

2013-2014
Employees of
the Year



Hawkins School

Diane Kinakin



Diane Kinakin is a teacher that you want to clone and have in every classroom on your site. She is the teacher you want your children to have every year of their school career.

Diane builds relationships with her students that create an atmosphere where students are willing to take risks, make mistakes and find success. This is something that is so critical with the implementation of the Common Core State Standards where students are required to think aloud, express their thinking and take risks. Diane has this mastered this for her students and when you walk into her classroom you can feel the support, caring and compassion she provides each and every one of her students.

Diane has been in teaching for almost thirty years and, luckily, does not see retirement in her near future. She was hired by her school's namesake, Tom Hawkins, and it was one of the best things he did for our district. She is constantly learning and striving to integrate current best practices in her daily instruction. She has become a role model to not only her grade level colleagues but our entire school staff.

Diane Kinakin deserves this recognition as she exemplifies everything a teacher should be. She is passionate in her job, she is compassionate to all of her students, she provides the positive learning environment that is necessary for her students to be successful and she is constantly learning and implementing current best practices.

Hawkins School

Judene Violante



Judene Violante has been in the position of Principal's Secretary for two years. Judene brings her stellar organization, multi-tasking, efficiency, commitment and her beautiful smile to Hawkins. Her attention to detail and efficiency has allowed our office staff to run smoothly, effectively and with purpose over the past two years.

She amazes the staff with her professionalism, preciseness and the ability to multi-task while also finding time to provide extra special touches to our students, staff and parents. Judene is always two steps ahead and predicts what needs to be done before her coworkers know what they need.

Judene has a natural ability to lead, setting good examples of what a dedicated professional, human being, friend, parent and team member should be. She is a positive role model and is an essential part of why Hawkins School is such a great place to be.

There have been many compliments from community members and other school leaders on how efficient and supportive Judene is. As one Hawkins staff member said...every school needs a Judene. We are lucky to have her at Hawkins and within the Jefferson School District.

Jefferson School

Delma DaVeiga



Delma DaVeiga has been teaching physical education for 17 years. She has been a member of the Jefferson School staff for 10 years. According to her colleagues, Del is a very involved teacher. She is very passionate about what she does. You can tell that she really enjoys her job and being with the kids.

Del not only helps students in their skills and knowledge of fitness, but she helps them grow and excel as well-rounded citizens. Del loves fitness and has always loved being active. Del believes that she needs to be a role model for her students. She really tries to reach her students so that they can be successful.

Del says that when kids excel in fitness and sports, they want to do better all around. They feel better about themselves. In class, when kids take a test, they earn a score. With fitness, they can constantly see improvements. It's individual and it builds their self-confidence. In addition to teaching physical education, Del has also coached volleyball and basketball for Jefferson.

Jefferson School

Bertha Ramon



Bertha Ramon has been an employee of the Jefferson School District for four years. She has worked both at Monticello and Jefferson. As a bilingual aide, Bertha plays a vital role in the success of our English Language learners. She is dedicated to doing whatever is needed to help students who struggle with the language barrier.

Bertha feels a strong connection to our English language learners because “that was me.” “I sympathize with feeling lost.” Bertha believes that once students start feeling more comfortable with the language and start making friends, it gets better.

Bertha does whatever is needed to help our English language learners have a positive experience in school. Bertha’s colleagues say that she doesn’t hesitate to take on a challenge and she accepts it with a smile. Bertha goes above and beyond by translating our school newsletter each week to help us connect to our Spanish speaking families.

She puts 100% effort into all that she does. In addition to her work with our bilingual students, Bertha is a member of the Jefferson School Site Council.

Monticello School

Lynn Hartzell



Mrs. Hartzell has been a teacher the Jefferson School District for 32.5 years. She has taught Kindergarten and first grade. She said she never wanted to move from either of these grade levels because she always felt comfortable in Kindergarten and first grades. The students needed her more, Lynn said, or it seemed that they needed her more.

Mr. Hawkins, a legend and an icon forever in the Jefferson School District, hired Lynn Hartzell. As the story goes, quiet, sweet, shy, Lynn Hartzell solicited her teaching position from Mr. Hawkins. And, the rest is history! Her nomination documentation had many kind words. Here are a few of the comments: Lynn is a hard-working, dedicated employee. She has a kind and gentle nature that has enables her to be an ideal kindergarten and first grade teacher. Students feel secure around her. Lynn is super organized and detail oriented. She always seems to be happy and in a good mood. She is willing to assist staff whenever needed.

Mrs. Hartzell has been on many committees over the years, including School Site Council, curriculum adoption committees and grade level representative. She also created and implemented, with team members, the Kindergarten and first grade curriculums during the whole language era of the 1980's.

Mrs. Hartzell is retiring after this school year and is looking forward to it. She and her husband of 29 years, David Hartzell, plan to do some traveling. She plans on working in her garden and wants to learn how to complete different types of crafts. She said that she wants to continue to learn new things every day.

Monticello School

Chris Baguio



Chris Baguio has been an employee in the Jefferson School District at Monticello for three years. She is one of our exemplary custodians. Ms. Baguio is a dedicated employee who arrives at work early every day. She has high energy, completes tasks cheerfully and efficiently. She has been a positive addition to our staff.

The person who nominated Ms. Baguio said, "Chris is a hard working person. She's always busy and on the go. She is self-motivated when completing tasks. She is a team player who is thorough and takes such pride in her job."

Ms. Baguio attributes her work ethic to her mother, who was a wonderful role model for her family. Chris said her mother instilled qualities in her and her family such as responsibility, respect, good work ethic, and to care for other people. Chris said that safety is first on her list when it comes to this position and working hard is second.

This is a second career for Ms. Baguio. She retired from AT&T several years ago and needed a little something to do. We are truly fortunate to have Chris working at Monticello School.

Traina School

Grit Walther



Grit Walter started working for Jefferson School District in August, 2004 as an instructional aide and a teacher in October, 2007. Grit epitomizes everything that makes a wonderful teacher. She is frequently looking to inspire students and staff to greatness. Grit is always searching for creative ways to engage her students in the curriculum or enhance programs. She spends countless hours at work to plan ahead, communicate with parents or provide professional development to staff.

Grit is always refining her craft to ensure she is using instructional practices that benefit all of her students. Her dedication is proven in the data showing her students' academic growth. She is helping our students close any achievement gaps they may have. The confidence her students are able to carry forward will help them be confident young people.

Grit challenges herself to reach each and every student to help them develop the skills to be confident and life-long learners. Her colleagues describe her as compassionate, a problem solver, willing to share ideas and a forward thinker. Traina staff appreciates Mrs. Walther going above and beyond for students and staff. Traina is fortunate to have her as part of their team!

Traina School

Gigi Olney



Gigi Olney started working for Jefferson School District in August, 2007 as a paraprofessional and in January, 2008 as an intervention specialist. She has worked to build positive relationships with staff and students. They trust and appreciate her insight and input with intervention and progress. Gigi's compassion and persistence is evident in the progress her students make academically and socially.

Gigi works well with staff and students. She has been an instrumental part of our reading program. She frequently communicates student's success with teachers and families to encourage all students. Her efforts and hard work impacts many students at Traina School.

Traina staff describes Gigi as sensitive to student needs; a pleasure to work with, compassionate and someone who is excited to celebrate each child's success. Gigi, thank you for all that you do for our intervention students.

District Debbi Rogers



Debbi Rogers is the district recipient of Employee of the Year. Debbi joined the staff in 2004, originally as a campus aide then clerk I and clerk II in food services.

Debbi filled an important role as interim director of food services during Lezlie Brown's absence. She educated herself on federal and state requirements and other duties to ensure the department ran smoothly. One of the reasons Debbi is so successful is she gets to know her coworkers and considers the food service department her extended family.

Debbi's positive attitude and great sense of humor are recognized by everyone who comes in contact with her. Her ability to keep things in perspective and caring attitude are evident. Spend a few minutes with Debbi and her enthusiasm for her job will be apparent.

At the time Debbi was nominated for district employee of the year, her position was food services clerk II. Since then, she was selected as food services director for the district. Congratulations on both accomplishments, Debbi, and thank you for contributing to the overall positive environment of our schools!

2013-2014 Employees of the Year

