

Vanessa Fitzgerald, Special Education Para Educator at Mountain View Elementary School, nominated by Jeanine Forder, Kindergarten Teacher at Mountain View Elementary School. Vanessa is a special education Para Educator in my general education Kindergarten classroom at Morningside Elementary School. Vanessa is a dependable, hard-working, kind-hearted, loving, and giving person who truly deserves this recognition!

Christine Baroch, English Teacher and **Kathy Jackson**, French Teacher at Great Falls High School, nominated by Steve Grout, English Teacher at Great Falls High School. In addition to all the usual madness of organizing kids for such an event, and in the face of all the shutdowns of dances due to “grinding,” these two pulled the StuCo and teachers and kids together to: 1) learn how to dance! (other than grinding) by organizing school-wide dance lessons after school; and 2) promote the non-grinding dance in a very positive and fun way. The result: kids who knew how to dance, truly enjoyed dancing and the whole prom experience, an example of how of how to transform a negative situation into a positive one, and nothing but exuberant responses from the students. Now, they have junior Prom to which to look forward, and everyone knows it can be done “right.”

Andrew Finch, Transportation Planner for the City of Great Falls, nominated by Marilyn Cron and her 4th Period Literacy Class at East Middle School. Mr. Finch volunteered his time to come and speak to our class about the career fields of city/urban and transportation planning and how they connect to multiple field areas of interest. His message was simple and built upon the importance of using many classes to find your area of interest for a life-long career path. His statement to the students that they found the greater humor in was: “Think of my job as being a party planner. My plan is to make sure that you arrive in the best possible time to an important event in your life; weather it is going to school, work, the grocery store, or attending a special party.” Mr. Finch was a great speaker who focused his message on building your education for a career journey of a lifetime. I greatly appreciated his volunteering his time and energy to the students at East Middle School in Financial Literacy. Please consider Mr. Finch for this award in recognition of his support of education. Thank-you for your time and consideration with presenting Mr. Finch with this award for the time he volunteered to students.

Rachel Bohannon, English Teacher at Great Falls High School, nominated by Christine Hinkle, Literacy Teacher at Great Falls High School. Rachel is working diligently to help others have a wonderful holiday season. Rachel works endless hours gathering, planning, preparing and facilitating special care packages for students with the help of our entire staff. Her leadership skills are inspiring as she reaches out to help others in need. These efforts unify and motivate other teachers, staff and care givers to do the same.

Students have expressed their love and appreciation for the gifts they have received, which in turn improves the morale of the entire learning environment. Rachel donates and dedicates her time and energy to make a difference in the lives of others. The impact it has improves the quality of life for so many, inspires students to invest more into their relationships with the adults in their lives, and in turn improves teaching and learning efforts. The ripples are felt long after the holidays are over. Rachel is truly an outstanding educator who goes above and beyond her expected job duties, inspires and brings out the very best in others.

Dr. Jack Allaire, Robin Allaire, Rosanne Davis, Judy Peach, Jane Snowberger, Jean Day, and Jim Day, Volunteers at Mountain View Elementary School, nominated by Amy Konen and Rachel O'Neill, Literacy Teachers at Mountain View Elementary School. As part of the Tuesday Tutor Program at Mountain View Elementary and consist of retired volunteers who want to make a difference in the lives of our early readers. Many of these volunteers have participated in this program for a number of years and have faithfully helped the students of our school become successful readers. These volunteers have positively impacted the lives of our first grade students as they work diligently once a week with the same student to improve their skills in vocabulary development, decoding, fluency, and reading comprehension. Without their help these students would not be able to consistently receive the support they need in reading. The positive relationships that have been formed between our first graders and our volunteers have been invaluable to our students and they look so forward to each and every Tuesday as they know they get to spend one on one time with their tutors. We greatly appreciate their efforts each and every week with our students. Thank you for all you do every week!

Lacey Gallagher, Spirit of Women and Community Outreach Coordinator for Benefis Health System, nominated by Tammy Lacey, Director of Human Resources at the District Office Building. Lacey is recognized for her outstanding work in organizing the 2011 GFPS Wellness Extravaganza. She has done so for the past several years which is notable as it requires the logistics of getting Benefis resources (people and booths) to the District's site. This is a vital activity that brings GFPS employees and spouses together with health care providers such as pharmacists, physical therapists, and doctors for a variety of screenings and consultation opportunities.

Additionally, she once again supported the District's efforts in organizing blood draws and flu shots at 23 sites over a 2 month period. This entailed the scheduling of phlebotomists and nurses as well as coordinating a large amount of paperwork for the 777 employees and spouses that participated. Lacey actually is present at most of the clinics which is a huge time commitment.

Both of these wellness activities were huge success because of Lacey's efforts. Her dedication to the health of our community is evident and should be recognized.