

June - October 2023 Nominations



Jennifer Nelson – School Psychologist

“Jennifer is very detail oriented and can provide information regarding eligibility and services which is research based and solid. She goes above and beyond service to her districts, though, by always being willing to help coworkers when they have questions or when they need help with scoring or developing services. When unfortunate events occur, Jennifer makes time to reach out and provide crisis support. She is a rock.”

Orlando Ortiz – Interpreter/Translator

“Orlando has assisted our district with interpreting services many times this year. He has been wonderful to work with! He is always willing to provide assistance and has been a great support for our district this year. Thank you for all you do!”

Zoey Wallace – Special Education Paraprofessional

“Zoey has been very helpful in the classroom and always willing to step up and help out. She is calm and patient and has made great relationships with the students. We are so lucky to have her at ELC Willmar.”

Amber Grengs – Senior Behavior Therapist

“We're so lucky to have Amber Grengs on our team. She always has a positive attitude and step in and helps where ever its needed. Thanks Amber!”

Courtney Opbroek - Behavior Therapist

“Courtney has been so helpful with observations happening across clinics in the last few weeks. She does a great job representing The READY Clinic during those opportunities. Thank you, Courtney!”

Amanda Appel – Business Services Specialist

“Amanda is always keeping an eye out to see if anyone needs assistance and is willing to jump in and help. On multiple occasions, she has stepped up and taken the lead on offering support to our member districts who email in with questions and concerns, even when it's not her day to cover the support email. She has been a huge help and a wonderful asset to our team! THANK YOU Amanda, for everything that you do! We appreciate you!”

Erin Flann – Physical Therapist

“Erin has been very welcoming to the physical therapy group. She went out of her way to meet me in the district she served last year to help me get acquainted with the buildings, staff and students.”

Laura Walker – Health Paraprofessional

“Laura is always willing to help out and learn new things! We appreciate all the help in our classroom ! It is fun to see her interact with our kiddos and get to know them!”

“Laura is a new employee at Educational Learning Center-Montevideo. She has worked hard to get to know the staff and students in the building and build relationships. She takes initiative to help out with any task.”

Alicia Roelike - Special Education Paraprofessional

“Alicia is always willing to help with a variety of task. If she sees something that needs to be done, she takes the initiative to get it done.”

McKenzie Vandelanotte – Administrative Assistant

“McKenzie is the new administrative assistant as ELC-Montevideo. She has made it a priority to get to know the students and staff in our building and start building relationships. She has a positive attitude and has worked hard to get to know her new role.”

Lisa Sonnenburg – Administrative Assistant

“Lisa is a go getter. She has embraced the adjustment of switching ELC locations along with being a mentor and assisting with Project SEARCH responsibilities. Lisa is direct and fair, she works hard and is an asset to our organization. I am so lucky to have her on our team here at ELC Belview!”

Karie Novak – Physical Therapist

“Karie has been such a great mentor. She has provided guidance, support and information to help navigate PT services. She has been so positive and patient.”

Danielle Thissen – Occupational Therapist

“Danielle has been a immeasurable resource in her school. She has gone above and beyond to help me get settled and assisted with scheduling and getting acclimated to the MACCRAY school.”

Ryann Beukema – ECSE Teacher

“Ryann is a hard worker, passionate about kids and education. She is a team player and always jumps in to help where needed. We are lucky to have her on our team.”

Brianna Bridgewater - Occupational Therapist

“Brianna goes above and beyond for her students! She is a team player and very knowledgeable. She jumps in when help is needed and has a big heart for her students.”

Mary Mortier – Career Assessment Coordinator

“Mary did an excellent job with the two Career Fairs that were held in Marshall and Worthington. She does an outstanding job of organizing which showed in how smoothly the days went. She also does an outstanding job organizing Project Discovery and working with the students who participate in the program. She has been a great mentor.”

Sydney Coleman- Special Education Paraprofessional

“She has been a true asset to our classroom. From doing whatever is needed, building relationships with every student, and always having a great attitude when she walks in the door. I know that she is someone that I can always count on to do the best she can for each and every student.”

Laura Walker – Health Paraprofessional

“Laura is always willing to jump in and help out at all times, when asked and when checking in. She is very compassionate and patient towards student and staff. She is such a joy to work with every day. She always has an upbeat attitude and brings positivity to the workplace. We are so fortunate to have her on our team at ELC Montevideo.”

McKenzie Vandelanotte – Administrative Assistant

“McKenzie is a huge asset to our team at ELC Montevideo. She came in here having to learn so many new things and processes and she is CRUSHING it! She always has a smile on her face, positive attitude and upbeat personality! She brings so much joy to the workplace every day. She encourages us all to be the best version of yourselves. She takes time in the day to come do movement dances with our kids in our class, which they enjoy so much! Thank you McKenzie for all you do and for being YOU!!”

Liz Block – Special Education Paraprofessional

“Liz goes above and beyond everyday for not only the students she works with but also all the staff. She is always willing to help with any student or classroom when needed. She is incredibly great at her job. We are all blessed to have her in Cosmos!”

Alissa Orsten – Special Education Paraprofessional

“Alissa is a great help in the classroom. She makes good connections with the students and takes the initiative to do things without needing to be asked. She keeps our classroom clean and running smoothly. We are lucky to have her.”

Amy Atkins- Behavior Analyst

"Amy is new to the BHS team at SWWC this year. She has gone above and beyond to serve the staff and students in the districts she supports. Recently, Amy has taken on a new contract that will bring SWWC BHS services to rural areas that have not been able to access services previously. Keep up the great work, Amy!"

Kari Watson – Behavior Analyst

"Kari is the definition of team player. She is always willing to step up and assist her colleagues. Kari's contribution to the annual Innovation in Education: BCBA Consultation in Schools virtual conference has had a direct impact on the event's success. Her creative ideas and efforts are greatly appreciated!"

Nichole Frericks – Behavior Specialist

"Nichole joined our team this year as a Behavior Specialist. She came in ready to learn and grow, and she continues to shine every day! She has a positive attitude and is willing to do whatever she can to help our students. She is a gem!"