



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: TUESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2025

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Derby Public Schools I Make A Difference Award Winners Announced at Board of Education Meeting on January 27

Cindy Richardson, staff, and Clide Marsh, volunteer, are the January recipients of the I Make A Difference Award.

This month's Staff I Make A Difference Award winner is Cindy Richardson, English Language Learners Teacher at multiple buildings across the district. Cindy's dedication to our students and staff goes beyond the classroom. She brings heart, dedication, and care to every building she serves, always making an effort to be part of the culture and community.

At Tanglewood, Cindy displayed a map on her door with a "Did you know?" section to highlight the home countries of the ELL students she supports, so that staff and peers are more aware. This simple act not only raised awareness but helped connect with Tanglewood's diverse student body. When she saw a staff engagement activity happening, Cindy, despite being in and out of buildings, jumped right in to connect with others—always eager to build relationships.

Cindy takes the time to ensure that families have the resources they need. When she learned about an informational meeting for parents of a student she supports, Cindy ensured that translation services would be provided. She worked with Tanglewood's administrative assistant and principal to make sure that the right people were contacted, and she planned on attending the event to guide the translator through the process. Showing Cindy's dedication to ensuring that everyone has access to support for learning.

In addition, Cindy also regularly participates in the Tiger Pals program, where she selects students to support and connect with throughout the year. She serves multiple schools while taking the time to form those bonds, offer encouragement, a friendly smile, and a listening ear to her Tiger pals. She has a way of making each child feel seen and heard.

Amy Steadman, Tanglewood Principal, shared "Cindy is an asset to Derby and we love that she is a Tiger!" Cindy is a strong advocate for families speaking other languages and supports staff to effectively communicate and utilize the resources available to best serve students.

Interesting fact, the home languages present in Derby Public Schools nearly doubled this year. With 56 different languages now present in our district, Cindy's heart and dedication makes a difference everyday in our English Language Learners and Derby community.

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Derby Public Schools strives to create a safe and inclusive culture and a comprehensive educational experience that propels students toward their fullest potential so they can positively impact their community.

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This month's Volunteer I Make A Difference Award winner is Clide Marsh, volunteer at Derby Middle School. Clide is being recognized for bringing a little extra holiday magic to Derby Middle School. During Bulldog Pride time last month, Derby Middle School students were surprised with a visit from none other than Santa Claus. Clide made time in his busy schedule to spread cheer to our students.

Bulldog Pride is all about celebrating students for their hard work, dedication, and involvement in school activities. Having a visit from Santa added a fun, festive touch to this celebration of excellence and community spirit. Clide also paid a visit to Ms. Rendall's and Ms. Hogan's mixed abilities class, where students were able to share their holiday wishes with Santa. Each student in the class had the opportunity to personally visit with Santa, receive a small gift and take a photo. Clide took his time with each student, listening intently and creating memorable holiday magic. The smile he brought to those students was a special sight to see.

Clide dedicated three months to growing his beard for this event and even borrowed the suit from his job, MPM Inc., to really bring "Santa" to life and make this afternoon extra special for the students. His wife, Karin Marsh, 6th grade Science teacher at Derby Middle School, shared about a special Santa tradition that used to occur at the sixth grade center. That combined with a memory of Clide's father being the Santa that rode on the fire truck every year in the Clearwater Christmas parade, brought the idea for the holiday visit to Derby Middle School.

What made this experience even more wonderful was how engaging Clide was. One of the most heartwarming moments was when he unexpectedly joined a Bingo game during Bulldog Pride time, calling out spots and engaging with the students. His genuine enthusiasm brought so much joy to everyone around him.

Clide's thoughtfulness and generosity embody the spirit of Bulldog Pride, and left lasting holiday memories.



Pictured: (Pictured left to right) Clide Marsh and Cindy Richardson

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