

Parents adore West Irondequoit workers for dedication to work

EAST EXTRA

Our east-side schools boast many excellent teachers and staff members. Three of the very best were recognized recently by the West Irondequoit Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA).

At a ceremony held at Dake Junior High School on March 12, Briarwood Elementary School secretary Diane Stout, Dake Library Media Specialist Anna Bayerl and Dake special education teaching assistant Kristan Rojas all received Honorary Life Awards from the West Irondequoit PTSA.

The Honorary Life Award is the highest honor presented by the PTSA, given annually to select West Irondequoit teachers and staff members, recognizing their long-standing dedication to students.

Nominations are accepted beginning in October and all three of this year’s honorees were nominated by parents in the district.

You may recognize Kristan Rojas’ name from the annual dodgeball tournament she and her husband Pat have organized for eight years in honor of their son Josh, a 10-year old Irondequoit soccer player who died suddenly on a playing field in 2005. The tournament is typical of the kind of commitment Rojas has for chil-



West Irondequoit School District staff members, from left, Kristan Rojas, Diane Stout and Anna Bayerl, were recently recognized for outstanding service. PROVIDED



East Extra

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Guest columnist

dren and families.

Rojas has worked in the West Irondequoit Central School District for 18 years, first at Listwood Elementary School and Brookview Elementary before joining the staff at Dake Junior High in 2010.

“The children that I have worked with over the years have brought such light to my life,” Rojas said. “When I lost Joshua and then again, when (my daughter) Katrina moved away from home, assisting this community’s children gave me a purpose and helped me heal so much.”

Anna Bayerl has served her entire 21 years in the West Irondequoit School District as Library Media Specialist at Dake Junior High. For three of those years, she

been taking care of the needs of children, parents and administrators for 20 years, juggling details big and small to keep the school running smoothly.

And she does it all with a smile.

“I can tell you that I obviously would not have stayed here 20 years if I wasn’t happy,” Stout said. “This is a phenomenal district to work for.”

Stout, who is planning to retire at the end of this school year, is definitely going out on top of her game.

All three recipients were surprised and touched by the awards, each one expressing how fortunate they felt to be working in the district.

traveled between Dake and Rogers Middle School, but said that “Dake has always been home.”

It’s a position which has provided Bayerl the opportunity to touch the lives of every one of the school’s students, every week of the year. In return, she says they have touched her.

“I don’t have children of my own, so I claim my students as my own,” she said. “Working in the library is fun and challenging, and I hope to make it that way for my students as well. My goal is to help them grow into capable, independent adults. They keep me young (at heart, anyway).”

As the main office secretary at Briarwood Elementary School, Diane Stout has

“My years with West Irondequoit have been filled with amazing children and inspiring stories,” Rojas said. “The strength and perseverance that I witness every day is so inspiring. I have been blessed to work with dedicated and devoted colleagues that have made such an impact on my life.”

“It’s a very close and caring district,” Stout added. “Everyone has big hearts here and are always willing to help everyone in the community.”

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