

FLAGSTAFF UNIFIED School District NEWSLETTER

March 2024

MEMS students create Dale Chihuly-inspired artwork

March 8, 2024

Eighth-grade students in Mr. Pischke's Innovation Station class created some eye-catching, colorful artwork that is prominently displayed against the windows of Mount Elden Middle School (MEMS) library.

David Pischke, an art teacher at MEMS, explained that Olivia Johnston, his student teacher, was the brainchild of the project.

"She wanted to plan a lesson in which the students felt successful creating a sculpture that could be included in a class-wide installation piece," said Pischke. "She used Dale Chihuly's glass artwork as the inspiration for the project because it is colorful, unique, and abstract."

Dale Chihuly is a well-known glass artist and entrepreneur best known for his blown glass artwork.

Pischke explained students are typically more successful with abstract artwork since they do not have to resemble anything specific.



"The class previously learned about color schemes, mixing primary colors and values to create new colors, and installation art, all of which were incorporated into this project," he said. "We attempted to recreate the experience of glass blowing. The students taped painted dura lar or

plastic sheets that react to heat onto yardsticks. One student held the yardstick and rotated it while another student provided heat of 750 to 1,100 degrees from the heat gun. When the dura lar is heated, it shrinks in the area of the applied heat. This is how the glass-like sculptures were

formed."

"The project really came to life when we installed the sculptures on the windows of the MEMS library," he added. "My favorite part of the installation is the colorful shadows created by the light shining through the sculptures." 🌲

IN THIS ISSUE



McCabe wins Student of the Year
at STEMMY... Page 5



Honani, Grand Canyon Region
Player of the Year... Page 6



Spencer Boatner, Poetry Out
Loud finalist... Page 8

A message from our **SUPERINTENDENT**

Resilience

Throughout this school year, I am highlighting and sharing with our community the ways both students and staff of the Flagstaff Unified School District (FUSD) are cultivating the conditions for our District's Profile of a Learner skills — Critical Thinking, Communication, Empathy, Initiative, and Resilience to flourish and prepare our students to be global citizens.

In today's complex and rapidly changing world, our students will undoubtedly face challenges both big and small. The Flagstaff Unified School District (FUSD) rightly emphasizes resilience as an essential aspect of its Profile of a Learner. This focus on resilience helps students not only to weather setbacks but to adapt, grow, and thrive in a world that increasingly demands flexibility.

What does resilience look like in the context of global citizenship? It means having the grit and determination to bounce back from failure, the open-mindedness to adapt when plans go awry, and the confidence to navigate unfamiliar situations. Global citizens encounter new cultures, complex problems, and perspectives that may challenge their own. Resilience helps them embrace these challenges as opportunities for learning and growth.

FUSD nurtures resilience in our students in a multitude of ways. By fostering a growth mindset, we help



them see challenges as learning experiences, not roadblocks. We encourage risk-taking and safe spaces for making mistakes, teaching them that missteps are part of the learning process. And by celebrating perseverance and highlighting real-world examples of resilient individuals, we show them the power of bouncing back and thriving despite adversity.

Resilience is not just about surviving difficult times — it is about unlocking the potential within our students. When they know they can navigate challenges, they gain the confidence and adaptability needed to thrive as global citizens. Let us continue to champion resilience, ensuring that our graduates emerge stronger and ready to make their mark in a dynamic world. 🌲



Kinsey Inquiry and Discovery School receives A+ School of Excellence Award

February 15, 2024

Kinsey Inquiry and Discovery School was recently honored as one of 37 Arizona public schools that earned the Arizona Education Foundation's A+ School of Excellence Award.

According to the Arizona Education Foundation (AEF), the award is a way to identify, celebrate, and recognize educational excellence in schools throughout Arizona. It is also the highest state-level award given to public schools and is often a stepping stone for schools seeking National Blue Ribbon status.

Principal Ellen Herman made the announcement to the Flagstaff Unified School District's governing

board on March 26, 2024.

"Among the 37 schools [awarded] this year, ranging from elementary to high school, Kinsey stands out as a prime example of educational excellence, embodying a number of characteristics for a public school," said Herman. "This recognition isn't just a badge of honor. It's a testament to Kinsey's unwavering commitment to its profound impact on the lives of its students and community."

Kinsey Inquiry and Discovery School will celebrate the achievement at 9:30 a.m. on May 16, 2024, unveiling their A+ School of Excellence banner. A follow-up article will be published in May. 🌲

ADMINISTRATION

MICHAEL PENCA
Superintendent

LANCE HUFFMAN
*Assistant Superintendent of
Curriculum & Instruction*

GOVERNING BOARD

CHRISTINE FREDERICKS
President

ERIK SATHER
Clerk

DOROTHY
DENETSOSIE GISHIE
Member

CAROLE GILMORE
Member

KRISTINE PAVLIK
Member

CONTACT

FLAGSTAFF UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
3285 East Sparrow Avenue
Flagstaff, AZ 86004

(928) 527-6000 | www.fusd1.org

What is the FUSD Foundation? What do they do?

February 24, 2024

The Flagstaff Unified School District Foundation, better known as the FUSD Foundation, was established in 2005 as a 501(c)3 charitable organization dedicated to enhancing the educational experiences of FUSD students with the help and support of alumni and community resources.

Jennifer Grogan, president of the foundation, explained that it is led by a volunteer board of directors made up of dedicated community members who work in partnership with administrators to support the FUSD's mission and goals.

"The foundation accomplishes its goals through teacher grant programs to support quality educational experiences for students across all schools," said Grogan. The Teacher Innovation Fund supports excellence in teaching through grants for innovative, original projects that motivate students, improve learning processes, and are not provided for in school budgets."

"The Micro-Grant Program funds projects for up to \$500 for supplies and resources to enhance instruction. The Debbi Grogan Memorial Fund provides grants to fund the gaps in music and art education," she added. "Through these programs, the FUSD Foundation has distributed nearly \$105,000 and supported 90-plus programs across the district since 2015. The Foundation is currently looking to expand its effort to include classroom grants, specifically for STEM education."

Grogan also mentioned that the foundation is excited to share that OneAz Credit Union recently announced its \$20,000 Legacy Grant, which is a major investment in Flagstaff's teachers and students.

"The grant represents OneAZ's commitment to driving future

excellence and education in Flagstaff and northern Arizona," Grogan said.

Brandon Michaels, the president and CEO of OneAZ Credit Union and president of the OneAZ Community Foundation, said OneAZ is extremely proud to support the Flagstaff Unified School District Foundation and all teachers in Flagstaff who are shaping the lives of students every day.

"At OneAZ, we understand that education is the cornerstone of progress. It empowers individuals, nurtures their talents, and equips students with the knowledge and skills needed to overcome challenges and create positive change," said Michaels. "We are excited to join FUSD on this journey in building a brighter future for Flagstaff."

Grogan explained the foundation will be using these OneAZ funds to replenish the micro-grant and Teacher Innovation Funds.

"The foundation is also in the process of opening a Teacher's Closet, where FUSD teachers can shop for supplies for their classroom," said Grogan. "The foundation feels that FUSD teachers should not be paying for supplies out of pocket for their classrooms. Thanks to OneAZ, the foundation will have an initial amount of money to purchase classroom materials and is currently looking for more partners to help keep the Teacher's Closet stocked at all times with the supplies our teachers need."

To learn more about the FUSD Foundation, visit their website at www.fusdfoundation.org. The foundation accepts donations to fund its programs. Donations to the foundation can be made via PayPal or by check to the FUSD Foundation at 3285 East Sparrow Avenue, Flagstaff, AZ 86004. People interested in joining the FUSD Foundation board of directors can email fusdfoundation@gmail.com for more information. 🌲



2024 Special Olympics Cheerleading Competition at Sinagua Middle School

February 9, 2024

Special Olympics Arizona held a Cheerleading Competition in the Sinagua Middle School auditorium on February 6, 2024. Current FUSD students and alumni had a blast learning and performing cheers and dance routines. 🌲

View more
photos on
flickr
Scan the
QR Code



FUSD teachers receive more grant funds from the FUSD Foundation

February 23, 2024

The FUSD Foundation issued a third and fourth round of grant awards to teachers at Flagstaff Unified School District in December and January.

Third-round grant recipients include Jenny Jordan, a music teacher, who received \$4,600 on behalf of Thomas Elementary School; Sara Owen, preschool coordinator, who received \$389.36 on behalf of special education services at Kinsey Elementary School; and Amy Dries, woods teacher, who received \$500 on behalf of Sinagua Middle School.

Fourth-round grant recipients include Angela Waltner, an ELL specialist who received two awards totaling \$1,000 on behalf of Marshall Elementary School, and Nadege Neta, an SEI English teacher who received \$169.99 on behalf of Coconino High School.

Jordan said Thomas Elementary School is honored and grateful to receive the \$4,600 Debbi Grogan Memorial Fund Grant.

"We are excitedly planning an installation of acoustical panels in the ceiling of the music room," said Jordan. "This will enable us to regulate the reverb in the room so that our students can make lots of music together without damaging their hearing. We will be able to play more instruments together and try more exciting projects in the coming years."

Owen plans to use the \$389.36 grant funds to improve seating options in the FUSD preschool program.

"The FUSD preschool programs provide developmentally appropriate education to students ages 3-5 years old, many of whom have special education needs. A core component of our program is to provide engaging instruction and hands-on experiences so that students are

kindergarten-ready," said Owen. "This goes beyond academics, as students often need practice with attending to the teacher, following directions, persistence to a difficult task, and asking for help."

"By having a classroom set of adaptive chairs, teachers can provide the physical support children require to better attend to classroom activities," added Owen. "These flexible seating options will be able to support our students as they gain academic, adaptive, and social-emotional skills that they are practicing while in preschool. These sturdy chairs will last for years to come, which means there is a positive impact for upwards of 100 students who may benefit from this wonderful grant award."

Dries plans to use the \$500 grant funds to procure essential woodworking tools and materials for her woodworking class at Sinagua Middle School.

"Items such as box-cutting jigs, sandpaper, clamps, sanders, wood, and glue will offer middle school students a transformative opportunity to participate actively in a groundbreaking scientific initiative," said Dries. "By assisting a scientist in the construction of boxes designed to contain mouse food aimed at reducing the mouse population without using poison, students embark on a hands-on journey to exploration and discovery."

Dries explained that this project will help students develop practical carpentry skills and gain invaluable insights into the scientific process and its real-world applications.

"Working collaboratively to craft these specialized boxes fosters teamwork, problem-solving, and attention to detail among students.

*Continued on page 7 /
Grant Funds*



Photos, top: Amy Dries, woods teacher at Sinagua Middle School, poses with some of her students in her wood shop class on February 15, 2024. Bottom: Sara Owen, preschool coordinator at FUSD, poses with Annette Pranke, preschool teacher at DeMiguel Elementary School, on February 21, 2024.

View more
photos on
flickr
Scan the
QR Code





Student of the Year Jai McCabe poses with his award and certificate with Renda Fisk, president of STEM City Flagstaff.

McCabe wins Student of the Year at STEMMY Awards Ceremony

February 21, 2024

Flagstaff Unified School District was well represented once again at this year's STEMMY Awards Ceremony, which was held on March 7, 2024, at the Coconino Center for the Arts.

Coconino High School freshman Jai McCabe won Student of the Year, and the Coconino High School CocoNuts Robotics Team won Community Partner of the Year.

Eugene Ellsworth Bowers and Tawni Slade, both 11th graders from

Coconino High School, were also finalists for Student of the Year, along with McCabe.

According to STEM City, who hosted the awards ceremony, each year, the STEMMY Awards recognize outstanding students, teachers, organizations, and businesses whose contributions have made a significant impact on their community. 🌲



CocoNuts Robotics Team named 2024 STEM Community Partner of the Year, win FIRST Impact Award

February 23, 2024

The CocoNuts Robotics Team of Coconino High School continues its winning ways, garnering yet another recognition, this time as the 2024 STEM Community Partner of the Year. The CocoNuts were honored during the STEMMY Awards Ceremony held on March 7, 2024, at the Coconino Center for the Arts in Flagstaff. STEM City presents the STEMMY Awards annually to students, teachers, and organizations that are STEM leaders in the greater Flagstaff community.

The team was highlighted for its community outreach efforts locally

and regionally. The team recently conducted outreach efforts on the Navajo Nation, where it partnered with tribal schools to host STEM fairs and competitions and is helping to develop teams.

Christine Sapio, CocoNuts FIRST Team coach, explained that in early March, the team competed in its first regional of the season in Salt Lake City, Utah, and it took home the top prize, the FIRST Impact Award.

"This [was] the thirteenth time our team has been honored with this award," she said. "The team has

Continued on page 9 / CocoNuts

MorningRain Honani, Grand Canyon Region Player of the Year, named to 4A All-Conference First Team

March 21, 2024

Flagstaff High School Senior MorningRain Honani was recently named the Grand Canyon Region Player of the Year at the conclusion of the regular season of her illustrious high school basketball career. She helped lead the Flagstaff High School Lady Eagles in capturing the 4A Girls Basketball State Championship in 2023 and making it to the state semifinals in 2024.

The Region Player of the Year distinction is for a player who is essentially an all-around player who leads their team offensively and defensively.

MorningRain is weighing her options, but she knows she wants to continue her education and, ideally, continue playing basketball while obtaining it. "I have a couple of college offers. I'm still deciding... I'm just not sure yet," she said.

Raine Honani, MorningRain's father, explained that his daughter had gained the attention of college recruiters and coaches from across the country. He said some college representatives attended an open tournament when the Lady Eagles played Pinnacle. Since then, numerous coaches have been following and observing her basketball prowess.

"Since that point, there have been a lot of college offers made to her since

her recognition as the Grand Canyon Region Player of the Year," said Honani. She is weighing her options regarding college visits."

Honani also said his daughter was named to the 4A All-Conference First Team, nominated to play in the 2024 Girl's All-Star Game, and is the only

Native American invited to the team to play with some of the top senior basketball players from throughout the state in 4A to 6A Conferences on April 12, 2024, at South Mountain Community College in Phoenix.

"My daughter... she's very humble, and she's very thankful for all the recognition. As parents, we try not to boast or put a lot of that

out on social media. We try to keep it to ourselves, but sure enough, things just came on their own," said Honani. "She's always been a really good athlete. We supported her as parents and as a family."

"As parents, we're just thankful and grateful for all the supporters from family, coaches, and the community," said Honani. "This is not over for her... she still hasn't signed yet with a college or university, and she's still going to continue her career."

MorningRain thanks her teammates, her coaches, her family, and the fans for supporting her and the Lady Eagles. Although basketball and athletics are important to her,

**My daughter...
she's very
humble, and
she's very
thankful for all
the recognition.**

— Raine Honani



academics and doing well in school are paramount for her. She said her favorite subject in school is English, and her favorite teacher is Ms. Julia Wilson, her math teacher.

MorningRain is three-quarters Navajo and a quarter Hopi descent. Her parents are Denaye and Raine Honani. 🌲

MorningRain Honani dribbles down the basketball court during one of her games in the 2023-2024 Basketball Season at Flagstaff High School. (Photo by Karl Mullings)



Undefeated season for Sinagua Girls' Basketball team

March 21, 2024

Congratulations to the Sinagua Middle School Girls' Varsity Basketball team for going undefeated this season!

View more
photos on
flickr
Scan the
QR Code



Angela Waltner, ELL specialist at Marshall Elementary School, poses with Principal Janelle Reasor on February 20, 2024, at Marshall Elementary School.

...Grant Funds / From Page 4

Moreover, their involvement in ecology research cultivates a profound sense of environment stewardship and community responsibility," added Dries. "This grant empowers students to make meaningful contributions to scientific endeavors while nurturing a passion for both craftsmanship and scientific inquiry."

Waltner plans to use grant funds to support the STEAM projects at Marshall Elementary School.

"As the Magnet Monday Coordinator for our STEAM program, we are constantly working to expand the hands-on science experiences for our students," explained Waltner. "We are expanding our Makerspace projects by purchasing 3D pens, sewing kits, and origami paper so that students have more creative options when designing and engineering. We are also encouraging

analyzing and experimentation by having students grow, observe, and manipulate habitats for ant and worm farms and how they impact indoor and outdoor garden activities."

Neta is buying playing games to help with language acquisition and conversational skills with her grant funds.

"The grant money will help me buy games for my Structured English Immersion (SEI) classes. I would like to have time in my SEI classes dedicated to playing games," said Neta. "This project is going to be especially important for my SEI students who are newcomers or beginner English speakers. It will help them develop conversational skills in English, but it will also help create a fun and positive classroom community for my students. In SEI 2, the games will focus on more specific aspects of the English language and vocabulary development." 🌲

Spencer Boatner, a Poetry Out Loud finalist

March 21, 2024

Coconino High School Senior Spencer Boatner was the only Flagstaff representative who competed with eight other high schoolers from across the state in the 2024 Poetry Out Loud state finals held on March 2, 2024, at Northern Arizona University.

According to Poetry Out Loud, they are a national arts education program that encourages the study of great poetry by offering free educational materials and a dynamic recitation competition for high school students across the country. This program helps students master public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and learn about literary history and contemporary life.

Poem selections must be from the Poetry Out Loud anthology. Students must be prepared with three poems. One must be 25 lines or fewer, one must be written before the 20th century, and one poem may be used to meet both criteria and may be the student's third poem. The competition consisted of three rounds. Students must recite their poems from memory, and they are not allowed to use props or wear costumes during their recitations.

For the competition, Spencer was prepared to recite three poems but recited two, "Hap" by Thomas Hardy and "Earth, You Have Returned to Me" by Elaine Equi. The third poem, "The Idler" by Alice Moore Dunbar-Nelson, was on standby in case he advanced to the finals.

The poems recited by Spencer were not random selections but selections that drew meaning to him.

"I had a couple of poems

memorized from years prior, but I wanted to do something else. All those had heavy themes of religion. I like talking about religion, but I'm not personally part of any church. I like hearing from the past, from the pre-19th century, about their views on religion and old stuff like that," explained Spencer. "'Hap' by Thomas Hardy, it's about happenstance and how it connects to God. Then 'Earth, You Have Returned to Me' is about pills, not as an addiction, but prescription drugs making you

feel different until, finally, you get over the sickness or whatever is wrong with you, and the pills start making you feel normal."

Spencer said his initial motivation to participate in Poetry Out Loud in his first year was extra credit, which he jokingly said was not a very good motivation. The next year, his motivation was witnessing his classmate, Oscar Landa Samano, win the state

competition and go on to place third at the national competition.

"[Oscar] told me to keep doing it. I was like, 'Okay.' I made a promise to him that I would, so the next year, I kept doing it, and then this year, I told Oscar I would," said Spencer. "I've been talking to Oscar throughout the process, and he's been a great motivation for me just because I miss him."

Spencer said he enjoyed the competition and the work he put in leading to the state finals.

"I love participating in Poetry Out Loud. I did the school competition for the last three years. I wasn't able to do it my freshman year because of COVID-19, but other than that, I've been doing it every year," he said. "I didn't make it to the regionals the

**I love
participating
in Poetry
Out Loud**
— Spencer Boatner



past two years, but this year, I did and got second at regionals. I moved to state, and then I didn't go past the state finals, but I did pretty good. It was a lot of fun."

Spencer is thankful for two of his favorite English teachers, Derek Born and Teresa Wilson, who have encouraged and motivated him to participate in the poetry competitions.

"Mr. Born encouraged me to participate in Poetry Out Loud at first and gave me a little extra credit," said Spencer. "Mrs. Wilson, my current English teacher... I practiced with her a lot, and she helped me. I definitely wouldn't have made it past regionals without her, and she was there watching me. As far as Poetry Out Loud goes, in English, those are my



two favorite English teachers."

Isabel Teran of Sahuarita High School won the NAU competition and will compete in Washington, D.C., in April with other winners across the country. Boatner was joined by two other northern Arizona representatives, including Alexis Bogatyrew and Reymond Papas-Collins, both from Sedona Red Rock High School. The competition

Continued on page 9 / Poetry



Eydis Robison, a kindergartener in Ms. Turner's class, uses her Apple iPad for a classroom scavenger hunt assignment on March 25, 2024, at Thomas Elementary School. She had to create a video on her iPad of all the number 20s she could find.

Thomas Elementary School has the highest number of Apple Teacher Recognition

March 21, 2024

Thomas Elementary School is setting the example of being an educational technology-focused school. Every teacher at Thomas Elementary School is a recognized Apple Teacher. Apple Teacher is a professional learning program and recognition process designed to support and celebrate educators who effectively use Apple products to enhance, engage, and extend learning opportunities for students in all learning content areas.

Principal Katrina Collins-Hernandez explained that Thomas Elementary School has been working toward the prerequisite requirements required before applying to become an Apple Distinguished School for several years now as a framework

for integrating best practices in leveraging FUSD's 1:1 iPad and teacher Mac laptops to support student learning.

"All teachers at Thomas have earned their Apple Teacher certifications, and last year, Christina Bowen earned her Apple Learning Coach certification, serving our school as the lead technology coach," said Collins-Hernandez. "Christina Bowen is one of only four FUSD staff members who have completed the extensive program to be recognized as an Apple Learning Coach. Our staff lives through our mission statement, 'Thomas Elementary School cultivates a diverse and inclusive learning environment through innovation in

Continued on page 11 / Apple

...Poetry / From Page 8

included a total of nine finalists representing the north, central, and south regions of the state.

So what's next?

With an interest in reading and studying poems, you would think his favorite subject in school would be English, but he said his favorite subject is engineering. He plans to study engineering at Arizona State University (ASU) after high school.

"I'm very excited. Electrical engineering specifically, and our CIT program [at Coconino High School] is great. Mr. [David] Tessmer, the teacher, he's fantastic!" said Spencer. "I've learned a lot, and it doesn't connect to poetry much, but that whole program is just amazing."

As Spencer's high school career winds down, he already has plans.

"I'm planning to go to ASU. I know a couple of people who have graduated and gone into the Ira A. Fulton School of Engineering," he said. "I'm excited! They've said good things about it. I got into Barrett, the Honors College, which is nice. It's only 25% of people

who get in there. It's going to be cheap because of my GPA, and I got a good scholarship and in-state tuition."

As a future career path, Spencer wants to be an engineer.

"I know that there are a lot of engineering jobs down in Phoenix. It's a booming industry right now. Getting just an internship at General Electric or Honeywell, something like that, would be really nice and further my experience," he added. "I also love film. I'm in the film class here, and we do a show called 'The Pulse' that comes out each week."

"I'm the anchor. I also help behind the camera with sound. I would love to combine engineering and film and make cameras one day as a personal business," said Spencer. "That's my dream, but it'll take a while to achieve, and I'll have to learn a lot more."

As once chapter closes soon, Spencer is optimistic and excited for his next chapter and his journey ahead. He thanks his parents, Lisa and Eric Boatner, for their continued support, encouragement, and guidance on his journey.

"They are great parents... they're very supportive," he said. 🌟

...CocoNuts / From Page 5

weeks to get ready to compete for the championship Impact Award at the World Championship in Houston. We'd love to have the students do their presentation to as many community groups as possible to give them practice."

Sapio explained the FIRST Impact Award is the most prestigious award at FIRST.

"It honors the team that best represents a model for other teams to emulate and best embodies the purpose and goals of FIRST," said Sapio, quoting the script from FIRST. "The FIRST Impact Award is presented to the team judged to have the most significant measurable impact of its partnerships among its participants

and community over a sustained period, not just a single build season. The winner is able to demonstrate progress towards FIRST's mission and transforming our culture."

"The team's commitment to expanding STEM has been unwavering," she added. "They have brought FIRST to all corners of the state, inspiring future generations. This team has demonstrated they can do hard things by cracking open the barriers to STEM in the indigenous communities."

For now, the team is concentrated on finishing their season with upcoming competitions at the AZ East Regional in Phoenix and in Las Vegas, Nevada, and the World Championship in Housing scheduled in April. 🌟

Wooden art mosaic presented to Killip Elementary School

March 9, 2024

Killip Elementary School received a beautiful wooden art mosaic titled "Killip Elementary School in a Box" from Dr. John Killip and his family on March 5, 2024. Killip is the son of Wilfred F. Killip, the school's namesake.

Killip Principal Joe M. Gutierrez explained the mosaic is made with red cedar, CCA lumber, oak tree bark, aspen wood, Missouri Walnut, Yellow Pine, Minnesota Bass Wood, Aged Red Cedar, and Ponderosa Pine wood.

"The pictorial in the box has the former Killip School with a picture of Mr. and Mrs. Killip in the doorway on the bottom left side. On the bottom right side is the pictorial of the new Killip building, all made of small wood pieces," said Gutierrez. "In the background are the Ponderosa Pines, Mount Elden mountains, and the San Francisco Peaks, also made of wood chips. On the doors are wooden cougars painted by two Killip students, 5th Grader Axel Rodarte Rodriguez and 3rd Grader Oscar Osuna Navarro."

Gutierrez explained that Myralyn McCabe, an art teacher, held a contest, and the two boys' artwork was selected and used in the mosaic.

"The Killip family also donated \$500 to the Killip art program," he said. "The mosaic has been placed at the top of the art display in the café."



Photos, top: The wooden art mosaic displayed on the wall of Killip Elementary School. Bottom, L-R: Teacher Myralyn McCabe, 3rd Grader Oscar Osuna Navarro, 5th Grader Axel Rodarte Rodriguez, and Dr. John Killip.





"Hero of the Week" game at Kinsey during Black History Month

March 21, 2024

Kinsey Inquiry and Discovery School celebrated Black heroes from the past and present by hosting a mystery "Hero of the Week" game during Black History Month. Each day on their morning show, a student announced one clue about the Black hero of the week. Around the school, QR codes were posted for students to scan and submit their guesses on who the hero of the week was. At the end of each week, all students who guessed the correct Black hero were entered into a random name picker, and the winning student received a prize and a shout-out on the announcements!

Last week's winner was 5th Grader Da'Mare Tsosie, who correctly guessed the Tuskegee Airmen. Great job, Da'Mare! 🌲



Stargazing at DeMiguel Elementary School

February 21, 2024

DeMiguel Elementary School hosted its Star Party at the Walker Observatory on January 26, 2024.

Principal Ginni Biggs said they were fortunate to have Dr. Christopher Edwards from Northern Arizona University (NAU) give a talk.

"Dr. Edwards has been involved in several Mars missions and runs the control room at NAU," said Biggs. "He [provided] us information about the exploration of Mars from the telescope era all the way to rovers on the surface. He also [talked] about what we've learned and engineering challenges along the way."

Biggs also said they used the telescopes at Walker Observatory to observe the skies and they also set up telescopes on the basketball court near Walker, which is located in the

back of the school. The observatory houses a 14" Newtonian reflector, along with other portable telescopes and solar filters. The Observatory is named after Kenneth Walker, a retired educator and avid amateur astronomer who, prior to his passing, donated the telescope and dome to the school.

The telescope club at DeMiguel will host future Star Parties, along with warm beverages, where they will teach students and families how to set up their sights on the stars. Attendees are recommended to dress warm because the observatory does not have heat. Future Star Parties are scheduled from 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. on March 29, 8 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on April 26, and 8:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. on May 17, 2024, dependent on clear skies. 🌲

...Apple / From Page 5

teaching and technology."

Collins-Hernandez also explained Thomas is incorporating technology by creating technology Essential Learning Outcomes for each grade level to design and engage innovative learning and problem-solving throughout their school.

"We are also using the Professional Learning Community's 15-day Cycle Framework to incorporate technology to create collaborative and inspirational lessons. We offer staff professional development or PD, such as Technology Playgrounds, digital books for student work, and tech workshops led by teachers," she said. "Next year, we hope to have a regular student-created podcast and a coding club using Apple Swift Playgrounds." 🌲



Photo, L-R: Judith Romero, Renda Fisk, and Heather Zeigler

Renda Fisk receives "Making IT Happen Award"

March 1, 2024

Renda Fisk, the coordinator of Learning, Technology, and Innovation at Flagstaff Unified School District, received the Arizona Technology in Education Association (AzTEA) and International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) "Making IT Happen Award" on February 23, 2024.

Fisk said she is incredibly honored to receive the award.

"This process allowed me invaluable time to reflect on how and why I've leveraged technology to impact student learning in the past, time to evaluate current practices and support for teachers and staff while providing time to look forward at what is possible," she said. "I am humbled to be recognized by peers and experts within the educational technology field at the local, state, and international level. This recognition fuels my energy and passion for education, commitment to excellence, and my belief that technology in the hands of exceptional educators can be transformational in supporting all

student's individual learning needs."

Judith Romero, ISTE liaison, presented Fisk with the award and an embroidered jacket, and she said she was very worthy of it.

"This is an award that recognizes leadership in technology education. You must have been in the field for many years and show the board that you are doing things above and beyond what you are paid to do," said Romero. "It involves presenting at conferences, being a leader within your district and your state, and participating in the international events that ISTE puts on."

"Congratulations to Renda on winning this award. She was nominated by one of her colleagues, Heather Ziegler," said Romero. "It's a very competitive process, and we have up to 30 applicants a year, and we only award one."

Heather Zeigler, assistant director of Learning, Technology, and Innovation, received this same award in 2017.

Learn more about ISTE by accessing their website at www.iste.org.



FHS, CHS Varsity Girls' Soccer rivalry game

February 13, 2024

Flagstaff High School and Coconino High School Varsity Girls' Soccer teams had a rivalry game at Coconino High School on Thursday, February 1, 2024, as they neared the end of their regular season.

View more
photos on
flickr
Scan the
QR Code



STAFF HIGHLIGHTS



Elizabeth Stradling

Elizabeth Stradling, FUSD bus driver

Elizabeth Stradling is a first-year bus driver and is completing her first full year of driving for the Flagstaff Unified School District. She helps to transport special needs students to and from school daily. She has been with the school district for 10 years, mainly as a bus aid.

Being able to transport children to and from school is her greatest joy.

"These kids have captured my heart. Even when I was a bus aid, they just gave me great joy," she said. "If I'm feeling down, all I have to do is just look at their bright smiling faces, and it just cheers me up. It just makes me feel really good about what I'm doing."

As the school year is coming to a close in May, Elizabeth is just focused on being the best special needs driver she can be.

"I am just focused on getting these special kids to wherever they need to go and just being there for them, making their day, smiling, and just



Patricia Harris

continuing to do what I do," she said. Patience is a virtue.

"Just be patient with these special needs guys, and they'll bring you more joy than you can ever imagine," she added.

Patricia Harris, FUSD Food Service

Patricia Harris is a cafeteria manager at Marshall Elementary School via Chartwells, the contracted food service provider for Flagstaff Unified School District (FUSD). She said she has been working on behalf of the school district for more than 12 years through the various food service vendors.

She is originally from Louisiana but has since lived in Flagstaff.

She loves her job, especially being able to feed children at the school.

"I like the little babies... I call them babies when they come through," she said. "I say, 'What's your name, baby?' I call them babies because my kids are grown, so they're my little babies."



Bailee Shupe

She wants parents to know their children are being fed well at school.

"I love your babies coming in, and I hope they love my food," said Patricia. "Our count has been high. We've been serving more than 230 children per day for lunch."

She said the numbers going up is a good thing, and they are up from last school year.

Her days are so busy she does not have time for a hobby because she works a second job outside of her work with FUSD.

"Once I leave here, I go home, change, and go and get ready for my next job," she said.

She enjoys working for FUSD.

Bailee Shupe, 1st Grade teacher

Bailee Shupe is a first-grade teacher at Leupp Elementary School, and she is completing her first year of teaching.

Shupe said she was born and raised in Mesa, Arizona, with her three brothers. During the COVID-19



pandemic, she said she packed up and moved in with her grandparents in eastern Idaho and spent a year with them. During that time, she met her fiancé, and they decided to move back to Flagstaff to finish school and get their lives started.

She attended Northern Arizona University, where she earned her Bachelor of Science degree in education and obtained a literacy endorsement.

Shupe loves teaching.

"My function as a teacher [is to] work to create community within the classroom and promote those characteristics of kindness, respect, and helpfulness," she said. "Those are our three classroom rules that we review each morning and reflect on. I really work to help the kids build regulation skills, understand their own emotions, and work through conflicts between each other."

In her free time, she enjoys crocheting and hiking. 🌲



FUSD celebrates National School Breakfast Week

March 10, 2024

Flagstaff Unified School District celebrated National School Breakfast Week during the week of March 4-8, 2024. The designation celebrates the importance of ensuring every child has access to a nutritious breakfast at school to fuel them for success.

FUSD Food Service conducted some activities. During their breakfast meal service, they ran a

Mood Boost and Discovery Kitchen program at Marshall Magnet Elementary School and Thomas Elementary School.

The Mood Boost program provided students with the opportunity to sample a mango strawberry smoothie while FUSD Food Service interns talked with them about Vitamin B12, which is commonly found in yogurt, and its link to feelings of happiness and well-

being. For the Discovery Kitchen demonstration, Chef Rob and Chef Ninah made whole-grain energy bites for the students to try with their breakfast.

Thank you to our FUSD Food Service Department and Chartwells K12 for organizing these events for our students. 🌟

View more
photos on
flickr
Scan the
QR Code





Flagstaff Unified School District social workers. Pictured, L-R: Nan Shoaff, Cindy McCollum, Vanessa Billegas, and Elyse Moreno.

National School Social Workers Week

March 9, 2024

National School Social Workers Week was celebrated during the week of March 3-9, 2024. It is a week to honor school social workers and highlight the important work they do to meet

students' social, emotional, physical, and environmental needs. Learn more at www.sswaa.org/school-social-work-week.

Thank you, FUSD Social Workers!



TAX CREDIT DONATIONS



SCAN ME!



STEM CITY
FLAGSTAFF, ARIZONA

STEM CELEBRATION

Fort Tuthill Fairgrounds
Saturday, April 27, 2024
1 PM to 4 PM

2024 Community STEM Celebration

March 9, 2024

You're invited to the 2024 Community STEM Celebration!

This year's event is scheduled from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, April 27, 2024, at Fort Tuthill Fairgrounds.

The 2024 Annual Community STEM Celebration is an opportunity for all of Flagstaff to engage with the STEM community. This year, the STEM Celebration will return to the Fort Tuthill Fairgrounds with both indoor and outdoor exhibits.

The STEM Celebration offers Flagstaff residents a chance to explore the dynamic world of Science, Technology, Engineering,

and Mathematics (STEM). This day will be full of hands-on activities, engaging demonstrations, and insightful conversations. At this event, attendees should expect to be introduced to STEM as potential for educational opportunities and viable career paths. Let's come together and celebrate Flagstaff's designation as "America's First STEM Community."

Flagstaff STEM City invites everyone to join in this celebration of knowledge, innovation, and community collaboration. Mark your calendars for an unforgettable experience at the STEM Celebration.





3285 East Sparrow Avenue
Flagstaff, AZ 86004

(928) 527-6000
www.fusd1.org

FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



View more
photos on
flickr
Scan the
QR Code

A purple-tinted banner featuring two young children, a girl and a boy, looking at something off-camera. The girl is on the left, and the boy is on the right, both appearing engaged and happy.

**KINDERGARTEN**
REGISTRATION NOW OPEN



Learn more at www.fusd1.org/kindergarten

A blue-tinted banner with a background of snow-covered evergreen trees. The text is white and bold.

**Winter Weather
Information**

A vibrant banner featuring a young boy smiling broadly. He is holding a large, yellow and orange sign that says "BACK TO SCHOOL". The sign is designed to look like a school bus.

**Now Hiring!**

For all positions district-wide