



# The Supt. Scoop

Scott Siegel  
Ceres Unified School District



Winter 2011-12

## Congratulations Employees of the Year!

The late James Bryant Conant, American educationalist and President of Harvard University, aptly said, "Each honest calling, each walk of life, has its own elite, its own aristocracy based on excellence of performance."

It is my pleasure to congratulate the staff members listed below, whose "excellence of performance" distinguish them as this year's Classified/Confidential Employees of the Year. To be selected for this honor, each of these 28 outstanding individuals was nominated by their site or department. Three were also recognized as *Employees Making a Difference* by the Association of California School Administrators and the Stanislaus County Office of Education on January 17, 2012, and two were selected as the CUSD Employees of the Year (inset). Congratulations and heartfelt thanks to all!

### Classified

- Adkison Elementary - Enedelia Marquez**, School/Staff Secretary II
- Caswell Elementary - James Velarde**, Library/Media Clerk
- Don Pedro Elementary - Milinda Ortiz**, Instructional Paraprofessional II
- Fowler Elementary - Gena Beck**, Instructional Paraprofessional I/Noon Duty/Crossing Guard

- Hidahl Elementary - Betsy Herrera**, Instructional Paraprofessional II
- La Rosa Elementary - Martha Costa**, Instructional Paraprofessional III
- Parks Elementary - Alicia Villegas**, Noon Duty
- Sinclear Elementary - Christina Camarillo**, Instructional Paraprofessional II
- Vaughn Elementary - Kathy Holt**, Cafeteria Manager II
- Westport Elementary - Vanesa Lopez**, School/Staff Secretary II
- White Elementary - Laura Phe**, Instructional Paraprofessional I
- Whitmore Charter - Colleen Armstrong**, Office Manager II
- Blaker-Kinser Jr. High - Lina Haro**, Instructional Paraprofessional II
- Chavez Jr. High - Connie Canfield**, Library/Media Clerk
- Mae Hensley Jr. High - Trina Alvarez**, Office Manager II
- Argus/Endeavor - Elizabeth Ojeda**, Clerk II
- Central Valley High School - Kelly Randle**, School/Staff Secretary IV
- Ceres High School - Jaime Carreon**, Custodian IV
- Child Nutrition - Lucia Mendes**, Food Service Worker I

- Educational Services - Sharon Lemons**, School/Staff Secretary IV
- Fiscal Services - Jose Lopez Jr.**, Accountant I
- Maintenance - Greg Brewer**, Groundskeeper
- Student Support Services - Cristina Martell**, School/Staff Secretary IV
- Student Support Services/CWA - Alicia Urena**, School/Staff Secretary II
- Student Support Services/Ed Options - Rebecca Jones**, School/Staff Secretary IV
- Tech/Media Center - James Morgan**, Computer Specialist I
- Transportation - Rebecca Dupuis**, Bus Operator

### Confidential/ Administrative Assistants

- Parks Elementary - Joe Stewart**, Administrative Assistant

### CUSD Employees of the Year

**Jaime Carreon**  
Ceres High School

**Joe Stewart**  
Parks Elementary

### Employees Making a Difference

**Jaime Carreon**  
Ceres High School

**Lina Haro**  
Blaker-Kinser Junior High

**Kelly Randle**  
Central Valley High School

*"Few will have the greatness to bend history itself, but each of us can work to change a small portion of events, and in the total of all those acts will be written the history of this generation."*

— Robert Kennedy

# Building continues despite hard times

During difficult budgetary times, I often get questions from the public and employees inquiring how the school district is able to embark on construction projects while contending with challenging operational budgets. There are two answers to this question.

First, the dollars allocated toward construction of new facilities and renovations of existing ones come from a separate source of funding than day-to-day operational expenses. These sources cannot be comingled. In other words, it is illegal to use bond dollars or matching state construction grants on instructional materials or employee salaries.

Second, a building program addresses long-term needs. The current economic misery will be a memory when the facilities we build now are still being used to provide the housing for a sound education. Our construction projects have timelines imposed by the state. Should we choose not to do these projects, we simply lose the state money. No matter how dire our current operational budget becomes, giving up millions of dollars would be short-sighted and counterproductive for our future.

Ceres Unified is grateful to the community for the trust they imparted in us when Measure U was approved. These bonds have allowed us to build a new junior high school, construct needed additions at **Adkison Elementary School, Argus High School, Ceres High School, Central Valley High School, Don Pedro Elementary School, La Rosa Elementary School, Parks Elementary School** and

**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:** Work on a four-classroom addition at Argus/Endeavor is complete; a new gymnasium at Chavez Junior High School is now in use; 14 new classrooms at Walter White Elementary School will house students after the February break; and work on a 16-classroom wing at Central Valley High School is well underway.



*The rules in Sacramento do not allow for delay. Either we build the schools in the next few years, or lose the generous state funding forever.*



**White Elementary School.** The Measure U funds have been supplemented by millions of dollars of state matching construction grants. We still have \$15 million of the original \$60 million in bonding authority remaining, but will have to wait to spend that until we have a way to issue the bonds within the limits of allowable taxpayer burden. (A rise in assessed property values would help, but will probably be a long time in coming.)

Perhaps one of the most advantageous parts of this building program is that the

district qualified for three more elementary schools, to be paid for out of state financial hardship funding. (This was made possible because of the contribution of our taxpayers to Measure U.) This program will bring over \$60 million additional funding into the district for construction. The rules in Sacramento do not allow for delay. Either we build the schools in the next few years, or lose the generous state funding forever. In spite of the challenges we face, it would be foolhardy to turn down these grants and face a future

in which we will have to build the schools with, at best, half as much state assistance. In the long term, we will desperately need these schools.

When you see these schools break ground in the coming year, I urge you to consider what a gift they are for our future. Educating our students so they can become productive citizens is among the most critical tasks of society. It is heartening to know that Ceres will be well situated to provide facilities for this essential endeavor.