

Outlook

A publication of the Diablo Managers Association. DMA is a charter of ACSA.

Mt. Diablo administrators share their (short) stories

As part of a series, *Outlook* is profiling Mt. Diablo Unified administrators and classified personnel who are members of DMA. The questions we asked were: How long have you been in the district? What is your major responsibility and greatest challenge? What is a recent successful project? And what is something people might not guess is true about you — or what do you like to do when you're not working?



Stephanie Roberts, Director of Development, MDUSD: I started out in the district as a teacher at Cambridge Elementary in 1994. I served as the After School Services Administrator from 2000 to 2007, when I assumed my current position. My major responsibility is to identify funding opportunities such as grants and business partnerships that will support new revenue for the district. I develop a monthly grant newsletter

called the GRIND and help schools, programs and the district apply for grants. This includes research, writing and mentoring individuals in their own grant writing. The greatest challenge is writing a grant about a topic I am unfamiliar with. To address this challenge I have been able to work closely with district colleagues — linking their knowledge about a particular program or service with my knowledge about grant writing. This partnership has proven to work effectively with the district bringing in over \$14 million last year in grants.

One of my favorite projects is working with schools in developing their vision and goals. I have been able to use the skills I have acquired over the years in addition to the facilitation training provided last year by the district to support principals and teachers in their efforts to enhance student learning. These experiences are satisfying to me because I know that the support I can provide to the schools helps to build sustainability and the capacity of personnel. It also brings us together for a common good — the students!

People might be surprised that I teach pilates and love to cycle. These activities allow me to decompress, and my pilates class allows me to continue being a teacher, which I love. I am also the mother of two children, a daughter Jessie, 7, and a son, Casey, 4. I have been married for almost 10 years to my husband Ken, a California Highway Patrol Sergeant.



Anne Eggleston, Vice Principal, Mt. Diablo Elementary: This is my 17th year as a VP. I have worked for the district for nearly 33 years — as a speech therapist, resource specialist and vice principal. My main job as a vice principal is to step up and do whatever needs to be done. I work with students, staff, parents and

paraprofessionals. I work with general education and special education students. The Care Team, IEPs and 504s account for quite a bit of my time, as well as writing and distributing the Comprehensive Safe Schools Plan, ordering textbooks and other materials. Discipline also is a portion of my job. I am lucky in that with my current principal I am able to multi-task and am not in charge of all the discipline.

I am the site coordinator for the 504 students. This affords me the opportunity to work with teachers and families to create a positive environment for children and staff.

One of the things I have always wanted to do is have a therapy dog that is trained to visit hospitals and rest homes. At the end of May, I was very excited to get my new puppy. I'm thinking about retirement in a couple of years and I plan to make this training of my new dog a priority. I know how much my dogs have always given me and if I can assist someone in their recovery or feeling a little joy in their lives, I will feel I've done something of value in retirement.

(Note: Anne's job will be eliminated due to budget cuts. Next year she expects to serve as a site speech and language specialist.)



Felicia Bridges, Student Services Coordinator, Olympic High School: This is my second year at Mt. Diablo. I previously worked at Pittsburg Unified.

My major job responsibilities include academic planning/counseling with the students; student scheduling, overseeing attendance and coordinating all other support services for

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students. The greatest challenge is finding enough time in the school day, outside of regularly scheduled meetings, to see all of the students and/or parents who schedule appointments with me and those who drop in for various reasons. Our students are only on site from 8:45 a.m. to 1:17 p.m., which limits the hours that I have available for direct contact with them. I find that prioritizing and keeping a focus on the students while they are in school has afforded me the ability to meet with them in a timely manner.

I am working with our new Vice Principal, Margaret Lowry, to set up a clothes and food closet for our students and their families, as so many of them are in need as a result of the economic crisis in our country.

When I am not working, I love to travel, especially abroad. I am planning to go on a mission trip to Haiti with my church this summer. I enjoy seeing other parts of the world and experiencing different cultures.



Hellena Postrk, Principal, Sequoia

Middle: This is my tenth year in the district, having moved from math teacher to co-administrator to principal. My major job responsibilities are providing a safe learning environment for the students, ensuring they make academic progress, and supporting my teachers so they can focus on student learning. Because we are a middle school, we also have to

focus on the emotional, social and physical changes that are occurring.

Not every student learns the same way or at the same time, so trying to provide a differentiated instructional program that can meet every child's needs is a real challenge. We use the collaboration model to support special education students in the classroom as opposed to a pull-out program. Our intervention classes are part of the school day and are therefore not dependent on students being able to come early or stay late. While we have after-school programs, such as the homework club three days a week with individual teachers contributing their personal time, it's still a struggle because not all of our students have the needed support at home for a variety of reasons.

The changing demographics over the past 10 years have also altered the focus in our school. We have significant economically disadvantaged and Hispanic subgroups, with almost one-third of our students having been English learners. We have had to find creative, alternative ways to meet these students' needs.

The changeover to the collaborative teaching model has made a big difference for the students at Sequoia. We have seen significant student improvement through using this model over the years. It is a very different school climate now — where special education and general education are cohesively combined programs. We have been designated a CalSTAT (California Services for Technical Assistance and Training) Leader for the past three years.

It might surprise people to know that I have been treasurer for a state assemblyman, president of a three-county professional arts council and at one point I had my own business. Regardless of the different positions I've held over the years, being an educator has been the most rewarding. ■

Your 2009-2010 DMA Board named

Newly elected DMA Executive Board members who will lead the organization in the coming school year are:

President — **Linda Hutcherson**

President-Elect — **Patt Hoellwarth**

Past-President — **Katie Gaines**

Vice Presidents — **Vonda Boucher** and **Denise Larkins**

Secretary — **Mary-Ann Tucker**

Treasurer — **Mike Mattos**

The following representatives have also been named:

Adult Education — **Vittoria Abatte-Maghsoudi**

Alternative Education — **Leyla Benson**

Central Services — **Jeff McDaniel**

Co-Administrators — **Amy Bush**

Confidentials — **Chris Wilburn**

District Office/Willow Creek — **Michele Smallhoover**

Elementary Principals — **Christina Boman** and **Diana De Mott**

High School Principals — **Barbara Oaks**

Middle School — **Andrea Uhle**

Retirees — **Evie Groch** and **Martha Riley**

Special Education — **Berry Murray**

Vice Principals — **Brent Brinkerhoff**

We would also like to thank **Denise Rugani**, who represented DMA on the Measure D Steering Committee this past year. ■

A message from DMA President Katie Gaines



DMA members provide exemplary district service

As President of DMA for the 2008-09 school year, I have been very fortunate to work with so many talented and hard-working classified, certificated and confidential managers. I want to pay homage and thank all of the members of DMA for the privilege to have served you. As I reflect upon the 2008-09 school year, I am reminded that the state's financial crisis and the subsequent multi-million dollar budget cuts have had deeply unsettling repercussions for many of our members whose management positions have been eliminated. I have watched these managers, who despite their personal loss, continue to provide exemplary service to the MDUSD community. Their integrity, passion and strength of character inspire me.

I also want to acknowledge the hard work undertaken by the DMA Board. They have volunteered many hours during these turbulent times to assist me in the coordination of three general membership meetings to address the issues of layoff, reassignment and our presence as an integral part of the MDUSD organization. Your officers have met on a monthly basis with the superintendent and the other labor leaders to represent the management perspective and have attended all of the Board of Education meetings. We have also represented management on the Safety Committee under the leadership of DMA member Barb Corrick.

During the past year we have stepped up our activities as an ACSA Region VI charter. Several DMA members, including Carolyn Plath and Julie Braun-Martin, have represented you on state level ACSA committees. DMA was well represented at the ACSA Legislative Action Day in Sacramento in March by Rose Lock, Bob Dodson, Linda Hutcherson and myself. We met with several legislators to inform them of the devastating effects of the budget cuts, especially mid-year cuts to education in general and specifically to our district. In these difficult times, there is a tendency for one group to pit itself against another. As management, I believe that we must continue to take advantage of the resources ACSA provides us to ensure that we work collaboratively as an educational coalition, promoting the interests of all students.

I leave this position confident that you are in very capable hands. Linda Hutcherson and I have worked well as a team. She is keenly aware of the challenges that lie ahead and committed to address them. Together we have learned that these times of crises are true opportunities; they serve as catalysts to create; they give us permission to think in very divergent ways to address our students' needs. We will thrive.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your president.

—Katie Gaines

So you think you can lead?!

An advice column for DMA members

—by Fred & Ginger



So you think you can lead?! is DMA's advice column. If you have questions related to your job or Mt. Diablo policy, or simply want to express your views about some issue near and dear to you, write to us at fredandginger.dma@gmail.com. You have our word that all questions and comments will remain anonymous. Let us know if you like our new column or have better answers to the questions than we do! —All the best, Fred & Ginger

Q. Fred and Ginger: This year one of my responsibilities is to oversee student activities. The leadership adviser actually makes me the bad guy every time the students are told they can't do something. What can I do to get this individual and the students to consider district and school policy in their planning? — *Really a Good Guy*

A. Dear Good Guy: Speak frankly to the adviser, letting him know what your concerns and expectations are. Then work with him to develop a process that will allow consideration of district and school guidelines when planning with students. Since this is your first year working together, weekly meetings are crucial to your planning and ongoing communication. For example, you could discuss possible projects with the adviser at one meeting while reviewing guidelines, and then meet the following week to address any additional questions, especially from students. The last step would be a meeting with the students and the adviser to review the final proposals and sign off on them if all the criteria have been met.

Q. Fred and Ginger: In our grade level meetings, one teacher tends to monopolize the discussion and asks questions in an accusatory manner. Teachers have asked me to talk to the "monopolizer" regarding her negative effect on the team. Since I need to drop in on each grade level meeting, I am not able to be present for an entire meeting. How much of this challenge should I let the teachers address on their own, and how much should I take on? — *Stumped*

A. Dear Stumped: You are wise to question how much of this you should try to solve on your own. What you might want to consider is empowering teachers by reviewing facilitation and meeting processes with all grade level teams. Each team would participate in setting agendas and developing group norms as well as a process for monitoring adherence to those norms. Then, each team would apply these processes to make all grade level meetings more effective. Good luck! ■

Welcome, new DMA members!

Suzanne Bernhard, Supervisor, Food Services
Lindsay Grossman, Occupational Therapist

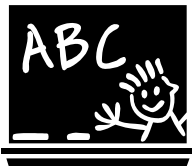
Congratulations to retiring members!

Adria Angelo, SDC Administrator
Mary Coyne, Assistant Director, Student Services
Tom Dial, Vice Principal, Foothill Middle School
Nancy Edwards-Dasho, Principal, Holbrook Elementary
Beverly Hansen, Principal, Mt. Diablo High School
James Long, Vice Principal, Clayton Valley High School
Joan Lundahl, Student Services Coordinator, Foothill Middle School
M. Ronald Miller, Principal, Concord High School
John Nattkemper, Student Services Coordinator, El Dorado Middle School
Sharon Panagotacos, Vice Principal, Mt. Diablo High School
Jana Harrison, Supervisor, Food Services ■

Professional Development program

DMA supports members' professional development by offering the opportunity to apply for an individual one-time reimbursement every three years of up to \$500 for participation in professional growth activities. Congratulations to the following people for receiving staff development reimbursements through the program: Bob Dodson, Jeanne Rau, Jenny Vargas, Rose Lock, Cindy Matteoni, Patt Hoellwarth and Berry Murray.

All you need to do is fill out an application and have proof of registration, evidence of attendance and a copy of your payment receipt. The window to apply is always in May. More information is posted at <http://diablomangers.org> > Programs and Projects. For questions, please contact Cindy Mateoni at Sequoia Elementary. ■



June 17 End-of-Year Awards Luncheon to honor members and student scholars

DMA members who have made outstanding contributions to the Mt. Diablo education community, along with five student scholarship recipients, will be honored at the End-of-Year Awards Luncheon, on Wednesday, June 17, at the Contra Costa Country Club, 801 Golf Club Road in Pleasant Hill. For questions, please contact Berry Murray, DMA Awards chair, at ext. 4065, or Denise Larkins at ext. 4136. Management awards will be named in five award categories: Outstanding Contribution to Education, Have a Heart, Most Involved, Lifetime and Rising Star.



Congratulations to these deserving student scholars, who will receive DMA scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 each:

- **Kayla Hutcherson**, daughter of **Linda Hutcherson**, Foothill Middle School. A 2009 graduate of Pinole Valley High School, Kayla will attend UC Riverside.
- **Alexis Lewis-McEvelly**, daughter of **Bob Dodson**, Mt. Diablo Elementary School. Alexis is a 2009 graduate of Las Lomas High School and will attend Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo.
- **Mario Lomas**, son of **Socorro Lomas**, Clayton Valley High School. Mario attends San Jose State University.
- **Jocelyn Jean Neudecker**, daughter of **Pam Jean Neudecker**, Crossroads High School. Jocelyn attends Saint Mary's College of California.
- **Erika Schuler**, daughter of **Linda Schuler**, Bancroft Elementary. Erika attends California State University, Chico.

Please join us! ■

2008-2009 DMA Executive Board and Representatives

President Katie Gaines, Alternative Education, 3908
President-Elect Linda Hutcherson, Foothill Middle, 5700
Past President Bob Dodson, Mt. Diablo Elementary, 84590
Vice Presidents Vonda Boucher, Elementary Education, 4016; Denise Larkins, Personnel Services, 4136
Secretary Mary-Ann Tucker, Highlands Elementary, 84990
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REPRESENTATIVES:

ACSA Rose Lock, Elementary Education, 4015
Adult Education Margaret Scott, Loma Vista, 4380 #2753
Alternative Education Leyla Benson, Summit NSHS and TLC, 925-687-0991
Central Services Jeanne Rau, Transportation, 3710
Co-administrators Amy Bush, College Park High, 3211

Confidentials Chris Wilburn, 4048
District Office / Willow Creek Julie Braun-Martin, Personnel Services, 4142
Elementary Principals Cindy Matteoni, Sequoia Elementary, 4330
Middle School Andrea Uhle, Glenbrook, 5410
High School Carolyn Plath, Ygnacio Valley, 3646
Retirees Sandy Brickell, 925-827-4002, Brickellsl@comcast.net; Evie Groch, 510-235-9771, egroch@comcast.net; Martha Riley
Special Education Berry Murray, 4065
Vice Principals Brent Brinkerhoff, Sequoia Middle, 5604
ACSA Region VI Consultant John Searles, 925-228-5700, searles3@comcast.net

The role of your DMA representative is to represent you on the DMA Board and to provide feedback to you about Board decisions and issues. If you have questions or feedback to offer, please contact your representative. To comment on items in this newsletter, contact Amy Bush at 925-682-7670, ext. 3211, busha@mdusd.k12.ca.us. For more information about DMA, visit <http://diablomanagers.org>.