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## Getting to Know

### Ahmed Haybe Abdille

Somali Translator/Interpreter  
Translation Services Unit

With a vision to improve the lives of children in his native Somali Ethiopia, Ahmed Haybe embarked on a quest to turn dirt floors into suitable classrooms and dreams of a high school education into reality for thousands of under-served Somali students.

The March 30, 2005 issue of Staff Bulletin introduced Ahmed's work as co-founder of the Kabridahare District Education Program in the Somali region of Ogaden, eastern Ethiopia. Founded in 2004, the program has successfully provided desks, chairs, books and other educational materials to five local

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## Keeping Our Schools Safe and Secure Always Our Highest Priority

With the recent national news stories about school safety, it's a good time to review the measures the district has in place to protect the safety and wellbeing of students, employees, volunteers and visitors.

- Every school reviews and updates an individual Safe School Plan, a state-mandated emergency response plan.
- Staff and students participate in regular emergency preparedness and response training. This includes annual drills to practice for fires, lockdowns and earthquakes.
- Substance abuse prevention programs are presented to students regularly.
- Schools have safety posters in each classroom, and Campus Crimestoppers signs

in visible locations on campuses.

- School-based police officers train regularly to respond effectively to any situation.
- Working closely with city and county agencies, school police officers prepare, conduct and debrief after emergency response exercises. These include full-scale exercises and shelter-in-place practices.

Revisions have recently been made to the district's Emergency Operations Plan, Site Emergency Plan template, and Emergency Response Manual. New disaster kits are at all district sites.

A new Hazard Mitigation Plan is also in place, and Hazard Site Assessments have been conducted at all schools and facilities. Make sure you know the changes at your site.

### Activating a Lockdown

- ✓ A lockdown may be declared another public safety lockdown status at ( )
- ✓ To initiate a lockdown if possible, ass

The site lockdown checklist and evaluation form are available on the district website.

Parents, students and the community are important and valued partners in school safety. They help by watching for suspicious activity and other concerns and reporting them promptly. Anonymous calls can and should be made to Campus Crimestoppers at (888) 580-TIPS.

All employees should know what to do in case of an emergency at their worksite. If you have any questions, check with your supervisor or contact School Police at (619) 725-7000.

## Becoming America's Best Henry High Senior Awarded \$20,000 College Scholarship

Sarah Silverstein, a senior at Henry High, continues to win accolades for her science project, which studied the stress levels experienced by first-year dental school students. She was one of four sweepstakes winners at the San Diego Greater Science and Engineering Fair, earning her a place at the 57th Annual Intel International Science and Engineering Fair Sweepstakes being held May 13-19, in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

On April 16, it was announced that she was awarded a \$20,000 college scholarship in the Young Epidemiology Scholars (YES) Competition, one of the nation's most prestigious and influential high school science competitions.

Sarah was among 60 high school students selected out of more than 700 entrants nationwide to compete in the finals held in the nation's capital.

The YES Competition, sponsored by the

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and administered by the College Board, is designed to spur students' interest in the field of public health, specifically epidemiology. YES competitors each developed a research project in which they identified a health problem, gathered data about that problem, and addressed the problem based on the data they gathered. Sarah's project was entitled "A Longitudinal Study of Stress in First Year Dental Students."

An aspiring orthodontist, Sarah found extremely high levels of stress in first-year dental students, based on a study of nearly 300 first-year students at four dental schools. "Knowledge of how stress affects performance and health and how it changes over time can be used by schools to counsel first year students and to stimulate the implementation of stress reduction programs," Sarah said.



## News You Can Use

**Jennifer Cheatham**  
*Appointed Executive  
Director of Curriculum  
and Instruction*

The Board of Education approved the appointment of Jennifer Cheatham as the new Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction. Since completing a six-month internship with Superintendent Cohn, she has been the Program Manager, High School Reform, leading the development of the instructional program at Lincoln High School.

Jennifer is currently completing her doctorate with the Urban Superintendents Program at Harvard University. Her six-month internship with SDUSD was a critical component of the program. Her expertise lies in developing instructional alignment and coherence at every level of a school system. She is particularly knowledgeable about teacher leadership, professional development, literacy and secondary level school reform.

Before her arrival in San Diego, Jennifer worked as a coach and professional developer at the Bay Area School Reform Collaborative (BASRC), a non-profit organization based in San Francisco that aims to increase educational equity in California school districts. At BASRC, she coached school and district leaders as they worked to create aligned school systems focused on improving teaching and learning.

She also designed and delivered professional development for teachers, principals, and district leaders on promising strategies for improving student achievement and accelerating the learning of under-performing students. Previously, she worked as an 8th grade English teacher and reform coordinator. In her role as reform coordinator, Jennifer led a multi-year initiative aimed at improving literacy for middle and high school students.

Jennifer earned an M.A. in Education Administration, Planning and Social Policy, from Harvard University; M.A. in Education, from University of Michigan; and B.A. in English, from DePaul University, Chicago.

## Every Day Counts!

Let's get the message out to parents that when their child misses school for any reason, valuable learning is lost that can't be repeated. Tips for Parents include:

- **Talk** with your child about developing good attendance habits while in school. Future employers will not accept excuses for frequent tardies or absences.
- **Realize** that extended vacations or long weekends will cause your child to fall behind in class.
- **Emphasize** with your child that every day in school raises the chances of scoring well on tests, which could lead to better opportunities for college admission and scholarships.



For a complete list of parent tips at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, call (619) 725-5598 or visit [www.sandi.net](http://www.sandi.net). Flyers are available in seven languages.

*The Every Day Counts! campaign is supported by a grant from the Annie E. Casey Foundation.*

## Celebrating Our Own Teachers, Classified Employees of the Year Selected

The selection process for the district Teachers of the Year and the Classified Man and Woman of the Year is finished. **Rudy Ortiz**, from Euclid Elementary, has been selected Teacher of the Year at the Elementary Level; **Courtney Browne**, from Horace Mann Middle School of Expedition, is Teacher of the Year at the Middle Level; and Serra High's **Elizabeth Ward** is Teacher of the Year at the Senior High Level.

Runners-up are **Celia Ramirez** from Chavez Elementary, **Lisa Hawk** from The Preuss School, UCSD, and **Sylvia James** from San Diego High School of International Studies.

These outstanding teachers, along with school site Teachers of the Year, will be formally recognized at the Board of Education's Day of the Teacher Ceremony on May 8.

De Portola Middle School Network System-Media Support Technician **Preston Robinson** and Henry High Special Education Tech **Kathy Reed** top the list of classified employees and have been named Classified Man and Woman of the Year. First runners-up are Twain High Independent Study Instructional Assistant **Ryan Barbrick** and Special Education Administrative Assistant **Carol Lee**. **Karen Lacey-Jackson**, Encanto Elementary Library Tech, and **Nick Nicolas**, Research Systems Analyst in the Program Studies Department, are the second runners-up. These exemplary employees, along with site Classified Employees of the Year, will be honored at the Board of Education's Classified Employees Recognition Ceremony on May 22.

## SDUSD Employees Go Above and Beyond

Since January 2007, more than 400 district employees have received a Super Service Recognition Award for going "above and beyond" in the area of excellent customer service. These awards are generated through the Super Service Commendations program, part of the Family Friendly Schools Initiative. Parents, community members, and even fellow employees can complete a Super Service Commendation form to say thanks for a job well done.

To see a complete list of employees who have been recognized, go to the Family Friendly Schools website at [http://www.sandi.net/depts/pcse/family\\_friendly.html](http://www.sandi.net/depts/pcse/family_friendly.html).

# Schools as Jewels

## Logan Elementary gets Extreme Makeover

In one day, Saturday, March 24, Logan Elementary School was transformed. Thanks to the generosity of Shadow Mountain Community Church in El Cajon and nearly 500 volunteers, the school received an extreme makeover. Church members and school staff performed a variety of

needed repairs and improvements including landscaping, painting, construction, installing new playground and office furniture/equipment, resurfacing the sports court, and other general cleanup. After the \$100,000 campus makeover, "Celebrating Logan," the volunteers joined Logan students, parents and community at a party in nearby Padre Park.

"The energy, enthusiasm, and generosity of the Shadow Mountain community was overwhelming," said Logan Principal Antonio Villar. "Our school has never looked better and the students have loved all of the new upgrades to the campus. We are very grateful."

*Volunteers help the landscaping effort at Logan Elementary. Above left, the refined grounds show promise for future growth.*



## Out and About Out and About Out and About



Trustee Mitz Lee (left) and Wangenheim Principal Robert Grano (right) are joined by Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings at this year's Legislative/Policy Conference for the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS) held in Washington, D.C. in March.

Cutting the red ribbon at the official dedication ceremony for Normal Heights Elementary School on March 28 are, from left, John Aguilar, principal; Rich Cansdale, Area 3 superintendent; Katherine Nakamura, Board of Education member; Breanna Limon, fifth-grader; Vincent Bullock, third-grader; Dorothy Leonard, chair of the Independent Citizens' Oversight Committee for Prop. MM; and Dave Umstot, executive director of Facilities.



## Hall of Fame

Three outstanding district employees have been selected by the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) Region 18 as 2006-07 awardees.

**Merila Lett**, confidential administrative assistant I, is the awardee in the Confidential Employee category; **Maureen Nolan**, vice-principal at Pacific Beach Middle School, is the awardee in the Secondary Co-Administrator category; and Marshall Middle School Principal **Rick Novak** is the awardee in the Middle Grades Principal category. They will be recognized at the "Honoring Our Own" awards dinner being held Wednesday, May 2.

Montgomery Middle School Principal **Jonathan Ton** is a recipient of a 2007 Public Health Champion award

by the County of San Diego Health and Human Services in recognition of his efforts in developing the Family Success Center at the school site. Through his efforts, the Linda Vista community now has a one-stop center serving the needs of the children and families such as academic support, physical and mental health services, legal assistance and counseling services.

De Portola Middle School Math/Technology Teacher **Craig Johnson** is the 2007 California League of Middle Schools (CLMS) Region 9 Teacher of the Year. This award is given annually to educators who exemplify educational efforts to implement elements of educational reform in the middle school.

**Shirley Culver** from the

district's Mental Health Resource Center (MHRC) was recognized by the California Association of School Social Workers and the School Social Work Council of the National Association of Social Workers at the 100th Anniversary of School Social Work in America. Under her leadership, the MHRC has grown to 80 staff and is providing evidence-based mental health services for students at all grade levels with the goals of reducing violence and substance abuse, reducing emotional symptoms, improving behavior, raising achievement, and increasing attendance.

Point Loma High student **Torin Ladewig's** film, "Backlash," has been selected for the Student Film Confidential program by KPBS. The film was shown at the Museum of Photographic Art in April.

Scripps Ranch High 9th grader **Cassandra Stephens** was the \$1,000 grand prize winner of the 2007 San Diego Cesar Chavez Essay Contest. Her winning essay was selected from among 455 entries from 60 schools throughout San Diego, Orange, and Imperial counties.

**Stephanie Vinson**, a senior at La Jolla High, was named the high school division winner in the sixth annual "Igniting Creative Energy Challenge." She sculpted an earthen-media fountain that depicts a world being held up by the actions of people who conserve energy and recycle and inscribed the base with almost 100 ways individuals can support our environment. She will receive a VIP tour of Hawaii and trip to Washington, D.C.



## In Memoriam

**Weldon Allred**, former Teacher at Adams Elementary School, January 31, 2007.

**Margaret Callister**, former Teacher at Ericson Elementary, March 3, 2007.

**Starr Chavez**, Bus Monitor with Special Education, April 1, 2007.

**Alice Donley**, former Administrative Secretary I-Confidential at the Education Center, March 4, 2007.

**David Frasca**, Construction Inspector with Facilities Management, April 4, 2007.

**Raymond Harris**, former Teacher at Hoover High School, January 17, 2007.

**Lynda Means**, Teacher at Ross Elementary School, March 15, 2007.

**Raymond Newton**, former Teacher at Central Elementary School, March 14, 2007.

**Jose Oregon**, Skilled Trades Helper with Maintenance, April 6, 2007.

**Mary Ruiz**, former Community Assistant II at Pershing Middle School, March 27, 2007.

**Joseph Thomson**, former Payroll Specialist at the Education Center, March 19, 2007.

**Mary Toscano**, former Food Service Work with Mann Middle School, January 27, 2007.

## Dates to Remember: May 2007

- 8 ..... National Day of the Teacher
- 9 ..... California Day of the Teacher
- 9 ..... National School Nurses Day
- 6-12 ..... Teacher Appreciation Week
- 20-26... Classified School Employee Week
- 20-26 ..... Educational Bosses Week
- 28 ..... Memorial Day Holiday

## Classifieds

### For Sale

1998 Toyota Corolla. 133,000 miles. Dual front airbags. Power windows & locks. Good condition. Runs great. Call Cindy at (858) 442-3748 (cell).

Pinball machine. \$325. Table top electric popcorn machine. \$150. OBO. (858) 569-6875.

### For Rent

Summer Vacation Rental. Townhouse in Mission Beach. Sleeps 6. Steps to sand. \$1200 per week. (858) 488-6023.

ADS RUN ON SPACE AVAILABLE BASIS - Email ads to [communications@sandi.net](mailto:communications@sandi.net) or send to Communications Office, Room 2145, Education Center. Limit to 15 words (not including phone). Include work location and phone (for ID purposes only).

## Rewards for Recycling

The district's Recycling Office, in conjunction with Keep California Beautiful, conducts a monthly contest to help promote recycling. This contest is open to all staff members, including volunteers, who pledge to recycle paper in district facilities. Every month, two names are drawn from the pledge cards submitted. Pledge cards are available online at [http://www.sandi.net/energy/pdf/pledgecard\\_form.pdf](http://www.sandi.net/energy/pdf/pledgecard_form.pdf).

Among the prizes were gift certificates of \$10 to Just Fabulous Kensington and \$5 to Sammy's Woodfired Pizza.

Congratulations and thanks to the latest monthly winners.

Are you interested in winning prizes while helping save the environment? Contact Andrea Eaton at (858) 627-7414.



(Clockwise from top left)

**February:** Elaine Nelson from the Education Center, Maggie Garza from Oak Park Elementary. **March:** Patricia Jeffery from Hickman Elementary and Carol Howg from the Instructional Media Center. **April:** Aurelia Parra from Food Services and Nancy McHenry from Silver Gate Elementary



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## Getting to Know cont.

schools, now serving 8,600 students in grades 1-12.

Here at SDUSD, Ahmed spends his days translating documents and interpreting school site meetings for Somali speaking families. His tireless efforts have been recognized with awards from the English Learner Support Teachers, Parent Involvement Department and Somali Family Service of San Diego. At home, using the worldwide web, Ahmed continues his efforts as Chairperson for the recently renamed Qorahey Education Foundation (pronounced ko-re-HEEY). In 2006, he and other supporters from around the world mobilized enough private funding to hire 12 qualified, credentialed teachers at the high school and college preparatory levels. These efforts have already yielded dramatic results with 152 students passing the national high school exit exam in 2006, as compared to one student passing in 2005 and two students passing in 2004. Future goals for the foundation include easing classroom overcrowding, securing non-profit status and gaining support to establish the Qorahey University in Kabridahare by the year 2012.

"I am learning a great deal as well, including how to organize groups, be a good educator, and even boost morale among supporters and families," says Ahmed. "Nothing is too difficult or impossible, if you put in the time."

To learn more about Kabridahare Schools, call (619) 288-0711 or e-mail: [haybe2000@yahoo.com](mailto:haybe2000@yahoo.com).



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Send all news items and classified ads to [communications@sandi.net](mailto:communications@sandi.net), Education Center, Room 2145 4100 Normal Street San Diego, CA 92103 or fax to (619) 725-5576.

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