

Ceremonial Presentation Honoring OUSD's Classified School Employees of the Year

Tara Gard, Chief Talent Officer - April 26, 2023



**OAKLAND UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Community Schools, Thriving Students

Our Vision

All OUSD students will find joy in their academic experience while graduating with the skills to ensure they are caring, competent, fully-informed, critical thinkers who are prepared for college, career, and community success.

Our Mission

Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) will build a Full Service Community District focused on high academic achievement while serving the whole child, eliminating inequity, and providing each child with excellent teachers, every day.



Ask of the Board

- This item is presented for the purpose of the adoption of Resolution No. 2223-0180 - Recognition - District's 2022-2023 - Classified School Employees of the Year in the following categories:
 - Paraprofessional Services
 - Clerical & Administrative Services
 - Food & Nutrition Services
 - Custodial and Maintenance Services
 - Security Services
 - Health & Student Services
 - Technical Services

Classified School Employees of the Year

Recognizes exemplary classified school employees who best represent all of California's classified staff and symbolize the profession's contributions and commitment to quality education.

Outline



- Recognize and pay special tribute to their tireless efforts and outstanding performance
- We will feature seven of our most experienced, excellent classified line employees
- The order of the awardees is in line with the categories as they have been named by the California Department of Education



Classified School Employees of the Year (CSEY) Program highlights contributions of classified school employees who support the education of California's more than six million public school students from preschool through grade twelve.

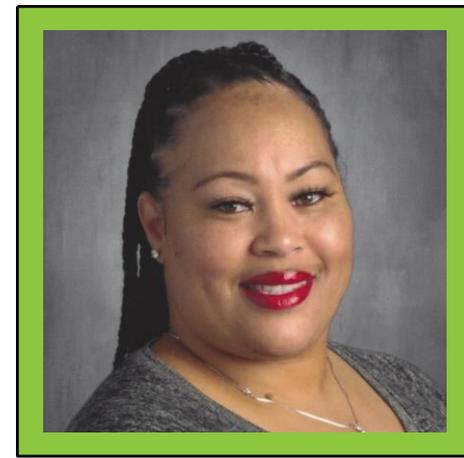
The CSEY Program identifies exemplary classified school employees throughout California with a structure of local, regional, and statewide recognition activities and selects employees to serve as CSEY Awardees.

May 21–27, 2023
is Classified School
Employee Week!



Paraprofessional Services

Mladie Thomas-Alexander has served as a ParaEducator at Piedmont Avenue Elementary School for 25 years



- “She cares deeply about not only her students but all the students at the school and consistently holds them to high academic standards, helps them achieve their goals, and advocates for their inclusion.”
- “Mladie's roots are in Oakland, and she has dedicated herself to the children of Oakland. . . I will often see her get down low to get on their level to make eye contact and connect with the kids. She has a way of loving and supporting all the adults in the building, and our families also know they can count on her.”
- “She has been a guiding force leading to exceptional performance in our Paraeducators; she holds everyone to a high standard both by her own modeling and her leadership. She is always willing and ready to help; she generously offers her expertise across the campus.”

Clerical & Administrative Services

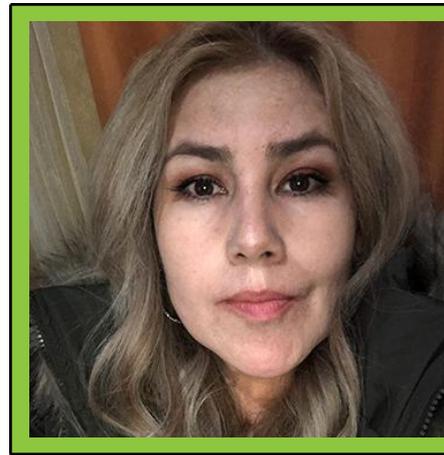
Sandra Burton has served as an Attendance Specialist at Emerson Elementary School for 7 years



- “You name it, she does it – lunch duty, students needing extra support, a struggling parent, orienting a new substitute, bringing food to a family, helping a sick or hurt student.”
- “She is there to celebrate the good days and hold space for the tough ones. She gives 110% to everyone on campus—teachers and students alike. Last year she made a huge effort to check-in and support me. Advice, words of encouragement, hugs or even sometimes just a shared ‘look’ from her made a huge, positive impact on my day and year; I don't know what I would have done without her.”
- “Ms. Sandra is always ready and available to support students who come in the main office asking for Band-Aids, ice packs, and classroom supplies; these caring connections always include a BIG hug and an affirmation of how much our students mean to her and the Emerson community.”

Food & Nutritional Services

Cecilia Franco has served as a Food Service Assistant III at REACH Academy for 7 years



- “Ms. Franco maintains high expectations and integrity by engaging all stakeholders around a shared vision of high-quality food service. This includes cultivating trusting relationships and building an exceptional positive school climate.”
- “Beyond her commendable work performance, there is a much deeper and richer aspect to her excellence. She continually advocates for equitable academic and social-emotional outcomes for students who have been historically underserved by schools and society by modeling a strong commitment to achieving ‘educational equity.’ Her strong commitment, exceptional leadership, and vision to address and to tackle food insecurity (as well as ‘food deserts’) head-on in deep East Oakland is exceptional.”
- “When she sees a young person who is sad or mad, she offers them more than food. She offers an open ear and gentle words and now they have smiles along with their

Custodial and Maintenance Services

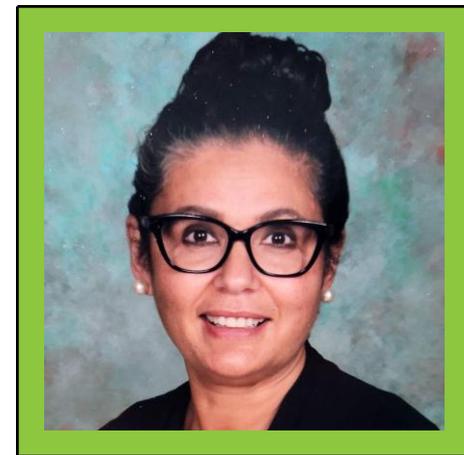
Jason Dixon has served as a Custodian at Oakland Tech for 14 years



- “Mr. Dixon is one of the most reliable and consistent colleagues that I have worked with. He maintains the cleanliness of the Upper Campus single handedly. He investigates issues and potential hazards before they need to be reported to him.”
- “In addition to his primary custodial duties, on any given school day, you can find Mr. Jason skillfully filling the roles of Culture Keeper, Counselor, Student Support Specialist, and Campus Security. Indispensable: he should be getting at least three salaries based on the responsibility he willingly holds across the entire school community. Jason maintains supportive relationships with several students and regularly checks in on their academic performance and home lives.”
- “We do not have a cafeteria; as a result, he also takes on the responsibility of setting up breakfast and lunch for the students. Mr. Jason effectively engages and participates in all school and community events on the Upper Campus.”

Security Services

Martha Flores has served as a Noon Supervisor at Lockwood STEAM Academy for 17 years



- “Not only does Martha assist school staff in supervising students in the cafeteria and on playgrounds, but she is such a critical part of positive school culture and consistent family engagement.”
- “Martha has a heart for kids and family and community, and she is secretly a great organizer and a great listener. She’s not just someone who’s being paid to watch students, she’s helping students develop as children and teenagers to become adults. She has that bond with the community; they trust her opinion. She is a Noon Supervisor who helps with attendance, helps with conflict resolution, will prep in the office, and oversee reading intervention. She wants to expand her ability to help at school, which is how she demonstrates leadership and commitment.”
- “Families trust her and know her information is accurate. Families seek her out, as do students; evidenced by the fact that often they *only* want to talk to Ms. Martha.”

Health & Student Services

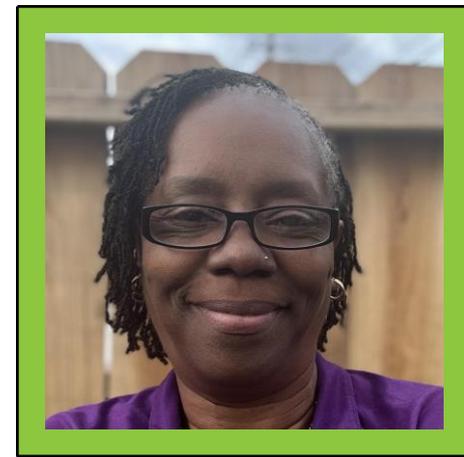
Venus-Vernadine Ewalani Mesui has served as a Case Manager at LIFE Academy for 10 years



- “She can handle absolutely ANY situation, be it an altercation, a 5150 psychiatric hospitalization, a need for immediate triage, or even where to get more copy paper. From small to big, Venus KNOWS what to do.”
- “As a Case Manager, Venus works with all our students to support them through the toughest of circumstances and always works to ensure that they are held and cared for. If you were to tally the amount of food that Venus has delivered to our most needy young people and their families over the last twenty years, it would be a grocery store worth of supplies. She does this because she believes that justice is community work, and that all people deserve dignity and care.”
- “Whenever a LIFE alum walks into the building, the first question is always "where is Mama Venus?" She has literally held the community in her arms for over twenty years, and all the joy, trauma, and struggle that comes with it.”

Technical Services

Belinda Campbell has served as a Senior Computer Operator in Tech Services for 13 years



- She is known for her desire to learn new things; whenever there's something new on the horizon that has never been done before, she jumps in with enthusiasm, figures it out, ensures it works well and has a process behind it. . ."
- "Belinda provides exceptional support with *Frontline* human capital management system through our helpdesk, processes Aeries security request forms, and supports users across the District. She will escalate where there is a need, but she tries to solve things herself first. Belinda covers all the bases and is very confident in her expertise. She is also a great team player and helps other employees throughout OUSD, not just Technology Services staff."
- "Our teacher Chromebook distribution didn't used to run very smoothly, but as soon as Belinda took it on, the whole backlog got eliminated! She kept us informed and, as a result, we never needed to worry about it."

Thank you to our OUSD Classified School Employees of the 2022-2023 School Year

For more information, please reach out:

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