

News U Trust

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MEMBERSHIP NEWSLETTER

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School “Rescue Squads” Celebrated

School districts across Tennessee recognized and celebrated their school “Rescue Squad” on March 11. That’s the name given to the special services staff by Utrust for this year’s Special Services Staff Appreciation Day.



School boards set aside the day to honor the rescue squad and invited students, other staff

and the community at large to join them in thanking these employees for making a difference in the lives of students and making our schools a better place for them to learn and grow.

We chose the theme of “Rescue Squad” because each one of these school employees helps to rescue students in a time of trouble or helps keep them from getting into trouble in the first place” said Dr. Dan Tollett, Utrust Administrator.

“Special service employees literally save some students lives, prevent harm to others and help others get back on track to useful, productive lives,” he continued.

Unlike other appreciation days during the year, staff members with a wide variety of titles are honored. Included are guidance counselors, school resource officers, speech pathologists and therapists, occupational therapists, school psychologists and a few others.

We’re Soliciting Your Ideas



For each appreciation day throughout the year, Utrust develops four packets: one for the superintendent and board and one each for elementary, middle and high school principals. We enjoy the challenge of developing creative ideas to share with you but we’ve been impressed with the creative ideas and activities that some of you have developed to celebrate appreciation days in your schools.

That’s why we are inviting you to share your ideas with us for making any appreciation day more meaningful or fun. Just email us your idea, song, poem, poster, marquee message, theme, class activity or any other idea that you think would make any appreciation day that you choose more special for those being celebrated.

Hawkins County Honors Their Special Services Staff

Hawkins County celebrated Special Services Appreciation Day on March 11th with many thanks given to the team that makes up the special services staff.

At **Surgoinsville Elementary School**, they began the day with words of praise for the members of the special services staff broadcast over the school intercom. Then, an award from the principal was placed on each of their doors to show thanks for the fantastic job they do. They also received trendy file folders and a nice file organizer. The students made personalized cards to express their thanks and gratitude to the special services staff for the help they provide to them each day.

Church Hill Middle School celebrated appreciation day by giving their special services staff a basket decorated with a big, colorful bow and filled with goodies to show how much they are appreciated. The blue baskets were filled with candy, knick-knacks, and a personalized thank you card.

Cherokee High School celebrated Special Services Appreciation Day with gift bag filled with tokens of appreciation, both personal and delicious. Principal Patrick Fraley presented a personalized note of thanks to each recipient and a much coveted gift certificate to Mrs. Bea's Perks and Pies.

SPECIAL SERVICES STAFF CHURCH HILL MIDDLE SCHOOL



Barbara Cogliano, School Nurse



Megan Leonard, School Counselor



Jason Montgomery, SRO



Tondalaya Stevens, School Counselor



Back Row: Assistant Principals: Scott Jones, Vakisha Henard, and Bob Edens; Olin O'Barr, Lesa Brooks, and Principal Patrick Fraley. Front Row: Renee Rogers, Andrew Morgan, Penny Sullivan, Amy Kenner, Melanie Winegar, and Betty Wilson

Jackson County Recognizes its “Rescue Squad”

Jackson County used the “Rescue Squad” theme as suggested by Utrust to celebrate this special day on March 16. The board got into the act by presenting “Life Saver” candies, pens, and letters of appreciation to each employee in the group being honored on that day.

All county employees with the title of school resource officer, guidance counselor, school nurse or speech o were honored but special recognition was provided to four outstanding employees with the most years of service in the county by position. These longest-serving employees included school nurse Virginia Anderson, SRO officer Nick Carter, counselor Cynthia Kernea and speech pathologist Emily Davidson.

Superintendent Joe Barlow acknowledged that each one of these special service employees had a job that made a major difference in whether students are able to enjoy a successful educational experience. Each of the employees who were recognized commented on how important the students are to them.



Jackson County Middle School-Joe Barlow (Director), Charlene Finch (Counselor), Chris Carter (SRO), Gretchen Simmons (Occupational Therapist), Sandy Ragland (Board Member)

Nick Carter, SRO officer at Jackson County High School said that he enjoys interacting with the students and that he makes it his duty to ensure everyone at the schools has a good and safe day. “I am honored and amazed that the board is recognizing me for the job that I do and truly love,” Carter said. Cynthia Kernea, the counselor at Gainesboro Elementary School, said that she tries to build bonds with the students who depend on her, and in turn she depends on them. “The bond that I build with each student is special, and it just puts a smile on my face,” Kernea said.

Virginia Anderson, a school nurse at Gainesboro Elementary says that she especially enjoys when students stop by just to say “thank you.” Anderson said that she was honored to accept her Special Service award. “It means a lot to me to be recognized by the board and it makes me want to perform my job even better,” she said.

“It means a lot to me to be recognized by the board and it makes me want to perform my job even better.” Virginia Anderson



Gainesboro Elementary School-Sandy Ragland (Board Member), Charles Breidert (Principal), Cynthia Kernea (Counselor), Virginia Anderson (School Nurse)

Emily Davidson, a system-wide Speech Pathologist, said that her reward is seeing the progress that her students make. She says that her favorite memory in her career was seeing the first child she exited from services because all of the goals were met. “It is very important to me to help these students learn how to communicate more effectively with their peers as well as adults, she said, “It feels wonderful to be recognized by the Board for the hard work I do each day,” Davidson continued.



Get warmed up for Teacher Appreciation Day on May 4th. Go to our website to find all of the materials and some great ideas for activities to celebrate this day in a fun and meaningful way.

Watch the video, "My Mary Poppins: Story of Amy Hearn" at this link: <http://www.tnuct.com/librarycontent.php?id=77>. Hearn was recognized as an outstanding person who makes reading fun and gets the students involved and prepared for college.



WIN \$1000 FOR YOUR SCHOOL

UTRUST WILL GIVE THE SCHOOL THAT HAS THE BEST CELEBRATION OF THE 8 APPRECIATION DAYS DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR \$1000.

EVEN BETTER, YOUR STAFF WILL FEEL APPRECIATED, HAVE IMPROVED MORALE AND DO AN EVEN BETTER JOB OF WORKING WITH THE STUDENTS IN YOUR SCHOOL.

WHY NOT PARTICIPATE WITH ENTHUSIASM?

Use Writing Competition to Honor Teachers

Utrust's annual writing competition and \$2,750 in awards can provide a great incentive to students to write essays of appreciation for teachers who have made a difference in their lives.

Each year, the competition draws hundreds of entries telling stories of school employees who have gone above and beyond what is required of them to make a difference in a student's life.

Entries have come from parents, teachers, principals and central office staff but an overwhelming majority of the entries come from students.

"One of the beautiful things about this competition is the large number of teachers and other school employees who receive essays telling them how much they have meant to someone else," said Utrust Administrator Dr. Dan Tollett. "Without the competition, chances are, the essays would never have been written and the teachers or other school employees may never have known how much they meant to someone else."

For contest rules, see <http://www.tnuct.com/writingcompetition>.

Trustees to Meet April 23

The Utrust Board of Trustees will meet at the Utrust office in Gallatin on April 23.

They will be considering premiums for the next fiscal year including seeking a way to provide an exact premium instead of using rates. Superintendents and finance officers have expressed a preference for a system that is as exact as possible for budget purposes.



David Jones, Chairman

Trustees will also review a section of the policy manual, consider annual and five year goals, review the awards program and hold its annual election of a chairman and vice-chairman.



Don Weathers, Vice-Chairman

David Jones of Hancock County is the current chairman and Don Weathers from Wilson County is the vice-chairman.



Kellogg Joins Utrust as Intern

Amy Kellogg, a student at the University of Louisville, is joining our team this summer for an internship position. Kellogg recently moved to Hendersonville from Elizabethtown, Kentucky and is completing her last semester of school.

She will graduate with her Bachelor of Science in Communications. Kellogg began working with Utrust, April 5th and will continue her internship through August.



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