

## Superintendent's Report 06.10.14

The Board and I would like to begin by recognizing a woman who has been volunteering at Kellond Elementary School for many years. According to 4<sup>th</sup> grade GATE teacher, Amber Pierson, **Mildred "Millie" St. Cyr** first offered her time eight years ago and has dedicated her efforts every day since.

She helps Ms. Pierson, also aiding her students and the school. She arrives before the students and leaves long after they are gone. She helps organize and prepare materials, the student's homework folders, creates displays and much, much more.

Even after her husband passed away, her devotion to these students led her back into the classroom just a month later. When Ms. Pierson had to take some time off, Mrs. St. Cyr still showed up every day to help the substitute.

Mrs. St. Cyr has never asked for any thanks or anything in return for her hard work but we think she deserves public recognition for her unwavering dedication to the staff and students at Kellond and so we will take this opportunity to thank you for making everyone's life just that little bit easier every single day.

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Speaking of volunteering time and service, we would next like to recognize some wonderful community partners who have helped provide services, scholarships and food for events.

**The Athlon/Fort Lowell Physical Therapy Group** came to Interscholastics two years ago to form a partnership in order to recognize student-athletes for their academic success, community involvement and athletic accomplishments. As a result, a Student-Athlete of the Quarter award was established. Schools nominate the students and a committee of Athlon therapists review and choose the winners.

I would like to call up Herman House to help me introduce the staff at Athlon/Fort Lowell:

**Dr. Thomas O'Donnell, Lukas Tvedt, Amanda Tvedt, and Carrie Anderson.**

At the end of the year those winners are then eligible for one of the two \$500 scholarships given by Athlon/Fort Lowell; one each to a male and female student-athlete.

In the past two years they have also sponsored a Sports Physical Fair for TUSD. Partnering with the U of A sports physicians, headed by Dr. Holly McNulty, during which a group of physicians donate a Saturday to offer sports physicals to our high school and middle school student-athletes for only \$10.00, which then goes directly back to the schools.

This year 220 students were serviced at this awesome event. The Board and I wanted to let you know how much your generosity and hard work is appreciated.

Thank you.

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The Board and I would now like to recognize the special efforts of two more individuals and their departments at the U of A.

**The African American Student Services “Cradle to College” event** allows our middle school students an opportunity to experience life on a college campus through workshops in university classrooms, participating in a campus tour and eating in the student union.

I would like **Mr. Rudy McCormick** and **Dr. Tanisha Price-Johnson** to please join me, as well as Mr. Jim Fish and Mr. Jimmy Hart, who will help us show our appreciation of their contributions to the event.

Mr. McCormick, Early Outreach Director at the University of Arizona, and his office partnered to secure facilities, technology access and give-a-ways for the event.

Dr. Price-Johnson, Admissions/Financial Aid Executive Director at the U of A, and her office provided meal tickets for the participants and parents for approximately 100 people.

This event was a great success in no small part because of their involvement. Thank you, so very much, for allowing our families this wonderful opportunity.

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## Our very own **Palo Verde High Magnet School is home to the 2014 Arizona Division III Baseball Champions!!**

Though a baseball player all his life, Coach Jim Mentz began coaching girls soccer at Palo Verde in 1988. They've won a state record 280 games in 26 years. He also began coaching baseball there in 1995.

This year they raised money for improvements by cleaning up the mess at the Tucson Rodeo. During spring break they spent hours painting dugouts, fixing the outfield fence and putting up safety netting.

Nobody thought of Palo Verde as a threat to win the division championship. They reached the semifinals against Phoenix Fountain Hills, which has played in seven state championship games since 2001! Then they determined to break the 18 game winning streak of Phoenix Northwest Christian – and they did just that.

Coach Mentz promised that if they ever won the state title he would get a tattoo. He did get a tattoo but not in the traditional sense. He was struck above the right eye by a wild throw during the first round of the state playoffs. He went to the emergency room and received 8 stitches. Released at 1AM, he was on the bus to the quarterfinals at 6AM and now considers that his permanent “tattoo” and a remembrance of these boys who led them to the state title.

We are all so proud of this team and their coaches.

**Coach Jim Mentz** and **Assistant Coaches Jason Fallwell and Mark Redding** will you please join me up front as we recognize your students:

**Cody Bush**

**Jordan Casey**

**Jared Cochran**

**Ather Dawod**

**Johnny Dorame**

**Tyler Fallwell**

**Mathew Gray**

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**Daniel Hunt**

**Rosario Martinez**

**Jose Parada**

**Victor Parada**

**Jose Pena**

**Zachary Redding**

**Rene Seym**

**Tahmani Williams**

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Palo Verde is also the proud home of the **2014 Arizona Division III Track & Field Discus Champion, Drake De Yonge and his coach, John Tadlock.**

We have found out a bit about Drake De Yonge besides the fact that he is a great athlete, who also came in 6<sup>th</sup> in the shotput competition. He has overcome some extremely tough medical obstacles to attain the title of Division III Discus State Champion of Arizona.

5 years ago, Drake was participating in one of the many sports in which he has been involved and shattered his right leg. Surgeons said damage to his bones and arteries might cause him to lose his foot. Drake's determination and optimism helped him overcome the limitations and outcome the doctors gave him. Drake was in a wheelchair for 2 months, used a walker for a month, and spent 6 months in physical therapy.

Drake went on to continue wrestling, playing football for the next 4 years, and competing in track & field in discus and shotput.

In addition, Drake excels at drafting and welding and has competed at state competition for Skills USA. He won 4th place for the 2014 Skills USA Mechanical Drafting competition. Through everything he maintained a 3.0 GPA.

Drake helped with construction of the Wetland project funded by a grant with Club Congress and also volunteers his time to help draft ideas for adaptive equipment used to help people with disabilities.

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Another fan of Track & Field – and Cross Country is **Mike Bekedam, a teacher at Lineweaver**. Mike received the first TUSD Interscholastics Service Award for his many years of hard work and dedication in organizing and supervising the sports of Cross Country and Track & Field for ALL TUSD elementary schools. A huge undertaking – maybe it is his “magic” (he’s also a magician).

Lineweaver staff and students love Mr. Bekedam and all of his enthusiastic, hard work for not only their school but all of TUSD’s elementary schools. We were unable to recognize him at the Superintendent’s Cup event so we would like to make up for that now.

Congratulations, Mike, and thanks for going above and beyond and going the extra mile for the benefit of all TUSD elementary students.

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Since we are on a sports roll right now, I would like to take just a moment to highlight an accomplishment of our own **Director of Interscholastics, Herman House**.

Mr. House, has been with the district for about 19 years. He was recently selected as the 2014 Distinguished Service Athletic Director of Arizona by the Arizona Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association.

Herman earned the Certified Athletics Administrator (CAA) title last year. To earn this distinction, candidates must demonstrate the highest level of knowledge and expertise in the field of interscholastic athletic administration. That process included a thorough evaluation of his educational background, experience, professional contributions, as well as a comprehensive written exam. The program identifies athletic directors nationally who demonstrate a certifiable level of both experience and expertise in the field of athletic administration.

His latest award is presented to a limited number of AIAAA members each year in recognition of length of service, special accomplishments and contributions at local, state and national levels.

This is certainly a reflection on his dedication to interscholastics and most especially to TUSD.

Herman will be recognized by the Association on September 8 at a banquet in Prescott. Congratulations!

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Finally, we would like to recognize one of our Language Acquisition employees, **Diane Alvarez**, who just received congressional recognition from Congressman Ron Barber for her central role in the Manzo Elementary gallery show hosted in the Biosphere 2 art gallery. The gallery show was an extension of the Manzo/B2 mini-LEO project.

Mrs. Alvarez worked to integrate language, art, and LEO science reaching a broad spectrum of learners, many of whom are English language learners. The art show ran in the Biosphere 2 gallery for a month and was well-received. Visitors even showed interest in purchasing student artwork!

Regina Heitzer-Momaday, who manages the B2 gallery space and Cita Scott, a local artist and photographer, presented Mrs. Alvarez with the award. She did an amazing job with the project and her recognition is well deserved.

Thank you for shining such a bright light on TUSD and its talented students.

**THAT CONCLUDES MY REPORT FOR TONIGHT.**