

SANTA CLARITA STAR

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FALL 2006

SANTA CLARITA VALLEY TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Teachers a Commercial Success

LOCAL EDUCATORS FEATURED IN 30-SECOND AD RUNNING IN LOCAL THEATERS

For several months, beginning in August, local teachers were featured in a 30-second spot at local Edwards Theaters. The commercial, produced by Choppé Advertising Group, is sponsored by Uniserv and is aimed at highlighting the importance of teachers in a child's life.

The union selected a teacher from each of the five districts in the Santa Clarita Valley who represent the cross-section of teaching patterns. Since the commercial's debut, young moviegoers have stopped talking before the show begins, noticing, "Hey, there's my teacher!"

Here are the educators featured in the ad:



Chi Kanagi

PEACHLAND ELEMENTARY

■ Sixth-grade teacher Chi Kanagi has been teaching in the Newhall School District for the past 38 years. Kanagi said the educational community works hard to provide a good education for its students, the commercial provides a boost.



Maureen Teague

CANYON SPRINGS ELEMENTARY

"People need to know that education is important," Kanagi said. "Many people bought their homes out here because they wanted their children to go to a good school. The teachers and administrators work very hard.

"I still enjoy teaching

very much and I like being in an area where parents can call me," she added.

At Peachland, Kanagi has taught first and sixth grades. She said she likes working in a community where former students choose to send their children to the same schools.

"Every year, I have kids of kids," she said. "It's fun for me to see the next generation and to see the similarities in the parents and their children."

■ Maureen Teague has been teaching in the Sulphur Springs School District for 12 years, in all grade levels. Teague has a master's degree in reading acquisitions. "I love when the kids start making con-

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Uniserv Marks Educational First Year

The Santa Clarita Valley Uniserv has just completed its first year of operation. It has been a year of challenges and growing pains, as local chapter leaders have come to understand the new responsibility of running "our own show."

Most rank-and-file members have hardly noticed the transition from the old CTA Regional Resource office to the new Uniserv format, but leadership has had to deal with funding start-up costs, hiring clerical support staff, building a reserve and making sure that all

services normally provided to members out of the local office stay the same or get better.

The Uniserv Council believes that we have met these challenges and have improved member services. Chapters now enjoy significant clerical support not available before. We control the calendar of office events, making it much easier to schedule our local chapter meetings in our centrally located facility. Chapter leaders have increased their own collaborations and dialogues, and they have been

able to provide for one another a stronger local support network.

For the 2006-07 year, the SCV Uniserv office will continue to support our local Santa Clarita National Board Network, provide workshops of professional interest, make referrals to legal counsel, be a source for member benefits information and coordinate the community outreach activities with the local PTA, Chamber of Commerce, School Board Trustees Association, and other community groups.

CTA ENDORSEMENTS

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 INSURANCE COMMISSIONER **Cruz Bustamante (D)**
 STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION **Jack O'Connell**

PROPS. 1A-1E — INFRASTRUCTURE BONDS **Yes**
 PROP. 85 — PARENTAL NOTIFICATION **No**
 PROP. 88 — PARCEL TAX INITIATIVE **Neutral**
 PROP. 89 — PUBLIC CAMPAIGN FINANCING **No**
 PROP. 90 — EMINENT DOMAIN **No**

Commercial

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nections, and reading does that for me,” she said.

Teague said her community is comprised of hard-working families, and their focus is on the staples of life and surviving. Her school (Canyon Springs) has an energy that is hard to describe and does a wonderful job of reaching out to the community. “The parents need to know the teachers work as a team and every single one of us have their child’s best interest at heart,” she said. “All the teachers sit around and problem-solve situations just like a business does when they launch a new product. We get know each and everyone of our students.”

■ Samantha Dusenberry is known for her fast pitch and her love of teaching. The pitching arm came from her days as a standout softball player at Hart High School and UCLA. The teaching part came from her parents and her experiences helping institutionalized children while in college. After 18 years in the Saugus Union School District, the last couple of those at Bridgeport Elementary, Dusenberry hasn’t lost the passion for either.

“Coaching is a form of teaching,” Dusenberry said, explaining her daily schedule of teaching at Bridgeport and then coaching at Synergy Sports, a sports training facility owned by Dusenberry and her husband that tutors boys and girls of all ages in softball, baseball and golf. “There are so many things these kids can learn, especially the younger ones.”

Dusenberry was headed down a different path during her days at



Samantha Dusenberry
BRIDGEPORT ELEMENTARY



John Ahart
HART HIGH SCHOOL



Bruce Brotz
CASTAIC MIDDLE SCHOOL

UCLA. Getting ready to sign with a major sports company, she needed one more class to round out her schedule. It was an education class. “I knew teachers didn’t make that much money, but after that class, I just decided I was going to teach and I turned them down,” she said.

A product of the Santa Clarita education system, Dusenberry raves about the administration, staff and parents of the Saugus District and Bridgeport Elementary. “We work closely and everything is very cohesive,” she said.

■ Hart High Science Teacher John Ahart came to the Santa Clarita Valley from South Dakota in 1989. He and his wife have a 4-year-old son, Joseph, and a little girl, Ashley, on the way. Ahart enjoys the teenage students he mentors every day as they investigate and learn about the world around them. “I use the examples from around the valley and it makes environmental issues easy for kids to see,” he said. “They learn about trying to preserve the area for the people who will be coming along.”

Ahart enjoys the freshman classes. They come in so many shapes and sizes, he said, you can see them develop throughout the years. “I like getting them started on

the right path,” he said. “They don’t have cars yet, they’re not dating (and) not working. They have the time to put into their classes.”

Ahart also likes the parents to be involved in the school. “The more they know, the more they will encourage their children,” he said.

■ Bruce Brotz teaches physical education at Castaic Middle School. An east coast guy, Brotz has been in Southern California for the past 24 years. He enjoys getting the sixth-, seventh- and eighth-graders at the middle school out for some physical activity during the school day, saying they do better academically when they can burn off some energy. Brotz realized his middle-school students enjoyed skateboarding, so he started a skateboard club that meets in the morning and during lunch. More than 200 students signed up for the club this year.

On being a teacher, Brotz said he enjoys seeing the passion coming from his students.

“You really have to be drawn to a certain profession, and you have to be a people person to be a teacher,” Brotz said. “I tell kids to pursue what’s in their heart. Find something that really sets you on fire.”

DISTRICT ROUNDUPS

Castaic School

Castaic schools are off and running. There are some new additions to our Castaic family. A big welcome to our new superintendent, Jim Gibson, and to Red Balfour, our new assistant superintendent of educational services and human resources. We are celebrating success in our district. The API score is over 800, with Live Oak Elementary raising its score by 25 points. The teachers have worked so hard, and it is so exciting to see the benefits of all the hard work.

Congratulations to John DeLemos, our District Teacher of the Year. He is one of the finalists for Los Angeles County. We have so many shining stars in our district. Here is to an awesome school year.

Newhall

Welcome back. Hopefully your vacation was safe and relaxing. Schools in Newhall are in full swing. Eight of the schools started on August 14, with Peachland and Newhall following on September 18 due to remodeling. Congratulations to all who made Back to School Night a grand success, and to all 10 schools for high API scores. Once again, you have proved how professional and inspiring it can be to teach the skills to students in order for them to be so successful.

Negotiations with the district have begun. We send our support to our team members for hopes of an early and equitable agreement. Have a great year and remember: be humorous, encouraging and caring ... you never know whom you teach may be inspired to do great things because of the example you portrayed.

Saugus

It has been a productive summer for the Saugus Teachers Association. New bylaws were developed and recently approved by a unanimous vote of the Site Rep Council. In August, new teachers were welcomed to the district with an STA-sponsored luncheon and were given the history of the Saugus Teachers Association and gift baskets filled with help-

ful items for the classroom.

The STA boasts eight new site representatives this year who are eager to answer questions and effectively represent teachers across the district. With communication as an important goal of the association, every effort has been made to survey members and share how the association works on behalf of all Saugus teachers. The bargaining team is currently meeting with the district in an attempt to reach an early salary agreement.

Sulphur Springs

Welcome back to the 2006-07 school year! We have a lot to look forward to this year. One pleasant addition to our individual schools is the state-of-the-art science labs. By spring, all sites will be up and running. Another first for us is Standards Based Report Cards. We are working with IDMS on a program that will help teachers align their teaching to the State Standards, as well as the needs of individual students. When it is up and running it will be a tremendous tool.

I'd like to extend a special welcome to our 18 new teachers and several new administrators. We are happy to have all of you as part of our family. Have a wonderful and exciting school year!

Hart

The 2006-07 school year opened with "bang" in multiple ways: more renovation and construction at some sites, more students to the district and more teachers as members. HDTA welcomed more than 80 new unit members to the Hart District at our annual New Teacher Luncheon on August 11. Our district continues to attract a significant number of former students into its teaching ranks, and that is an especially gratifying sign that the Hart District and Santa Clarita are considered good places to work.

Leslie Littman, HDTA vice president, attended this summer's National Council of Urban Education Associations (NCUEA) conference in Orlando, Florida. She returned with interesting information about NCUEA's role in advocating for increased funding for local Uniserv offices, bringing equity to educational support personnel and exposing the manifest flaws of the current NCLB law. Her attendance has helped to strengthen our connection to growing urban and suburban locals.

An interesting article in an August edition of the Los Angeles Daily News, and another in a September edition of The Signal, has once again highlighted the success of the Hart District PAR Program, providing testimonial feedback from newer teachers who believe they benefited from the peer assistance they received. Our Hart PAR Program is now beginning its seventh year of providing peer support.

HDTA also congratulates Laura Arrowsmith, the Hart District Teacher of the Year for 2007. Laura teaches social studies at West Ranch High School. Not only has Laura been recognized by her local district, but she has also been named as one of the Los Angeles County Teachers of the Year. All of us in the Hart District community send congratulations to her. This is the second consecutive year that a Hart District teacher has been selected as an L.A. County Teacher of the Year!

Santa Clarita Valley Teachers Association

- Krysti WilsonCastaic
- Orval GarrisonHart
- Nancy ButlerNewhall
- Linda MetzgerNewhall ESP
- Richard SealNewhall ESP
- Joan OxmanSaugus
- Patty FitzpatrickSulphur Springs

Laura Terman, Executive Director; Roberta "Bobbi" Osborn, Office Assistant; Patti Rasmussen, Star Editor; Jared Evans, Star Copy Editor, Designer

The Santa Clarita Star is published by the Santa Clarita Valley Teachers Association. The SCVTA represents employees of the Castaic, Hart, Newhall, Saugus and Sulphur Springs school districts. The SCVTA is affiliated with the California Teachers Association and National Education Association. For more information, call (661) 255-0311, or write us at California Teachers Association, 26111 Bouquet Canyon Road Suite H-5, Santa Clarita, CA 91350.



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