

DPO Honorees, 2016

ALEXANDER

Betty Adams

Betty Adams has been a volunteer extraordinaire in the ICCSD for many years. She volunteers all day, five days per week, reading with and spending time with the children. Miss Betty, as the children lovingly call her, uses a walker to stroll down the halls to pick up her students and gives them rides back to their special reading spots. Riding in the walker is not what makes Miss Betty so special to the students though, it's her genuine love and joy for seeing them each day. As one student wrote in a birthday card for Betty, "I'm that girl in 4th grade who you told that I was pretty and told to go to college." That is just one example of the many ways Miss Betty shows students that she loves them and believes in them. She has impacted hundreds of children in our schools over the years and we thank her!

John Harman

Mr. John, as the 395 Alexander Falcons lovingly call John Harman, quickly became an important part of the school community at Archibald Alexander Elementary School when he was hired as head custodian to open the brand new school. Not only does he go above and beyond to keep the school a top notch environment for learning, but he goes out of his way to help with academic and social/emotional learning as well. When walking through the halls of Alexander between the hours of 7:00 am-6:00 pm, you may see Mr. John teaching a health lesson, working one on one with children, or playing chess or basketball with students, in addition to his regular work duties. Mr. John regularly goes the extra mile to ensure that Falcon scholars feel safe and connected in a healthy and clean elementary school. Thank you for your work, Mr. John. You are greatly appreciated!

BORLAUG

Andrea Frederickson

Andrea received her bachelor's degree from UNI and started her career in Solon, teaching Family and Consumer Science and Health for grades 7-1. She later earned her master's degree in Library and Information Science from UNI, and became a teacher librarian at City High and then at Borlaug. Andrea has enjoyed her 36 years of teaching. In her words: "I've been so lucky to work with wonderful colleagues and privileged to teach amazing students from kindergarten through 12th grade. I have seen many changes during my teaching career. I started out making my handouts on a ditto machine with damp purple ink and ended up teaching through Google Classroom with all work assigned and submitted electronically. I look forward to starting a new chapter in my life with time to travel and to read all the books I've been saving up." Andrea will be greatly missed by all.

Vicki Saunders

Vicki graduated from Des Moines North High School and then took her studies to the University of Iowa where she graduated in 1972. She began her teaching career in Lone Tree where she taught 6th grade for six years. Vicki then turned her attention to directing a daycare in Iowa City for eight years. Later, she returned to the classroom where she taught 3rd, 4th, and 6th grade at Roosevelt Elementary in Iowa

City. She has been teaching 6th grade at Borlaug Elementary for the last four years. This marks the end of a remarkable career for a teacher who was truly loved by all of her students. Vicki is an amazing person, mentor, friend, and teacher. She will be missed by many in the community.

CITY HIGH

Kim Blaser-Averkamp

Kim was hired at City High School in August of 2001 to supervise the 10th grade study hall. Soon after she supervised both the 9th and 10th grade study hall together. In 2010 she was hired as the Guidance Office Secretary where she has served the past 6 years.

Terry Huisenga

Terry Huisenga has a thing for schools on hills near busy roads, teaching Family and Consumer Science or Home Economics. She started her teaching career in 1977 at Nishna Valley Community Schools in southwest Iowa, teaching grades 7-12 Home Economics. This was a small district on a hill by the highway. In 1985, Terry and her family moved to Iowa City, with two kids and a third on the way. She gave up teaching to operate a home daycare. In 1991, she returned to teaching Family Consumer Science at a small school on top of a hill by a highway, Highland Community Schools. She wore many hats on that hill. In 2001, she moved to a big school on top of a hill, where she has been for 15 years. Terry is not sure what she will do next, but she thinks it may once again involve a hill.

Jerry Hora

Jerry started as a Hall Monitor at City High in Oct 2008. After one year at that position, Jerry became a para-educator in the special education programs. Jerry has also worked in the school's golf programs, serving as assistant and head coach. He is a member of the Iowa High School Golf Coaches Association Hall of Fame and has coached male and female golfers for 43 years. During his coaching career at City High, Jerry took one boy player to state and two girls' teams to state. His 2005 & 2006 girls' team won the Mississippi Valley Conference titles for the first time in school history. Jerry served as President for the Iowa High School Golf Coaches Association from 2006-2008.

Bill Mitchell

Bill was hired into the Iowa City Community School District by South East Principal Jim Ferguson, with Language Arts Coordinator Bill Lyons' recommendation. Bill has taught at South East, West High, and The University of Iowa (rhetoric, one year), but he's taught for most of his career at City High. He has coached football at South East for more than 30 years. He remains profoundly ambivalent about the decision to retire, but he is deeply grateful for the honor of working with superior colleagues and for the privilege of teaching (and learning from) so many amazing and wonderful students.

Eddie Percy

Eddie has served the most vulnerable students with the highest levels of need at City High School. He currently works in the Modified program. He has been a cornerstone for the program, for both students and staff. Eddie has demonstrated an unmatched level of commitment and compassion to all students, parents, and staff. His patient, kind, and creative approach have allowed his students to grow and thrive. In the past, he has also taught social studies and economics. Eddie was educated at

Texas A & M and at Morningside College. He enjoys biking, hiking, walking and reading. His favorite memories will always be the smiles and laughter of students, family and friends during graduation ceremonies at Opstad Auditorium and the reception that followed for graduates in the City High Commons. After retirement he will join his wife in Phoenix where they will set up their new home, and he will also search for a new teaching position.

George Volk

George Volk started with the Iowa City school district in January 1994 as a night custodian at West High School. Before this he managed convenience stores and then was a property manager for Ed Barker. He came to City High in July 1997 as the head custodian. His physical plant co-workers warned him that the demands of the old building would be great, but he took the job at the school, built in 1937 as part of the New Deal's Works Projects Administration. He looked at it as a challenge and he loved the stately school. He has been head custodian for 20 years. George, who could not be here today because he is working at a City High track meet, says that he has enjoyed his time at City and adds: it's Great to be a City High Little Hawk!

Bruce Wilson

Bruce Wilson is a native of Belmond, Iowa, and received his bachelor's and master's degrees in chemistry education from the University of Northern Iowa. For 33 years he has been a valued and dedicated teacher in the City High Science Department, where he taught many classes but focused mainly on Honors Chemistry and AP Chemistry. Bruce's dedication was obvious, as the chemistry room's lights often burned into the night and on weekends while he worked to provide the best education for his students. He also mentored new science teachers at City High. Bruce has received the Excellence in Chemistry Teaching award from the Iowa Academy of Science; was a Woodrow Wilson Fellow in Chemistry Education; and served on the 2013 and 2016 American Chemical Society High School Chemistry Exam Committee. He is thankful for the love and support of his family members, whose support his career was built upon.

CORALVILLE CENTRAL

Dell Cameron

Dell has been teaching at Central for 21 and a half years (we'll round that up to 22). Dell always shows up with a smile and a hug ready for anyone who might need it. One of her favorite memories was her time spent at School of the Wild with 5th grade students. The experience of watching children enjoy the outdoors -- and develop an appreciation and understanding of nature -- is something she'll never forget. Dell's classroom is a constant source of wonder with various artifacts, rocks, and treasures collected through her own outdoor adventures. She will be greatly missed, but her friends and colleagues know that she will make the most of her time with family, friends, and nature.

Karen Callaway

Karen has been a part of the Coralville Central family for 15 years. She has tirelessly dedicated her time to improving the health of all our students – not only through PE classes, but also through organizing the Mileage Club and the Family Fun Run. Her fondest memories include times when not only students, but also parents, have let her know the positive impact of activities she has organized. One example is the Family Mileage Club, which has helped create fun family environments. Some

family pets have even gotten in on the action. Central will greatly miss having Karen to raise awareness of and improve the school community's physical health. She looks forward to spending more time with family, friends, and being able to give back to the community through volunteer activities. She is warmly thanked for her dedication, enthusiasm, and commitment to Coralville Central.

Linda Scheetz

Linda Scheetz has worked at Coralville Central for 17 years. She has worked with three different principals during this time: Mike O'Leary, Barb Mueller, and Andy Gahan. She is beloved by parents, students, staff, and teachers. She's quick with a smile or a hug for the children. One piece of advice she gave students: "To smile, and try to be positive about school, family and friends." A motto she read in a book long ago was "I'm okay and you're okay." She has done her best to instill that in the students. She recalls when Principal O'Leary asked her about the best asset she could share with the school. She replied, "I love children, and they love me." One favorite memory of the school: she was helping make ice cream at Family Night and many parents made a point to stop and give her a hug, as did their children. Linda has many plans for her retirement, including a good deal of volunteer work. Her daughter teaches at Garner elementary, and she plans on helping there and also to help in her grandchildren's classrooms. helping out in her grandchildren's classrooms.

DISTRICTWIDE PARENT ORGANIZATION

Patti Benson

Patti has a long volunteer history in the ICCSD, beginning in 2002 when her daughter was in kindergarten. Even before that, she volunteered at her church and at a preschool. She has served as Horn PTO's volunteer coordinator, president and vice president. At North West Junior High, she was PSTO president-elect, president, and co-chaired the school's magazine sales fundraiser for three years. At West, she has been PSTO treasurer, president, past president, and is now co-president. She was a DPO representative for Horn, North West and West at various times over the past 12 years. She also served as DPO president elect, president, past president and secretary. She has attended DPO meetings since 2004 and has helped conduct the scholarship reception for many years. These receptions are among her favorite memories, offering inspiration about future educators and showing the community the many ways our teachers, staff and volunteers have impacted our children's lives. She has also volunteered with her kids' band and jazz bands at West High. Her volunteer career has clearly run the gamut. She also has fond memories of her early volunteer days at Horn, crafting gold mind tunnels from old appliance boxes for Fun Night. Her children are now graduating, and she will be greatly missed by both the DPO and by West High.

Pam Ehly

Pam recently retired as the district's Director of Instruction. She received bachelor's and master's degrees in the field of education from two universities in Texas, and was further trained at the University of Iowa in the areas of education specialist, instructional design and technology, and superintendent certification. She taught special education for five years before joining the ICCSD, where she spent one year at Central Junior High, six years as a staff development facilitator, one year as assistant principal at City High, four years as principal at Lemme Elementary, and 23 years as Director of Instruction. As a teacher, she has always appreciated the joy and humor of children, who she believes do a great job of grounding adults in what truly matters in life. As an administrator, she enjoyed getting to know so many in the community – parents, students, teachers and others. In

retirement, she will travel, spend more time with family, and will stay connected to the district via other agencies and volunteer activities.

Becky Furlong

Upon her recent retirement from the ICCSD, Becky began teaching half time at St. Ambrose University in the Educational Administration Department, where she is training future administrators. She earned one degree at Iowa State and two at the University of Iowa. Her passion for education began with a teaching career in home economics. After taking time to have a family, Becky returned to teaching special education and gifted education at Columbus Community Schools, Columbus Junction, Iowa. She later moved into administration in that district, then served as middle school principal at Mid Prairie, elementary principal at Muscatine, and on to Curriculum Director and Assistant Superintendent in Muscatine before she came to Iowa City. Here, she served as assistant superintendent and chief academic officer. Over the years, she has especially enjoyed the curiosity and sense of humor of children display while learning and also found it rewarding to work with teachers on professional development. In addition to teaching part time, she plans to spend more time traveling and seeing more of her three grandchildren.

GARNER

Amy Johnson

Amy has taken the Garner Elementary PTO from zero to hero in the five years that she served as co-president. Under her direction, the school established great traditions and built a community full of pride rivaling that of schools more than twice Garner's age. Her dedication to enriching the educational experience of the children and the working environment of the teachers at Garner is an example for all parents. During her tenure, she established the student T-shirt contest. Students design t-shirts based on the theme of the year, and the student body chooses a winning design that is selected for the school shirt. She also established a robust spirit wear tradition. Gators are proud of their school and love to show it. She helped establish the annual GPV Rock'n Run, a yearly fundraiser put on by Garner, Penn, and Van Allen schools to raise money for all of the schools' Family Resource Centers. Amy feels lucky to be part of the Garner community, which she calls a "close community of wonderful teachers, staff and families."

Tina Scandrett

Tina is a native Iowan. She grew up in Kalona and lives just north of Iowa City near Wilson's Apple Orchard. She received her Bachelor of Arts from Coe College in Cedar Rapids with her emphasis in drawing and painting. She has taught both high school and elementary art in Cedar Rapids, summer classes for the University of Iowa's Belin-Blank Center and elementary art for the Iowa City Community School District. She has taught at Garner since it opened in 2010. In addition to teaching art to kids, she loves spending time with her family camping and riding motorcycles. Tina commonly volunteers to help with PTO causes and finds unique ways for the students at Garner to share their artistic talents. The PTO, staff, and families at Garner Elementary truly appreciate the quality art program she has created for kids.

Jill Winders

Jill has been the Student and Family Advocate for the ICCSD for the past 21 years. She started at Penn Elementary for 15 years and then moved to Garner when it opened up in 2010. Jill is a native of

Iowa. She grew up living on a lake in Spirit Lake, IA. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Work from the University of Northern Iowa. She landed her first job as a social worker at Bremwood Lutheran Children's Home in Waverly, IA. After meeting her husband, they moved to Solon and she began working for the ICCSD as a Student and Family Advocate. Jill is passionate about building relationships with families and helping them navigate resources. In her spare time she enjoys camping and fishing with her husband and three children. Jill has dedicated countless hours to support families and children at Garner Elementary and her commitment is greatly appreciated by staff and the PTO.

HILLS

Cindy Baldwin

Cindy has taught art classes in the school district for approximately 28 years, at both secondary and elementary schools, including City High, Northwest, Roosevelt, Hoover, Lucas, Twain, Mann, Kirkwood and Hills. She credits getting her first job to describing her teaching philosophy with the word "FUN." Cindy wishes students could have art every day. In Cindy's own words, "Making art is not just about making pretty things. It's about expressing your ideas and your feelings and creatively solving problems. I feel the idea of being "hurt" should be directly connected with the core curriculum and should be given value. It adds personal meaning and connections to a child's learning. We all need to be creative thinkers and problem solvers in our world." Cindy has a laid-back, fun-loving approach to teaching and has built a love of art for so many children. Thank you for all you do, Cindy, especially for having fun with our students!

Sheila McCarville-Jennerjohn

Sheila is retiring from teaching at Hills Elementary School. She previously taught special education at Longfellow, Lucas, and Twain, but has been at Hills for 20 years. She began as a special education teacher and transitioned to general education, teaching 5th grade, 3rd grade, a 1st/2nd grade combination, and finally ending with a 5th/6th grade classroom. Sheila sponsored Student Council, ran a lemonade stand to fund a well in Sudan, and wrote the daily announcements. She collaborated with the PTO to create a student art gallery, framing two student pieces per year. She and her husband, Denny, have graciously hosted the annual school parties at their home. To quote Sheila: "For me, it has always been about inspiring students to be their best selves and come to love learning by instilling curiosity in them. Basically, to believe in who they are, what they have the possibility of becoming, and how they can impact the world as they grow up." Sheila has been a leader and her legacy will live on in her students and colleagues. Hills Elementary is forever grateful.

HOOVER

Dr. Linda Graham

Linda grew up on a farm near Cherokee, Iowa, in a family that valued education. Her Aunt Mary was her inspiration for becoming a teacher. When she was in high school she went to her aunt's fourth grade classroom during study halls and helped her by checking papers and reading with students. She started teaching in Nebraska in 1970, and then taught for 11 years in Spencer, Iowa. She was a

teaching assistant in reading methods at the University Iowa, where she completed her Ph.D. thesis in 1985. She started teaching for the ICCSD in 1985, as a Language Arts Resource Specialist at Horn, Mann, and Lincoln. In 1989, she became a second grade teacher at Hoover and stayed for 27 years. She has loved teaching students to enjoy reading and writing. The Hoover staff, students, and parents working together created an outstanding school and inspiration for her.

Sarah Meehan

Sarah Meehan is a parent of two children at Hoover Elementary. She is an active member of the Hoover Community. She deserves recognition for her tireless work in two areas: books and backpacks. Sarah has been the director and coordinator of the Scholastic Book Fairs for many years at Hoover elementary. She has also quietly filled backpacks with food each week for students in need. She does not advertise this work, nor ask for additional assistance from other PTA members. The program works because it is “low profile and portable” -- one backpack per student, filled with ready-to-eat healthy food. Sarah is generous with her time and with her heart, and for this, the Hoover community is thankful.

Lorraine Whittington

Lorraine is retiring from Hoover Elementary after 15 years in the district. She taught at Hoover for the last 14 years. At Hoover, she taught with Lori Kriz and Dawn Herren Wegman in 3rd and 4th. Later she taught 5th and 6th with Jeff Kosier and Lynn Ahlers. Three years ago she became the ELP teacher for Hoover and Wood, and this year added Alexander. Her favorite moments involved encounters of trust and courage among her students. She always told them to write her name on their Social Studies notebooks so one day “people will wonder who was this Mrs. Whittington who taught so many Nobel Laureates, Senators, Supreme Court Judges and Presidents.” Her retirement will include trips to Sweden, New York City and Cape Cod, and possibly a huge road trip covering 10 western states to visit friends and family. She may also volunteer at the Office of the State Archaeologist, helping with their educational materials. Her motto has been, “Let the learning be a surprise,” and she’s sure retirement will have plenty of learning and surprises in store.

HORN

Jan Bohnsack

Jan has been the ELP teacher at Horn Elementary for the last 32 years. She graduated with a bachelor’s in Elementary Education/ Math from Iowa State University and a master’s in Instructional Design and Technology from the University of Iowa. She was the ELP Coordinator at Estherville Community Schools for five years before joining this district. She has taught in various schools throughout the district as well as Geometry Honors 8 and Seminar at Northwest and North Central. Jan has been a valuable asset to the Horn community and she will be greatly missed by the staff, parents and students.

Don Gentsch

Don Gentsch has been an orchestra teacher for 45 years. He worked 30 years in Jefferson City Public Schools before coming to the Iowa City Community School District for the last 15 years. Don has degrees from Lincoln University and the University of Missouri, Columbia. He has taught in many different buildings and instilled his love of music in many children. His sense of humor and positive attitude have made him a joy to work with. He will be truly missed by the students, parents and staff of the Iowa City Community School District. Don is being honored by Horn Elementary as well as Weber Elementary, one of several other schools where he also taught elementary orchestra.

Peggy Powell

Peggy Powell has been the guidance counselor for the last 16 years at Horn Elementary. Prior to this she taught for 17 years as a first grade and reading recovery teacher. She received her counseling degree from Western Illinois University and her Elementary Education Degree from Iowa State University. Peggy has touched the hearts of many Horn students. She is always there with kind and encouraging words for every student, parent and staff member at Horn. Her dedication to Horn and her passion for children will be truly missed.

Kathy Whited

Kathy Whited is currently the library secretary at Horn. She is retiring at the end of the school year and plans to spend time with her retired husband and their four adult children and their families, including nine grandchildren. Kathy has been an invaluable resource at Horn, both to children and staff. She has videotaped students for class projects, music concerts and graduation. She troubleshoots technology problems in the building, unafraid to climb ladders, crawl under desks or plug, unplug and restart any equipment she encounters. She goes out of her way to find a book in the district if Horn doesn't own it. Finally, anyone who has driven on Benton Street in the past twenty years has seen her walk to and from work every day, a six-mile round trip adventure. She will be missed here at Horn.

LEMME

Diana Lane

Diana began teaching at age 21 in Gretna, Nebraska, with a class of 35 second graders, modeling for her students a passion for curiosity and learning. After several years she took time off to start her family, eventually worked as a sub, and later as a part-time teacher of gifted students. She and her family moved to Iowa City in 1987 and she taught part-time in the Extended Learning Program at Lincoln, later adding Lemme and working full time between the two schools. She worked with one particular student for seven years. This student sent a "thank you" letter that warmed Diana's heart. She would like to share some quotes from the letter and also wishes to thank her colleagues, principals, curriculum director and students. The student wrote, "Every second was exhilarating and after each class I would excitedly rush back to tell what I learned. Going through the grades is a constant change, but it was always comforting to have ELP. This class wasn't just extra academic experience. I learned life lessons and was always given extra challenges which pushed me further. I have learned so much and can never thank you enough." In retirement, Diana hopes she continues to be an inspiration.

LINCOLN

Tea Ho

Tea Ho has been volunteering at Lincoln Elementary for six years. Growing up in a Chinese immigrant family, her family shied away from engaging teachers or administrators. But as the mother

of three wonderful and joyful daughters, ages 11, 8, and 3, she has come to realize how important it is to support and challenge the amazing ICCSD community. Tea has coordinated or volunteered at Skate Night, Fun Night, STEAM day, flower plantings, Pancake Day, Book Fair, Lincoln's Learning at Lunch program and the Wellness Committee. Tea is currently DPO co-President Elect and the President of Iowa City Girls Softball. In her non-volunteer mom life, she is a research scientist and instructor for University of Iowa Department of Microbiology and a yoga addict. Tea helps make Lincoln a great experience for all students and families.

Michelle Stalkfleet

Michelle Stalkfleet is in her 14th year in a row volunteering at Lincoln Elementary. Her oldest son Sam went thru K-6 at Lincoln and is now a freshman in college. She has two children still at Lincoln, Aaron and Heidi, who are currently in 6th grade. During these 14 years at Lincoln, Michelle has served as the president and vice president of the Lincoln Parent Teacher Organization. She has chaired the landscaping committee and organized Lincoln's Learning and Lunch program and Pancake Day. Michelle has also volunteered at Lincoln's Fun Night and Book Fair and has been a reading buddy. She is currently a board member for the ICCSD Foundation. Michelle's contributions have made Lincoln a wonderful place to learn and grow.

Diana Lane

Diana is honored today by both Lemme and Lincoln elementary schools.

LONGFELLOW

Emily Lennon

Over the past eight years, the Longfellow community has had the pleasure of working alongside Ms. Lennon. Emily came to Longfellow at a young age – first growing up in the Longfellow neighborhood and later supervising students in the before-and-after school program. Six years ago, she became the director of the before-and-after school program and has maintained that role ever since. She has high standards and is continually looking for ways to improve herself, her staff, her program and most importantly, the lives of her children and families. Emily's strong skills and her ability to relate to people have been her greatest assets – the environment she has created in the Longfellow program is outstanding. Anyone visiting the school can see how much she enjoys her role and how much she truly cares about our community. The Longfellow community would like to thank Emily for everything, and wish her the best of luck in Colorado. She will be dearly missed.

Michelle Morey

Michelle Morey came to Longfellow six years ago after a stint as the teacher-librarian at Twain Elementary School. She hit the ground running and has never looked back. She is an educator with high standards and great expectations for students. Michelle is continually looking for ways to improve herself, her program, and most importantly, her students' learning. Her strong literary skills have been her greatest asset – the library she has built in such a short period of time is excellent. Anyone visiting will see children scouring the shelves for the latest and greatest titles that Mrs. Morey has ordered. Additionally, she has helped Longfellow increase its technological capacity by helping to bring a mobile lab, iPads, and Chrome Books to enhance student learning. She is continually growing and helping others grow with her. She is one of the very best! Thank you, Michelle.

Sara Morelli

Sara Morelli has been a parent volunteer at Longfellow for 10 years. For the past several years, she has drawn on that experience to help the PTA's events and programs run smoothly. She has served in the role of PTA treasurer, and volunteered at the bike rodeo, carnival, ice cream social, 6th grade party, teacher appreciation week, and field trips. For several years, Sara volunteered in the classroom assisting with reading and math. Her dedication and willingness to help has enhanced the educational experience of hundreds of students in Longfellow school community.

Angela Volkman

Angela Volkman has been a parent volunteer at Longfellow for the last 10 years. She has coordinated many school activities -- from the Kindergarten Valentine's Day breakfast to the 6th grade graduation party. Angela has volunteered at the elementary pajama party, bike rodeo, art show, book fairs and landscaping projects. She has lead a book club and two girl scout troops. She has chaperoned field trips and been a classroom and media center volunteer. Angela's creativity and dependability has enhanced the core offerings of at Longfellow as well as the extra activities that make the school a community.

Doug Ward and Connie Sherman

Doug and Connie Sherman are the parents of a 6th grade student at Longfellow. They have chaired and volunteered at many events over the years including the bike rodeo, landscaping projects and butterfly garden, art show, book fairs, ice cream social, carnival, and graduation party. Doug has served on the Before and After School Program board, including 2 years as treasurer. Connie has served as the PTA volunteer coordinator and has inspired children's creativity as a visiting artist in the school's art curriculum. Their commitment to education and the community has contributed to the positive experiences of many students and families.

LUCAS**Sharon Van Fosson**

Sharon has been associated with Lucas Elementary in almost every way imaginable. She began as a Lucas parent, and since 2002, has worked as a building secretary, a library secretary, lunchroom and recess supervisor, kindergarten literature enrichment reader, and most recently as a para educator in a self-contained classroom. Sharon puts extra effort into everything she does. She engages students in conversations about their lives in order to get to know the whole student. While working as a library secretary, she read many Lucas library books so she could stay current with new literature. Sharon has a calming aura about her. Whether she is working one-on-one with a student or monitoring a large group, she is a gentle, consistent presence for students and staff. Sharon is a treasure and it is very fitting to honor her by passing the baton to a future educator.

MANN

Sara Goering

Sara has spent the past 36 years as a Speech and Language Pathologist and ELL teacher. She has taught English Language Learners at Mann for the past five years, and before that she taught at Hills, Weber, Roosevelt, Wood, Lucas, and West High. Sara has been instrumental in the success of Mann's International Night. In retirement, Sara is looking forward to enjoying different activities and a new schedule. The Mann community would like to thank Sara for all she has given to the school's students and staff.

Kris Wingate

Kris is retiring after 36 years of teaching special education and kindergarten. She has taught kindergarten at Mann for the past 18 years, and has touched the lives of many, many students during that time. Kris says she is looking forward to finding out what her retirement holds. She will miss the kids, teaching, and the perks of getting more than "four hugs a day." The Mann community would like to thank Kris for helping students get off to a great start in school.

NORTH CENTRAL JUNIOR HIGH

Charlie Huff

Charlie has spent 40 years as a teacher, counselor, and coach, and the past 30 of those were spent in the ICCSD. He taught American Studies at Northwest Junior High and at West High, and was a counselor and football and wrestling coach at Northwest. Currently Charlie teaches American Studies and works with the Student Congress. He has served as President and Vice President of the Iowa City Education Association. Charlie was part of the team that planned the transition to North Central and has been a member of its staff since. In retirement, he plans to spend time with his older son, and to make it to more of his younger son's football games and track meets. He'll be able to give his wife rides to and from work, and spend time with the family's dogs. Maybe they'll teach this old dog some new tricks. Charlie promises that on days when there is a late start he will fondly think of his colleagues at work, and then roll over and go back to sleep.

NORTH WEST JUNIOR HIGH

Julie Cotton

Julie is the Student and Family Advocate at North West Junior High. Her area of focus is Mentoring, Delinquency & Truancy. She has been part of the North West Junior High family for 6 years, where she goes above and beyond. As the Secondary School Mentoring Site Coordinator for Big Brothers Big Sisters, Julie trains, supports, coordinates and mentors throughout the school year, developing and implementing individual mentoring plans to help each student be successful. She is the liaison to Juvenile Court and Attendance and Truancy Court. Julie also acts as the Homeless Liaison for the school, providing necessities like backpacks, winter coats, shoes & clothing vouchers, school supplies, and tutoring and transportation services for our families. She also helps students and their families with transportation to school functions and appointments and helps make sure they receive vital services. She assists the guidance office, helps with registration, and works with nutrition services to make sure all students get a healthy meal. Julie encourages a strong home-school partnership. With all of this, her greatest achievement is being a proud mom to 3 amazing young men!

Dave Raaf

Dave's first job, 1972-1984, was at Boeuf Valley Farm, where he was a laborer and the best cow milker ever! He graduated from Metamora High School in 1981 and continued on to Illinois State University, receiving a Bachelor of Science degree in industrial Technology. He worked for almost a decade in the auto industry, as District manager for Chrysler Corporation, Service Manager at Hartwig Dodge and then Service Advisor/Warranty Administrator at McGurk-Meyers Motors. In 1999, he earned a teaching certificate, changed careers, and began teaching for the ICCSD. In 2012 Mr. Raaf graduated with his Master's in Educational Leadership from Drake University. He married his wife Nancy in 1988 and they have 2 children, Rachael & Ryan, who are both alumni of North West Junior High. NWJH! Dave is an ASE certified Technician, Trojan Baseball organizer, and a retired Youth Baseball and soccer coach.

Michaela Winn

Michaela Winn attended The Masters College in Santa Clarita, California and graduated Magna Cum Laude with a bachelor's degree in English literature in 2010. The following year, Michaela began working at Tonopah Valley High School in the Phoenix Metropolitan area. While there, she taught 9th through 12th grade English, AP Literature courses, served as the Department Chair, and became one of the first early adopters of a "flipped" online classroom when her school transitioned to a 1:1 program. She also coached Spirit Line, worked as the AP Film and Book Club Coordinator, and created the TVHS After School Writing Initiative Program. This year, Michaela taught 7th and 8th grade Language Arts at Northwest Junior High School in addition to co-teaching Northwest Junior High's Colors Club. Throughout her five years of teaching, Michaela has been awarded the Student Achievement and Growth Award, the CTE Academic Integration Excellence Grant, and most notably, was named the Westside Impact Teacher of the year in 2013.

PENN

Debra Dorzweiler

Debra has served as a school librarian for 20 years. She began her career in Durant, then worked at West Branch Schools and has been at Penn for the last 8 years. At Penn she undertook the task of remodeling and reorganizing the media center and then had the opportunity to plan and open the new library. She has been incredibly patient, organized, creative and diligent throughout this long process. Penn will enjoy the fruits of her labor for years! In the library, Debra has especially enjoyed reading aloud to young children and helping students discover the fun of research. she is looking forward to having the freedom to travel with her husband and to visit her parents and children.

David "Pat" Fewer

After Pat retired from teaching Social Studies in Montana, he and his wife moved to the Iowa City area to be near their children and grandchildren. Since moving here, Pat has worked for the Iowa City School District as a custodian for 13 ½ years. He began at West High and has been at Penn for 8 years. Pat's work ethic has always been impressive, and he was especially helpful through Penn's recent construction process. Pat is looking forward to traveling with his wife and spending time with his grandchildren.

SHIMEK

Terry Conner

Terry has served the Iowa City Community School District for the past 29 years. During her time, she taught at Mann and Shimek Elementary and will retire from her current position as Title I Coordinator and Shimek Elementary Principal. Terry's love of learning and dedication to the profession is evidenced through her rapport with students, families, and her staff. The laughter she generates with her positive attitude and solution-focused mindset has helped create a positive climate for the administrative team and her teaching staff. Terry's courageous leadership and firm belief that every child can succeed will leave a lasting impact on the Shimek community.

Kara Seaton

Kara is a parent of three students at Shimek Elementary. Although Kara's family only recently joined the Shimek Community in the fall of 2015, Kara has already invested time working behind the scenes as well as spending countless hours volunteering in her children's classrooms. Working closely with Shimek staff and administration, Kara compiled the necessary evidence of implemented policies and programs which led to Shimek's Blue Zone designation. Kara has given of her time, talents, and efforts to champion the work of the Shimek community, truly making it a great place where students, staff, and families want to live longer, better, lives.

SOUTH EAST JUNIOR HIGH

Gae Ellyn Gentzsch

Gae Ellyn has been teaching 7th and 8th grade orchestra students at South East Junior High for 15 years. She has also taught stringed instruments at Lucas and Hoover during that time, and previously taught in Jefferson City, Missouri, for 18 years. She believes the best part of teaching is being with students, sharing laughter and music, helping them learn, and getting to know them as people. In retirement, she will spend time with her family, volunteer, lead various honor orchestra events, and will continue teaching and performing. Gae Ellyn has completed Suzuki instruction and is registered in 8 levels of violin instruction. She will continue performing as a piano accompanist and the principal violist with the Southeast Iowa Symphony Orchestra.

Lynda Johnson

In 20 years of teaching at South East Junior High, Lynda Johnson has been fascinated to see the changes in education relative to technology. In addition to helping students, this has helped her continue on her own learning path. She believes teaching is about finding the motivations and needs of individual students in order to help them become successful. She finds it rewarding to see students grow from the beginning of the year, to the end of the year. An especially fond memory was when 6 former students came to visit during one of her classes and shared their experiences with the class, including their plans to attend college. Lynda has taught science and personal development at South East, after teaching previously in Boone, Iowa. She has also taught in higher education and earned a master's degree in education from the University of Alabama. She plans to relax with her family, travel, play golf, play tennis, and bike.

Mike Martin

Mike Martin has taught 35 years, the last 25 at South East Junior High where he has most recently taught 8th grade science. Before South East, Mike taught all the high school sciences at some time or another at other schools in Iowa. He graduated from Iowa State University with a bachelor of science degree in animal ecology, and with certification to teach all secondary sciences. He also earned a master's degree in science education from the University of Iowa in 1995. Mike looks forward to doing some traveling at times other than summer, spending more time with grandchildren, and working on projects at home without a deadline. He hopes to be able to do some volunteer work such as Habitat for Humanity building projects.

TWAIN

Mary Bontrager

According to her mother, Mary Bontrager started her teaching career at age 5 – teaching her 4 younger siblings to clean, do dishes, write their names, and make their beds. She went on to graduate from the University of Iowa and has served as an educator for 35 years in the Clear Creek and the ICCSD school systems. Mary coached softball and taught kindergarten, 1st, and 3rd grades for Clear Creek. She then taught kindergarten, first, and second grade at Lincoln Elementary, and third/fourth grade at Horace Mann before becoming an assistant principal at Grant Wood. Mary most recently has served as principal the last 8 years for Mark Twain Elementary. Throughout her years, Mary has felt both honored and humbled to work with such dedicated, hardworking staff; creative, intelligent students; and caring, involved families. She cannot imagine a better school than Twain to end her career and knows she will always be a Twain Tiger!

Darcy Cooley

Since moving to Iowa City in 1998, Darcy has been a part of the Mark Twain Community. For the first two years she worked with students with behavior challenges, then moved to a supportive classroom. She will miss the many wonderful people who share the same passion for working with this diverse population. She will remember the faces of each and every child who has walked through her door and the impact they have made on her life.

Linda Figg

Linda began her career with the ICCSD at Mark Twain Elementary as a health associate in Margeret Felling's Level 3 classroom. It was a major transition from doing in home daycare for the previous 13 years, but she fell in love with the kids and the staff, and stayed in this position for 5 years. When the opening for a resource para-educator came along, it seemed like a good change for Linda. She worked alongside the special education teachers and in the classroom, with her focus being resource students. She was in this position for the last 17 years and says she learned as much from the kids as she hopes they have learned from her. She shares that a highlight from her 22 years at Mark Twain is having old students stop in and say hello, or running into them out and about in town and finding out how they are doing.

Sue Ruxton

Sue has worked at Mark Twain Elementary school for 25 Years, starting as a 3-hour paraprofessional, then moving into the secretary position about 23 years ago. During that time, she has enjoyed building relationships with many, many families. She is now starting to see children of former students attending Mark Twain. She will miss the connections made with families and the amazing Mark Twain staff, and hopes to do some volunteer work there after her retirement.

VAN ALLEN

Kathy Wilder

The Van Allen Elementary staff is excited to share their appreciation of Kathy Wilder, school nurse. Kathy serves multiple schools in the North Liberty/Coralville area and has been a school nurse since 2001. As school nurse, she supports students and families in a variety of ways, from helping with scrapes and cuts all the way to intervening in health-related emergency situations. Even though she is busy and may not always be at the school, she is always a phone call or email away. Kathy lives in Iowa City with her husband. She has two grown children and has lived in Iowa City for almost 22 years. She is a native Vermonter and spends her summers on the shores of Lake Champlain. She attended the University of Vermont. During her free time she enjoys quilting, handwork, kayaking and listening to audio books. Kathy is a valued friend and colleague at Van Allen Elementary. Please join Van Allen in thanking Kathy for the service and support she provides.

WEBER

Anne Spencer

Anne grew up in Iowa City and attended Mark Twain Elementary School, University High School, and the University of Iowa. She started teaching in Iowa City and Lone Tree before taking a break to raise her family. She has three children, and now, six grandchildren. While raising her family, Anne played in the Cedar Rapids Symphony and ran a catering business from her home. When her youngest child was in kindergarten, she earned her reading specialization certificate. She returned to teaching 1994 in West Branch and transferred to the ICCSD to teach at Weber Elementary 5 years later. In 2003, Anne received her Master's Degree in Elementary Mathematics and served the school district as a math consultant for one year before returning to Weber as a full time 6th grade teacher. Anne has been an outstanding educator in all regards. She is passionate about nurturing a love of reading and an understanding of math concepts within her students. She will be missed by her students, her colleagues, and her school.

WEST HIGH

Elwyn Pearson

Elwyn started at West in 2002 and has been part of the school's supervisory staff since that time. Over the years he has helped with hallway supervision, monitored security cameras, and overseen the parking lots, earning the affectionate nickname "the parking lot guy." He will miss the staff and students at West when he retires, but he and his wife have 5 children and 7 grandchildren that they will have more time to go visit. Elwyn doesn't plan on doing much else in retirement unless his wife is listening, and then he has a list of projects to complete. Elwyn has often said that he he thinks he's much too young to be old enough to retire, and other days he feels too old to be working! He will be greatly missed at West High School.

Wayne Thelander

Wayne started teaching in 1976. After teaching orchestra in Minnesota, Wisconsin and New Mexico he came to Iowa and started at West High school in 1998. Wayne has had many successes as an orchestra teacher, but he particularly remembers competing at the 2008 National Orchestra Festival in Albuquerque and placing third (the highest of any public high school). Other highlights include many wonderful concerts and having his own children in his classes. Wayne will miss witnessing the “ah-ha” moment on a student’s face when they get what is being taught -- that, he says, is priceless. In retirement Wayne will spend as much time as he can with his family. As he likes to say, “Every day is an audition -- first for me as a teacher and second for the students in the orchestra.” Wayne’s talent, expertise and hard work will certainly be missed at West High School!

WICKHAM

Sarah Gretter

Sarah Gretter joined the staff at Wickham Elementary at the start of the 2014-2015 school year as the Principal’s Secretary. Before that she worked as an office manager at Eastern Iowa Periodontics, and served as a substitute teacher, secretary, and para-educator in the ICCSD and the Solon Community School District. For the 2015-2016 school year, her position at Wickham changed and she added the role of School Administrative Manager. She has greatly enjoyed the opportunity to continue to learn and assist Wickham staff and students in her new position. She loves the challenges and rewards that come with working in an elementary school, especially the fact that each day is different! Sarah’s family includes her husband John, and 3 daughters, Ellie, Chloe, and Camille, who keep her very busy! She loves spending time with them doing the things that they love, including track meets, dance competitions, and basketball games. She also enjoys reading, baking, and trying new restaurants with friends and family.

Jim Rogers

Wickham Elementary was lucky enough to have Jim Rogers join their staff as head custodian in November 2015. He works tirelessly every day to be sure that Wickham is a clean, safe, and functioning elementary. Jim has the ability to fix or find anything that staff needs, and has never met a mess he couldn’t clean up without complaint. He is an invaluable part of the staff at Wickham Elementary. Jim previously worked at Borlaug and at Roosevelt as an evening custodian, and in the ICCSD paint shop. Prior to coming to the ICCSD, Jim worked for the University of Iowa in the Engineering and Maintenance Department for 20 years. When he is not taking care of the Wickham building, staff, and students, he enjoys spending time with his wife, Joyce, 3 sons, and 2 daughters. They also have six grandchildren who he enjoys visiting. Jim also enjoys being outdoors: fishing and camping are two of his favorites! And, of course he loves to cheer on the Iowa Hawkeye football team in the fall.

WOOD

Gary Glenn

Gary is a 23-year veteran of the Iowa City Community School District, and has spent the past 18 years as a sixth-grade teacher at Grant Wood. While Gary is known for walking the hallways in bright Hawaiian shirts with a coffee mug ever-present in his hand, it’s his dedication to his students that really makes him stand out. That behind-the-scenes commitment leads to so many of his former students coming back to visit him, to share their stories of personal successes and to introduce their

families. Gary is also highly regarded by his peers. He is always willing to step up to help out another staff member, regardless of the situation.