned to the cafeteria and helped prepare more than 50 servings of the Golden Eagle Burrito, which was filled with fajita chicken, refried beans, Spanish rice and a Mexican cheese blend. It was served with lettuce, sour cream, guacamole and salsa.

"The students were very excited. They were so eager to try this and serve it to other kids," LeBeouf said. LeBeouf said she developed the program this year as a way to help kids understand what goes into creating a school lunch and seeing what a career possibility in the culinary field might look like.

During National School Lunch Week, all campuses in Clovis Unified held activities and celebrity servers – that included teachers, coaches, administrators and Clovis Unified Governing Board members – made special pop-up appearances at cafeterias.

Cubs care for wildfire victims

Students at Garfield Elementary hand painted ornaments over the holiday season that were then sold as a fundraiser to benefit those impacted by the recent wildfires in California. More than $3,500 was raised. The proceeds were shared among three organizations: the California Community Foundation's Wildfire Relief Fund, California Fire Foundation and North Valley Animal Disaster Group: Camp Fire.

Weldon keeps the lights on

Weldon Elementary's afterschool program ASES joined in the annual Lights On Afterschool this fall, a nationwide celebration of afterschool programs. They were one of more than 8,000 sites across the nation sending the message that afterschool is key to children's success, and that it is important to keep the lights on and doors open after school and providing programs. Parents, neighbors, school officials and others helped Weldon celebrate its safe, stimulating afterschool programs and for the special day.

Afterschool programs have many benefits. They support working families by ensuring that children are safe and productive when the school day ends; they make communities stronger by involving students, parents, business leaders and volunteers; and they give children the opportunity to discover hidden talents as they grow academically and socially.

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Conferences provide cultural learning for all students

CUSD Today

Clovis Unified has opportunities this spring for students to participate in student leadership conferences. The district partners with the community in creating these cultural events where students can learn about themselves and one another.

Upcoming conferences are:

African American Student Leadership High School Conference, Feb. 5, at the Fresno Convention Center, hosted by the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools. The theme is "Working Collectively to Achieve Excellence."

Clovis Unified African American Student Leadership Middle School Conference, Feb. 12, at Clovis North Educational Center, hosted by CUSD. The theme is "Know Your Past, Empower Your Present and Change Your Future," and the keynote speaker is Dr. Chike Akua, who is a culturally relevant trainer and master teacher.

Clovis Unified Latino Student Success Middle School Conference, March 22, at Kastner Intermediate, hosted by CUSD. The keynote speaker is Gabe Salazar, who is rated the top Latino youth speaker in the nation.

Sixth Annual Latino Student Success Conference, March 29, Clovis North Educational Center, hosted by CUSD for high school students. The conference includes a college and career fair, mentors and keynote speaker Juan Felipe Herrera.

Clovis Unified's leadership conferences are open to all students regardless of race and ethnicity.

"Having knowledge of each other's culture and diversity is important so that students can be better prepared to compete in a diverse society," said Saul Salinas, CUSD Coordinator of Community Relations. "Listening to wonderful keynote speakers, professionals in the community, and sharing information on college and careers is essential for student success."

CUSD's Asian Student Success Conference was held in December.

More information about these conferences and signing up is available through schools' counseling centers.

Imaginations: Program engages young children

FROM PAGE 1

been treated to a cornucopia of stimuli, using everyday child-sized treasures to broaden their worlds.

Called "Loose Parts," the newly-implemented program was hand tested by the preschool teachers themselves last May when the State Funded Preschool Program of CUSD hosted over 100 staff for a voluntary training on The Theory of Loose Parts.

Architect Simon Nicholson developed the theory in 1971, believing that it is the "loose parts" in the environment that will empower creativity. "Loose parts" are materials – either natural or synthetic – that can be moved, carried, combined, redesigned, lined up, taken apart and put back together in multiple ways.

CUSD Preschool Teacher Director Shera Scott said bowls filled with buttons, beads, feathers, twigs or cotton balls empowers a creative imagination, bringing together multiple curricular areas such as science, mathematics, engineering, art, literacy and fine motor skills.

"Having "loose parts" available in a play space allows children to use these materials as they choose," Scott said. "Often you will find that children would rather play with materials that they can use and adapt as they please, rather than expensive pieces of play equipment. These activities show us where the students are at and we immediately know where to take them."

The preschool activities, which might be done weekly, monthly or at the teacher's discretion, use items multiple times either with all the same materials, or sometimes mixed around.

In Clovis Unified, the Loose Parts project is a collaboration between Scott and Preschool Program Supervisor Erika Whitney. It began with the May training that would bring this unique and respected theory in Early Childhood Education to the CUSD State Preschool Program staff. About 80 percent of CUSD's preschool classes are using the program.

"We realized that the impact would be far greater if we could not only plan and introduce the theory to the staff, but also provide the materials for the teachers to use in a hands-on training session that they could then take back to their classrooms the very next day," Scott said. "The impact included introducing children to materials that developed their problem-solving skills, enhanced their creativity, and strengthened curricular development."

Both Scott and Whitney have received much positive feedback and teachers left excited to start utilizing what they had learned in their classrooms.

"The open-ended materials draw both boys and girls to the activity, and they stay engaged a longer time building those cooperative play and verbal language skills," Whitney said.

Photo special to *CUSD Today* by Ron Webb.

Nelson Elementary preschoolers Raven Ramirez, left, and Sydney Stevenson have fun using seashells to make alphabet letters. The bowls of small items such as shells are part of the "Loose Parts" program that are stimulating young imaginations.

Loose Parts includes picture books on topics such as science, art, mathematics, engineering, social skills and history. The materials range from shells, stones, wood, mirrors, fabric and plants to building materials, newspaper, tape, boxes, sea glass, feathers, playdough and felt.

"We are always looking for ways to further engage with the students and have them excited about learning. For science and math – we have books about real beaches and ocean life and then the hands-on materials include sand, shells, starfish and sea horses, all vary in size shape and color. The students are counting, making patterns, learning about different textures, classifying objects and sorting. Any of the natural we can bring in is huge."

Boundary: Updates can be found at cusd.com

FROM PAGE 1

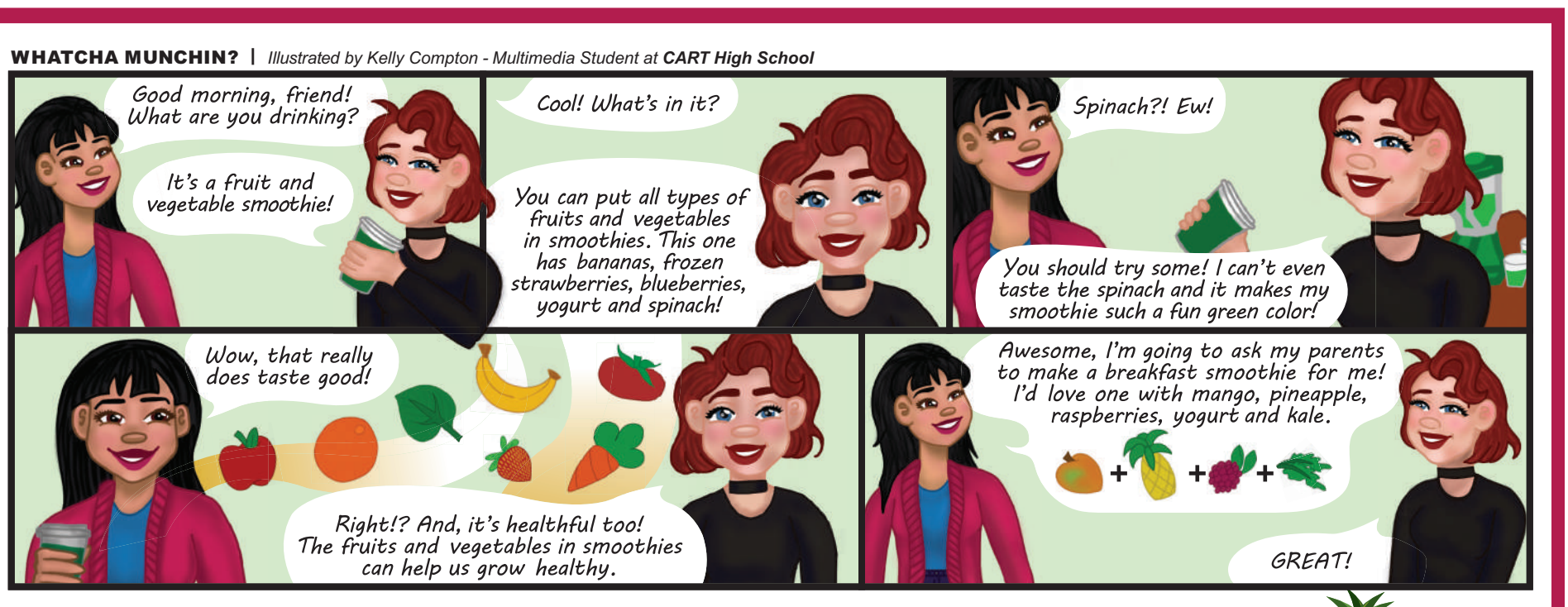
- Reducing operational costs if possible (such as busing)

Also underway are efforts to develop a recommended name for the new school. A community survey was conducted in December to gather desired qualities in a school name from families in the Clovis East Area, and it is anticipated that a recommendation will also be provided to the board for consideration on Feb. 6 and action on Feb. 20.

Once attendance lines and a school name are in place, efforts to develop a school mascot and school colors will begin in collaboration with the new school community led by Principal Kacey Gibson.

Updates about these recommendations will be provided to the community through their neighborhood school, and on school and district websites.

"By making these decisions more than a full year ahead of the school's opening, the new school community can come together and build relationships even before the doors open," said CUSD Assistant Superintendent of Facilities Kevin Peterson.



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Awards: 32 exceptional employees to be honored

FROM PAGE 5

Adam Belmont
Manager of Maintenance, Maintenance Department

Adam Belmont, Clovis Unified's manager of maintenance, is all about service to teachers and students. He makes sure everything runs smoothly so they can spend their time teaching and learning. Belmont is responsible for 51 school sites and manages 60-plus employees. With his calm demeanor and flexibility, he and his team always figure out a way to solve just about any maintenance or construction problem that comes along.

Under his supervision last year, his dedicated department repaired and put an end to a spate of electrical panel vandalism. Belmont is the district's Indoor Air Quality specialist and is often called upon to assist with environmental issues. When the problems are particularly difficult, he leads his team through possible solutions until they find an answer.

Belmont also keeps the financial bottom line in mind. When the special education program needed sinks in nine portable classrooms, the bid from an outside vendor was so high, he recommended his team take care of it. They saved the district more than $10,000.

Constance Boyd
Science Teacher, Clovis High

Constance Boyd is a dedicated Clovis High School biology teacher who does things far and above beyond what her required duties are. Let's start with one of her most selfless acts during her 19 years of employment at CUSD – she became a foster mother to a student. The student, who has chronic health issues, had been transferred from one foster home and high school after the other and she was frantic. Boyd decided the student needed a stable place to live and to stay at Clovis High, so Boyd went through the process to foster the student.

Another highlight of Boyd's time at Clovis High – so far – was her readiness to step out of her core content area of life science in order to create a new Physics and Technology course that aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards. To do this she took a two-week training course over the summer and integrated the teaching strategies in her lessons.

Constance is one of those teachers who offers after-school tutoring, comes in early, helps kids get ready for important state tests, and makes the classroom fun.

Maureen Clark
Registrar, Clovis West High

As registrar at Clovis West High School, Maureen Clark turns what could be a matter-of-fact transaction into a warm welcome for each incoming student.

She is excellent at her job, but beyond the efficient registering of students and keeping of the transcripts is Clark's special care of students and her work with counselors to make sure each has the best chance possible of academic success. As a registrar, she supports teachers by streamlining end-of-semester processes, making it easier for teachers to provide attendance and grade book records, even digitizing the process.

Clark maintains a climate of trust and respect in the office and is always a positive force. Even after the devastating loss of her husband, Bart, she thought of the students and created a scholarship in his name for AVID students. Not only that, she volunteered to become a Clovis Support and Intervention mentor and co-leads a group on grief and loss for students. Said one colleague: "Maureen is one of the chambers of the heart of Clovis West." That pretty much says it all.

And the Crystals goes to …

- **Kirsten Aguilar,** English Teacher, Clovis North Educational Center
- **Shelley Arakelian**, Fourth-Grade Teacher, Garfield Elementary
- **Jaime Arredondo**, English Teacher, Clovis East High
- **Adam Belmont,** Maintenance Manager, Plant Operations
- **Constance Boyd**, Science Teacher, Clovis High
- **Maureen Clark,** Registration Specialist, Clovis West High
- **Kelly Dalbec**, Student Activities Specialist, Red Bank Elementary
- **Todd Deck**, Principal, Copper Hills Elementary
- **Suzi Erickson,** Deputy Principal, Reagan Educational Center
- **Ellen Hansen Gates,** School Nurse, Clovis High
- **Donna Geil,** Second-Grade Teacher, Cedarwood Elementary
- **Margarita Gonzalez**, Math Teacher, Clovis West High
- **Stacey Kiehlmeier,** Nurse, Clovis East High
- **Donna Kohlruss,** AB Teacher, Granite Ridge Intermediate
- **Tara Lindlahr,** Application Development & Support Services Manager, Technology Services
- **Sandy Marcelo,** Campus Club Lead Instructor, Child Development
- **Marcos Martinez,** English Teacher, Peer Counselor Coordinator, Buchanan High
- **Melissa McKenney,** Fourth-Grade Teacher, Freedom Elementary
- **Susan Mott**, Third-Grade Teacher, Clovis Elementary
- **Carrie Mueller,** Library Technician, Fugman Elementary
- **Les Nunes,** Music Teacher, Clark Intermediate, Clovis High
- **Vincent R. Oraze,** Math Teacher, Kastner Intermediate
- **Christen Otta,** Third-Grade Teacher, Maple Creek Elementary
- **Kendra Pfalzgraff**, First-Grade Teacher, Red Bank Elementary
- **Regina Ponomarenko**, Kindergarten Teacher, Fancher Creek Elementary
- **Sharon Rutherford,** Campus Catering Supervisor, Tarpey Elementary
- **Lori Salazar,** Science Teacher, Alta Sierra Intermediate
- **Michael Sandoval,** School Plant Supervisor, Dry Creek Elementary
- **Shera Scott,** State Preschool Teacher Director, Child Development
- **Wendy Smith**, Kindergarten Teacher, Dry Creek Elementary
- **Michael Ward**, Senior Business Analyst, Business Services
- **Katrena Washington**, Second-Grade Teacher, Mountain View Elementary

Kelly Dalbec
Student Activities Specialist, Red Bank Elementary

Give Kelly Dalbec a task and stand back. Or don't even mention you want something done, and yet – it gets done – in the most efficient way possible.

Dalbec is a student activities specialist and acts as the registrar at Red Bank Elementary. In her job as registrar she is known for implementing a pre-approval registration process that eliminated hours of waiting and ended with the top district re-enrollment rate at 100 percent for two years in a row. She does everything she can to create a seamless first day. Dalbec, however, is much more than a fantastic registrar. She is called "the glue that holds our school together," with her constant work to smooth students' and parents' daily Red Bank experiences.

Dalbec treats each child like he or she is her very own. She has a very big heart. She often takes the initiative to help students in need, such as a homeless boy who was missing breakfast every day because of a bus schedule, and a girl from a low-income home who had a dirty spirit uniform and unkempt hair. She helped these – and many other kiddos – out. She truly cares for all students.

Todd Deck
Principal, Copper Hills Elementary

Twenty-nine-year CUSD employee Todd Deck is committed to whatever is best for kids. And one can see it in his actions as principal at Copper Hills Elementary.

Meeting the needs of all students is so important to him that he attends almost every IEP for students, getting to know their names, needs and ways to help. He started the MinerZ Club two years ago that places general education students as peer helpers in specialized programs with special education kids. It encourages inclusion on campus and brings home the Miner Code theme of "Take Care of One Another."

Deck hires new teachers who are "all in" with helping every student learn. He works to make a student-centered learning environment through programs like Visible Learning, helping staff reach every last child. The results show in school pride, student confidence and student achievement. Copper Hills state test scores increased 27 percent in the last four years, the greatest growth in the district.

Deck started the Principal Advisory of Student Affairs group, to gain insight from minority students. With an approval rating of 95 percent by his staff and the community, Deck is seen as one who serves the Copper Hills community with outstanding leadership, effectiveness and integrity.

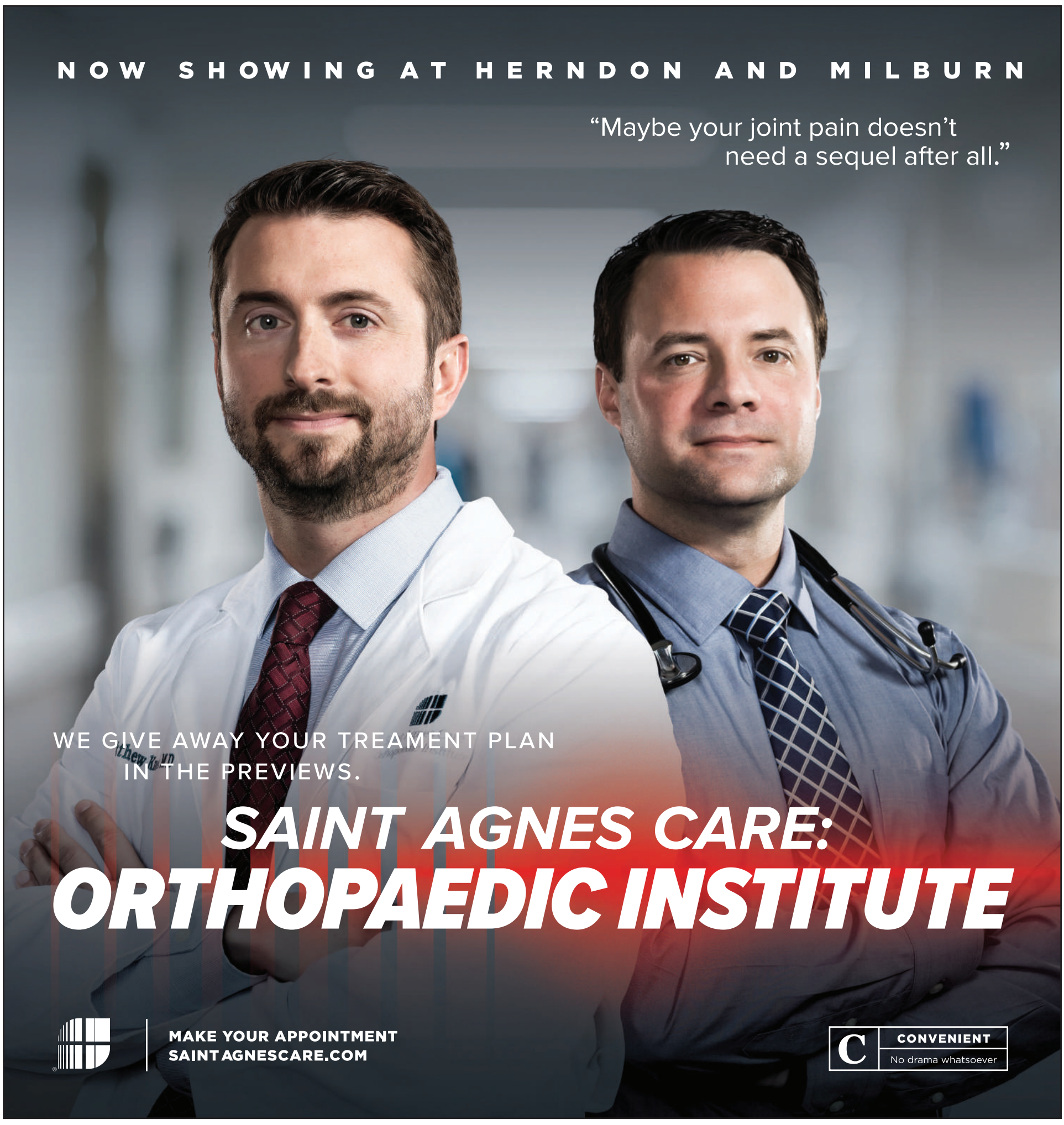
Suzi Erickson
Deputy Principal, Reagan Educational Center

If you need something done, consult Reagan Educational Center Deputy Principal Suzi Erickson. But don't expect her to just do it. She will bring all interested parties together and have them solve the problem. Erickson is a master collaborator. Basing all her decisions on what is best for kids, Erickson models a servant leader. She has an innate knack to make things work, and she is a respected and valued administrator throughout the Clovis East Area. Erickson believes that hiring the best employees is key to students' success, and she supports new employees at every step of the way. She is a driving force in innovation, encouraging teachers to try new things. She knows it's the people, not the programs, who make a positive difference in the lives of students.

Erickson embodies what Clovis Unified stands for. She encourages a positive, collaborative working environment. She promotes a culture of professional learning, whether it is through a motivational book, a story from her experience or by allowing opportunities for others to lead. She is everyone's biggest cheerleader, celebrating others' wins as if they were her own.

One parent said it's because of Erickson's compassion and leadership that her daughter successfully navigated the tragic unexpected death of her father. Said the mom, "Suzi put her arms around my daughter and assured me she'd be OK."

For 30 years, Suzi Erickson has worked for the district and is dedicated to her students, to the Clovis East Area and to Clovis Unified.



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