



May 2021 Recipients

CONGRATULATIONS!

Ketin Houle - Special Education Paraprofessional

"Ketin has shown so much growth and is a great asset to our classroom. We are so lucky to have him."

Liz Block - Special Education Paraprofessional

"Liz is always willing to help out no matter where she is in our program. She has been a huge help over the years for doing the majority of our MTAS testing which alleviates a lot of stress for teachers and a certain DAC. She builds great relationships with her students and the staff she works with. Thank you so much for all you are doing Liz!"

Ashley Bendickson - Behavior Therapist

"Ashley has become such an integral part of the TRC team. She's taken some recent staffing changes in stride and stepped up in big ways to help with training staff and parents. Our clients continue to benefit from the creativity, dedication, and positivity she brings to work every day. Thanks Ashley for all that you do!"

Hannah Redmond - Behavior Therapist

"Hannah is a terrific model for our clients, parents and newer staff at TRC. She continues to demonstrate outstanding professionalism in difficult situations, proactively plans to make therapy sessions a success, and is always willing to lend a hand when we need it. She's recently taken on some extra caregiver coaching which has resulted in big changes for the client at home and in the community. Thanks for all that you do for TRC Hannah!"

Carrie Kesteloot - COTA

"Carrie is a great co-worker who is always willing to lend a helping hand. She was able to assist me with using an on-line scoring tool that I was not very familiar with. She helped me problem-solve it until we obtained the scores we needed. I know I can always call her for help. Thanks Carrie for all you do!"

Michelle Niehus - ECSE Teacher

"Michelle is an awesome teacher who goes above and beyond to search for fun and meaningful lessons, crafts and projects for her students to complete. She cares about each of her students as individuals. She is also a great co-worker who has been a carrier for me all year, delivering supplies and items to and from the Pipestone office for me, as well as bringing protocols and other testing supplies from other co-workers. I don't know what I'd do without you Michelle! Thanks so much!"

Amanda Mattsen - Special Education Teacher

"She always goes above and beyond for her students and co-workers!"

Elizabeth Sullivan - Compensation and Benefits Supervisor

"Elizabeth goes above and beyond all expectations by constantly going out of her way to help anyone and everyone. We would like to thank Elizabeth for helping us make this transition as smooth as possible for everyone within Heartland Ranch School."

Tina Kanthak - School Counselor

"Tina has such a heart for these students and does so much for them, but it's really everything else that she does that makes her so deserving of a GROW award. She cares so deeply about the entire ELC and its mission. That is especially true in how she works with and cares for the staff. It has been a difficult year and the way that she positively impacts all of the staff has really been a joy. I can think of many times that she has gone out of her way to recognize personal milestones, giving of her time to benefit others, or just supporting me personally, as not just a colleague, but a friend.

I think the amount that she does this is sometimes overlooked. I see the impact she makes and how she is always working towards making ELC - Pipestone a positive place, not just for the students, but for the staff as well. We appreciate you, Tina!!! Thanks for all that you do!"

Clay Elness - DAPE Teacher

"Clayton does so much more than teach DAPE. He is always willing to lend a hand where ever/ whenever we need. He is not afraid to jump in any situation and help. The students really enjoy their time with him, as he makes PE fun! We are fortunate to have him here 2 days a week."

Steph Alfson - Special Education Teacher

“Steph has done an amazing job this year coming off maternity leave part way through the year and being a brand new Mom while juggling in person learning, Distant Learning, new students coming in and some leaving. It's been a year of changes for her and she does all with the patience of a Saint! She has such great relationships with her students and her classroom management is one to be modeled by others. Thank you Steph for being such a good role model for our students at ELC - Pipestone. We are BLESSED to have you here.”

Chelsea Vander Plaats - LPN/Health Para

“Chelsea is such a joy to work with. She always has a smile on her face and is willing to help out wherever she is needed. Chelsea has such a huge heart which is one of the many reasons students tend to gravitate towards her. She brings such a positive energy to our school and I feel so lucky to work with her. Thanks for all you do, Chelsea!”

Kari Watson - Behavior Analyst

“Kari does a wonderful job coming in and helping out where we need help. She is always willing to step into a situation and give us feedback on new things to try. She has so many different ideas and we are so lucky to have her support here in Montevideo a few days a week! Thank you for all you do! We appreciate you!”

Ana Holtan - Special Education Paraprofessional

“Throughout this school year Ana has improved the classroom environment, making it a place students can succeed! Ana's work goes beyond her defined duties. Ana creates engaging life experiences for the students she works with. She is a reliable and stable adult in the lives of students. She forms great relationships with the students she instructs. Ana makes ELC - Montevideo a place students want to be by making school fun. Thank you for your hard work Ana!”

Shelby Grunewald - Special Education Paraprofessional

“Shelby has a positive attitude and it is contagious! When Shelby takes on a task it always gets done. She works to ameliorate barriers to student learning and students benefit. Shelby identifies projects that are appropriate for students which promote and empower their creativity. These are a few of the multiple reasons Shelby is an asset to the work culture and students at ELC - Montevideo. Thank you for all you do!”

Abby Hacker - Special Education Paraprofessional

“Abby is amazing because she enjoys a challenge. She maintains a positive attitude with all of the students she works with and genuinely cares for them. Students have responded to her positivity and formed relationships with her. Abby is always searching for ways to improve students' scholastic experience. Abby is able to effect change in the students she guides. Abby is a great asset and essential member of the ELC - Montevideo team. We are thankful for Abby's hard work and dedication!”

J Jurgens - School Psychologist

“J has come into our district late in the year to fill in as our school psychologist. She has been so amazing to work with and goes above and beyond to help the students and staff in our district. She is always helpful and always has a smile on her face. She is so good at what she does and shares her knowledge with staff and parents in the most professional and understandable way. We have loved having J work in our district, so thank you J for all of your extra hard work!”

Alexis Hogrefe - Special Education Paraprofessional

“Alexis has been an awesome addition to the ELC - Montevideo team! Alexis has quickly formed positive relationships with students and staff members. She is reliable and maintains a great attitude. Alexis' hard work ethic and willingness to learn new things is appreciated. Thank you for all that you do Alexis!”

Lisa Sonnenburg - Administrative Assistant

“Lisa is new to the ELC - Montevideo team this year. She has come into her position and quickly developed organizational systems allowing staff to better manage their time and keep the focus on students. When Lisa gets a free moment she enjoys spending it developing relationships with students. Lisa has significant experience working with people who have special needs making her a valuable resource. Lisa is passionate about her work and we are lucky to have her!”