



PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Poway Unified Announces its 2017 PUSD Volunteers of the Year

Rachel Allums, Jenny Burnett, and Cathy Rongey Receive School District Honors

The Poway Unified School District is proud to recognize our volunteers and is pleased to announce that Rachel Allums, Jenny Burnett, and Cathy Rongey have been chosen as Poway Unified District Volunteers of the Year for 2017 from a very distinguished list of school site volunteers of the year.

Rachel Allums, Twin Peaks Middle School



Rachel Allums embodies the spirit of giving without expecting anything in return. She has served two terms as PTSA President, Parliamentarian, and Treasurer over the last five years at Twin Peaks Middle School. She has initiated multiple events for both students and parents to feel better connected to the school. She started a back-to-school parent education event so parents have the tools they need to stay informed, and she has hosted Principal chats so parents have direct access to the administrative team; she helped create "School Year's Eve," a tour and orientation to ease the transition for new and incoming students; she has also been integral to the success of countless events including Character Counts and Volunteer Appreciation breakfasts, Academic Awards Night, Math Making it Real program, SWITCH documentary screening, and Adopt-a-Family gift drive. Rachel serves as a mentor to other PTSA presidents by providing support and sharing her experiences, and she is also the PTSA President at Poway High School, where both of her children will be attending next year. Her son proudly says, "She is a leader and a role model and I want to be like her." Rachel's legacy of giving will remain long after she leaves Twin Peaks for Poway High.

Jenny Burnett, Pomerado Elementary School



Jenny Burnett has a deep passion for students that motivates her to go above and beyond for Pomerado Elementary School. She is the driving force behind Pomerado’s annual ReWear sale, which generates money to buy gift cards for Pomerado families in need. Jenny spends hours sorting, organizing, and selling donated shoes and clothing for the popular event, which is open to the public. Jenny also organizes the Book Exchange, which was dedicated to a lifelong Pomerado volunteer. She works with the school’s Spanish-speaking families and encourages them to attend parenting classes, volunteer in classrooms, and be an active part of the learning community. In addition to being a member of the PTA and School Site Council, Jenny is the yearbook coordinator. She ensures all groups and activities are represented, creating a treasured keepsake for all students. She accomplishes many things behind the scenes, working on events like the Talent Show, Science Night, Cultural Night, and Movie Night. Jenny is described as a “shining example of what a Volunteer of the Year should be.”

Cathy Rongey, Westview High School



Cathy Rongey and her husband Scott have given thousands of hours of service to the students of PUSD. They have volunteered with Westview High’s Robotics program for many years, attending every weekend meeting and many weekdays during build season. Cathy takes the time to mentor students and often teaches them skills beyond what the advisors can. She manages the Robotics website, serves as a driver, and guides the business administration for the program. She also initiated start-up robotics programs at several local elementary and middle schools. She and the Westview students visit younger students to build up interest and appreciation for STEM learning. There would be no Robotics program at Westview without Cathy. Her colleagues say, “Anything we need, we hear ‘I’ll do it!’ over and over again.”

2017 Poway Unified Volunteers of the Year

The following is a list of all PUSD 2017 school site Volunteers of the Year. All of these finalists are outstanding candidates, representative of the high level of commitment to our students and schools.

Name	Site
Orlando Cardoso	Adobe Bluffs
Noreen Walton	Abraxas
Rebecca MacBain	Bernardo Heights
Jenette O'Brien	Black Mountain
Melanie Jacobson	Canyon View
Jamie Stinson	Chaparral
Shalom Bowcott	Creekside
Val Azcona	Deer Canyon
Ana Rubio	Del Norte
Sarah Wilson	Del Sur
Sarah Mastrianni	Garden Road
Erin Tavernier	Highland Ranch
Gwen Maunder	Los Penasquitos
Naneth Sotic-Jose	Meadowbrook
Kris Hernandez	Mesa Verde
Beth Case	Midland
Katie Burns	Monterey Ridge
Xu Perry	Morning Creek
Robin Rosenthal	Mt. Carmel
Cass Kaminetz	Oak Valley
Cristina Gerardi	Painted Rock
Jenny Burnett	Pomerado
Janet Lettang	Poway High
Liz Schwartz	Rancho Bernardo
Tara Cicchelli	Rolling Hills
Mona Hiden	Stone Ranch
Rose Meloney	Sundance
Dana McPherson	Sunset Hills
Julie Trafecanty	Tierra Bonita
Kevin Juza	Turtleback
Rachel Allums	Twin Peaks
Selena Pankretz	Valley
Cathy Rongey	Westview
Tracy Hotze	Westwood
JoAnn Sweidel	Willow Grove