

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

ASD MEMORANDUM # 285 (2008-2009)

May 5, 2008

TO: SCHOOL BOARD

FROM: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

SUBJECT: RECOGNITION OF DENALI AWARD RECIPIENTS - SPRING  
2008

*ASD Goal: Establish and maintain a supportive and effective learning environment by continuing to retain, recruit and train highly qualified staff.*

PERTINENT FACTS:

To Alaskans, Denali means "great one," and the Anchorage School District is proud to have employees that display greatness in the areas of achievement, service and dedication. Twice each year, a committee of Anchorage School District employees selects a number of co-workers and a team of colleagues that demonstrate an outstanding commitment to its mission of educating all students for success in life.

The certificated Denali award winners for Spring 2008 are Ellyn Derman of Inlet View Elementary, Andy Holleman of Goldenview Elementary and Roxy Kohler of Hiland Tech High.

Third grade teacher Ellyn Derman has taught in the Anchorage School District for 23 years. According to her principal, Ellyn takes the time to understand and appreciate the unique qualities of each of her students, emphasizing diversity and high expectations. One parent said, "Ellyn has an uncanny way of making all of her student feel special. This reassurance gives them the confidence necessary to achieve their full potential."

Goldenview Middle School technology coordinator Andy Holleman is admired by parents, students and staff alike. Andy has a special touch with middle school students -- he maintains a high regard for their natural innocence, their growing independence and their ability to further their knowledge through inspiration. Colleagues applaud they way he supports technology in their classrooms, whether he's taking the lens cap off a mysteriously darkened projector or fixing a complex network problem.

Highland Tech teacher Roxy Kohler exemplifies the school's values of leadership, ethics and integrity. According to one parent, Roxy sees the

greatness in each student and looks at each student's ideas as a way to promote self-confidence and learning. Roxy connects Hiland Tech with the community, working with over 150 businesses as well as local and state representatives.

The classified staff award recipients are Jaybee Delara, BPO at Airport Heights and Jennifer Westrom, executive secretary in business management.

The Airport Heights building is old and requires a lot of "tender loving care," according to the principal. Jaybee Delara makes the most of the building and keeps everything in tip top shape. Numerous staff members call Jaybee's demeanor calm, emphasizing that he takes pride in his work, maintains a positive attitude and always puts the children first.

Jennifer Westrom helps keep the business management division focused, organized and on-track to meet objectives. Jennifer politely and persistently ensures that all employees complete the School Based Medicaid Administrative Claiming Survey. Thanks to Jennifer's tenacity in seeing that 100% of employees complete the survey, the district receives over \$1 million in Medicaid related revenue.

Many staff, students and parents contributed to the nomination of administrative award winner Patrick Garrity, noting that it is obvious Patrick truly cares about children. As principal at Sand Lake, Patrick sets a positive tone in the building and leads by example. He can often be found working into the evenings and weekends and mopping up after events. Teachers say he is eager to share ideas for lessons and classroom management and has helped the staff become tech savvy.

The Denali team award goes to the Argon teaching team at Central Middle School. All who visit the ASD Education Center see the handiwork of this team through the colorful spirit bears gracing the entrance. By infusing social studies, math, language arts and science into the multi-year spirit bear project, these four teachers truly exemplify the collaborative middle school model. Author Ben Mikaelson says the team has honored the *Touching Spirit Bear* book with their work and allowed the book to grow larger than its pages.

It is recommended that the School Board recognize these Denali Award recipients, and all of the nominees, for the example of excellence that they set for the entire Anchorage School District community.

Attachment

CC/ME

Prepared by: Michelle Egan, Director, Communications

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Fall 2007 DENALI AWARD NOMINEES

Certificated:

Ellyn Derman, Inlet View Elementary  
Andy Holleman, Goldenview Middle School  
Roxy Kohler, Hiland Tech High School

Classified:

Jaybee Delara, Airport Heights Elementary  
Christy Smith, Begich Middle School  
Jennifer Westrom, Business Management

Administrator/Principal:

Patrick Garrity, Sand Lake Elementary

Team:

Argon Team, Central Middle School  
Counseling Staff, Begich Middle School

Denali Award Nomination Review Committee:

Russell Jackson, Payroll  
Sheila Judge-Hall, Elementary Education  
Randy Ribble, Project Manager, Facilities  
Val Woods, Human Resources/EEO