



school bulletin

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

October 31, 2014



HALLOWEEN SAFETY – Long Beach Police Chief Jim McDonnell shared reflective trick-or-treat bags and Halloween safety tips with Lafayette Elementary School kindergartners this week. The bags came with glow sticks and a few treats, courtesy of the Long Beach Police Association.

New CBFO Named

The Long Beach Unified School District Board of Education has approved the appointment of Yumi Takahashi as Chief Business and Financial Officer.

Takahashi joined the school district as financial services officer in February 2012.

Previously she worked for the Los Angeles Unified School District for 10 years as controller, budget director, deputy budget director and special assistant to the superintendent. The Signal Hill resident received her bachelor's degree from Pomona College in psychology and her master's degree from the University of California, Berkeley in public policy.

The CBFO oversees business and fiscal services, technology and information systems, facilities, maintenance, nutrition services, operations, purchasing and contracts, risk management and transportation. The position was held by James Novak until June, when he left to take a job as assistant superintendent for business services at Desert Sands Unified School District.

Ron Fortson served as interim CBFO here until last week's naming of a replacement.



Takahashi

Second Careers as First-Rate Teachers

All three Long Beach Unified School District Teachers of the Year chose teaching as a second career.

Two of the three also earned the Los Angeles County Teacher of the Year honor recently and advanced for consideration as California Teacher of the Year.

Jean Davis teaches math at Millikan High School, Gail Hamilton teaches history at Bancroft Middle School, and Lynette Foe-Aman teaches math at Cabrillo High School.

Davis and Hamilton earned the L.A. County honor. All three were honored at a recent event hosted by the Los Angeles County Office of Education for top teachers throughout the county.

Jean Davis was not thinking of becoming a teacher while growing up near NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, AL, during the era of the moon landings.

"My father was an electrical engineer. All my friend's fathers and my uncles were engineers. I thought that if you didn't know what to be when you grew up, you became an engineer. So I did," Davis said.

But in the middle of a successful career in the oil and technology industries, she was finishing a company-paid MBA program at Pepperdine University when a professor called her aside and asked her to consider teaching.

"He sparked an interest. So in March of 2000, I interviewed at Newcomb Academy," she said.

After landing a position at Newcomb, she later moved to Millikan, where she actively engages students by singing the quadratic equation every time she uses it in class and finding other ways to spark interest in the subject.

"When I taught conic sections recently, I pulled a satellite dish out of my classroom closet. 'Whoa! Where'd you get that?' asked my students. Facetiously, I told them I climbed on a roof. When trying to conjure up interest in the focus of a parabola, nothing works like a real satellite dish," Davis said.

She also participates in community volunteer work, using her MBA experience on the board of directors of the LBS Financial Credit Union and logging more than 2,000 hours at the Aquarium of the Pacific. Those efforts have benefited her students with paid field trips, speakers at Career Day and a potential internship program.

"I am an active volunteer in my community. I always end up getting more out of my volunteer work than I put in, and I serve as a role model for my students, but the primary reason I give my time is because I am committed to making my community a better place," Davis



Davis

said.

It's all part of her mission as a teacher to improve the lives of kids and encourage them to pursue studies and careers in science, technology, engineering and math.

"I was lucky in grade school. My teachers were positive and enthusiastic. They encouraged me, challenged me and entered me in competitions. As a result, I believe that the classroom should be a positive learning environment, with lots of encouragement and challenge and praise. I liked school, so I want my students to like school — and like math," Davis said.

Fellow teacher Hamilton, of Bancroft, was well into a business career when world events encouraged her to change her plans.

"After the attacks on 9-11, I was forced to take stock of my life, and I realized that my job didn't mean anything. Despite the hours upon hours upon hours that I spent, I wasn't making a difference in the world," Hamilton said.

Her introspection helped her realize her interest in teaching, so she contacted an LBUSD middle school and asked to observe some classes.

"I saw teachers who were enthusiastic and creative as they helped students to learn about challenging new topics. They encouraged students to question, and they always appeared supportive and friendly. I wanted to be one of those teachers, and so I gave notice to my employer and enrolled in the credential program at California State University, Long Beach," the history teacher said.

Shortly after joining the faculty at Bancroft, she became known for her wide-ranging approach to motivating students and stimulating critical thinking, including challenging students to a rap-off and earning the nickname "Hami-G."

"It was a hit; the students had to write and perform a rap about the Reformation that would compete against mine. I think the prospect of the spectacle of watching me rap motivated the students more than any possible grade or consequence ever could," Hamilton said.

By demonstrating her ability to shake things up on occasion and avoid monotonous classroom routine, she helped her students become engaged learners.

"Each day should be fresh and novel so that students are excited to come to class. This originality can come in many forms whether it is music that I play when students are entering the class, a game designed to help them master content, or experiential activities which will

(Continued on next page)



Hamilton

DRIVERS THANKED – The Buffum Total Learning Center recently held a Bus Driver Appreciation Day, providing breakfast and praise for the efforts that drivers make on behalf of students. This large banner was displayed on the pre-K center's fence.



• Teachers of the Year Share Success Stories

(Continued from first page) help me assess their understanding," Hamilton said.

She specifically looks for ways to develop students' resilience as learners.

"One scholarly trait that I want to help students develop is the ability to keep working even when it becomes difficult. I encourage students to think of their brain as a muscle and that with each workout it gets stronger. My goal is to help my students become independent learners," Hamilton said.

Like Davis, she also is glad she chose a second career as a teacher in Long Beach.

"I left a career that was very lucrative financially, but I have no regrets, because the career that I entered pays back in so many ways," Hamilton said.

Lynette Foe-Aman considers herself a student-centered educator with a firm belief in educating the whole child. Recently her students described in writing what they appreciated about their classmates, and finished with what they appreciated about themselves.

"When we read them aloud, one of my students, who is usually very quiet, told me and the class that he appreciated that he was a good person. 'I am a good person in this class,' he said. He had never before felt that way about himself. I was proud of him for recognizing and verbalizing that feeling. He can now move on with the confidence and knowledge that he is a good person. This will be his starting point for a successful life," Foe-Aman said.

Coming to teaching as a second career, she was an accountant who began at Cabrillo by teaching a first period accounting class before heading to her job at a private firm in the oil industry.

"To my surprise, the Cabrillo principal



Foe-Aman

called me in one day and asked how I liked teaching. I explained that I enjoyed it and that it had created an excitement in me to work with young adults. She asked if I would be interested in a full-time position as a mathematics teacher. I couldn't believe it but was honored to be considered, and I accepted the position," Foe-Aman said.

She has drawn on her previous professional experience to bring speakers, internships, scholarships and employment to her students. One memorable example was a football player who had a natural ability and dedication to accounting. She recommended him for an internship at a local CPA firm, and they accepted him.

"He loved accounting, and they loved him. He was offered a part-time position throughout high school and college. The accounting firm also provided him with a full scholarship. The part that always makes me smile when I remember his story is when he returned with tears in his eyes thanking me for introducing him to accounting as a career possibility. He told me he thought his only option to improve his life was through football. He became an accountant and today still works in the field," Foe-Aman said.

She looks back with amusement at her decision to teach.

"I remember a time growing up when I thought, 'I will never be a teacher.' My mother was a teacher, and I saw how hard she worked for a meager salary. I saw how she was always thinking of her students and how to bring new ideas to the classroom even as we traveled and spent time together as a family. But I understand now that even without a large salary, teaching is a very rewarding career," Foe-Aman said.

SCHOOL BULLETIN

Official publication of the Long Beach Unified School District issued bi-weekly during the school year from the Office of the Superintendent of Schools, 1515 Hughes Way, Long Beach, California 90810. (562) 997-8000. www.lbschools.net

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Superintendent of Schools

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In Memoriam

Mike Bowles
former director, Employee Relations
Oct. 23, 2014

\$2M Grant to Boost Art, Math Instruction

The U.S. Department of Education has awarded a \$2 million grant to the nonprofit organization Dramatic Results to help boost arts and math instruction in Long Beach Unified School District elementary classrooms.

Four elementary schools that receive federal Title I funding for disadvantaged students will benefit from the grant. The four schools will be determined in spring 2015.

Dramatic Results specializes in curriculum that integrates art and hands-on learning into other core academic subjects. The Long Beach-based nonprofit has served more than 18,000 students in Los Angeles County, including students in LBUSD schools.

In this case, the Art in Education Model Development and Dissemination Grant will help to enhance arts, technology and math instruction for 1,680 fourth graders.

Learn more at dramaticresults.org.

Career, College Night

The 43rd Annual Career/College Exploration Night will be held 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Nov. 5 at the Walter Pyramid on the Cal State Long Beach campus. The college and career planning event, held in partnership with CSULB and the Port of Long Beach, is expected to attract more than 4,000 local high school students and their parents.

Representatives from more than 150 higher education, apprenticeship, military and nonprofit organizations will be available to discuss college interests and career dreams. University of California, California State University, private and community colleges will be represented.

"This truly is a terrific opportunity for our district's students and their parents to get a great idea, and a lot of information, about the variety of college and career opportunities available to them after high school," said Christopher Clifton, the Long Beach Unified School District's career education support services manager.

Free parking near the Pyramid will be available in lots 13 and 14 at Atherton Street and Merriam Way.

Dates to Remember

November

	National Native American Heritage Month
2	Standard Time Day
3-10	Elementary Conference Days
4	Election Day
4	First Quarter Ends
4	9:00, 9:30, 10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30, 1:00, 2:00— "Pilgrims At Plymouth," Grades 4-8, ed.tv 8
5	8:00, 10:15, 11:30, 1:00, 2:00— "William Bradford, The First Thanksgiving," Grades 3-8, ed.tv 8
11	Veterans' Day
12	Elizabeth Cady Stanton's Birthday
12	8:00, 10:15, 11:30, 1:00, 2:00— "Thanksgiving Day," Grades K-3, ed.tv 8
13	9:30, 10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30— "Turkeys in the Wild," Grades K-4, ed.tv 8
14	10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30— "Thanksgiving," Grades K-5, ed.tv 8
17-21	American Education Week
18	9:00, 9:30, 10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30, 1:00, 2:00— "First Thanksgiving," Grades K-3, ed.tv 8
19	Education Support Professionals Day
19	Gettysburg Address Anniversary
20	9:30, 10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30— "School Bus Safety," Grades 3-5, ed.tv 8
21	10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30— "McGruff on the Law: Bicycles and Pedestrians," Grades 2-5, ed.tv 8
27-28	Thanksgiving Holiday
30	Mark Twain's Birthday