

Board of Education

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dcuneo@ssdmo.org
- **Ms. Jan Goodman**, Board Vice President
jagoodman@ssdmo.org
- **Mr. John F. Koeper**, Board Secretary
jkoeper@ssdmo.org
- **Ms. Peg Lestina**, Director
plestina@ssdmo.org
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driggs@ssdmo.org
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jwestbury@ssdmo.org
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zwilliams@ssdmo.org
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dbohannon@ssdmo.org



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VISION: Partners for every student's success

VALUES: student success • collaboration • integrity • stewardship • continuous improvement • equity

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NEWS FROM SSD



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BUILDING PROJECT UPDATES **proposition S**

Investing in student success

Roofing is complete and inside progress is at a fast pace at the new building that will replace the current Northview High School.

Ackerman School progress is also fast moving. You can see photos of both schools and a video of the additions at Ackerman at http://bit.ly/prop_s ■



SPECIAL EDITION

Student Councils Learn Through Service, Leadership

For many, December is a time to make holiday cookies and delicious treats for family and friends. For the student council members at SSD's Neuwoehner High School, however, the treats they baked might not smell particularly appetizing — at least not to humans.

“We cooked dog treats,” said Paige, who is vice president of the student council at Neuwoehner. “We’re doing a donation to Open Door Animal Sanctuary. We’re also collecting dog food, blankets, toys and treats for dogs.”

Student councils are found in most schools throughout the country, including many SSD schools. Their specific roles differ from building to building, but the core principles of service and leadership are always present.

“Last year we collected stuffed animals for the Shriners,” said Tracey, who served as Neuwoehner student council president a year ago. His successor, Derrick, added that being on student council gives him the opportunity to help people (and animals) in the community. Learning the value of service firsthand leads to strong connections for students.

“They do good works for the school and the community and that makes them feel like they are important and they have a voice — which is the best self-esteem booster,” said student council sponsor and school counselor Nancy Richey. “We know that when students feel good, they do well.”

Along with the benefits of service, student leadership is perhaps the most recognizable component of student councils.

“People have started to look up to me,” Derrick said. “People will say ‘Hey, president, nice to see you.’ It inspires me and helps keep me going.”

According to Richey, council members are seen as leaders, and that added level of responsibility can bring about changes in their actions.

“I didn’t know as many student names before,” Tracey said, before explaining that he memorized the school bus route sheet in order to learn the names of all the fellow students at his school. “I also learned how to interact with students. Student council has helped me with responsibility and respect.”

“Student council members are viewed as leaders and take their position seriously,” Richey said. “If they are acting out, I ask



Student council members at Neuwoehner High School organized a drive to collect pet care items to donate to Open Door Animal Sanctuary.

them, ‘Is this being a good role model for others?’ and ‘How would others feel if they saw you behaving like this?’”

Paige sees the difference being a member of student council has made in her school life. “It’s made me more responsible,” she said. “And I also like working with other students, too. We help each other do things and use teamwork.”

Not every school at SSD has a student council.

“We don’t have one yet,” said Marsha Myers of SSD’s Southview School. “But I would like to start one to get the voice of students involved in some of the decisions that impact them.”

At North Technical High School this year, the school has moved away from the classic formula for having a school-wide vote for student council, and has replaced it with each Career and Technical Education program choosing a senior representative to meet and speak for their program. These 25 students allow for a more representative sample and more ideas from the whole class, according to North Tech principal Jim Hieger.

Whatever the setup, the value of the honor that goes along with being on student council is one that you can’t measure, according to Richey: “You can’t put a price tag on pride.” ■

STUDENTS HONORED FOR ACHIEVEMENTS

On April 23, the Special Education Foundation and SSD joined together to recognize the outstanding achievements of local students at the annual Commitment to Kids Banquet. This year, 23 students received the Rosemary Zander Award. Others were also honored with financial scholarships for college and summer camps.

The Rosemary Zander Award has long recognized the accomplishments of students receiving services from SSD. Since 1988, students have been honored for success in a variety of categories — academics, arts, athletics, communications, vocational training, employment, independent living skills, community service and extracurricular activities.

Each of the 2015 award recipients has diverse achievements and has had varied challenges to meet and overcome. And they all have demonstrated SSD's central mission — that all students can learn, succeed and make a successful contribution to our community.

Read about three of this year's Rosemary Zander Award recipients to the right. To learn more about each award winner's inspiring story, visit <http://bit.ly/zander2015> to read their individual profiles and watch a video featuring the honorees.



Positive Attitude Helps With Independence and Growth

Seyoon Choi, an eighth-grader at Parkway Central Middle School who receives services from SSD, faces visual impairment challenges with a positive attitude and welcomes learning new skills.

When Seyoon came to the United States three years ago, he spoke almost no English and had no experience in Braille or with any assistive technologies.

According to SSD teachers Lynn Berger and Candace Hickerson, who nominated Seyoon for the Rosemary Zander Award, he sets goals for himself and can achieve anything to which he sets his mind.

"He has taken on a second language and learned Braille simultaneously," said Amanda Kraft, teacher at Parkway Central Middle School.

Seyoon has also learned to navigate his surroundings to promote safe and efficient travel and seek independence. "Seyoon's vision warranted a long cane to safely navigate, and he picked up the skill quickly," said Hickerson.

Seyoon plans to visit Parkway Central High School to learn the layout of the school for next year. "He takes a challenge and seeks to master it, tackling it with a positive attitude and perseverance," added Hickerson.



Student Overcomes Obstacles to Become a Leader

Alana Curth, a senior at Lindbergh High School who receives services from SSD, has overcome many physical and educational challenges, starting in her early childhood.

As Alana progresses through high school, she has used assistive technology to facilitate her learning and achieve success in the general education classroom, according to SSD teacher Joyce Colombo, who nominated Alana for the Rosemary Zander Award.

Not only has Alana progressed academically, but her extracurricular activities and volunteer work have kept her very busy. She has been participating in the Equine Assistant Therapy Program since the age of 6.

Alana has completed the A+ Tutoring Program and completed 50 hours of community service. She was also nominated and selected for the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum.

"After the leadership weekend, Alana was invited to sit on the question-and-answer panel at the University of Missouri-St. Louis regarding how her disability impacts her in the school setting, what it is like to be a student with a disability, and accommodations," said Colombo. "Alana's advocacy and communication skills have become phenomenal."



Progress and Hard Work Helps Student Become a Leader

Matthew Montgomery, a junior at SSD's Neuwoehner High School, has developed leadership skills, improved his behaviors, and made great strides with his speech challenges.

"Matthew has made so much progress in so many areas in the past three years," said SSD physical therapist Laurie Dahle, who nominated Matthew for the Rosemary Zander Award along with SSD teacher Barb Horton. "He struggled when he first came to our school, but then he began participating in Boot Camp."

Boot Camp is a group that meets three times a week. The group consists of students who lead the group and act as role models for the participants who need to work on gross motor skills, turn-taking and personal interactions with other students.

"When Matthew first started, he was an inconsistent participant, sometimes refusing to attend," said Dahle. "Now, Matthew is a leader and eagerly comes to each session. He makes sure the equipment is ready and assists other students. It is such a joy to watch him interact with all the students."

Dahle added that the leadership has carried over into the classroom and that he is dependable, trustworthy and can light up a room and turn someone's bad day into a good day.

2015 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

SAMMY GOLDMAN
"LIVING BIG" CAMBERSHIP

Trinity Robinson
Rose Acres Elementary, Pattonville School District

C.J. AUBUCHON CAMBERSHIP

Liam Longworth
Marvin Elementary, Ritenour School District

SSD BOARD OF EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS

Michael Robinson
Marquette High School, Rockwood School District

De Vaughn Smith
Missouri School for the Blind/North Technical High School, Special School District

BONHOMME LIONS SCHOLARSHIPS

Maria Brown
Mehlville High School/South Technical High School, Mehlville School District/Special School District

Brooke Brust
Affton High School/South Technical High School, Affton School District/Special School District

Matthew Pearl
DAN McLAUGHLIN SCHOLARSHIP
Eureka High School, Rockwood School District

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Marquette High School, Rockwood School District

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Nicholaus Jodlowski
Parkway West High School, Parkway School District

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Annie Donnell
Ladue Horton Watkins High School, Ladue School District

Molly Fiore
Hazelwood West High School, Hazelwood School District

Paul Gada
Ladue Horton Watkins High School, Ladue School District

Gabriela Gonzalez-Snyder
Parkway West High School, Parkway School District

Andrew Lanson
Parkway Central High School, Parkway School District

Daniel Loewenstein
Pattonville High School, Pattonville School District

Audra McFarland
Parkway South High School, Parkway School District

Audra Mikaliukas
Parkway West High School, Parkway School District

Michael Mitchell
Parkway West High School/South Technical High School, Parkway School District/Special School District

Matthew Pearl
DAN McLAUGHLIN SCHOLARSHIP
Eureka High School, Rockwood School District

Peter Razny
Parkway Central High School, Parkway School District

2015 ROSEMARY ZANDER AWARD RECIPIENTS

Aaron Alster
Green Park — Vocational Skills Program, Special School District

Kyrona Brown
Hazelwood West High School, Hazelwood School District

Seyoon Choi
Parkway Central Middle School, Parkway School District

Dominick Colosimo
Lindbergh High School, Lindbergh School District

Jack Coulter
Litzinger School, Special School District

Alana Curth
Lindbergh High School, Lindbergh School District

Annie Donnell
Ladue Horton Watkins High School, Ladue School District

Mario Dreon
Marquette High School, Rockwood School District

Madeleine Gildehaus
Monsanto - Creve Coeur — Vocational Skills Program, Special School District

Gabriela Gonzalez-Snyder
Parkway West High School, Parkway School District

Ezra Heard
South Technical High School, Special School District

Brandon Jones
Neuwoehner High School, Special School District

Whitman Kibble
Pattonville High School, Pattonville School District

Darius Matthews
Hazelwood West High School, Hazelwood School District

Asha Medley-Turner
University City High School, University City School District

Michael Mitchell
Parkway West High School/South Technical High School, Parkway School District/Special School District

Matthew Montgomery
Neuwoehner High School, Special School District

Nathaniel Parker
Ritenour High School, Ritenour School District

Gabe Pearson
Kirkwood High School, Kirkwood School District

Carson Sears
Valley Park Middle School, Valley Park School District

Sarah Sharp
Southview School, Special School District

Eric Viehman
Hazelwood West High School, Hazelwood School District

Malik Warbington
Hazelwood West High School, Hazelwood School District