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PPSPERA IS SUPPORTED BY COLORADO SPRINGS SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 11

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*welcome* to Pikes Peak School and Public Employees Association (PPSPERA)



President's  
**NOTE**

I hope you all are having a great summer! I am looking forward to a very good PERA year. I encourage you all to come and support your fellow PERA retirees as we work very hard to keep our PERA Funds secure.

We have some great programs scheduled for the coming year so please get them on your calendars today.

See you all at the summer get together on August 15th.

*LuAnn Long*  
President



Sandy Patton, our CSPERA representative, installs Lu Ann Long as the next president of PPSPERA for 2019-2020.



Sandy Patton installs Jan King and Rose Enyeart as past presidents and John Kerr as treasurer for 2019-2020

## Welcome Michael J. Thomas, Ed. D., Superintendent of Schools

We were very pleased to have Dr. Michael Thomas, Superintendent of D11 School District as our speaker during our June 20th General Membership luncheon at Valley Hi. Dr. Thomas told the group about his background and his vision for School District 11, with some information on the new Strategic Plan. He invited everyone to attend the Opening Day Ceremony at the Broadmoor World Arena on August 8, 2019 from 1-3 pm. He promised it would be an exciting afternoon. He would love to see hundreds of community members there.

### BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

#### **Michael J. Thomas, Ed. D., Superintendent of Schools Colorado Springs School District 11**

Dr. Michael J. Thomas has over twenty years of experience in the fields of education and social work. He received his Bachelor's in Social Work from the University of St. Thomas and completed his Masters in Social Work as a Title IV-E Fellow at the University of Minnesota. While a full Presidential Scholar in the School of Education Educational Leadership program at the University of St. Thomas, Dr. Thomas completed his PK-12 Principal and Superintendent's license and Doctorate of Education.



Dr. Thomas' experience spans multiple industries such as education, community-based mental health, hospitals and corrections. He believes that education is the gateway to success in life and adopts a holistic approach to supporting students' academic, social and emotional needs. Dr. Thomas has been a leader with Minneapolis Public Schools, the third largest district in the state of Minnesota serving as an Associate Superintendent, Chief of Schools, and Chief of Academics Leadership and Learning.

Dr. Thomas' passion is for all students, equity, and integration. While in Minnesota, he was very successful closing learning gaps between students of color and white students, and he significantly increased the learning of students receiving special education support. Dr. Thomas is well known for his mantra, "We are ALL here, ALL of the time, for ALL students!" Former students, staff, and communities can attest that it is more than a mantra...it is at his core, and the way he leads every day.

Dr. Michael Thomas leads Colorado Springs School District 11 as Superintendent of Schools, and has done so since July 2018. D11 serves approximately 26,000 students in 55 elementary, middle, and high schools and oversees a general fund budget of \$269.3 million.

Dr. Thomas believes the key to long-term success is experiencing professional and personal balance, which in-turn fills his bucket to be a better leader each day. To achieve this, he enjoys spending quality time with his family, fishing, cooking, and writing poetry.

## COMMUNITY AND DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

The following (original revised due to newsletter space-lw) is from Elaine Naleski's article where she nominated Fostering Hope for recipient of our Distinguished Service Award. At our June 20, 2019 general meeting, a beautiful plaque (created by Joe Morin and D11's Printing Office) was awarded to Brian Newsome, Development Director of Fostering Hope. Their mission is affirming and supporting foster parents through their task of caring for abused and neglected children as well as changing the foster care system in America. What became a hunch--with heart--for helping these families is today an organization impacting hundreds of lives.

Fostering Hope gives the children and families three essentials for success: Stability, Enrichment, and Connection. In partnership with 20-30 faith communities, businesses and other nonprofits, Fostering Hope supports some 40 foster families in the Pikes Peak region, as well as dozens of teens and young adults who are emancipated, or aged out, of the child welfare system. Their network of volunteers act as extended family providing what these kids have missed and assisting foster parents who need to keep going.

Working with faith communities, 645 children have been served. Due to their efforts, 100% of children in the program received a GED or diploma. 53% of foster children end up incarcerated; only 18% of those involved in this program have done so. Now Fostering Hope has a goal of significantly lowering the number of homeless foster children by providing transitional housing. We applaud them for ALL their efforts!



## NEEDED - YOUR VOLUNTEER HOURS



PPSPERA members reported a grand total of 3,514.5 volunteer hours for the year 2018. Good job, members. Please continue to send your volunteer hours not yet turned in to: [rogerlouden340@yahoo.com](mailto:rogerlouden340@yahoo.com) or [Roger.Louden@d11.org](mailto:Roger.Louden@d11.org). Or, mail them to me at 12611 Pensador Drive, 80921.

The volunteer sites of PPSPERA volunteer hours touch a wide spectrum of locations and organizations. The following is the list that we have so. If your site is not listed, please inform Roger Louden. PPSPERA Board and Committee meetings (multiple members), HOA Landscape Committee and Board meetings, Radio Station KCMJ, Salem Lutheran Church and School, New Horizon Band, Colorado Digital Learning, School District 11, School District 49, Artemis, Colorado Springs Science Center, Girls' STEM, CSPERA (multiple members), School District 11 Board of Education, Democratic Party Office, Pillar Institute, American Association of University Women, Palmer High School Alumni Association, St. Paul's United Methodist Church, Sons of Norway Lodge, Catholic Diocese of Colorado Springs, Holy Apostles' Catholic Church, Sub City West & Sewing and Ceramic Clubs (both in AZ), Happy Cats Haven, First United Methodist Church, Colorado High School Activities Association, Silver Key, American Cancer Society, Divine Redeemer Church, Villa Sierra Condominiums, Memorial Hospital Central, PERA Ambassador & Training Activities, Pikes Peak Hospice & Palliative Care, Howbert Elementary School, Pleasant Valley Association, Pleasant Street – 300 Block, Jim's Garden, Pleasant Valley Entrance – 31st Street, assisting a blind neighbor and her two sons, assisting a 93 year-old former teacher with meals and shopping, and visiting a nursing home.

As you can see, your volunteer hours benefit many organizations, friends, and neighbors and is much appreciated. You help make our community the good one that it is. Thank you for all that you do.

Thank you for all you do,  
Roger Louden - Volunteer Chair



## 2019-2020 Outstanding Volunteer Opportunity for PPSPERA members

If you want to help young people and make a positive difference, we sure could use you at Palmer High School. Our students need mentors, adults who can talk with them about a variety of career and college options and someone who will simply listen to them. We also need help in our math and science tutoring centers. Our bustling tutoring center is run by math teachers with well-trained student tutors as well as a cadre of committed community volunteers. We would love to have you here as much or as little as you can every school day from 7:30 AM until 4 PM. We can always use more help and will train you if you'd like to be part of our team!

If you are interested or have questions, please contact:

Susan Dorle, Math Tutoring Center Coordinator. [Susan.dorle@d11.org](mailto:Susan.dorle@d11.org)

Martha Noble Higgins, Intervention Coordinator. [Martha.hanawalt@d11.org](mailto:Martha.hanawalt@d11.org); 719-328-5018

OR

Dawn Enger

School District 11 Volunteer Services

GrandFriends Project Coordinator

1115 N. El Paso Street Colorado Springs, CO 80903

W: 719-520-2311; [DAWN.ENGGER@d11.org](mailto:DAWN.ENGGER@d11.org)

# SCHOLARSHIPS

On April 1, 2019, Charlotte Brummer, Jennifer Alley, Julia Hargrove and Barbara Watt met to consider this year's scholarship applications. We received 15 applications from 10 high schools in 8 local school districts. Unfortunately, 3 of those applications were incomplete and could not be considered. Our two recipients each received a \$2,000 scholarship and will be eligible to apply for the second-year renewal of \$1,000 next spring.



Isaac Wright is the recipient of our 2019 scholarship honoring Wayne Bricker. Isaac graduated from Mesa Ridge High School with a 3.07 GPA, number 107 of 295 in his class. He plans to attend Barclay College to study education, elementary or PE.

Isaac enjoys sports and was the #1 men's singles tennis player one year at Mesa Ridge, #1 doubles tennis player for two years, and captain of the men's tennis team for three years. He participated on the swim team, baseball team and basketball team. In addition he was girls' tennis team manager for three years.

Isaac volunteered with several organizations in a variety of activities including coaching children's track, marathon staff, planting and watering trees after the Waldo Canyon Fire, camp lifeguard, and numerous church duties from teaching children's church to outdoor maintenance.

We especially liked Isaac's varied involvement, his strong sense of personal responsibility, and his expressed attitude toward children, the disabled, and those who struggle to achieve. We were very pleased to present the 2019 PPSPERA Scholarship honoring Wayne Bricker to Isaac Wright.



The 2019 PPSPERA Scholarship honoring Bill Brandenburg was awarded to Caroline Fraser of Pine Creek High School. Caroline served as National Honor Society President and a French National Honor Society officer. She has also been a varsity swim team member, an elementary school helper, a sixth grade teacher at church, a varsity cross country runner and High Trails counselor. She ranks 17th in her class of 362 with a GPA of 4.5243. Carrie plans to attend the University of Alabama to earn her Bachelor's degree in elementary education.



Carrie discovered her passion for teaching children on a mission trip to Peru with Compassion International in the summer following her sophomore year. Since then she has taught young girls at church, been an elementary school helper for three semesters, and participated in the teacher cadet program where she recently completed her field experience in a third grade class.



Carrie's recommending teacher declared her to be a model of respectability, responsibility and integrity. We were delighted to present the 2019 PPSPERA scholarship honoring Bill Brandenburg to Caroline Fraser.

Both of last year's scholars qualified for the second-year renewal scholarship this year. Brooke Zarkovacki is working toward a Bachelor of Science in Nursing as a dual enrolled student through UCCS and Pikes Peak Community College. She maintained all A grades as a freshman with 14 credit hours first semester and 18 credit hours second semester. Brooke expressed her appreciation for the PPSPERA scholarship and how it is helping her achieve her dream of becoming a nurse.

Audrianna Bechert began her freshman year at Pikes Peak Community College with 12 credit hours. Wanting to accelerate her education, she switched to Western Governors University, which allows her to take all of her classes online, and was able to take 20 credit hours second semester. She changed her teaching emphasis from mathematics to earth science. Audrie also expressed her appreciation for the help she is receiving from the PPSPERA scholarship in achieving her dream of becoming a teacher.

The Scholarship Committee is very pleased with the progress of our scholars.



**Your generous contributions to the scholarship fund make these scholarships possible. If each PPSPERA member will contribute just \$10 or \$20 to the scholarship fund each year we will be able to continue this very valuable service to our community. Thank you!**

## DATES TO REMEMBER

### PPSPERA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP

Valley Hi Golf Course  
610 S. Chelton at 11:30 a.m.

11/21/2019      2/20/2020  
4/16/2020      6/18/2020

### PPSPERA BOARD MEETINGS

The Egg and I  
733 S. Academy N. at 9:00 a.m.

10/17/2019      1/16/2020  
3/19/2020      5/21/2020  
7/16/2020

### SUMMER SOCIAL 2019

August 15th at 11:00 AM

The social will be at the homes  
of John and Sharon Kerr  
2516 Fairmount St  
and Alan Rasmussen  
831 East Boulder St.

If you will be attending please  
call John Kerr at 719-635-8620  
and leave a message or email  
him at johndkerr@comcast.net.

### CSPERA ISSUES CONFERENCE

September 18, 2019  
8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Embassy Suites Denver Tech Center  
10250 East Costilla Avenue  
Centennial, CO 80112

There will be informative  
speakers and round table  
discussions regarding  
pertinent and timely issues  
for CSPERA members.



If you have questions on PPSPERA or CSPERA, feel free to contact any of the following:

Rose Enyeart, PPSPERA President, [rose.eneart@yahoo.com](mailto:rose.eneart@yahoo.com)  
Karen Hart, PPSPERA Membership, [hartsdale202@q.com](mailto:hartsdale202@q.com)  
Sandy Patton, CSPERA Board Rep., [pattosl@comcast.net](mailto:pattosl@comcast.net)