

May 2023 Nominations



Melissa Andree – Behavior Analyst

“Melissa has been instrumental in getting our new READY Clinic Marshall location up and running. She's dedicated a great deal of time and heavy lifting (some of it literal!) to prepare the space to welcome families and we could not have done it without her!!”

Angie Meyer (School Social Worker) & **Kelsi Topp** (Administrative Assistant)

“Angie & Kelsi stepped up to cover my nurse duties during my maternity leave. Their great communication made for a seamless transition back to work. I appreciate you both so much! Thank you!!!”

Darla Macik – Special Education Paraprofessional

“Darla, you have done such a wonderful job helping in the most random ways possible this year. Whether it is helping make sure the hallways are open, helping students through the doors, and praising the students as they walk appropriately past your room. I have seen the joy in the students faces when they get a star card from staff that doesn't directly work with them - you have found a way to make them feel appreciated even when you only see many of them for just brief moments throughout the day! Thank you for keeping up with some positivity amongst the students, keep it up!”

Michelle Whitcomb-Johnson – Dean of Students

“Michelle - you are truly irreplaceable! You have helped so many of us for countless reasons this past year (and all the years before), you are approachable and knowledgeable making you the go to in many circumstances. So - thank you for always putting the students first, for helping in the classrooms, for bringing new ideas to life, for making the tough calls, and for finding humor on the toughest days. Thank you for EVERYTHING you do!”

Jodi Tongen – Special Education Teacher

“Jodi works hard to meet the needs of our students and classroom paras. She is quick to step in when extra hands are needed. Jodi makes the learning environment exciting and fun for our students. We appreciate her so much!”

Koral Mortensen – Special Education Paraprofessional

“Koral is a new para this year, she has jumped into her role as a paraprofessional in the Middle school bridges program with an open mind. She does a great job helping with prepping for the school day, working 1-1 with the Kiddos when needed, and encouraging them to do their best. Koral keep smiling and sharing your ideas, we are happy you are here!”

Jim Lentz – Site Administrator

“Jim is the best! He works hard to assure our students and staff have the best school experience possible, while growing and learning! Thank you Mr. Lentz for being you and we appreciate all you do!”

Robyn Sullivan – Special Education Teacher

“Robyn always goes above and beyond for all her students and the staff she works with. She has the bubbliest personality, and it's contagious. Robyn brings neat ideas to the table that can benefit not just her students, but the entire school. She jumps in and helps out whenever she can. Robyn, we are so lucky to have you! Keep up the awesome work!”

Jessica Molinaro – Special Education Paraprofessional

“Jessica has worked in an elementary SUN classroom for 2 years now and does a great job with the students she works with, as well as students in other classrooms. She always jumps in and helps out wherever she is needed, even with students she hasn't worked with before. She has built a lot of great relationships with the students this year. We are so lucky to have her as a part of our team! Thank you for all you do, Jessica!”

Chris Leibel – Custodian

“Chris is new to the team and has done an amazing job getting to know the staff and students. He is always busy, finds things to do, and helps out in any way he can. The ELC Willmar has never looked so nice!”

Shaleigh Jackson – Special Education Paraprofessional

“Shaleigh is a great asset to the ELC Willmar. She is fast to respond to any crisis call and is willing to help out where ever and however needed. She always has a smile on her face and builds great relationships with the staff and students!”

Chris Franzwa – Special Education Paraprofessional

“Chris has been a great addition to the ELC Willmar. He comes in to school everyday with a positive attitude and is willing to help out where ever needed. He has great relationships with the students and serves as a positive role model to them!”

Arie Gibbs – Special Education Paraprofessional

“Arie has been a great addition to the ELC Willmar this year. She is willing to help out in any way she can and does it with a smile on her face. She has an awesome way of connecting with the students and they know they can go to her for help. Arie also does a great job of finding things to do during down time to keep busy.”

Jennifer Kimman – Director of Special Education

“Jen is appreciated for how well she keeps us all informed. If I have questions, Jen will find an answer. As things change throughout the year, Jen is also quick to update us. As a supervisor, Jen is wonderful at giving directions that are clear and at listening to concerns.”

Julie Menage – Director of Special Education

“Julie is a great advocate for students, schools, and staff. She has done an excellent job of providing support during difficulty times, being flexible when the need arises, and standing firm in getting the services that students need. Julie does a nice job of balancing the needs of everyone in the system, while still recognizing mandates and rules.”

Patty Molden - Administrative Assistant

“Patty is the silent partner who makes sure things happen. She is very gentle but persistent with her reminders on deadlines, and reaches out to ensure communication stays open. When specific needs arise, (like getting service for our vehicles) Patty adjusts and figures out what needs to be done. Her diligence with details combined with her flexibility, makes doing our jobs so much easier.”