Newport-Mesa Recognizes Six High School Seniors for Character Traits

Newport-Mesa Unified School District (NMUSD) recognized and honored six high school seniors for their character and leadership traits.

“We have a wealth of incredible students and it is gratifying to annually recognize a few of them,” said Superintendent Dr. Fred Navarro. “Getting to know students and their genuine good natured approach to life is something I look forward to each year,” he added.

The Character Trait Award Programs aims to highlight six seniors, one from each high school, who symbolize one of the six pillars of character: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship.

Staff members from the six NMUSD schools nominate a student for each category and the final award choices are decided on by a small committee steered by Superintendent Dr. Fred Navarro.

Kaitlynn Kistler, Early College High School – Trustworthiness

Selected for the Character Trait Award of Trustworthiness, Kaitlynn is a dedicated, thoughtful, and hardworking student. She is a member of the National Honors Society and dedicates her time to assist struggling classmates and goes above and beyond to offer her support.

Ryan Kassel, Corona del Mar High School – Respect
Selected for Character Trait Award for Respect, Ryan is unfailingly courteous, kind and respectful to his peers, teachers, and coaches. He is captain of the Varsity Cross

Country team and participates as an intern in the Biorobotics Lab at UC Irvine.

Menzin Echols, Back Bay High School – Responsibility
Selected for the Character Trait Award for responsibility, Menzin has maintained excellent attendance, stellar grades, and earned the respect and friendship of his peers as well as the Back Bay faculty and staff.

Clarissa Barragan, Estancia High School – Fairness
Selected for the Character Trait Award for fairness, Clarissa is good-natured, open minded and patient. She is respectful toward peers and staff and carefully listens to others viewpoints to ensure fairness among peers.

Peyton Espley-Jones, Newport Harbor High School – Caring
Selected for the Character Trait Award for Caring, Peyton regularly displays a caring, positive, optimistic approach to things. She is personable, compassionate, and driven to succeed. She is president of a student body of more than 2,500 students and consistently spends time and energy to improve the lives of others through her genuine caring nature.

Nora Vartanian, Costa Mesa High School – Citizenship

Selected for the Character Trait Award of Citizenship, Nora maintains a 4.3 GPA, while balancing her academic activities and activities outside of school. She is a member of the Madrigal Choir and the varsity cheer team. She advocates for the needs of herself and others and is active in her church and numerous community service activities.

The winning high school seniors reflect strong leadership traits and exuberate kindness.

Winners are applauded with a six foot banner showcasing their photo, winning character trait and school they represent displayed in the district lobby for one year. Students will also be recognized at a special ceremony June 7, 2016 at 6

p.m. in the Corona del Mar High School Performing Arts Theater.

Costa Mesa performing arts students and fans enjoy sounds of newly donated piano

The sound of music in the Costa Mesa High School Performing Arts Center is now many octaves improved with the addition of a Yamaha C6 Grand Piano donated through the efforts of a prominent alumni, a local family and the school’s foundation.

The piano was unveiled Tuesday night during a Costa Mesa High School Choir concert at the performing arts center.



Speaking to the concert crowd, Costa Mesa High School Foundation President and Councilmember Katrina Foley credited the school's music director Jon Lindfors for asking the foundation to purchase the piano that was sorely needed to enhance the school's musical performances.

"This year it is no surprise that the Costa Mesa High School Foundation awarded Mr. Lindfors with our first ever Visionary Award," Foley said. "It's through his vision that Costa Mesa High School breeds an environment of innovation, culture and creativity."

In addition to the foundation donation, the piano was made possible by a $25,000 gift from Costa Mesa High class of 1992 alumnus Lane Merrifield and local residents Bob and Sue Denton.

Merrifield is notable for being the co-founder of Club Penguin, a hugely popular virtual online gaming site for

children.

“My Costa Mesa High School music and drama experiences were so critical to me during my time there,” Merrifield told Lindfors in a written note. “I am confident that without the artistic outlet and foundation in my life that you and others provide, I would not have enjoyed the success I have today.”

Costa Mesa High Principal Jacob Haley thanked the donors for the gift to the school.

“A piano such as this is a once in-a-lifetime purchase and will serve students and audiences to come for many decades,” Haley said.

SMART Camp is back for 2016

SMART Camp, which is a collaborative program between the City of Costa Mesa and the Newport-Mesa Unified School District, will be back again this summer. The free summer camp will be held Monday through Thursday July 5 – Aug. 4 on the campus of Costa Mesa High School.

The Sports Camp will include: Aquatics, basketball, cheer, football, soccer, softball, tennis, track, volleyball and wrestling. The Music Camp will include jazz band and orchestra lessons and the Arts Camp will include two and three dimensional visual art projects and theatrical acting.

A new acting component has been added to the Arts Camp as well.

In an effort to increase participation, organization and registration, this year's SMART Camp registration will be available online through the City's ActiveNet registration software as well as in person at City Hall, Balearic Community Center, Neighborhood Community Center, and Downtown Recreation Center.

CMHS Foundation Annual Meeting

The Costa Mesa High School Foundation will hold its annual meeting on Friday, March 25 from 4 – 6 p.m. at the Crowne Plaza Hotel Fireside Lounge.

The annual meeting, which is open to the public, will include an introduction of the new Foundation Board of Directors, a CMHS Arts Academy update, artist showcase and special performances by the CMHS Madrigals and Music Department.

The Foundation was formed in 2003 to manage an endowment donated by CJ Segerstrom & Sons that funds enhanced educational opportunities at Costa Mesa Middle & High School. The Foundation has contributed more than $500,000 in teacher grants directly from the interest earned on the endowment. In 2013, the Foundation began to fundraise for additional discretionary funding with the annual Gala and Home Tour.

The CMHS Board of Directors includes parents, alumni and teachers, as well as business and community leaders. Click here for more information about the Costa Mesa High School Foundation, and click here to RSVP to the annual meeting.

Mayor’s award goes to longtime education leader Kirk Bauermeister

Life-long Costa Mesa resident and Newport-Mesa educator and coach Dr. Kirk Bauermeister received the Mayor’s Award at the Tuesday March 15 City Council meeting.

In his 18 year career with the Newport-Mesa Unified School District, Bauermeister is the only person to serve as principal at all four of Costa Mesa’s secondary schools, TeWinkle and Costa Mesa middle schools as well as Estancia and Costa Mesa high schools.

Prior to that, he was a coach and the athletic director of Costa Mesa High School.

“This was really an easy one to pick,” said Mayor Steve Mensinger, regarding his choice of Bauermeister for this award. “I’ve never met somebody who is more committed to what he does. He gives us all inspiration.”

Bauermeister, who was accompanied by his family, said from an early age he decided to follow in his father’s footsteps and work in education.

“It’s an honor to be recognized by a city that has done so much for me,” he said.

Costa Mesa High School Drama Presents Shrek the Musical

Come check out the Costa Mesa High School Drama department’s presentation of Shrek The Musical at the Costa Mesa High School Performing Arts Center located at 2650 Fairview Road.

The production will run March 4 through March 13 with Friday and Saturday shows beginning at 7 p.m. and Sunday showings at 4 p.m.

Tickets will be $15 for adults, $10 with ASB and $8 for children 12 and under.

OCC soccer players get Mayor’s Award honor

Five players from the OCC Men’s Soccer Team who earned a spot on the 2015 All-Orange Empire Conference Team were honored at City Council meeting on Tuesday Jan. 19.

Ryan Brown, Ty O’Connor and Costa Mesa High School graduate Peter Marquez were named to the first team, while Estancia High School grad Marco Pineda and Taylor Kane earned second-team honors.

This is not only a great individual accomplishment for each of these student athletes, but also a great honor for Orange Coast Athletics.