

Outlook



Issue 57 **SPRING 2024**

Great Happens Here!

Evergreen Elementary Begins Leader in Me Initiative

“Every child who walks through our doors at Evergreen Elementary is a leader, has a voice, and is loved,” shares Principal Dr. Gabriel Cardenas.

Last year, the school committed to implementing and instilling “life-ready” skills from Steven R. Covey’s bestselling book, “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People.”

“Our focus is cultivating the leader in every child,” he said. On February 23, Student Action Team members were happily greeting schoolmates entering campus and assisting in the office. Fifth grader Reina Chakrabortygupta delivered the Words of Wisdom schoolwide morning message in the Principal’s Office.

“I feel so confident!,” she said.

The Leader in Me education model provides children with solid principles and skills to be successful beyond the school day and well into their future.

“Our goal is to become a Leader in Me Lighthouse School within two-to-three years,” Cardenas said of the highly regarded global certification.

Student Lighthouse Teams represent each grade level and work with teachers to plan and implement leadership opportunities throughout the campus.

“How amazing it is to be a part of this whole-school transformation where we are equipping our students with the tools to be the true leaders of tomorrow,” shared second grade teacher Lily Chang.

Every Evergreen classroom has created a mission



statement, implemented leadership roles, and displays the 7 Habits Tree poster. Leadership skills are embedded in curriculum that promote character development and personal growth.

“Students see themselves as leaders and have completely grasped the 7 Habits as they all have a common language and use it daily,” Chang added.

The goal is to have all TK-5th grade students able to demonstrate and recognize all 7 Habits by May 1, according to Cardenas. The enthusiastic school leader is already witnessing students “flourishing” in the growing culture of student empowerment, love, and teamwork.

“Leader in Me is helping us develop students that are ready to meet the world and be great leaders,” he shared.

The innovative experience helps students learn how they can use the 7 Habits to help develop individual skills, skills to collaborate with their peers, and skills to work through peer conflict.

“We can be leaders and that means a lot to me,” said fourth grader Mark Du.

“I feel proud of myself and get to try new things, and I never give up.”



Message from the Superintendent



Dear Walnut Valley Educational Community,

Working with our District’s Leadership Team, we have had the pleasure of studying and applying the key concepts of the bestselling book, *Trust and Inspire: How Truly Great Leaders Unleash Greatness in*

Others, written by Steven M.R. Covey.

According to Covey, the ability to inspire is one of the three foundational attributes and/or skill sets of an effective leader. World-renowned author Simon Sinek explains the connection between inspiring others and knowing your “Why”... your purpose. Leadership researchers Kouzes and Posner share their decades of data from around the world that cites the ability to “inspire others” as one of the most sought after leader attributes that people look for in a person that they would willingly follow.

As I previewed the stories in this Outlook publication, I was immediately reminded of the amazing people that have established, and those who continue to build upon, this amazing school district and entire community ... the many people that are inspirational leaders in our community.

It’s people like Ray McMullen, who will have a pathway named after him this month, which have inspired and “unleashed greatness” in so many others. Ray’s 70 years of commitment to Walnut Valley (both the schools and the community) have significant and lasting impacts that will forever positively influence students.

It’s people like Leonard G. Westhoff ... who covered the same grounds on horseback decades ago where Westhoff Elementary School now sits ... what an amazing experience it was for me to visit the school named after this incredible leader with his daughter and granddaughter (a recently retired WVUSD teacher herself of more than 30 years).

And, it’s current leaders like professional and world-class athlete Alex Morgan, a Diamond Bar High School graduate, who continues to serve as a role-model while inspiring greatness in kids throughout America.

Finally, it’s truly humbling to read stories of our current educators, those inspiring others as we read this publication, and the contributions of our students ... those who will serve as the future generation of inspirational leaders.

As you enjoy the stories, I encourage you to reflect on those people who have inspired you.

Sincerely,

Robert P. Taylor, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Brahma Mural Unveiled

A mural of Diamond Bar High School alumna (Class of 2007) and Olympic Gold Medalist Alex Morgan was unveiled on December 20 between the JV and Varsity Girls Soccer games. The artwork is located inside the Walt Holmes stadium.

This mural was donated to WVUSD and Diamond Bar High School by the L.A. County Office of Education through a grant to fund public art. Artist Mike Sullivan has created murals of famous athletes all over the country.

The hometown soccer star is currently the captain of San Diego Wave FC of the National Women’s Soccer League (NWSL), the highest division of women’s professional soccer in the United States, and the United States women’s national soccer team. She co-captained the United States women’s national soccer team with Carli Lloyd and Megan Rapinoe from 2018 to 2020.



Now ENROLLING FOR THE 2024-2025 School Year!

Registration is now underway for **transitional kindergarten** children turning 5 years old September 2 - June 2. Students must be 5 years of age on or before September 1, to enroll in **kindergarten** for the 2024-2025 school year.

For online registration and information, please visit <http://enrollment.wvusd.org/> or scan the QR code.

At the time of registration, parents will be asked to present a certified copy of the child’s birth certificate or passport, proof of the child’s immunizations, and for kindergarten and 1st grade, proof of an oral health examination. For residency verification, parents will also need to provide either final escrow papers, mortgage statement or lease/rental agreement, **along with** a current utility bill (gas, water or electric bill) **and a** driver’s license (or California I.D.) with current home address. Enrollment is on-going, and your residence address determines the elementary school where you should enroll your child.

The Walnut Valley Unified School District offers a quality day care program at all elementary sites, for both before and after school hours. Contact the Child Care office at (909) 444-3460 for information and fees.



Classified Employee of the Year

Anna Gonzalez

"I'm so greatly honored!" said 20-year veteran special education aide Anna Gonzalez of being distinguished with the 2023 Classified Employee of the Year award.

"Walnut Valley is the most amazing school district to work at with love, support, and compassion for all our kids at every school site."

Rain or shine, you can find Anna greeting students as they enter campus with a warm smile and words of affirmation.

"There is no doubt that Anna puts "Kids First" with her endless dedication to students and school," said elementary learning specialist Frances Baird.

Anna's love of her craft and her school is evident in the many ways she extends a helping hand, maintains a positive attitude, and connects with all students.

Anna is a team player, cheerleader, friend, and a true blessing to Castle Rock!



Collegewood Principal Gets

SLIMED!



A group of lucky Collegewood Elementary students took turns pouring buckets of blue slime on their school leader on January 25. Principal Rochelle Wolf promised to get doused with the slippery goop as a reward for the school reaching its \$25,000 Fun Run Booster objective.

"We didn't quite meet the goal," Wolf said of the fundraiser netting just over \$21,000. "That was good enough for me!" Wolf said.

Over 500 gathered students roared with applause and cheers as top fundraisers from each class got a chance to dump the slime. After they all were finished there was still a half a trash container full of the blue goo.

"So, I thought why waste good slime!" Wolf shared.

Two teachers stepped up on stage to dump the remaining gallons over her head.

"It was so fun!"

A Class Act!

2023 Cornerstone Awards

Walnut Valley USD continued the enduring tradition of celebrating excellence during the 25th Annual "A Class Act" Cornerstone Awards held on February 8. The ceremony recognized a dozen outstanding classified (non-teaching) employees for going the "extra mile" to support students, teachers, and schools.

"Classified employees are truly the foundation of our organization!" lauded Superintendent Dr. Robert Taylor. "You twelve are the shining stars this year and we appreciate you!"

Congratulations to the 2023 honorees:

Christina Tse	Instructional Aide II Bilingual/Bicultural	Westhoff Elementary
Gladys Villa	Nutrition Services Worker III	Nutrition Services
Laura Morris	Instructional Aide II Special Education	C.J. Morris Elementary
Kendra Wilson	School Administrative Assistant	Maple Hill Elementary
Liz Lopez	Registrar	Walnut High School
Sunny Garcia	Database Specialist	Technology
Anna Gonzalez	Instructional Aide III Special Education	Castle Rock Elementary
Pia Munoz	School Administrative Assistant	Suzanne Middle School
Kathleen Moyer	Noon Aide	Chaparral Middle School
Sandra Davaloz	Instructional Aide II Special Education	Evergreen Elementary
Jolina McCurry	Secretary II	Diamond Bar High School
Xavier Chavez	Maintenance Worker III HVAC	Maintenance & Operations

Diamond Bar High Launches New Culinary Program



Cooking LAB

"Organized chaos" was how Diamond Bar High School teacher Marcy Hail described the new Culinary Science class on January 24.

Student teams raced to decorate three-tier cakes that would be unveiled and judged during Open House the following evening.

"It has been an exhilarating experience to create and implement a brand-new culinary program and the students have been so much fun to work with!" Hail exclaimed.

The four-day assignment included designing the sweet confection offerings on posters, sculpting bases from Rice Krispies or Styrofoam, and finally making the cakes come to life. All hands were on deck as the teens tinted, kneaded, and rolled out the fondant "frosting" before applying finishing decorations.

"I like the creativity part of this class," shared junior Michelle Grenados while learning how to pipe icing between the cake layers.

"It's fun," added junior Nick Madrigal.

The pair were crafting a safari golden anniversary cake for the competition.

"This is an early morning class and I'm always excited to eat what we make,"

Madrigal added.

"My favorite were the crepes!"

"I like to have students learn how to design events and everything that goes with it," said Hail who was a wedding planner before she became a home economics teacher, taking over the class when her mother retired.

"I taught in the exact same classroom!"

Now, in her first year as a Brahma, Hail teaches five periods with about 180 teen chefs.

"I've been teaching for 14 years, but somehow every year finds something new! These kids are amazing!"

So far this year, students have done everything from caviar-tasting, sushi-rolling, Twinkie teambuilding, and more.

"I'm looking forward to designing more projects for the students in this course, and we will finish up with a food truck competition for our final," Hail said.

"For over five years, we have explored the idea of adding a Culinary Science program to our list of Career



Technical Education (CTE) offerings," said Instructional Dean, Gabriel Aguilar.

The opening of the school's new Science building last year provided an opportunity to secure and redesign an appropriate classroom to host such a program.

"We are excited see our students developing tangible skills that not only prepare them for careers in the culinary and hospitality sectors, but also allow them to feel confident in navigating their own kitchens!" he added.

"I came into this class to learn the basics which I have accomplished, thankfully," shared junior Chris Phillips whose group was creating a Minecraft cake.

"My dad and my mom cook so I want to help out."

"I did make a dish for Christmas, green beans - and they loved it!"

View ABC7 report at: <https://bit.ly/3T5X5Yw>.



Construction Update

Watch Us Grow!

Measure WV Funds 3 Projects at Suzanne Middle School

An official ribbon-cutting ceremony marked the completion of the new two-story science building and gymnasium at Suzanne Middle School.

"I'd like to thank our community for passing Measure WV which has made this day possible!" said Principal Dr. Amy Smith during the December 13 celebration.

"Your support has enabled us to enhance, modernize, and build new facilities at our elementary, middle, and high schools," said Superintendent Dr. Robert Taylor.

"Generations of kids will get to experience world-class facilities from transitional kindergarten all the way through high school."

"It's a great day to be a Suzanne Challenger!" exclaimed P.E. teacher Keith Prager about the grand opening of the school's first gymnasium.

The 12,000 square-foot gymnasium includes interior bleachers, full-size basketball court and two practice courts, volleyball court, wood gym floor, and attached Kinesiology workout room.

"Now we can finally have the pride and excitement to host teams, and our P.E. Department has a place that we can call home and are excited to use each and every day!" Prager added.

Parents, teachers, staff, students, community members, and local officials joined the commemorative event.

Science teacher Susan Warren said colleagues enthusiastically said "yes" to providing input for the new building and sharing plans with the community. And now

they are filling classrooms with sixth grade earth science students learning about rocks and minerals, seventh graders using microscopes, looking at cells, and growing plants, and eighth graders studying chemistry and doing inquiry with physics.

The 10,000 square-foot science building features 10 STEAM-focused classrooms with collaboration work spaces.

Entertainment during the ceremony was provided by the Challenger Band under the direction of Instrumental Music Teachers Ami Garvin and Jeff Blackstone.

The celebration included a groundbreaking for Suzanne's new 10,000 square-foot Music Building.

The facility will feature large choir and orchestra classrooms, four practice rooms, ensemble room, band, orchestra, and music library storage rooms, instrument storage cabinets, and offices.

"Imagine with me in this moment over 400 students will be able to make music every day in a space where they have space!" Garvin said of the upcoming construction project.

"Although we won't be able to get to experience it as long as our siblings, future generations of Suzanne Challengers will get to learn in an exciting and stunning state-of-the-art campus," shared eighth grade ASB President Brandon Zhang.

"Thank you to everyone who has made this possible!" added Band President Kaden Wong.



Thank You, Community!

Spotlight on Diamond Bar High World Class Facilities

Music Building: The Diamond Bar High School concert band under the direction of Marie Santos rehearses in the world-class instrumental music building completed in February 2023. "Our new facilities have exceeded all the hopes and dreams we had when we first started planning!" shared music teacher Steve Acciani of the beautiful three-story building. "Watching our students thrive in an environment worthy of their incredible talent and work ethic is heartwarming." The nearly \$9.8 million construction of the towering 15,700 square-foot building was funded by voter support of Measure WV.

500 Science Building:

Science teacher Teresa Hebert's period 1A Chemistry lab investigates the reaction of crystal violet with sodium hydroxide using a new spectrophotometer. "We are grateful for a community that understands the everchanging needs of our students and has stepped up to support Diamond Bar High School," Hebert said. The two-story 500 Science Building features 18 state-of-the-art chemistry, biology, and physics classrooms with collaborative learning spaces. The nearly \$14.3 million Measure WV modernization was completed in September 2022.



Career Technical Education

Walnut High Video Production offers Real-World Experiences

Walnut High School advanced video production students are creating a portfolio of digital marketing materials for Ron Hockwalt Academies (RHA). The career technical education (CTE) class taught by Karen Alorro offers hands-on opportunities to a dozen budding cinematographers.

"My goal is to expose students to real-world experiences

to help them prepare for a career in film or graphic design, not just with the technical skills but with a work ethic and etiquette that will be expected of them when they enter the work force or college," Alorro said.

Two Trailblazing Production teams filmed around the continuation high school campus on November 8.

"RHA is basically our client and we see advanced video production as a job," explained producer junior Audrey Nunez.

"Our crews are filming students and staff to create a documentary and short social media reels," she said.



"A lot of people think of video production as just a hobby – but we're out here doing this for real people and real clients," said junior Deandra Meza.

The team is also working on a marketing campaign with a local restaurant.

"I feel like it helps us in meeting deadlines and keeping everything professional – and a lot of us want to do this in the future," Meza said.

"And this is a great way to get experience!"

Video production students have been learning fundamentals of videography and photography including rule of thirds, basic camera angles, and making a documentary, Nunez shared. A team of graphic designers from Alorro's CTE class is designing print ads and branding collateral materials for Ron Hockwalt Academies.

"Most high school students don't get to experience and find their passion as early as we are," Meza added.

"We're also earning internship hours for college!"

"When I first heard about this class I thought 'I need to take it right now!'" said Nunez, who has a background in editing YouTube videos.

"Some of us began video production and photography fundamentals at Suzanne Middle School - but we're still learning!" she said.



"We're also being trained in leadership skills to help when we go to college and begin our careers," said junior Stella Wu.

The class typically keeps busy filming Walnut High events and pep rallies for social media postings.

"It was really nice to be interviewed and represent Team Ron Hockwalt Academies," said junior Karla Tovalin.

"We're excited for this opportunity to share all the wonderful things happening on our campus!" shared RHA Principal Dr. Ron Thibodeaux.

After filming is complete, students will begin editing clips, adding music, and formatting the sound bites. The team will produce a one-minute documentary trailer for social media. The team also collaborated with Alorro's Advanced Graphic Design class to rebrand print materials.

"It's fun to work with a crew and other people – it's like a real-world experience!" junior Ethan Alorro shared during the outdoor video shoot.

Teddy Bear Tea Returns!

Proceeds Fund 68 Classroom Mini-grants

Following a long pandemic hibernation, the Walnut Valley Educational Foundation's 24th annual Teddy Bear Tea returned December 9 at the Diamond Bar Center.

Proceeds from the signature event funded 68 mini-grants to support Walnut Valley USD classrooms and schoolwide projects totaling \$31,000.

Forty creative teddy bear raffle baskets were generously donated by parent groups, District staff, and community members.

"I was excited to win this grant to add more technology to my culinary cooking lab," shared Diamond Bar High School teacher Marcy Hail.

Hail plans to purchase a portable camera and wall-mount television to provide students an aerial view during cooking demonstrations.

"I will also be able to walk around with the camera and project what students are making onto the big screen for other groups to see!" she said.



South Pointe Middle School technology teacher Crystal Dira upgraded VEX IQ Robotics Brains and Batteries to the next Generation.

"Technology is constantly advancing and thanks to our WVEF grant, we are hoping to provide our students with products that are up-to-date and currently used at local, state, and even World VEX competitions," she said.

Castle Rock Elementary second grade teacher Jenny Lui created a classroom "zen space" with surf lap desks, comfortable Nugget couch, and fluorescent lighting filter covers.

Vejar Elementary intervention teacher Jennifer Hernandez purchased 100 decodable books for her "Empowering Little Readers" project.

"These books have been terrific! My students are already enjoying the colorful pages, fun stories, and practicing reading to themselves and with a partner," she shared.



Another mini-grant funded premium quality paint brushes for Diamond Bar High art teacher Vianney Hwang's Fundamentals of Art students.

The coveted brushes were distributed as personal sets rather than being shared among multiple class periods.

"These brushes allowed students to create dynamic Pop Art paintings with a modern design," Hwang shared.

South Pointe sixth grade math teacher Rachel Lee can now deliver lessons while moving around the classroom with a new iPad. The device which is connected to the projector and monitor allows Lee to present relevant content information, pictures, videos, and notes.

"I can also progress monitor, check for understanding from my students' work, and provide immediate small group and one-on-one assistance. I am so grateful for the grant and the opportunities it will provide me as an educator to further support students!" she said.

Mark Your Calendar:

The WVEF 2024 Golf Tournament will be held on Monday, August 26 at South Hills Country Club. Registration and details at www.wvedfoundation.org.

Outlook WALNUT VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Issue 57 Spring 2024

Walnut Valley Unified School District
880 S. Lemon Ave.
Walnut, CA 91789-2931
T (909) 595-1261 • F (909) 839-1214
www.wvusd.org

Dr. Robert P. Taylor
Superintendent

Board of Trustees
Helen M. Hall, President
Larry L. Redinger, Vice President
Layla Abou-Taleb, Clerk
Dr. Y. Tony Torng, Member
Cynthia M. Ruiz, Member



@wvusd



@WVUSD_Tweet



@WalnutValleyUSD

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT #4480
City of Industry, CA



LAST DAY OF SCHOOL **May 30**

FIRST DAY OF 2024-2025
SCHOOL YEAR **August 12**

Let's Talk! – We want to be responsive to your needs and invite you to send questions, comments, and suggestions to www.wvusd.org.

Legacy Memories Westoff Family Visits Students and School

Westhoff Elementary had a special morning hosting the family of the school's namesake on December 12. Mrs. Jeanne Burgh, the daughter of Leonard G. Westhoff, and her daughter Salli Collins, a retired WVUSD special education teacher, thumbed through photo albums with pages of the school's history and 1989 opening.

"Mrs. Burgh even found a picture of her dad in the album and was so touched," shared Principal Dr. Rosa Northcott.

Then the visitors and District officials formed a circle of chairs in the multipurpose room where a representative from each homeroom class recalled their favorite moments at Westhoff.

Students shared about special friendships, fun activities, field trips, caring teachers and staff, and signature events like the Culture Fair and Season of Love winter performance.

The morning capped off with a song and a spirited "YEEHAW" from a small group of TK and kindergarten students.

"Our teachers and staff were thrilled to show off how Westhoff truly SHINES!" said Principal Dr. Rosa Northcott.

Burgh shared that her father was "so honored to have the school named for him."

"I so enjoyed my visit to Westhoff!" she said after the



Leonard G. Westhoff

visit. "It was an absolute delight!"

"The learning experience is exceptional and the students and faculty take such pride in this school."

Leonard Westhoff was a former Walnut School Board Member who advocated for Walnut Valley becoming a unified school district.

He also served as Mayor and a Council Member in the City of Walnut.

"He was a class individual who made a significant contribution to our community," according to retired administrator and historian Ray McMullen.

"My grandfather would be so proud!" Collins said.



A white mini horse named Blue Moon is helping make a big impact in the life of Evergreen Elementary third grader Kane Sanchez. The ten-year-old born missing his femur and ankle bones has been through surgeries and several prosthetics.

Kane now works with Blue Moon while receiving his physical therapy at Shriners for Children Medical Center in Pasadena.

"Kane exemplifies the true spirit of a student leader at Evergreen," lauded Principal Dr. Gabriel Cardenas.

Comfort and Joy Tiny Horse Making Big Impact for Evergreen Student

"His unwavering dedication, coupled with his loving and caring nature, sets him apart as a beacon of positivity in our school community!"

The Shriners pediatric specialists make sure that the time is fun by incorporating play into each session. Kane beamed as he walked an obstacle course and then played kickball alongside the highly trained pony from the non-profit Mini Therapy Horses program. The playful little horse displays a remarkable ability to adapt to different situations and make meaningful connections with the children and their families. And Kane has achieved remarkable results. He is now running around using a prosthetic and dreaming of becoming a basketball player!

"This experience has taught me to try my best. I hope my story can inspire others to do their best!" Kane said.

Kane's story was featured on Fox 11 News at: <https://bit.ly/3R1goQc>.

"Kane's leadership is a source of inspiration for us all, and we are exceptionally proud to have him as a shining example of the outstanding individuals that define Evergreen Elementary," Cardenas said.