



# school bulletin

ISSUED BI-WEEKLY SEPTEMBER THROUGH JUNE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

May 6, 2005

## Disney Prize Teacher Relates to Students

Before you can teach content, you must build relationships.

That's the sage advice of Millikan's Roberta Patterson, one of 45 finalists for the Disney Teaching Award. The national honor recognizes teachers who use innovative methods to engage students in learning.

"Once you know one another, you start trusting each other and helping each other," said Patterson, an accomplished art teacher and scholarship adviser.

She uses a method of classroom organization called "Tribes."

"We stress respect and peer teaching in a small learning community," she said. "The best thing you can be to another person is a good example."

After Patterson's demonstration on water-color techniques, one student announced to the class, "In 10 minutes, you can come to our table to see the dry brush technique."

"We have the 'I can' attitude," she said.

Her students win frequent awards and honors at many juried art shows and competitions. Their work has been displayed in the halls of Congress.

"When they want to apply themselves, we can go great places together," she said.

An outstanding teacher at Millikan for 13 years and at Hughes Middle School for a decade, Patterson often receives calls, letters and e-mail from former students. One recently sent her a five-page letter describing how her belief in him had motivated him to shed some self-destructive habits and become a serious college student.

Her students have gone on to earn full-ride scholarships to Stanford and to graduate school at Otis Art Institute in New York. Her own two children have also excelled as Millikan graduates. Her son is earning his Ph.D. at Harvard. In addition to being a superb teacher and parent, she helps many students apply for college admission and scholarships. She is the adviser of Young Black Scholars and Young Scholars groups at Millikan.



Patterson

More than 50,000 teachers in the U.S. applied for the Disney Teaching Award. As one of 45 finalists, Patterson will receive a \$10,000 prize plus \$5,000 for her school. She will be honored in July at a special ceremony at Disneyland.

At that ceremony, she will make a four-minute presentation to a panel of experts. They will select four winners. Each will receive an additional \$15,000. The 45 finalists

(Continued on back page)

**STATE CHAMPS—** Dozens of the most elite, expensive private prep schools in California were overwhelmed by the stellar performance of Jordan juniors Louis Blackwell and Richard Funches. They triumphed as California State Speech and Debate Champions. Each won a \$500 scholarship and hopes to compete in National Championships next year.



## Jordan Wins State Debate Championship

Persuasive young debaters from Jordan High School have won the California State Speech and Debate Championship. Two of Jordan's finest—juniors Louis Blackwell and Richard Funches—represented Jordan and the Southern California Debate League in last weekend's statewide competition. They outperformed 1,000 of California's best student speakers and 64 top high school debate teams from throughout the state.

Blackwell and Funches each received a \$500 scholarship, a large trophy and the Jordan team plaque. Besides winning the policy debate competition, Jordan took second place in the overall sweepstakes.

Of the teams advancing to the elimination rounds in debate, Jordan was the only public high school. All other advancing debate teams were from private schools. Although many of the top debaters were more experienced than Blackwell and Funches, the Jordan team won.

The final debates were held April 29 through May 1 at Cal State Northridge. Teams in the final round argued the topic, "Resolved: the U.S. federal government should establish a foreign policy substantially increasing its support of U.N. peacekeeping operations."

Teams had to prepare to take either the affirmative or negative side. Jordan was assigned the negative position. Based on research and analytical evidence, their job was to make persuasive points, refute their opponents' position, think quickly and respond eloquently on their feet.

Jordan speech and debate teacher Sandy Stoneman gave much of the credit to the two students and their volunteer debate coaches, Geof Brodak, a graduate student at CSULB, and David Wiltz, director of the Urban Debate League. Both were national debate champions.

"I was impressed by our students' desire to win," said Stoneman.

"Our two outstanding debaters should do

very well in national competition next year," said Wiltz. "After their recent state championship, many colleges are interested in them. They have a good chance of winning full-ride scholarships."

Blackwell and Funches excelled in 10 prior competitions this school year. This is only the second year of debate experience for both.

The Jordan team has depth with sophomore Gabby Thomas and junior Kenneth LeBlue. They took fifth place at the Nationals in Atlanta in the novice division April 22-24. Jordan's Nina Centers and Kenny Gravino won first place in policy debate at the Spring Fling at CSU Fullerton.

At the California State Speech and Debate Championship, Poly High School won second place in the Student Congress category. Team member Siodhbhra Parkin excelled in that event. Andrew Dunkley placed fifth in the state as Student Congress presiding officer. Their teacher is Brett Alexander.

## 10 Title I Schools Win

Ten local schools this week won outstanding 2005 No Child Left Behind Title I Achieving Schools awards.

Winners include Emerson, Fremont, Gompers, Hill, Hoover, Hudson, Hughes, Kettering, MacArthur and Mann.

Each winning school achieved at least double its schoolwide API growth target and double its growth target for disadvantaged students.

Each school underwent a rigorous California Department of Education review with school visits by evaluators from county offices.

The awards honor the highest achieving Title I schools. At least 40 percent of all students enrolled in these schools must be from low-income families.

# Thanks to You, 'The Long Beach Way' Prevails

By Chris Steinhauser  
Superintendent of Schools

We've had many visitors lately. Every few days more educators arrive from Fresno or Denver or Boston or Reno or San Diego – even from the Philippines and Russia – to learn how the Long Beach Unified School District continues to do what is right for kids. Despite the state budget melt-down, despite Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's suspension of Prop. 98 funding guarantees to schools, despite the rising cost of educating students, we continue to see improved academic achievement and more state and national recognition for your accomplishments.



When visitors ask how we do it, I say it's simple. We have the best employees. We have the best teachers, administrators and support staff working with the most supportive parents, volunteers and community. This month we celebrate California Day of the Teacher and Classified Employee Week. Both groups of employees have earned my deep respect and gratitude for all you've done to preserve The Long Beach Way, especially during these difficult budget times.

The Long Beach Way is difficult to describe. A good friend, Sean McPhetridge, coined that phrase. He worked here for six months as an intern during his recent doctoral studies with Harvard's Urban Superintendents Program. Before he left, he delivered this touching message at one of our Board of Education meetings:

"Long Beach Unified School District is different than most school districts because of the way you all work together and with one another in the name of the children served by the district. I have met faculty and students of the best universities in the field of education who have come to visit Long Beach to try to figure out and document how you accomplish what to many seems impossible—the closing of the achievement gap in an urban school system. In no other district where I have worked or observed have I felt such a sense of family and such a sense of genuine caring as I have witnessed here. You have heart. You have courage. And you have wisdom. For that I will be forever grateful, and because of it I take with me lessons that I will never forget, lessons of The Long Beach Way."

As Sean observed, The Long Beach Way is alive and well, and your results continue to speak for themselves. Consider the honors you've earned over the past few weeks. These awards would not be possible without the

## • Disney Teacher

(Continued from front page) will also vote for the overall outstanding teacher of the year. That top national winner will receive another \$15,000.

Patterson is a National Board Certified teacher. She was a peer assistance and review consulting teacher and mentor teacher. She also was a Long Beach Unified School District Teacher of the Year and Los Angeles County Teacher of the Year in 2001.

superb teamwork of teachers, classified employees and our entire school district team:

- Three California Distinguished School Awards (Hill, Hughes and Wilson)
- Ten 2005 No Child Left Behind Title I Achieving School Awards (Emerson, Fremont, Gompers, Hill, Hoover, Hudson, Hughes, Kettering, MacArthur and Mann)
- Statewide winner of the California Prospector Award from the California Council for Excellence. (Hill and Emerson won this honor for effective use of Malcolm Baldrige continuous improvement strategies.)
- National MetLife Ambassador in Education Award (Newcomb teacher Fay Tracy)
- National winner of the Disney Teaching Award (Millikan art teacher Roberta Patterson)
- Outstanding School Psychologist for our Los Angeles County region (Marcie Roussos)
- Statewide winner of the Daughters of the American Revolution Outstanding Teacher of American History Award (Bancroft teacher Ryan Baker). Bancroft history department chair Gabby Mercado also was the only teacher to represent the western United States on the national committee that created test questions for the new NAEP history exam.
- Statewide winner of the Health Education Teacher of the Year Award (Ann Rector, teacher on special assignment in the Health/Physical Education Office)
- Statewide winners of the California Speech and Debate Championship. (In the elimination rounds, Jordan was the only public high school and defeated the best private school teams in the state.)

The list goes on and on. These inspiring accomplishments remind me how blessed I am to work with all of you. Thank you for all that you do for our students and schools. You are The Long Beach Way.

## Exchange Student

A Chinese exchange student who will spend next year at Poly High School is in need of host families. The 16-year-old student is from Beijing and Shanghai. He speaks English, and he plays guitar. For information call 427-2013.

## Retirement Event

Honoree	Date	Contact
Lenora Montgomery	June 14	Mary Ann Lazatin ext. 6680

### SCHOOL BULLETIN

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CHRISTOPHER J. STEINHAUSER  
Superintendent of Schools

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# Employees of Month

Three employees were recognized as Long Beach Unified School District Employees of the Month at this week's Board of Education meeting:

- Sophia Mean, recreation aide at Butler and the only Khmer speaker on staff, recently used her off-track vacation time to talk to Khmer-speaking parents so that their child could participate in a special program.
- LeAnn Mora, school social worker at Bethune, keeps students focused on learning by helping their families receive the assistance and support they need to get through emotionally trying times.
- Maria Rodriguez, recreation aide at Bryant, helps prepare award assemblies. She fills in wherever needed to assist teachers and other staff members in creating and maintaining a learning environment that celebrates students' achievements.

The monthly award provides each winner \$100 from a private donation to recognize extraordinary service in a particular month.

Applications are available from each site secretary. Applications must be received by the Employee Relations office by the last day of the month.

For information, call ext. 8220.

## Head Start Hits 40

Head Start marks its 40th anniversary this year. To celebrate, Long Beach Unified School District Head Start is looking for district employees whose lives have been made better by Head Start.

Head Start alumni or relatives of a Head Start participant—past or present—may share their stories of how Head Start helped them by emailing Linda James, Head Start director, at ljames@lbusd.k12.ca.us.

Head Start will observe its 40th anniversary by holding an Open House at all centers (except Job Corps) on Friday, May 13. LBUSD central office employees are invited to visit from 8 to 9 a.m. For information, or to submit an application to enroll in Head Start, call 427-0833.

## The Job Board

- Applications are now being accepted at the Personnel Commission, 999 Atlantic Ave., third floor, for choral accompanist, cook remote site, job developer, network support specialist, nutrition services supervisor I, nutrition services supervisor II, nutrition services supervisor III, plant supervisor I, plant supervisor-Avalon, and school safety supervisor.

- Lafayette is looking for a Reading First/literacy specialist to assist teachers implementing the reading/language arts program. For information, call Damita Myers-Miller, principal, at ext. 7952.

- DeMille Middle School has openings for a Dual Immersion (Spanish) science teacher and an Applied Technology Magnet computer graphic arts teacher. For information, contact Tim Spivey, principal, at ext. 4500.

## In Memoriam

**Maria Aguilar**  
student evaluation technician, Willows  
April 18, 2005