

Editors,

The Northshore School District is excited to share that Northshore's Family Outreach Liaison Mayela Martinez was recently named the Regional Classified School Employee of the Year for the Puget Sound Educational Service District (PSESD) 121.

A photo is attached for your use.

Please let us know if we can be of further assistance.

## **NEWS RELEASE:**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Northshore's Mayela Martinez Named Regional Classified School Employee of the Year for Puget Sound ESD 121**

Bothell, Wash. – Northshore School District's Family Outreach Liaison Mayela Martinez was recently named the Regional Classified School Employee of the Year for the Puget Sound Educational Service District (PSESD) 121. With this selection, Martinez is now a finalist for the Washington State Classified School Employee of the Year.

"It is an honor and a privilege to have been selected as the Regional Classified School Employee of the year for the Puget Sound ESD 121," said Martinez. "I feel very proud and grateful to all the Northshore School District faculty and to the families who have given me the opportunity and trust to work as a team and promote the academic success of our students. This recognition is also a platform that will serve to motivate me, and encourage all those who have dreams and goals to achieve - if I can do it, you can do it too."

Martinez, a dedicated educator, and advocate has served the Northshore School District for more than 20 years. She goes above and beyond the call of duty for her students and their families.

Her career with Northshore began with the District's dual-language program, where she was instrumental in supporting emerging bilingual students in the first few years of the program. Martinez's bilingual abilities and work ethic led her to support the District in numerous ways, such as becoming an interpreter for countless meetings and events, including attending guidance team and IEP meetings to help families understand the special education evaluation process from beginning to end.

"Mayela is relentless in her advocacy, making sure that student needs are met, no matter where she has to look for the support that a student might need," said Elizabeth Meza, assistant director of accelerated models and programs, who nominated Martinez. "She collaborates with colleagues to find the needed resources, then follows up with our families to make sure that all their questions have been answered and any additional meetings get scheduled."

For many years, Martinez worked in Northshore's English Language Learner program and helped staff better understand students who were learning English. She also provided outreach to engage the parents of English learners. Through her efforts, the District continues to see increased engagement with a robust group of bilingual parent volunteers and active school participants.

Additionally, Martinez championed the Natural Leaders program at multiple schools and created a pipeline of engaged parents, K-12. This program serves as a bridge between families, community and schools to assist and provide outreach to families where English is a second language and cultural differences may inhibit parental communication and participation at school. Parents value and trust her to connect them with teachers and staff, as well as coach them on how best to support their children at home to be successful scholars.

"I'm always ready to provide support and service to our Northshore community," said Martinez. "My main focus is to connect, guide, support, empower, motivate, and encourage parents and guardians to participate actively in their student's education."

Martinez continually seeks professional development and models for others the curiosity and open-mindedness that it takes to better understand the needs of our students and their families. Her growth mindset encourages those around her to learn.

With the current health crisis, Martinez recognized the opportunity and need to learn how to use new tools. With a change in her day-to-day work, she took it upon herself to learn how to use the platforms that teachers across the District are using so that she is able to help families through the changes and distance learning.

"I can guide and help parents to better understand the online system that is being used in Northshore so that we can provide the best possible education to their children. When parents know what is going on in their children's education, they feel more secure and confident, and can effectively support their children at home," said Martinez. "Another drastic change in my

work during this time is making sure that families have the correct information about the resources that are available in the community, both to cover their basic needs and socio-emotional and educational needs.”

Martinez’s dedication to ensuring each and every student thrives is inspiring.

“Every day I start my work with three words in mind that are key to having success in my work: empowerment, involvement, and commitment of parents. With these, I am able to help our students succeed.”

Learn more about the Classified School Employee of the Year program by visiting the [Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction website](#).

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