

Outlook

A tri-annual publication of the Diablo Managers Association. DMA is a charter of ACSA.

Mt. Diablo administrators share their (short) stories

As part of a series, *Outlook* is profiling Mt. Diablo Unified administrators and classified personnel who are members of DMA. The questions we asked were: How long have you been in the district? What is your major responsibility and greatest challenge? What is a recent successful project? And what is something people might not guess is true about you—or what do you like to do when you're not working?

Jenny Vargas, Principal, Westwood Elementary: I've held many different positions throughout my 17 years in the district, including special day class (SDC) teacher, regular ed. first grade teacher, reading specialist, Title I coordinator, After School Program teacher leader and vice principal.

My greatest responsibility is providing students a safe learning environment. I truly believe that when you get to know the children, families and staff, and build these important relationships, a caring learning community is developed where all students feel successful. My greatest challenge is always having the feeling that I'm not doing enough!

Westwood became a California Distinguished School in 2008, which was such a proud moment for not only myself, but the teachers, support staff, students, families and community. We all knew we were providing students an exemplary program, but to be recognized by our peers and the state was such an honor and privilege.

Some people may not know that I have three children—all girls, an 18-year-old at Sonoma State, a 13-year-old at Diablo View and a four-year-old. Yes, a four-year-old! I love music and am a major "rocker."

Hermes Cervantes, Ph.D., 7th Grade Student Services Coordinator, Glenbrook Middle:

I started with MDUSD in August 2006. I am the administrator for the 7th grade and focus on the Far Below Basic (FBB) students, since my work is funded by the Supplemental Counseling Grant. As a school psychologist by training, I find using problem-solving and decision-making strategies helpful in working with these students. A real benefit I have found is being bilingual. It is an asset not only in

working with the students but also with their parents and guardians.

Career Day at my previous school district was a favorite project, which involved going to a number of middle schools and sharing my duties and responsibilities as a school psychologist. It was challenging, as I had to make my discussions interesting and entertaining to a difficult age group. I found that sharing my own experiences in middle school was of interest to most students. They found it funny when I told them I was in school before there was electricity and that dinosaurs roamed the fields in back of the school. I must have been successful because I was requested year after year.

I am an old-Volvo nut. I am restoring a 1977 Volvo 244. My wife and I have had the car since we were married, and now it needs a V8 and a turbo. It is already painted VC (vitamin C) orange, which was a popular muscle-car color back in the '60s.

Michele Smallhoover and Susan Peddy, Personnel Analysts—

Credentials: Susan (pictured, at right): I have been with Mt. Diablo for 18-1/2 years and have been doing credentialing for the past nine

years. Our role is to make sure the district's teachers hold the appropriate credentials for their teaching assignments and comply with the new No Child Left Behind requirements. We prescreen teacher applicants to assist principals in hiring teachers with the correct credentials, and also help applicants and returning teachers with any credential issues, and advise them on the different methods available to meet NCLB requirements. Michele and I are currently working on NCLB compliance review and the state and county audit of credentials. While the job is very challenging, it is good to know that we are helping provide qualified teachers for our students.

My husband and I have bought property in Mokelumne Hill in the Mother Lode (Calaveras County), where we plan to build a retirement home. We honeymooned there 34 years ago.

Michele (pictured above, at left): I've been with the district five years and in this position nearly six months, so I am still learning



DMA stories *(continued from page 1)*

the job. I enjoy it and find it very challenging. The work requires a lot of research and it is very detail-oriented. It also requires keeping up with current legislation, and working closely with state and county agencies. I enjoy the opportunity to help the district's teachers. Susan and I work very closely, which makes the job easier. It's great when you have someone to bounce things off of.

I like to backpack and especially enjoy the Lake Tahoe area. I climbed Donner Summit in the snow one winter.

Bryan Richards, Director, Fiscal Services: I was hired on



November 17, 2008. My responsibility is management of the budget and the Fiscal Services division. The greatest challenge at this time is dealing with the effects of the state's economy on the district and finding creative ways to keep programs viable as the revenue stream is drying up.

Last spring I completed UC Riverside's Chief Business Officials certificate pro-

gram. It is a 35-unit comprehensive study of all of the elements of the position of chief business official for a California school district. What made it particularly valuable was that the course instructors were all experts in school business who had real-world experiences and ideas to share, several of which we were able to implement in my last district, John Swett Unified.

I love to travel and have been to a lot of interesting places. We once lived in American Samoa and still have good friends there. I would love to go back for a visit!

Barbara Oaks, Principal, College Park High: I have been the

principal at College Park since 2005 and have worked for MDUSD since 1988. My major responsibility is to make certain that the school is an academic environment that is welcoming, safe and conducive to student learning. The challenge is juggling all of the responsibilities and making certain that everything gets done. I try to accomplish this by remaining calm and keeping a positive attitude.



Getting on an airplane and flying to the East Coast to visit family was my big challenge recently. It is a major project each time I fly. I'm always satisfied when I get home because I challenged my fears.

I most enjoy walking my dogs at 5 a.m. It gives me free and uninterrupted time. All I have to think about is walking the dogs. It gets me ready for the day. ■

Lots of ways to get involved in DMA

DMA's member committees are important in moving our organization forward. If you would like to get more involved in DMA, or have suggestions to offer, please contact your DMA representative (listed on page 4) or any of these committee chairpersons today!

DMA committees and chairpersons this year include:

Awards—Berry Murray: Plans the End-of-the-Year recognition program

Bylaws/MOU—Katie Gaines: Solicits member feedback and updates DMA's bylaws and Statement of Purpose (memorandum of understanding)

Communications—Amy Bush: Oversees publication of the *Outlook* newsletter and other communications

Membership—Denise Larkins: Recruits and welcomes new members

Mentor/Mentee—Julie Braun-Martin: Oversees the Mentor Project and the One-Minute Mentor directory

Professional Development—Cindy Matteoni: Oversees professional development activities and reviews applications for the Member Professional Scholarship Program

Salary/Benefits—Katie Gaines: Makes recommendations regarding salaries and benefits

Student Scholarship—Linda Hutcherson: Reviews applications and selects DMA's annual student scholarship winners

Sunshine/Hospitality—Leyla Benson: Sends get-well and condolence cards to DMA members ■

One Minute Mentor Directory

DMA's One Minute Mentor Directory is a quick reference for Mt. Diablo managers who would like to contact other managers to obtain ideas, guidance or specific information. This year's directory has been cross-referenced by topic and is available from *Julie Braun-Martin* in Personnel at ext. 4142. If you have questions or wish to share your expertise with other managers, please contact Julie. (If you are reading this, please e-mail *Amy Bush* right now at busha@mdusd.k12.ca.us to join a drawing to win a special prize!)

Julie reports that several managers, including three new elementary principals, have been paired with mentors this year. If you are seeking a mentor, or would like to serve as a mentor, please get in touch with Julie. ■

A message from DMA President Katie Gaines



A DMA call to action: Let your voice be heard!

Our district continues to face unprecedented financial challenges. The budget cuts that are proposed to keep Mt. Diablo Unified solvent, if enacted, will eviscerate the infrastructure and programs that support and maintain the quality education we provide for all our students. As the Diablo Managers Association and as an ACSA charter, we must commit ourselves to action now. We are one of several school districts across the state that cannot afford to passively sit back, wait or hope that someone else in the community will address these challenges.

As MDUSD administrators, we recognize the moral imperative to ensure a quality education for all students. Every day we focus our efforts on closing the achievement gap that exists in our district. The proposed cuts make our district's situation even more desperate. We do not have a single minute to lose. The time is now; we must weigh in and manifest the moral courage needed to make a difference. We need to take action.

The energy and adrenalin associated with our frustration, anger, rage, fear and sadness about our state government's apathy, ineptitude and disregard for the future of all our children have the potential to galvanize our efforts to overcome these fiscal challenges. A solution to these obstacles requires us, at a minimum, to make a personal commitment to keep sufficiently informed, to move outside of our professional comfort zone and to stand up for what we know our students and their families deserve. We need to follow through with action that will make a difference.

So what exactly do we need to do? We need to repeatedly and tirelessly communicate with our representatives in Sacramento to demand that they address these key messages from ACSA:

- In 2008-09, schools have already been cut more than \$3 billion. Schools need ongoing, stable revenues.
- Already ranking 46th out of 50 states in the nation in per-pupil spending, California schools were forced to accept cuts totaling \$500 million in the middle of the school year and \$3 billion in our current school year.
- Schools need fewer mandates and more flexibility to ensure that maximum resources are directed to classrooms and student instruction.

Here are the names and addresses of the chairs of Senate committees that impact education:

Appropriations Committee
Senator Christine Kehoe
State Capitol, Room 4038
Sacramento, CA 95814

Education Committee
Senator Gloria Romero
State Capitol, Room 2082
Sacramento, CA 95814

Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
Senator Denise Ducheny
State Capitol, Room 5035
Sacramento, CA 95814

Public Employees & Retirement Comm.
Senator Lou Correa
State Capitol, Room 4062
Sacramento, CA 95814

Don't delay... write today! Thank you for all that you do. I am proud to be your colleague. —Katie Gaines

So you think you can lead?!

An advice column for DMA members

—by Fred & Ginger



So you think you can lead?! is DMA's brand-new advice column. If you have questions related to your job or Mt. Diablo policy, or simply want to express your views about some issue near and dear to you, please write to us at fredandginger.dma@gmail.com. You have our word that all questions and comments will remain anonymous, although we may get in touch with you, if we need to clarify your question. Let us know if you like our new column or have better answers to the questions than we do!

—All the best, Fred & Ginger

Q. Fred and Ginger: My ongoing issue is that I get a huge pile of work because someone else on the administrative team is not doing his work. What can I do about this? — *Anonymous*

A: Dear Anonymous: Explain your concern to your boss and ask if the administrative team can meet under his/her leadership to establish ground rules for how assignments are made and/or changed. Good luck!

Q. Fred and Ginger: I have a student who reached SARB (Student Attendance Review Board) court status last year. A bench warrant was issued; however they never picked him up. His attendance continues to be an issue this year. Our CWA (Child Welfare and Attendance representative) has been to his home numerous times. District SARB shared that he still has a bench warrant and could not be seen at SARB. HELP! What am I to do? — *Frustrated administrator*

A. Dear Frustrated: The SARB process cannot proceed until the bench warrant has been served. A call to the police department to check on the current status of the bench warrant would not be out of order. For additional guidance and expertise, contact *Dick Bergamini*, Child Welfare and Attendance consultant, at 925-682-8000, ext. 4291. He has already been briefed regarding your concern. ■

Welcome, new DMA members!

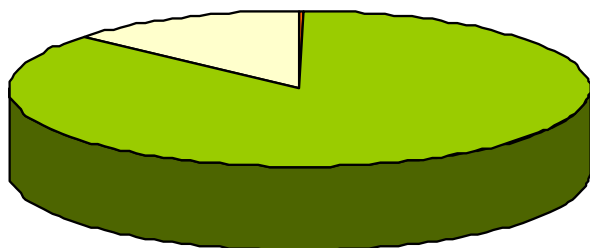
Ean Ainsworth, Vice Principal, Riverview MS
Sherry Brauer, Vice Principal, Pleasant Hill MS
Rick Correa, SSC, Mt. Diablo HS
Efa Huckaby, SSC, Ygnacio Valley HS
Nancy Klinkner, Vice Principal, Highlands
Kimberly Liu, Mt. Diablo HS
Margaret Lowry, Vice Principal, Olympic HS
Hilary McFatrige Shen, Parent Liaison
John McMorris, Principal, Northgate HS
Alexandria Medina, Administrator, After School Program
Janine Mozee, SSC, Mt. Diablo HS
Sharon Olofson, Payroll Manager
Dale Petrich, Vice Principal, Alliance
Bryan Richards, Director, Fiscal Services
Michele Smallhoover, Credential Analyst
Joel Vidovic, Educational Behavior Specialist ■

DMA 2008-2009 budget

Beginning balance: Checking (as of 7/1/08)	\$13,018
Beginning balance: Savings (as of 7/1/08)	\$ 5,577
Total beginning balance (as of 7/1/08)	\$18,595

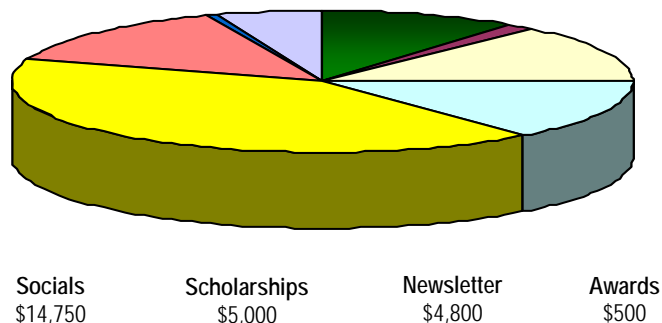
2008-2009 Projected Income \$28,930

Dues	Socials	Interest income
\$25,000	\$3,850	\$80



2008-2009 Projected Expenditures \$35,920

Staff development	Tax	Leadership Institute	Admin. costs & services
\$5,000	\$195	\$2,000	\$3,675



ACSA Corner: Things you should know!

Have you checked out the new ACSA website at www.ACSA.org? You can now access ACSA's two major publications, *EdCal* and *Leadership* magazine, online. There are abundant resources on this greatly improved and more easily navigable website. Learn about ACSA-sponsored professional development activities as well as current events.

DMA is well represented on the Region 6 Leadership Team. *Julie Braun-Martin* is the Region representative to the state ACSA Human Resources Council, *Carolyn Plath* is the representative to the state ACSA Secondary Education Council, *Patt Hoellwarth* is the Region 6 Secretary, and *Katie Gaines* is on the Region 6 Board of Directors.

Congratulations to the following DMA nominees for the ACSA Region 6 Administrators of the Year Award: *Denise Rugani*, Middle Grades Principal; *Julie Braun-Martin*, Personnel/Human Resources Administrator; *Pete Pedersen*, Classified Manager; and *Margaret Scott*, Adult Ed Administrator. All nominees and region winners will be recognized at the Region 6 Awards Dinner on April 24 at the Concord Hilton. Region winners will go on as nominees for ACSA's state awards.

Region 6 offers several financial opportunities for its members, including three \$1,000 scholarships, offered to children of ACSA members, and \$1000 mini-grants and professional development scholarships, which are available to members. For more information and applications, visit www.ACSAregion6.org > Awards.

If you are not a member of ACSA yet, I encourage you to make that commitment to your professional organization. ACSA is still offering new members a special membership rate of \$1 a day. Check out membership benefits on the ACSA website. You can download an application there or e-mail me and I will get one to you.

Welcome to these new or returning ACSA members: *Ean Ainsworth*, *Charmion Brown*, *Amy Bush*, *Ana Castro*, *Connie Cirimeli*, *Margaret Lowry*, *John McMorris*, *Alexandria Medina*, *Nina Mucher*, *Kara Oettinger*, *Sandra Seskin* and *Absyalom Sims*.

—Rose Lock, Region 6 President-Elect

2008-2009 DMA Executive Board and Representatives

President Katie Gaines, Alternative Education, 3908
President-Elect Linda Hutcherson, Foothill Middle, 5700
Past President Bob Dodson, Mt. Diablo Elementary, 84590
Vice Presidents Vonda Boucher, Elementary Education, 4016; Denise Larkins, Personnel Services, 4136
Secretary Mary-Ann Tucker, Highlands Elementary, 84990
Treasurer Mike Mattos, Pine Hollow Middle, 5506

REPRESENTATIVES:

ACSA Rose Lock, Elementary Education, 4015
Adult Education Margaret Scott, Loma Vista, 4380 #2753
Alternative Education Leyla Benson, Summit NSHS and TLC, 925-687-0991
Central Services Jeanne Rau, Transportation, 3710
Co-administrators Amy Bush, College Park High, 3211

Confidentials Chris Wilburn, 4048
District Office / Willow Creek Julie Braun-Martin, Personnel Services, 4142
Elementary Principals Cindy Matteoni, Sequoia Elementary, 4330
Middle School Coleen Martin, Pine Hollow, 4368; Andrea Uhle, Glenbrook, 5410
High School Carolyn Plath, Ygnacio Valley, 3646
Retirees Sandy Brickell, 925-827-4002, Brickellsl@comcast.net; Evie Groch, 510-235-9771, egroch@comcast.net
Special Education Berry Murray, 4065
Vice Principals Brent Brinkerhoff, Sequoia Middle, 5604
ACSA Region VI Consultant John Searles, 925-228-5700, searles3@comcast.net

The role of your DMA representative is to represent you on the DMA Board and to provide feedback to you about Board decisions and issues. If you have questions or feedback to offer, please contact your representative. To comment on items in this newsletter, contact Amy Bush at 925-682-7670, ext. 3211, busha@mdusd.k12.ca.us. For more information about DMA, visit <http://diablomanagers.org>.