

Unity Award Recipients

- 2018 -

The “Together Against Bullying” Award

Awarded for taking action to prevent and change an attitude or behavior that physically or emotionally hurts, harms, or humiliates someone.



Marshall Elementary School Bullying Prevention Group

"This group is made up of dedicated fourth-graders who want to make a difference in our school. They work together to make sure our school remains bully free. They have addressed the definition of bullying and taught our school the rules we are to follow if they feel they are being bullied. Each month they have created a schoolwide theme, like Friendship or Respect. They display the theme on a poster and hang quotes around the school that relate to the theme. This group has also created a green screen announcement each month to inform the school of bully prevention events and how to be bully free. This month they are creating lessons to teach to the younger students about being a good friend. They will read a story to the

students and take about what a bully is and how to help your friend if you are the bystander. The lesson will have an activity the fourth-grader created to address their topic during their book. The bully prevention group raised money during a schoolwide event and bought a Buddy Bench which we will place on our school playground. This bench is for a student that is lonely and does not have anyone to play with, they are to go to the bench and a Marshall friend will come and get them to play. We are very excited to present this bench this spring to our students and staff. The Marshall Elementary School Bully Prevention Groups is ending this school year with a “Be a Buddy, Not a Bully”, schoolwide poster contest. Kids are going to create a poster to fit the schoolwide theme. The grade level winners will win a prize from local business and the school winner will have their poster made into a banner which will be hung outside our school next year." – *Nominated by Dense Zallow, Educator*

The “United for Kindness” Award

Awarded for demonstrating outstanding act(s) of being helpful to others.

Nolan Russell

"Nolan is 10 years old and he always makes sure everyone is included and felt loved. There is a girl in his class that says she has no friends, Nolan became friends with her so she was not left out. Nolan has gotten several letters from kids in his class saying how he is kind to them. Last school year Nolan was selected by a classmate with autism to help calm him down when he has a meltdown, as he said Nolan understands him and helps him. Nolan still worries about the boy and looks out for him at recess. Some days Nolan comes home from school upset and sad because someone else was being bullied and he wasn't able to stop it. Nolan includes everyone to make sure nobody is left out. If someone is left out Nolan will leave the group to be with them." – *Nominated by Misty, Parent*

The “United for Acceptance” Award

Awarded for looking beyond the differences of others and celebrating what makes each person unique.



Nick Green

“Nick is a young History teacher at Wichita West High School. He has developed Nerd Night, a couple hours of card or board games, anime, magic, art, costumes or whatever the individual kids want. It started out small earlier this year. It is becoming known as a place where there is no judgment or bullying. At the last meeting, there were 60 kids in attendance and a few kids from SE High School attended because they want to start their own group. This is not sponsored by the school. It’s been funded by Nick and his partner Mrs. Wallace. I see this as being something that will continue to grow and it’s a great idea.” – *Nominated by Jim Homan, Community Member*

The “United for Inclusion” Award

Awarded for outstanding acts to help others feel like they belong and know that they aren’t alone.



Lisa Lucario

“Ms. Lucario moved to Greensboro from Houston, Texas and changed our school for the better. Since her arrival at our school, a little over a school year ago, she has done many things to improve our school environment . This school year alone, she has formed a bullying prevention club called “Lean On Me” (the first club of its kind at our school) and has constructed a learning environment all her own where differences are accepted, not judged. She's more involved with her students than most teachers , and she thinks of her students as her children and we students feel loved. Lean on Me has hosted many school events like a screening of “Wonder” at our local theatre, selling “buddy” wrist bands to let students know that they're not alone, and planned a special bullying prevention performance to open the Talent Show, which will consist of club members signing the lyrics to the song , “Lean On Me” to help the deaf feel included as well. In addition to all of this, she's realistic. She's not trying to change students' views on the world or opinions but encourages us all to choose kind and celebrate differences. This unity is important because before Ms. Lucario showed up, our school was filled with bullying. She has made an impact for the good of our school, and each day the amount of bullying at Greensboro Academy vanishes.” – *Nominated by Alex Bailey, Student*

The Faces of Change Award

Awarded to individuals and groups for outstanding acts to make a difference in our community, nominated by PACER's Youth Advisory Boards in Minnesota and California



Shakopee High School GLOmies

"GLOmies is a student driven and student lead group at Shakopee High School. In their few years of existence, their mission to change their school culture towards inclusion is working. Through initiatives such as the Spread the Word to End the Word campaign, the GLOmies group spreads the message of acceptance for students of all abilities. This group meets on a weekly basis and focuses on activities

such as arts and crafts, unified sports, and even doughnut sales! The impact this group of students is making is spreading outside of the school walls and the Shakopee community is feeling the inclusion movement growing at varsity sporting events, school dances, community engagement events. These students are part of the unified generation and are changing mindsets towards looking at others for their abilities, rather than disabilities." – *Nominated by PACER's Youth Advisory, Minnesota*



Coon Rapids High School Kindness Campaign

"This year Coon Rapids High started a yearlong campaign called Kindness Matters, which has consisted of contests, challenges, charity drives, pep assemblies, posters, and other messaging planned throughout the year. They first launched the campaign planned by school leaders with a pep festival which included their two assistant principals dressing up as superheroes, entering the gym on motorcycles, and giving an inspiring speech on kindness. Kindness is also encouraged

throughout the year as teachers hand out 'random acts of kindness' cards, challenging students to complete. Coon Rapids High School has taken on the message of kindness in full force and deserves to be acknowledged for all they do!" – *Nominated by PACER's Youth Advisory, Minnesota*



Eagle Heights Spanish Immersion Unified Club

"I would like to nominate the Eagle Heights Spanish Immersion Unified Club in Eden Prairie. Eagle Heights Spanish Immersion is a K-6 elementary school in the Eden Prairie School district. The club is made up of 5th and 6th graders. Its goal is to encourage inclusion of students of all abilities and to build a community of acceptance and kindness. It meets bi-weekly and hosts several events during the school year, including an adaptive floor hockey event with 5th and 6th grade students and Special Olympics athletes. It also participated in Polar Plunge and threw a winter

party." – *Nominated by PACER's Youth Advisory, Minnesota*



Jefferson Elementary School

"Jefferson Elementary is a school that is all about Unity! They celebrate Unity Day in the Fall with a food drive to help another school in their district with many needs. The week long celebration includes spirit days that are connected with bringing in food or self-care items. After October, they still celebrate Unity Day each month

on the last Wednesday of the month with friendship announcements provided by various students from different grades. As Michael, their school social worker shared, 'It's nice to see our students wearing orange as well as getting along.' – *Nominated by PACER's Youth Advisory, Minnesota*



Esperanza Lee – Minnesota

"Esperanza Lee began the Stick With Hope initiative in 2017 after seeing youth with mental health issues drop out of school. Stick With Hope is a youth-led initiative to advocate for mental wellness among youth through notes of encouragement. It seemed as though parents and other caring adults often did not know how to encourage them. When asked why she started the initiative, Esperanza Lee responded: "I started Stick With Hope in 2017 to advocate for mental wellness among youth. I developed presentation scripts for middle school and elementary school students that introduce them to depression, anxiety, and mental health stigma. One way to reduce mental health stigma is for adults and youth to write simple hand-written notes of encouragement. Through my involvement with Woodbury Thrives' Mental Well-Being Action Team, I have experienced valuable connections with caring adults; they have been great mentors. One

of Stick With Hope's long-term goals is for more youth to receive encouragement in the school setting, such as through social workers, counselors, teachers, student wellness groups, peers etc." Messages of hope are written on sticky notes printed with "There is ALWAYS hope". Esperanza is willing to share the presentation scripts and packs of Stick With Hope notes for use in schools and community organizations." – *Nominated by PACER's Youth Advisory, Minnesota*



Lindsey Roe – Minnesota

"Lindsay Roe promotes inclusion at Battle Creek Middle School with her friendly outgoing personality. She makes every student feel loved and as though they are apart of something bigger. She is not only inclusive with students, but her coworkers as well. Lindsay was one of the first teachers I met when I started at Battle Creek and was the first to invite me out so that we could get to know each other outside of school. She is an amazing leader and I couldn't think of anyone more deserving of this award." – *Nominated by PACER's Youth Advisory, Minnesota*



The Peer Mentors of Thousand Oaks High School

"This group of 25 students created many activities throughout the school year to unify not only their school community but beyond to other schools in their district to assist with bullying prevention and so much more. They promoted kindness, acceptance, and inclusion, through events like "Lunch Bunch" (to encourage all students to come together), "World of Wonder" (where students created lessons for elementary schools based on the movie Wonder), as well as creating a student survey on cyberbullying to create better understanding of the issue, assisting with the "All-District Middle School Leadership Conference" that challenged middle schools to create inclusive activities in

their schools, creating a campaign called "It's Okay to Be You," and assembling and handing-out "Stress-Relief Care Packages" to support their peers experiencing the symptoms of stress." – *Nominated by PACER's Youth Advisory, California*



The Interfaith Council of Greater Rancho Santa Margarita – California

"With a mission of outreach to all in their communities, this group of adults and students from 17 different faith congregations and 6 cities in Southern Orange County, CA, produced 2 public forums in 2017 under the title of "Bigotry, Bullying, and Bravery" for teens and adults. The teen event was run by 10 student leaders and focused on helping teens identify when they were in the middle of a bigotry or bullying situation, brainstorm solutions, and 'try on' what it feels like to speak up and support others when these situations arise. The adult forum focused on what could be done to support the youth and

learn from the feedback gained from the youth forum. The themes for this year's "Bigotry, Bullying, and Bravery" forums are "Now Walk in My Shoes" for youth and "The Next Step" for adults. The Interfaith Council of Greater Rancho Santa Margarita is committed to events that unite all members of the community around acceptance and inclusion." – *Nominated by PACER's Youth Advisory, California*