



A Supplement from the...

Palm Springs Unified School District

Serving Cathedral City, Desert Hot Springs, Palm Desert, Palm Springs, Rancho Mirage & Thousand Palms December/January 2018

DHS Teacher Named State Designee for National Teacher of Year



For the first time in Palm Springs Unified School District history, a District teacher has been named the state nominee for National Teacher of the Year honors.

Dr. Brian McDaniel, director of music at Painted Hills Middle School, was named one of five California Teachers of the Year by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson in October and moves forward as California's state nominee for National Teacher of the Year. This is the first time a Riverside County Teacher of the Year has been chosen to represent California in the National Teacher of the Year since 2003 when Coachella Valley Unified's Chauncey Veatch went on to be selected as National Teacher of the Year. James Workman Middle School Teacher Jessica Pack was named a state Teacher of the Year in 2013.

"We are so proud of Dr. McDaniel and the outstanding work he has done with our students, first at Desert Hot Springs High School and now at Painted Hills Middle School and Bella Vista Elementary Schools," said PSUSD Superintendent of Schools Dr. Sandra Lyon. "Dr. McDaniel is a stellar example of our cadre of dedicated professionals who work tirelessly each and every day to do what's best for our students. We are so excited that his talents and perseverance are being recognized in our County and State, and we know he will make our entire state very proud as our representative for National Teacher of the Year."

Both McDaniel and Desert Hot Springs High math teacher Michelle

Beyronneau last May were named two of the four Riverside County Teachers of the Year in May, the first time that PSUSD has had two District winners in the same year. Beyronneau was selected as one of the state's semi-finalists in this year's competition.

"On behalf of the Board of Education, I want to express our extreme pride and excitement over this wonderful announcement," said PSUSD Board of Education President John Gerardi. "We congratulate Dr. McDaniel on his outstanding accomplishment and honor. There is no doubt Dr. McDaniel will represent our District, the city of Desert Hot Springs, Riverside County and the state of California the way he serves his students, with humility, dignity and professionalism. We also want to congratulate Mrs. Beyronneau on being named a semi-finalist for the state. She is another example of the phenomenal educators we have in Palm Springs Unified. We sincerely thank and salute both Dr. McDaniel and Mrs. Beyronneau for their dedication and commitment to their students and the teaching profession."

"To have two of the four Riverside County Teachers of the Year in our District is an amazing honor," said Lyon. "And to have both of our candidates be recognized at the state level – among nearly 300,000 teachers across California, is just incredible. What an honor for our District, the city of Desert Hot Springs and Riverside County!"

McDaniel and Beyronneau will be recognized at the state level at a Sacramento banquet on February 12, where McDaniel's Painted Hills Middle School Choir and Jazz Band has been invited to perform. The National Teacher of the Year will be announced in April, 2018.

PSUSD Seeking Community Input for New LCAP

Palm Springs Unified Schools District is currently working on the fifth year of its Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) and, once again, are seeking input from staff, students, parents and community members on changes, additions or deletions to our current plan.

As part of the state's Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), all districts in California are required to prepare a LCAP, which describes how PSUSD intends to meet annual goals for pupils, with specific activities to address state and local priorities identified. This past year, PSUSD has been able to provide many additional support programs and services for students, due to more local control of funding. As a result of the input received from stakeholders, additions funded during the past year through LCAP include:

•Elementary, Secondary Literacy Coaches, •Additional Staff Development, •Career and Technical Education, •Additional Technology Staff and Support, •Class Size Reduction, •District-wide Full Day Kindergarten, •Counseling Support at Elementary and Middle Schools, •Increased arts opportunities

As the District prepares for its 2018-19 plan, stakeholders are being asked to provide feedback and suggestions. Two community forums are scheduled for Jan. 25, 2018 from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at the Edward Wenzlaff Education Center 11625 West Street, Desert Hot Springs; and Jan. 30, 2018 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Palm Springs Unified District Service Center at 150 District Center Way, Palm Springs. Each school site is also hosting a forum. The dates for those forums, along with an input survey (in English and Spanish) for all interested community members to provide suggestions for the 2018-19 LCAP plan, can be found on the home page of the PSUSD website at www.psusd.us.

The deadline for survey response and input is Feb. 15, 2018. The Board of Education will discuss initial actions and outcomes at their Feb. 27 meeting at 6 p.m. prior to the actual writing of the plan. A public hearing on the plan will be held on June 12, 2018, at 6 p.m. prior to the Board vote later that evening.

District Launches New Mobile App

With a new website launched at the beginning of this school year, Palm Springs Unified now offers a mobile app for parents, students and community members interested in having fast, convenient and personalized access to district and site news and information.

The new mobile app can be downloaded on both iOS and Android devices. The download for Android is: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.blackboard.community.psusd&hl=en>. The iOS download is:



<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/palm-springs-unified-sd/id1267434384?mt=8>. Once users download the app, they can access the District calendar; Top Stories; ParentVue (which provides parent access to student information); StudentVue; school lunch menus and electronic payments; bullying tip line; Peachjar electronic flyer system; school sports scores; and parent and student resources. Users can choose which school sites they would like to receive notifications from when new information is posted, and the language for the entire app can be changed to Spanish or a wide array of other languages by simply making the request under "Settings."

The new mobile app joins not only the new PSUSD website

but also a new auto dialer communications system that allows parents to choose their preferred method of site and District alert individual messaging communications (phone, text and/or e-mail). Parents should make sure their emergency information is updated with their school site to ensure that the proper information is inputted into the system.

For more information on the new mobile app, visit the home page of the website at psusd.us or call (760) 992-3200, Option 1.

District Digest



Foundation Receives \$25,000 CBS/Berger Foundation Grant: The Foundation for the Palm Springs Unified School District was a recent recipient of the \$25,000 Coachella Valley Spotlight Award from CBS Local 2 and the Berger Foundation. The funds will be used to support the Foundation's classroom grant program. The presentation was made in Pamela Cole's classroom at Nellie N. Coffman Middle School.

CCE Commemorates Red Ribbon Week: There was a different theme each day of the week for Red Ribbon Week in October at Cathedral City Elementary School. Principal Jessica Whiteman got into the spirit with students on "Silly Hair and Sock Day."



Academy Students Teach Pedestrian Safety: Eight Desert Hot Springs High School Public Safety Academy (PSA) students put their training into practice recently when they walked Two Bunch Palms Elementary second and third graders through a "pop up city" culminating with a safe arrival to school. The program is part of Desert Regional Medical Center's Trauma Prevention Program. Pictured above are PSA teacher Emily Musashi with PSA students Joel Hernandez, Sebastian Irene, Andrea Rodriguez, Daniel Valdivia, Manuel Carranza, Natalie Lopez, Daisy Rodriguez and Kimberly Soto.



Local Chefs Share Skills, Tips With Culinary Students: Four local chefs recently shared their talents and skills with Rancho Mirage and La Quinta High culinary academy students during a 3-hour cooking and plating demonstration at RMHS' Culinary Arts Food Education Academy (CAFÉ) classroom/café. Pictured with student participants are La Quinta High instructor Sheri Tucker, CAFÉ instructor Howard Merrick and guests Ritz Carlton Master Chef Bruno Lopez, Tipper's Gourmet Marketplace Chef Felix Tipper, Kathy Ireland Worldwide Design Ambassador Chef Andre Carthe and Culinary Instructor and CAFÉ Partner Chef David Locke. Earlier in the same week, CAFÉ students visited LQ High's Blackhawk Kitchen for a cupcake demonstration by Chef Dominique Valenzuela, executive pastry chef at the JW Marriott in Palm Desert.



Doors Spread Red Ribbon Week Messages: Rio Vista Elementary commemorated Red Ribbon Week with a door decorating contest to spread the "Say No to Drugs" message. First place honors went to Melissa Ferguson's kindergarten class for their "Drugs are Despicable!" creation.



Soroptimists Honor Teachers of the Year: Soroptimist International of Palm Springs recently honored PSUSD's city of Palm Springs Teachers of the Year at a Board of Education meeting. Soroptimist members in attendance included from left, Vice President of Ways & Means Sharon Snow, Treasurer Samantha Dewing, Vice President of Service Joan Boiko and President Gloria Hill. Honorees included, from left, Theresa Smith, Desert Learning Academy; Carol Gafney, Raymond Cree Middle; Dena Cockrell, Vista del Monte Elementary; Jodi Diaz, Katherine Finchy Elementary; Sonia Burkett and Amber Moser, Cielo Vista Charter; Joshua Otteson, Rio Vista Elementary; and Gloria Chao, Palm Springs High. Recipients received a personalized canvas bag from the club along with a \$100 Mastercard gift card from SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union and certificates of recognition from local, county and state elected officials. The presentation was followed by a reception at Nicolinos.



Foundation Honors Loni and Jerry Argovitz: PSUSD Foundation President Mark Gauthier, right, presented the "Champions of Excellence Award" to Loni and Jerry Argovitz at the recent "Champions of Excellence" career training workshop produced by the Foundation and PSUSD's Career Technical Education Department at the Agua Caliente Resort.



District Arts Coordinator Gathers National Honor: PSUSD Arts Coordinator Louisa Castrodale was the recent recipient of the National Arts Schools Network's Dr. Denise David-Cotton Emerging Leader Award. Castrodale, center, received the award at the organization's annual conference in Minnesota in October.



Foundation Supports DHS Marine Corp JROTC: Richard Stelk, of the Stelk Charitable Fund, right, presented a check for \$20,000 to Lieutenant Colonel Carl Lewke, who directs the Marine Corps JROTC at Desert Hot Springs High School, to support cadet field trips and events, at the recent Marine Corps League Corporal Jason L. Dunham Medal of Honor Detachment's 242nd Birthday Celebration of the United States Marine Corps at the Miracle Springs Resort, supporting the DHSHS JROTC.

Operation School Bell Clothes Over 1,000 Needy Students: Assistance League® of Palm Springs Desert Area once again this year provided new school clothes to PSUSD elementary school students through its Operation School Bell® program. Clothing packages for 1,000 PSUSD students were assembled by Assistance League members and PSUSD community liaisons shortly after the start of the 2017-18 school year. School personnel identify students with the greatest needs such as students with limited school clothes because of an emergency or crisis; students being raised by a struggling single parent, in foster care, or living in a homeless shelter; students being teased or bullied because of the clothes they wear; and students teachers observe wearing worn, torn or ill-fitting clothing or the same clothes after day. Principals say students who receive the clothing packages are more confident in their appearance, have improved self-esteem, and are more likely to attend school on a regular basis.



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BOE Participates in CCHS Homecoming Parade: The theme was "Games Inc.," and the full PSUSD Board of Education, from left, Richard Clapp, Karen Cornett, President John Gerardi, Madonna Gerrell and James Williamson; participated in the Homecoming Parade, which was followed by a rally at Cathedral City City Hall in October.

Foundation Hosts 'Grab Your Seat Icons & Idols'

The Foundation for the Palm Springs Unified School District will host its Second Annual Benefit Concert, "Grab Your Seat: Icons & Idols" on Thursday, Jan. 18 at 7 p.m. at the Richards Center for the Arts. The musical tribute to Janis Joplin, Freddie Mercury, George Michael and Prince is being presented by Michael Childers with Frank Goldstin with proceeds benefiting the "Grab Your Seat" capital fundraising campaign for arts education in PSUSD.

Tickets range from \$75 to \$125 and may be purchased by calling (760) 416-8455 or online at grabyourseat.net.

The concert celebrates four musical legends that influenced the worldwide music scene in a new production created by Childers with Golstin. Event ambassadors include Doug Donenfeld, Debbie Green, Barbara Keller, Terri Ketover, Ann Sheffer and Tom Truhe.

"Last year's inaugural concert featuring PostModern Jukebox introduced this series and celebrated the complete remodel of the Richards Center," said Foundation Director Ellen Goodman. "We wanted to continue that momentum this year, so we worked closely with Michael Childers and Frank Goldstin to create this never-before-staged musical experienced honoring four legendary performers and artists. We hope that, through this performance, we can continue to keep their music alive. This will be a fantastic and fun evening, unlike anything else going on this season."



Davies

Mary Bridget Davies, a Tony Award-nominated singer, performs as Janis Joplin. She was asked to sit in with Joplin's original band with whom she later toured. Her travels have taken her around the world including a 2-year pre-Broadway run with "A Night with Janis Joplin." She received her Tony nomination for Best Performance by an Actress in a Leading Role in a Musical when the show debuted on Broadway in 2013.

Von Smith, a singer/songwriter/actor who garnered more than 20 million views on YouTube while with Scott Bradlee's Postmodern Jukebox, will perform as Freddie Mercury. Smith opened for Lady Gaga on her Australia tour, and he has performed on many national television show stages.



Smith

Jake Simpson, who twice won top honors on Star Search, will be performing as George Michael. With a powerful high tenor voice and



Simpson

three-octave range, Simpson has recorded, written and performed with a multitude of artists including Desmond Child and American Idol finalists David Archuleta, Syesha Mercado and Adam Lambert.

Rogelio Douglas Jr., starring as Prince, has performed with the New York City Opera and was the lead tap dancer at the Black Orchid in Chicago. He has opened for Tito Puente and Jennifer Holiday and has traveled throughout Western Europe and Asia as lead tap dancer in Riverdance and has also performed in the musical "The Heights" on Broadway.



Douglas

The "Grab Your Seat" commemorative naming initiative campaign provides members of the public the opportunity to name a theater seat, gallery space or other building amenity in their or their loved one's honor, designed by a commemorative plaque, nameplate and custom lettering. For more information about seat and amenity-naming, contact Goodman at (760) 416-8455 or e-mail egoodman@psusd.us.

Message from the Superintendent

'See Something, Say Something' More Important Than Ever



In the current world of texting and social media, fewer and fewer people – especially our teenagers—are sharing their thoughts and experiences verbally. While there are certainly pluses to our students being able to express themselves via texts and social media without having to leave their comfort zones, communicating in this fashion also creates added challenges and disadvantages particularly for those of us who are focused on school safety. While, students may be more willing to communicate concerns on one level, on another, they may feel they are protected in anonymity, which creates its own set of issues. They may also assume that because they have read something online or on a social media platform, that others, including the adults around them must know what is going on as well. When it comes to safety, these online communications pose new and serious obstacles for school administrators as they try to ensure that our students are safe and protected from potential dangers.

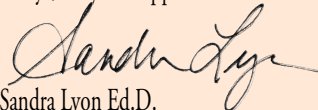
You may have heard the expression "See something, say something," and these words have never been more crucial than they are today. We do everything we can to teach our students from a young age that if they see or experience something that feels threatening or uncomfortable, they need to share that information with a trusted adult on their school campus

as soon as possible in order to protect themselves and their peers from a potentially unsafe situation. The problem today is that when students see something, rather than say something, they post or text. Rather than students seeking out a trusted adult – a teacher, administrator, counselor, security officer or school resource officer – they might instead post something on social media or text their mom or dad. In years prior, if a student wanted to call a parent, he/she had to ask an adult on campus to use a phone. If the student appeared upset, the adult staff member could try and find out if something was wrong and would often discover something that had happened or was going to happen on campus. Now that students can call or text parents and friends without speaking to an adult on campus, students may feel they have connected with someone and the situation is taken care of, when, in fact, the person who has been notified is hours away. Precious time is wasted handling an anxious situation in this manner, not to mention the rumor mill that spreads from posts or texts that may be taken out of context and don't convey the appropriate emotions or urgency that goes along with a verbal report.

Whether it is experiencing or witnessing bullying, being approached by a stranger, an issue or conflict with a teacher, a friend or peer who seems to be struggling emotionally or exhibiting abnormal behavior or anything else that just doesn't feel quite right, we ask our

students to share the information with an adult staff member on their campus as soon as they become aware of the incident or behavior. If a student doesn't feel comfortable sharing the information verbally, we do have a mechanism in place where they can make an anonymous report that alerts our administrators as soon as reports are made. The system is called Sprigeo and here is a direct link: <https://app.sprigeo.com/>. This link can be found on the homepage of our website at psusd.us under the "Parent" drop down.

Texting parents or other students or posting on social media is not the best way to handle a worrisome or threatening situation. In the interest of safety for all, it is of the utmost importance that we encourage our students to share their concerns promptly with an adult on campus or report on sprigeo.com. Our top priority is always the safety of our students and staff, and if we work together with our students, staff and community members we can be as responsive as possible to ensure the maintenance of the safety and welfare of our students. Thank you, as always, for your support!



Sandra Lyon Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools