



Meet New High School Leaders

Getting to Know You: Executive Director, Office of Secondary School Innovation H.J. Green

He greets kids in the hallway. He knows their names. He makes school welcoming. He gives respect and he gets it. His motto is "everybody graduates."

He was recognized in 1976 as one of the top 30 high school principals in the U.S. A former teacher, coach, principal and assistant superintendent, H. J. Green has joined San Diego Unified School District as executive director of the Office of Secondary School Innovation. Responsible for all of the small high schools, atypical schools, Morse High School and the School for Creative and Performing Arts (SCPA), he has earned a national reputation for making good schools even better.

He first made national news in 1973 for transforming and desegregating a school by recruiting teachers and attracting hundreds of students to Booker T. Washington High School in Tulsa, now one of Newsweek's Top 100 high schools. Only 25 white students were enrolled at Washington before Green took over. He developed rich curriculum and created a new learning environment with the help of some of Tulsa's finest teachers. He not only knows all students can learn. He makes sure they.

"There was never a black or white issue with Mr. Green," said Anthony Marshall, a former student who returned to teach at Washington. "He wanted to see the traditions continue. He helped both blacks and whites feel comfortable."

The school is now so popular that it turns away potential students every year. It offers 22 Advanced Placement courses and 24 International Baccalaureate courses. Each year, 100 percent of its students graduate and 91 percent go on to college.

Mark Hanes, an advanced chemistry teacher at Washington, summed up Green's impact. "He took a school with a wonderful heritage and made it ever more wonderful. I have the utmost respect and admiration for him."

Recruited as principal of Long Beach's Polytechnic High School (where H.J. stood for Head Jackrabbit, the school mascot), he was promoted to assistant superintendent of secondary schools. Green led the districtwide creation of co-principals in large comprehensive high schools, developed small learning communities within those schools, brought on-site alternative education, walk-in counseling centers and evening high school to help students earn credits to graduate. He expanded the successful Poly North human relations camp to similar camps for every high school's incoming ninth graders and helped the district earn the national Broad Prize for Urban Education for its dramatic improvement.

He returned to live in Tulsa, but recently moved to San Diego when he was recruited by Superintendent Carl Cohn. *Staff Bulletin* recently met with H.J. to get his impressions of his new position with San Diego Unified School District.

What are your first impressions of the SDUSD?

I have been very impressed with the dedication and enthusiasm of the principals of the small high schools. They are pioneers in this important movement and have made remarkable progress during the

past two years. I also have to say that the level of competence of the classified support staff is definitely impressive. The administrative assistants in my office and the high schools are the best I have known throughout my career.

What are you most looking forward to this year?

There are so many exciting things going on in my area that is difficult to choose just one. The continued development of the small high schools is of course high on my list along with the preparation for the opening of Lincoln High School next fall. Equally important to me is the opportunity to develop new options in alternative education programs for at risk students in our district.

What should we know about your philosophy and what is important for good schools to do?

I firmly believe that when adults work together in a collaborative mode all things are possible for our students. In order for a school to be considered a “good school,” the students must be able to recognize and believe that the adults on the campus are both demanding and caring.

Who most influenced you and why?

My dad instilled in me a work ethic that is personified by my thinking that a 10-hour work day is considered “taking it easy.” Professionally there have been many former and present colleagues that have had a bearing on my life and career. My first high school principal as a teacher, my first superintendent as a principal and my current superintendent, all demonstrated a style of successful leadership that was and is based on setting high levels of expectations and demonstrating that they trust you to perform at that level.

What unique background and strengths do you have that will have the greatest impact upon our students and schools.

I’m not sure about the unique part of the question, but if experience at the secondary level of education is considered a strength, then I’m an Olympic Weightlifter. I have worked in secondary education since 1959 as a teacher, coach, principal, assistant superintendent and consultant and most of that time was spent in various forms of trying to bring about meaningful change to high schools. I firmly believe that the San Diego Unified School District is moving in a positive direction in reforming high schools and I see my role as providing support to the principals who are the ones leading this important effort.

###

Getting to Know You: Assistant Superintendent, High Schools Nellie Meyer

Nellie Meyer spent much of her life moving up through the chairs in classrooms and schools in the San Diego Unified School District. The native San Diegan enjoyed attending several schools in the district as a child. She returned to work here as a teacher’s aide at Jackson Elementary while she attended San Diego State University where she earned a BA in psychology, and a Masters in administration. She holds teaching credentials in social science, English, and language development. She has served the district for 24 years including more than 10 years as a middle school and high school teacher. She also served as dean of students, vice principal and principal before her appointment as assistant superintendent of high schools in August.

For Nellie, her passion for education is a family affair. Her mother was a teacher. Her father was a principal. Her parents’ influence is reflected in her love of working with students and her success as an educator. Before her appointment as assistant superintendent, she enjoyed remarkable success as principal of Clairemont High School. During her tenure, Clairemont’s Student Achievement growth jumped 83 points in only three years, one of the highest API increases of any comprehensive San Diego County high school during that period.

CHS also made a dramatic increase in its student attendance rate from 91% to 97%. At the Carnegie-funded smaller learning community, she guided systemic reform, creating higher standards, smaller and more personalized learning environments, collaborative leadership structures and the use of data to support continuous improvement.

Recognizing the crucial importance of parent and community engagement to the success of a school, Nellie opened many avenues for involvement supported by Pangea, Barnes and Noble, SeaWorld and Wal-Mart. She established Principal's Chats to informally meet with parents and the community. She worked tirelessly as a board member for the Clairemont High School Foundation and PTSA.

Sharing experiences and exchanging ideas with colleagues are important to Nellie. She was the lead presenter at the Secretary of Education's High School Summit in 2004. In the presentation titled, "*Turning a School Around, Strategies for Success*", she outlined her school's professional development model and her philosophy on supporting and creating a climate focused on student success. She also presented "*Creating AVID School Wide*" at the National AVID Conference.

Nellie's dedication and hard work always point toward her ultimate goal – doing what's best for kids. *Staff Bulletin* recently sat down with Nellie to talk about her new role as Assistant Superintendent.

Why did you decide to make the change from principal to assistant superintendent?

I loved being a principal. Applying for the job was a difficult decision for me to make. I had a great job, working with people I liked and respected. I was helping the students and staff at my school every day. It was very rewarding. But, I saw the role of assistant superintendent as an opportunity to continue to do what I love, helping people at the high school level, just reaching a larger group. I am excited that I get to help to improve the many high schools in my area. My vision is to bring the district's high schools closer together through open lines of communication and teamwork. I want to help the schools share their good ideas.

What are you most looking forward to this year?

I am looking forward to being out in the community, working with principals and parents. I have visited each of the high schools in my area and have been impressed by the hard work and good things that are taking place. I have already learned new things from my visits. It is important to discuss and pass on the things that are working, and also identify the things that aren't.

What should we know about your philosophy and what is important for good schools to do?

I believe high school students want to be challenged. It is the responsibility of adults to work together to provide students with the support and resources they need to succeed. Creating a culture of respect, collaboration and academic mission among all students, parents, staff and community is the key to success.

Who most influenced you and why?

There have been many, many, individuals, both personally and professionally, who have played an important part in my life. The person who comes to mind when I think of my educational career is Maria Theodore Benedict. She was principal at Patrick Henry High School when I was a teacher there. She was one of the first people to encourage me to explore opportunities outside of the classroom. As a leader, she knew how to get the best out of people through listening, making sure that people had the resources they needed to do their jobs and believing that working as a team produced the optimum results. I watched her work and many times asked myself what she would do in challenging situations. She was a great role model for me in my career as an educator and administrator.

What unique background and strengths do you have that will have the greatest impact upon our students and schools.

As I mentioned, I have worked in San Diego Unified School District for 24 years. I understand the challenges faced by our high school students, schools, parents and communities. I recognize the difficulties that come with the day-to-day operations of a school site. I know what its like to experience success at both improving student achievement and student attendance. It has been my privilege to build many long-standing relationships with staff members in our district and I respect their expertise and experience. I truly believe we can benefit from each other's strengths as we strive to do the best for our students.

###

Becoming America's Best
SDUSD Police Officer Hero Receives National Honor

Courageous campus police officer Cecilio Flores, will be honored in Las Vegas on Saturday, October 14, as co-recipient of the 2006 National Latino Police Officers Association (NLPOA) Police Officer of the Year Award. NLPOA is a national organization that recognizes and values the benefits of exemplary Latino law enforcement personnel.

Officer Flores joined the San Diego Unified School District Police Department in May 1995. After serving five years as a Community Service Officer, Officer Flores put himself through the police academy and was hired as a full-time sworn police officer in January 2000. He spent five years in patrol and then was promoted to Campus Police Officer. He is currently assigned to the San Diego High Educational Complex.

On February 17, 2005, Officer Flores and a Community Service Officer were driving through a neighborhood when they noticed smoke coming from an apartment window. Presuming the apartment was on fire, the officers stopped the car and approached the building. Officer Flores began yelling and knocking on the apartment door in an attempt to warn anyone inside. When no one responded, Officer Flores took immediate action and entered the smoke-filled apartment. Once inside, he located a disoriented man and saw the silhouette of another person standing in the distance. He assisted the disoriented man to safety outside. The rescued man told him that his 18-year-old brother with Down syndrome was also inside. Officer Flores re-entered the apartment and removed the younger brother from the kitchen, now fully engulfed in flames. Officer Flores escorted the younger brother to safety and entered the burning apartment yet a third time to search for additional occupants.

The older brother was treated and released at the scene. The younger brother suffered minor burns to his head and arms and was transported to a hospital for treatment. Officer Flores and his partner were both treated at the scene for smoke inhalation.

"Officer Flores' courage clearly demonstrates his unselfish commitment to safeguard lives and his dedication to the citizens he serves", said San Diego Unified School Chief of Police Don Braun. "As a school police officer, he is a true hero and role model for our youth. There is no doubt Officer Flores' quick action saved two young lives."

Officer Flores was the San Diego Police Officers' Association 2005 Peace Officer of the Year and was also honored by the National Burn Institute and the County of San Diego for his life-saving effort.

Dates to Remember

- September 23 – Ramadan Begins
Ramadan is a holy time when Muslims worldwide fast and honor the revelation of the Koran to the prophet Muhammad. The observance ends October 22.

- October 2 – Yom Kippur

The most solemn day of the Jewish year, and one of the most important, the “Day of Atonement” is typically spent at synagogue in fasting, reflection, and prayer.

###

News You Can Use

Board President’s Scholarship Helps Prospective Teachers

The Board President’s Scholarship Award is presented annually by the President of the Board of Education and California Coast Credit Union to two monthly classified employees interested in becoming teachers. Each year, California Coast Credit Union donates \$2,000 to fund these scholarships. Each scholarship recipient receives a \$1,000 check that will be presented at the Tuesday, November 14 Board of Education meeting. Scholarship funds can be used for tuition, fees or books at any local two- or four-year accredited college or university. Previous winners are not eligible to apply. Applications are available on the district’s website “Bulletins and Circulars” page. Completed applications must be received in the Board of Education Office, Room 2231, Eugene Brucker Education Center, by 5 p.m., Friday, October 20.

School Police Crime Prevention Unit Established

In an effort to continually enhance the services provided, the School Police Department has established a Crime Prevention Unit (CPU). The CPU team, which includes a sergeant and four community service officers, is responsible for developing, implementing and maintaining several districtwide safety programs that meet the needs of the individual school site. Programs being offered include:

- School Police Volunteer Patrol (SPVP)
- Students Against Violence Everywhere (SAVE)
- School Watch program
- Identi-kit program
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)
- Site Security Surveys
- Crimestoppers

For information about the Crime Prevention Unit and its programs and service or the San Diego Unified School District Police Department, contact (619) 725-7000 or visit the website at <http://prod031.sandi.net/policeservices/>.

Office Depot Offers Discounts to SDUSD Employees

Interested employees can now register their personal credit cards online with Office Depot at https://odams.officedepot.com/registrations/sdusd_cc.php and receive the discounted SDUSD contract price on purchases made at any Office Depot retail store. The discount, approximately 43% below regular prices, will be activated 48 hours after registering a credit card number and email address online. Employees will automatically receive the SDUSD contract price or the store price, whichever is lower, when using their registered credit card for purchase. Items must be purchased as CREDIT not DEBIT. Only items included in the SDUSD contract are eligible for the discount. Other items will be sold at the regular store price. Coupons and the Advantage card discounts cannot be combined with the employee discount. For information, contact John Groll at jgroll@sandi.net or (858) 496-1989.

***Remember to give your school ID when shopping at Office Depot. Your school will receive 5% back from Office Depot on every purchase. If you do not know your school ID, the cashier can look it up.

###

Hall of Fame

- **Superintendent Carl A. Cohn** has been named to the board of directors of ACT, Inc., the non-profit educational and workforce development organization based in Iowa City, Iowa. ACT's Board of Directors is composed of 14 members, including representatives from education and business. Best known for the ACT college admissions exam, the organization offers a wide array of programs and services in education and workforce development.
- State Superintendent Jack O'Connell announced that the San Diego Unified School District is one of only 12 California school districts being honored for its exemplary job of sharing translated documents with other districts throughout the state as part of the Clearinghouse for Multilingual Documents (CMD). The online database containing information regarding translated parental notifications. Local educational agencies voluntarily provide information for translations that they are willing to make available to others. Special recognition goes to **Ana Morales** and the SDUSD **Translation Unit** for their numerous contributions to the statewide CMD database.
- Perkins Elementary Reading Recovery Teacher **Linda K. Williams** is a co-author of the latest title in the *Chicken Soup for the Soul* series. *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Stories for a Better World* was published in 2005 and is a collection of 101 inspirational real-life tales of people working toward a better and more peaceful world.

###

Scenes from Schools

On the five year anniversary of 9/11, students at **Normal Heights Elementary** celebrated "First Responders Appreciation Day," designed to educate students about how important local police officers, firefighters and ambulance personnel are to students' safety. Students had a chance to explore fire trucks, police cars and ambulances after a ceremony honoring the first responders that included presentations by Superintendent Carl Cohn, School Board Member Katherine Nakamura, Congresswoman Susan Davis, Senator Christine Kehoe and members of the San Diego Police Department, Fire Department, Medical Services, and the SDUSD Police and Crisis Response Team.

Montgomery Middle School and Community Garden was the brain child of former Montgomery teacher Jay Lewenstein. His vision was to create a space that would bring together the many immigrant families in the community and the school. A team of teachers approached the Linda Vista Civic Association for support of their garden dream and received a \$10,000 Community Development Block Grant from Councilmember Donna Frye. Over the weekend of September 16 -17, the dream became a reality. Thanks to the hard work of more than 200 volunteers from the Linda Vista Teen Center, college students from the University of San Diego's Office for Community Service Learning and Montgomery staff and students, a weed-filled lot turned into a beautiful spot, complete with gazebo. Teen Center Director Philip Sammuli secured the help of Competitive Edge Construction to provide guidance during the weekend's two-day extravaganza.

"This is a dream come true and yet, it is just the beginning of what promises to be an ongoing labor of love for the Montgomery/Linda Vista Community," said teacher Emalyn Leppard, who is now spearheading the project.

###

Save the Date

- Montgomery Middle School will have a bench dedication ceremony in memory of teacher Heidi Gattoni, who died on April 16, 2006. The ceremony will take place this Saturday, September 23, at 10 a.m., near the science building on the Fulton Street side of the campus.
- The new Chollas/Mead Elementary School dedication and ribbon cutting ceremony will be held Tuesday, October 3, at 5:30 p.m., at 4525 Market Street, San Diego, 92102. For information or to RSVP, contact Cathy Lopez at clopez@sandi.net or (619) 264-3113.
- Cox Presents "A Salute to Teachers," the 33rd Annual San Diego County Teacher of the Year Awards, will be held Saturday, October 7, at 7 p.m., at the Civic Theatre, 202 "C" Street, Downtown San Diego. Nominees include SDUSD teachers Tim Towler from San Diego High School of International Studies, Eduardo Ochoa from Marston Middle School, June Silver from Kroc Middle School, Cindi Elrod from Gage Elementary, and Deborah Balmat from La Jolla Elementary. The four County Teachers of the Year will be announced at the ceremony, which will be televised live on Channel 4 San Diego. SDUDS 8th graders Montay Romero, Bell Junior High, and Daniel Louis Myers, High Tech Middle Media Arts, and 12th grader Benjamin Roy, SCPA, will take part in the festivities. Ticket prices are \$14 for general admission, \$ 7 for students (K-12) and \$12 each for groups of 50 or more. For information or to purchase tickets, call (858) 292-3753 or go to <http://www.sdcoe.net/comm/salute/teachers.asp>.
- The San Diego County Latino Coalition and the Latino Education Summit planning committee are sponsoring the 11th Annual Latino Education Summit on Saturday, October 14, from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the San Diego County Office of Education. The cost is \$10. The deadline to register is Tuesday, October 3. For information or to register, contact Norma Gomez at ngomez@sdcoe.net or (858) 292-3829.
- San Diego State University has scheduled meetings to provide information about two of the university's Masters in education programs. Learn about the MA Degree in Education with a focus on Critical Literacy & Social Justice on Monday, September 26, or Thursday, October 5, from 4 to 5 p.m. at Memorial Academy, Room 600. Learn about the International BCLAD Certificate/Masters Program on Friday, September 29, at 11 a.m. and 5 p.m., or Friday, October 13, at noon or 5 p.m., in room 226A in the BAM Building on the SDSU campus.

###

In Memoriam

Douglas Adams died on July 7. He was a Safety Coordinator with Risk Management at the time of his retirement.

Catherine Came died on August 19. She was a Teacher with the Gifted and Talented Department at the time of her retirement.

Eleanor Dorman died on July 27. She was a Secretary II with the Gifted and Talented Department at the time of her retirement.

Joan Elko died on July 12. She was an Independent Student Assistant at Garfield High School at the time of her retirement.

Mildred Head died on August 9. She was a Teacher at Valencia Elementary School at the time of her retirement.

Francis Irwin died on August 2. She was a Teacher at Webster Elementary School at the time of her retirement.

Andre Mahan died on August 19. He was a Custodian at Audubon Elementary School at the time of his death.

###

Classified

For Sale

2003 Ford Ranger super-cab. Only 24,000 miles. AC. Power windows/door locks. AM/FM CD player. Bedliner. Excellent condition. \$11,500. Contact Michael at (619) 563-8059 or michaelbdelia@aol.com.

Ladies Harlick ice skates. Size 8½ C with MK Phantom Blades. Originally \$900. Barely used. \$300 OBO.

White metal bunk beds with mattresses. Beds become 2 twins. Ladder incl. \$200 OBO. Call Diane (858) 487-4746.

Beautiful pine dining table, two leaves, 6 chairs w/ reed seats. Seating for 10+. \$600. Nancy (619) 224-0456

Electric guitar, case & amplifier. Guitar in good condition, case/amp like new. Beginner level. \$200. Contact ebarber@sandi.net or (858) 733-8372 (cell).

Timeshare at Gaslamp Plaza Suites, San Diego. 1bedroom. Best trading power. \$3,000. Contact Bich Ha at (858) 689-9842

For Rent

3 BD/2 BA house. Kearny Mesa. Great neighborhood. \$1,700/mo. Call Cora (858) 212-5544.

2 Br/2 Ba house w/garage. North PB. 4 blocks from Law St. beach. Utils incl.; furn or unfurn. Avail. 10/1. Call (619) 654-9223.

Wanted

Roommate to share Condo in Grossmont College/SDSU area. \$675 + dep. Lg. pvt. Bd/ba Call Paul (619)-297-5701.

###