

Madera County
Excellence in Education
Awards



September 29, 2022
Madera County Superintendent of Schools
Conference Center





Madera County

Excellence in Education

Proudly sponsored by

Elizabeth J. Dooley
President & CEO

Educational Employees Credit Union
and

Dr. Cecilia A. Massetti
Madera County Superintendent of Schools



**Cecilia A. Massetti, Ed.D.
Madera County Superintendent of Schools**

Welcome as we celebrate sixteen years of excellence! We award honors to special individuals who demonstrate their passion and commitment to children and their families in our schools. We celebrate the accomplishments of educators and instructional staff from throughout Madera County who make a difference daily. We showcase our honorees and the contributions they have made to enhance the lives of children. Our honorees are often “unsung heroes”. We shine a light on their achievements and see how they inspire students.

Please join me in expressing appreciation to the Educational Employees Credit Union Board of Directors, President and CEO Elizabeth Dooley, and the EECU staff for their commitment to honor educators and for their impact and service to our community. EECU is the sole sponsor of this elegant event. We are fortunate to partner with an organization whose dedication to our schools is genuine and whose helping hands are felt in many ways.



**Elizabeth J. Dooley
President & CEO
Educational Employees Credit Union**

EECU has proudly sponsored the Excellence in Education awards program since 2007. It is with great pleasure that we join together each year with the Madera County Superintendent of Schools to honor outstanding educators in Madera County.

Congratulations to all of the nominees, finalists and winners. The work they do every day deserves to be recognized and celebrated. They are all very deserving of this special recognition of their commitment and dedication to their students, their schools, and their community, and for all they do to support students and help them realize their academic potential.

Program

Welcome

*Dr. Sally L. Frazier
Master of Ceremonies*

Flag Salute

*National Anthem
Priscilla Huerta*

2021 Honorees

2022 Nominees and Finalists

Greetings

*Dr. Cecilia A. Massetti
Madera County Superintendent of Schools*

*Elizabeth J. Dooley
EECU President & CEO*

*Presentation of Awards
Dr. Sally L. Frazier*

School Employee of the Year



*Danny Floriano
Lead Groundskeeper
Chowchilla Union
High School District*

Mr. Floriano has worked with Chowchilla Union High School District for five years. Superintendent Miller commented, “Danny is the key to our success in the grounds department.” His strong character and high work ethic are examples of what makes Mr. Floriano a great leader. He understands that recognizing the work of others, no matter their position, is important to building a strong team. His coworkers noted that Mr. Floriano has made work feel like a family unit. Mr. Floriano takes pride in his work, which is evident from

the appearance of the grounds. He is a master problem solver. When issues have arisen on campus, Mr. Floriano has devised solutions which have made work easier for staff and have prevented injuries. During COVID, he insured the safety of students and staff with additional sanitizing measures and by delivering personal protective equipment (PPE) where needed. Mr. Floriano regularly goes above and beyond. When there was a shortage of bus drivers, he volunteered to transport students in vans. Mr. Floriano does things like this, not for recognition, but because it is the right thing to do. In his words, “I hope that I am a good role model for my fellow employees and that I make a positive impact on others... I have always been one to lead by example... I can truly say, I love my job. I enjoy serving the students, staff, and community of Chowchilla.”

School Employee Nominees



Karina Martinez
School Safety Officer
Madera Unified
School District



Maria Belen
Martinez Campos
Health Aid
Chowchilla
Elementary
School District



Jessica Melgoza
Senior Secretary
Madera County
Superintendent
of Schools



Sharon Mello
Human Resource
Technician III
Chawanakee Unified
School District



Tanya Rosa
Site Secretary
Golden Valley
Unified School
District

Administrator of the Year



*Jacklyn Jones
Program Director, Early
Learning Programs
Madera County
Superintendent of Schools*

Ms. Jones has served the students in Madera County for 20 years. In high school, she taught swim lessons to preschool age children and knew then that her career would involve this age group. “I wanted to play a significant role in helping children discover their love for learning by providing a positive first experience in the classroom.” In the Early Childhood Education (ECE) program, Ms. Jones gets to do that for more than 300 families. Days are filled with social emotional support, art experiences, mathematics, reading, science, phonological awareness, language modeling, imagination, creativity, and play.

Ms. Jones said, “The best indicator that we operate a successful program is hearing children beg their parents to stay ‘just five more minutes!’ because they don’t want to leave school.” Ensuring families have access to high quality early childhood experiences is important to Ms. Jones. During the pandemic, ECE continued in-person instruction, providing childcare and educational programs to the children of essential workers. Ms. Jones does what is best for children and it shows in her programs, which have received four and five star (the highest) ratings from Quality Rating and Improvement System. She has partnered with agencies such as Camarena Health for dental visits and First 5 for vision screenings and access to eye glasses. “I feel an enormous responsibility to ECE families. I know (these programs) will make a great impact on our community’s youngest learners.”

Administrator Nominees



***Lisa De La Pena**
Principal
Madera Unified
School District*



***Karen Higginbotham**
Coordinator of Health
Services/School Nurse
Golden Valley Unified
School District*



***Rachelle Lee**
School Psychologist
Chawanakee Unified
School District*



***Maria Plascencia**
School Counselor/
School Psychologist
Chowchilla Elementary
School District*



***Maggie Yamasaki**
Director of
Business Services
Chowchilla
Union High
School District*

Teacher of the Year



*Jenny Mejia
SDC Teacher
Moderate/Severe
Madera County
Superintendent of Schools*

Ms. Mejia has been a Special Day Class Teacher for students with moderate to severe disabilities for five years with Madera County Superintendent of Schools. She has found it essential to build strong relationships with her students to understand *how* they learn. Teaching them skills to improve their independence is one of her main goals. Ms. Mejia was one of the first teachers who volunteered to return to in-person instruction. She realized the importance of hands-on instruction and found ways to continue teaching life skills while the world was shut down during the pandemic. She created the Stallion Brew, a coffee house run out of her classroom where students learn to follow recipes, exercise good hygiene, practice math skills (measurements and handling money), and engage with their customers. Ms. Mejia is adamant, “Our kids are capable... They are definitely hard workers.” She collaborates with community businesses to facilitate work based learning. Ms. Mejia has a community based mindset. She volunteers in a number of Madera projects: food drives, backpacks for kids, Central California Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, etc. She has extended that mindset to her classroom getting her students involved in things like the Christmas Parade. She also encourages her students to participate in traditional high school sporting events including: track and field, basketball, and soccer. A parent, Chelsea Dell, commented, “She is determined to show families the potential of their student’s abilities.”

Teacher Nominees



***Sherisse DeOrion**
Teacher
Madera Unified
School District*



***Allison Medeles**
Teacher
Golden Valley
Unified
School District*



***Brenna Neely**
Teacher
Yosemite Unified
School District*



***Jacqueline Ross**
Teacher
Chowchilla
Elementary
School District*



***Melissa
Cottington**
Teacher
Chawanakee Unified
School District*

Selection Committee



*Will Oliver, Leticia Gonzalez,
Rebecca Martinez, & Ernesto Vega*

Film Crew

Dennis Lingo

Bouasone Monty

Sam Pedersen

Brenda Plauson

Robert Velasquez

Planning Committee

Jennifer Pascale, Coordinator

Aimee Beintker

Melanie Burton

Maria Elizondo

Kelly Kline

Kayla Ontiveros

Sheri Ramos

Karen Roget

Raylene Trent

Kristi Winter

Special Thanks

Dr. Sally Frazier

Leo Martin, Elegant Occasions

Pardini's

Photography by MJD

Priscilla Huerta

EECU Staff

MCSOS Staff

Madera County Board of Education

Alfred Soares, Jr., President
Tammy Loveland, Vice President
Cathie Bustos
Shelley Deniz
Zimri Padilla
Nancy Prosperi
Joe Vived

Educational Employees Credit Union
Board of Directors

Walter A. Franzell, Chair
Ali Nekumanesh, Vice Chair
Lisa Cutts, Treasurer
Cleo Bauer-Papagni, Secretary
Rick Browning
Phil Neufeld
David A. Roberts
Derek Scharton
Mike Snell

