

PRESS RELEASE

Manhattan Beach Unified School District

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MIRA COSTA HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER LINDA GESUALDI HONORED AS MBUSD TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Manhattan Beach, CA, May 29, 2012

Mira Costa High School (MCHS) mathematics teacher and department co-chairperson **Linda Gesualdi** was named MBUSD Teacher of the Year during a meeting of the Board of Trustees on Wednesday, May 16. Linda earned her Bachelor of Science degree at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut. Though she initially worked as a computer programmer after earning her undergraduate degree, she had always wanted to be a teacher. A few years later she earned her teaching credential and taught mathematics to students in grades seven through twelve at an alternative high school. Twenty-six years ago, Mira Costa administrators had the foresight to hire this extremely talented mathematics teacher, and she has been a member of the MCHS faculty ever since.

When asked to reflect on her personal views about teaching mathematics, Ms. Gesualdi stated, "I believe that every student can achieve in math. With thirty different minds analyzing a problem, there is more creativity in one classroom than you can imagine." Ms. Gesualdi feels strongly that teachers must consider the whole child when teaching and not have tunnel vision about a single subject. She also believes that students need to have the opportunity to show multiple ways of solving problems, and she strives to help each child achieve his/her personal best in her math class.

To be named MBUSD Teacher of the Year, Ms. Gesualdi participated in a very rigorous process. School Site Teachers of the Year are nominated by colleagues on a form that is based on the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. The MCHS leadership team reviewed the submitted applications and selected Linda Gesualdi as the Mira Costa High School Teacher of the Year. She and the Site Teachers of the Year from the other MBUSD schools were observed teaching a lesson and interviewed by a district committee consisting of nine individuals including teachers and administrators who represent different grade levels and disciplines. This district committee had the daunting task of selecting the one teacher out of a field of exceptionally talented educators who would represent Manhattan Beach USD at the county level. "While all of the site Teachers of the Year were outstanding, Linda Gesualdi stood out because of her remarkably strong connection to her students and the critical thinking and creative problem solving skills that permeated her lesson," stated Carolyn Seaton, MBUSD's Executive Director of Educational Services.

When asked about Linda Gesualdi, MBUSD Superintendent Dr. Michael Matthews affirmed, "Linda believes passionately in all of her students, and she works tirelessly to help them achieve at their highest possible level. She is an outstanding choice for this honor."

Principal Dr. Ben Dale also praised Ms. Gesualdi. “Linda represents the best of what it means to be a Mira Costa teacher—she is knowledgeable, professional, collegial, collaborative, and will go out of her way to help her students in every way imaginable. She is a star!”

“Linda Gesualdi's passion for teaching, mastery of instructional strategies, and comprehensive content knowledge combine to provide a foundation that truly enhances student learning in her mathematics classroom,” added Ellen Rosenberg, President of the MBUSD Board of Trustees.

Ms. Gesualdi will now represent MBUSD in the Los Angeles County Office of Education's (LACOE's) Teacher of the Year process. She will submit an introductory letter, four essays, a list of background experience and professional development activities, and three letters of support. She will be notified in the middle of July whether she has been selected as one of the top twenty-five semifinalists for the L.A. County Teachers of the Year program. Semifinalists submit additional essays and undergo a videotaped interview. Ms. Gesualdi and all Teachers of the Year from districts across Los Angeles County will be honored at a special luncheon in September during which the top sixteen county teachers of the year will be announced.

About the Manhattan Beach Unified School District

Manhattan Beach Unified School District ranks as the third highest performing unified school district in the State of California with a 2011 Growth Academic Performance Index (API) of 932. MBUSD serves nearly 7,000 students from preschool to twelfth grade at eight school campuses—one preschool, five elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. Mira Costa High School's API of 911 places it in the top 1.3% of public high schools in California, and it was named number fifteen in ESPN's "Fab 50" High Schools in the Unified States in 2010 for its superior athletic programs. In addition to outstanding students and excellent teachers, MBUSD is extremely fortunate to have a high level of parental involvement in the schools and very strong partnerships with the Manhattan Beach Education and Athletic Foundations, the City of Manhattan Beach, Chevron, Northrop Grumman, Continental Development, the Manhattan Beach Chamber of Commerce and other local organizations and businesses. More information about MBUSD is available at www.mbusd.org.