



Picking up the PACE

A National School Public Relations Association award-winning newsletter

Highlighting Staff Accomplishments

CLIPBOARD

Congratulations Quarterly Award Winners

Superintendent John L. Barry recognized 11 individuals who make a difference in the lives of APS students. At a ceremony held at Aurora Frontier K-8 on May 16, Barry honored eight staff members, two parents and a community/business member with Superintendent Quarterly Awards. To see the winners, turn to page 2.

May 2007

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One Healthy Career

Forty-two years, plus zero sick days, equals one healthy career for this Hinkley High School retiree.

If you haven't heard already, it's official--math teacher Charlie Morrison is calling it quits--sort of. His last day of teaching at Hinkley is in May, but this isn't the end of his teaching career.

Morrison has plans to come back to teach one or two classes at Hinkley in the International Baccalaureate program or math studies for seniors.

"They're not rid of me," said Morrison. "I've been lucky to teach here, and if you love these kids they will love you back."

When a 21-year-old Morrison walked through the school doors 42 years ago, he never looked back. His teaching career started in 1965 at East Middle High School and he's taught every math class from algebra to advanced trigonometry.

Morrison's teaching philosophy is summed up in a famous quote from Ben Franklin, "Find a job that you enjoy and you will never work another day in your life."

"I'm sad," said Morrison. "I really mean it. I'm not one to count down the days, and I love the kids and my classes."

That attitude will certainly be reflected in his last paycheck from the APS district. With a 42-year career and never a sick day, Morrison will get a pay bonus for his unused sick time.

Unlike most retirees who spend the extra money on a vacation home, a trip around the world or a nice boat, Morrison wants to use his extra money for something else.

The money will go back to students. "I want to set up a scholarship in the name of APS students," said Morrison. "I don't need the money, so I'd rather give it to the kids."

Morrison says there are subject teachers and people teachers. "I like to think I'm a people teacher and my subject just happens to be math," said Morrison. "You have to love kids first and then they will respond to what you teach."



Charlie Morrison

Congratulations Quarterly Award Winners

Each quarter, Superintendent Barry honors individuals, who are outstanding contributors to Aurora Public Schools. Staff, parents and community members nominate the winners. In addition to the award, winners' photos are displayed on a special "Wall of Fame" located outside the boardroom in the APS Administration Building.

Classified Employee, Support



Denise Givant

*Budget Technician - Title I Department,
Highline B*

Each quarterly winner is eligible for the APS Superintendent Annual Awards, May 25.

Submit Superintendent Quarterly Award nominations online at www.aps.k12.co.us/hr/awards.

Superintendent's Quarterly Award

Classified Employee, Elementary



Janie Butler

*Para Educator, primary self-contained
affective needs classroom,
Park Lane Elementary*

Classified Employee, Secondary



Tony Garcia

*Custodian,
Rangeview High School*

Licensed Employee, Elementary



Judy Dutcher

*3rd Grade Teacher
and Literacy Teacher Leader,
Montview Elementary School*

Quarterly Award Winners (continued)

Licensed Employee, Elementary



Susan Naqica
*ELA Teacher,
Dartmouth Elementary School*

Licensed Employee, Middle School



Mike Potoczak
*7th Grade Math Teacher,
Aurora Hills Middle School*

Licensed Employee, High School



Mary Barnes
*Spanish Teacher,
Gateway High School*

*Administrative / Professional /
Technical Employee*



Harry Chan
*Principal,
Peoria Elementary School*

Parents



Kelly and Steve McCartney
Lansing Elementary School

Community / Business Member



Charlene Dichter
*Global Learning & Development,
Community Ambassador,
Peoria Elementary School*

APS in Action



Maintenance Staff Make Lunch Fun For Boston Students

APS maintenance and facilities staff members sat down to lunch with students at Boston Elementary School as an opportunity for students to enjoy some individual attention. Students shared stories of their favorite teachers, homework and positive citizenship at their school.

“I talked about how to be good in school and about things I like to do. My mentor even gave me a new backpack. I had a lot of fun. They are really cool!” said Boston student Cameron.

Maintenance and facilities staff members visited students every Wednesday during the month of April and they hope the mentorship program will continue next year.

“It taught us how giving of one’s time can make a difference in the life of a child,” said Facilities Direct Support Coordinator Steve Allen.

“Each lunch meeting helped the facilities team see beyond the construction and the maintenance of the school building and we focused on the real reason we all have a job—the students!”

--Facilities Direct Support Coordinator Steve Allen

Want to Learn More About APS?

- Visit <http://www.aps.k12.co.us/communications/> to learn more about APS staff, students and APS community achievements.

Congratulations APS Retirees!

Aurora Public Schools would like to thank the nearly 130 staff members who are retiring from the district this year. These dedicated staff members represent more than 2,600 years of experience and dedication to our students. Thank you!

APS Staff Honors

- **Hinkley High School Teacher Abbi Kaplan Wins \$1,000**
Kaplan was one of 15 honorees for the 2007 Jared Polis Foundation Teacher Recognition Award who will receive a \$1,000 discretionary award. Hinkley will also receive a \$1,000 general operating grant.
- **French Teacher Awarded Grant to Study Playwrights**
Hinkley High School teacher Dana Goodier earned a grant to take a four-week seminar for teachers to study the works of Becket, Molière and other French playwrights.
- **Park Lane Elementary Teacher Jessica O’Muireadhaigh Earns Heart of Gold Award**
Affective needs teacher O’Muireadhaigh earned the 2007 Sister’s In Service Heart of Gold Hattie Mae Redford Beacon Light Award. The award recognizes teachers who instill a love for learning and a sense that there is a world beyond the city limits.
- **Aurora Hills Middle School Teachers Share Space Unit with IB Program**
Teachers Josh Cooley and Jake Emerson Cooley will be speakers at the International Baccalaureate conference in Chicago this summer. They will share ideas from the space unit curriculum that eighth-grade teachers implemented this year. To give students a living example, Superintendent Barry spoke to students about his experience investigating the Columbia Space Shuttle accident as the executive director of the 2003 Columbia Accident Investigation Team. To see the full story of Barry’s visit to Aurora Hills Middle School, visit http://www.aps.k12.co.us/students/ahills_barry_shuttle.htm.

In Memory of Debbie Justen

Dedicated teacher, Debbie Justen, spent 26 years teaching students at Dalton Elementary school before losing her battle with ovarian cancer in October.

Colleagues describe Justen as one of the most passionate and dedicated teachers they’ve ever known.

“She gave her heart and soul to every child.”

- Melodee Morrissey

Dalton teacher and former co-worker of Debbie Justen



Debbie Justen

Now her former colleagues are asking the APS community to help honor Justen with a beautiful memorial bench to be placed outside the first-grade classroom she taught in for so many years. The goal is to raise \$1,200 to purchase a mosaic butterfly bench.

Donations are due by May 25. Contact Dalton Elementary School for more information 303-693-7561.