



*Forget-Me-Not:
Fields of Hope*

May 17, 2018

Acknowledge Alliance

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Forget-Me-Not: Fields of Hope

*A bright wildflower, the forget-me-not grows in the shade
Symbol of resilience, remembrance, and renewal*

May 17, 2018
Holbrook-Palmer Park

5:00

Doors Open
Silent Auction
Hors D'oeuvres
Wine Tasting — *Portola Vineyards*

6:15

Dinner Buffet — *Absolute Barbecue Company*

6:30

Silent Auction Closes

6:45 to 8:00

Welcome
Susan Williams-Clark, Executive Director

Honorees

*Anita Lee, Principal, Cherry Chase Elementary School
Jessica Norris, 7th Grade Teacher, Kennedy Middle School
Ivette Ramos, School Psychologist, Selby Lane School
Cesar Zuñiga, Community School Coordinator, Selby Lane
Nick Jasso, Graduate of Sequoia High School Class of 2015*

Live Auction & Fund-the-Hope

*Mark Alman, Auctioneer
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PORTOLA VINEYARDS

Dining Around the Peninsula

A BAY AREA CULINARY DELIGHT
OF TOP RESTAURANTS

Evvia*

Palo Alto

The Village Pub*

Woodside

Saint Michael's Alley*

Palo Alto

Donato Enoteca

Redwood City

VALUE: \$1,100

Donated by Susan & George Clark
and participating restaurants*



Palo Alto Staycation

A GETAWAY IN YOUR
LOCAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Take a break from your usual to-do lists and experience your staycation like a true getaway! Let someone else make the bed while you relax in an overnight stay at The Westin Palo Alto.

You'll be minutes away from all the great shopping and dining nearby. Visit Vina Enoteca for dinner – where the rustic charm of Italy meets Stanford Barn.

After sleeping in and feeling recharged, stroll over to Douce France in Town & Country for brunch. This delightful French café has coffee and pastries waiting for you. Then, pamper yourself at LaBelle Day Spa & Salon because you deserve it.

VALUE: \$525

Donated by The Westin Palo Alto,
Vina Enoteca, Douce France and Sharon Navarro

Tour & Taste

A SUMMER WINE TOUR FOR
YOUR GROUP OF 8 TO 20 PEOPLE

There's something special about drinking local wine. Gather your favorite people and spend some quality time together at Portola Vineyards in Portola Valley. These Peninsula foothills were once California's premier winegrowing region, and the small vineyards here today continue to produce phenomenal wines!

Schedule a date for your large group to receive a private summer-season wine tasting along with a tour of the vineyard and winery from the winemaker between now and August 20, 2018.

Continue your fun adventure with fresh Middle Eastern eats at SAJJ Mediterranean!

VALUE: \$550

Donated by Portola Vineyards
and SAJJ Mediterranean



Farm to Table

AN EXTRAORDINARY DINNER FOR 6 AT A WELCOMING WOODSIDE HOME

Imagine an evening in a candlelit gazebo under the stars with views of Jasper Ridge, Searsville Lake and Mt. Diablo with friends/family. Settle into a culinary fanfare of fresh organic food. This inspired farm-to-table dinner will feature locally produced vegetables, cheeses, lamb, fruit and more. Preparing your menu is an amazing chef who holds a Grande Diploma from the Paris Cordon Bleu School of Culinary Arts.

It will be a memorable night for you and your party, as your hosts will delight you with a four course extravaganza paired with specially selected west coast wines!

VALUE: PRICELESS

Donated by Diane Toby & Jeffrey Lea,
MJ Myatt & Scott Mobley, Susan & George Clark



Fund-the-Hope

Raise your paddle
to make a gift tonight!

VALUE:
INFINITELY PRICELESS



"The Acknowledge Alliance staff are an integral support system for our teachers, students, school staff, and administration. Having the appropriate people in place to help support the social-emotional growth of students, along with crisis management for acute or chronic mental health situations, help make sure that academics can be more of my focus in the classroom. It reassures me that I have resources to help my students have their needs met. From a personal perspective, I know that I can seek out someone who is there to support me in a social-emotional way. This helps me be confident so that I can continue to do my sometimes difficult job without burning out."

-Teacher, Resilience Consultation Program

"I learned how to bounce back and stand up for myself and others. The lessons about friendship made a big difference for me! I also learned more about myself and if I was an introvert or extrovert."

-Student, Project Resilience (Social Emotional Learning)

"With Acknowledge Alliance, I felt I had someone I could trust and count on. It made me feel like people actually cared about me. I was able to just clear my head and concentrate in my next classes afterwards. Counseling helped me realize what I want to do in life and how to view and cope with things."

-Student, High School Transition Program

Anita Lee



*Principal
Cherry Chase Elementary School*

**OUTSTANDING
EDUCATOR**

The journey from parent to principal has spanned 28 years so far in the Sunnyvale School District for Mrs. Anita Lee, who is currently in her fifth year as the principal at Cherry Chase Elementary School. Prior to that, she taught primary grades for ten years at San Miguel Elementary School and then coached there for another six years. (If you're doing the math, she spent the remaining seven years as a Sunnyvale parent prior to teaching.)

In whatever community she has served, Anita has maintained the value that learning needs to happen within the context of caring. Children thrive when they are surrounded by adults who care, and those adults can thrive when they know that they are similarly supported by colleagues who care.

Growing up in an Air Force family, Anita attended 9 schools between Kindergarten and 12th grade. She understands from that personal perspective the need for resilience in children and adults and knows that people can adapt to changing circumstances with support. Resilience and relationships are essential needs in our diverse communities, so she has welcomed the opportunity to work with Acknowledge Alliance to support their development in her school communities.

Anita is grateful for the support that Acknowledge Alliance provides through teacher and principal resilience groups, as well as from resilience consultants. Together we create school communities where *Learning is CORE – caring, organized, respectful and engaging!*

Acknowledgment

Anita Lee is being honored because she is an excellent example of an Acknowledge Alliance partner.

I first met Anita when she was a member of one of the early Teacher Resilience Groups I led in Sunnyvale. At that time, Anita was feeling discouraged as a teacher and was wondering whether she wanted to retire from the profession. The group only met five times then, but because she had time to reflect on her work, her life, her values and goals with support and care, she decided to stay in education. She persevered and even became a Principal!

As Principal of Cherry Chase Elementary School now, she has brought Acknowledge Alliance in to help support teachers and strengthen their collaboration and sense of community. Anita is also a member of our monthly Leadership Resilience Group, where she gives positive and thoughtful feedback to other administrators.

Anita is a great model of resilience in her personal life - in body, mind and spirit. She has faced many challenges, health-related and loss, in the past six years and has responded to them with dignity, grace, humility and love. She embodies and brings this resilience to her leadership at work every day.

I reached out to many people who've worked with her over the years, all who happily commented on her strengths and leadership:

From Liz Hernandez, Instructional Coach at San Miguel Elementary School: "The word is strong (about Anita). Strong character, leads by example, an attentive listener..."

From Traci Cahn, Acknowledge Alliance Resilience Consultant and Winnie Hardie, Assistant Principal at Cherry Chase: "Anita is a strong leader who makes wellness a priority; she makes connections with people, learns about them and their families; she is thoughtful and caring."

From Rachelle Romander, Principal at Fairwood Elementary: "Anita always comes to every conversation with a student-centered focus. As a leader, she understands that leadership is a shared responsibility. She capitalizes on the strengths of her team."

From Deb Kilner, a friend and former Acknowledge Alliance staff: "Anita is a gifted administrator with a kind and generous heart. When she has to make tough decisions that affect the lives of her students, she is thoughtful and considerate."

And from her boss, Benjamin Picard, PhD, Superintendent of Sunnyvale School District: "Mrs. Lee is a strong instructional leader. She understands how to distribute leadership... to initiate and sustain change. She enjoys engaging and developing the talents of others to attain results for her school."

What more could anyone ask for at the helm of an educational ship sailing the tough seas of change in our world today!

— *Jean Hamilton, MFT*
Resilience Consultant

Jessica Norris



*7th Grade World History Teacher
Kennedy Middle School*

**OUTSTANDING
EDUCATOR**

Jessica Norris grew up in the small town of Lakeport, and lived one block away from Clear Lake, the largest natural freshwater lake in California. She attended UC Berkeley, where she graduated with a major in Rhetoric and a minor in Ethnic Studies. While this type of major generally yields lawyers, Jessica decided to pursue teaching. She continued her education at CSU Chico, where she received her teaching credential in both single and multiple subjects. Her first teaching job was at Roy Cloud Elementary School in Redwood City, where she taught 6th and 8th grade English and History for three years. For the past eight years, she has taught 7th grade History at Kennedy Middle School in Cupertino.

Jessica has always loved school. When she was a child, she would play “school” and pretend to teach her younger sister. She grew up attending various school events because her father worked for the local school district. After graduating from college, she changed paths from law to education. Her mom suggested that if she was a teacher she could “always be in school.”

As an educator, Jessica shares her passion and love for learning with her students. From a small school to a large school, she addresses the need for building a sense of community with her students. This includes daily activities in her class, to whole campus events. Jessica helps her students feel safe, included, and excited to come to school.

Acknowledgment

Teachers show up every day to inform, inspire, guide and craft the future via their work with students. Teachers are rarified in their passion, dedication and resilience. To know Jessica Norris is to see these qualities in action.

In her 7th grade classroom, I facilitated a social emotional learning lesson on the topic of character strengths. After the students and I defined a variety of strengths, I asked her class to name some strengths of their teacher. Strengths they identified included wisdom, curiosity, leadership and love of learning. But equally telling, the students also recognized Ms. Norris for her compassion, kindness and courage. Jessica has been teaching middle school history, language arts, and art with courage and compassion for eleven years – the last eight at Kennedy Middle School.

Jessica grew up in a small rural town in Northern California where she graduated high school as the class valedictorian. After attending UC Berkeley, she earned her multiple and varied teaching credentials from CSU Chico. Her love for teaching, school, people, art, music, travel and global pop culture translates into a well-rounded teacher who genuinely connects with her students. For instance, as a way to honor and support a student charity fundraising challenge at school, Jessica dressed up in a different Japanese Kigurumi animal costume for 10 days. My standout favorites included the frog, gloomy bear and toothless dragon.

Jessica has long focused on the holistic support and education of students. Before Acknowledge Alliance started providing services at Kennedy, Jessica was instrumental to the School Leadership Team, where she took part in developing an Advisory Course to address student stress and social emotional well-being. The curriculum included mindfulness activities, social emotional lessons and team building exercises. It is no wonder when Acknowledge Alliance's Project Resilience was invited into her classroom, Jessica offered insightful suggestions and sourced materials that enhanced our lessons and further engaged the students.

When I asked Jessica about developing resilience in her students, she shared her philosophy: "If you support the whole child and they know you're someone they can count on, that you believe in them, that you can give them opportunities to share or help build skills to overcome challenges, then you get a student who is more open to learn and grow."

In this way, she is not just teaching history, she is teaching the whole child in her history classroom. Jessica supports the ideals of social emotional learning every day with every student.

Thank you Jessica for all you do for so many.

— *Dara Tynefield, MFTI*
Resilience Consultant & SEL Facilitator

Ivette Ramos



*School Psychologist
Selby Lane School*

**OUTSTANDING
EDUCATOR**

Ivette Ramos started her education at San Francisco State University's Psychology department. During her undergraduate studies, she volunteered at Head Start for AmeriCorps, where she realized her passion for working with children. Through her work, she discovered the joy of giving back to her community and decided that she may be better able to make meaningful impact in the lives of students with exceptional needs by furthering her education. She pursued a master's degree in School Psychology, and became the first in her family to obtain an advanced degree.

Ivette has had the privilege of working as a School Psychologist for the past three years at Selby Lane in Redwood City. Selby Lane has given her invaluable opportunities working with students of different backgrounds, education, and social/emotional needs. During her time working with students with emotional dysregulation, her focus has been to build and create a nurturing and safe learning environment for students. Ivette believes that with appropriate accommodations and support, every student has the ability to meet their highest potential in and out of the classroom.

Acknowledgment

“I don’t give up easily” – Ivette Ramos

For the last 3 years, Ivette has been the School Psychologist at Selby Lane School. There are a lot of challenges that come with working at a kinder through eighth grade school with only one School Psychologist and over 700 students to be responsible for.

It’s not difficult to feel overwhelmed by the work, the needs of the students and the constraints of the school budget. Yet, Ivette has pushed beyond all of that. She definitely does not quit when it comes to students and their needs. Time after time, I have seen Ivette work tirelessly on identifying ways to help students be successful and stable at school. Sometimes that means frequent phone calls with the parents, working with teachers, getting the county mental health services involved and/or advocating for residential services for students.

Like an educator, Ivette creates a safe place for students to learn and grow. She has a deep understanding of their social and emotional needs and always finds the best ways to support them. In the process, she helps them build resilience and improve their well-being.

Naturally, Ivette and I share common goals. We frequently collaborate on students and their counseling needs. Our partnership is important to the work we do at Acknowledge Alliance. For example, while our therapists would provide counseling, Ivette administers any necessary assessments to obtain valuable information about the student's learning, behavior, or mental health. Together, we have been able to get more services for students in need.

Ivette is persistent and dedicated with a big heart. No matter how challenging things may get, she never gives up. And because of this persistence and tenaciousness, she has positively changed the lives of many students – students that probably would not be in school today, if not for her support.

— *Jane Haddow, MFT, ATR*
Resilience Consultant

Cesar Zuñiga



*Community School Coordinator
Selby Lane School*

**OUTSTANDING
EDUCATOR**

Cesar Zuñiga is the proud Community School Coordinator and R.E.A.C.H After School Program Director at Selby Lane School. He was born and raised in Redwood City, CA and an alum of Redwood City schools. He studied Sociology and also played soccer at San Diego State University. Along with Selby Lane, Cesar has worked for the City of Redwood City Parks and Recreation Department along with partnerships with the Redwood City School District for 17 years. His involvement in After School programs, event planning and administration have helped him gain experience in understanding school needs from 7am-7pm. Working with children and youth has always been his passion, especially in the communities where he grew up. He is a strong believer in building a great team (student, school, family, community) and he is dedicated to helping students succeed in and out of the classroom. He prides himself on always being available to help in any way and strives to make students, families and staff feel confident in their abilities and trust that they are supported and appreciated. Being a face and a voice for the "Community School" is extremely important to him and through challenges and hardships we might face in our communities, he is proud to stand together with his community and find solutions. He is an active family man who enjoys sports, adventure and traveling but understands the importance of balance. In short, a grown-up with the heart of a child.

Acknowledgment

“I want to be able to reach every student that needs support at Selby.” – Cesar Zuñiga

Cesar has been at Selby Lane School for 3 years. He has an important role – he connects all of the Selby community. I see him on campus when I arrive before school starts and I see him working with the afterschool team when I leave after the school day has ended. Despite his busy schedule, he works hard and always upholds a positive and supportive attitude. He has a profound way of impacting others. Even for me, I know that I breathe a little easier whenever I see him on campus. Not only has he made it a priority to know all of the students by name, he knows the names of their parents as well. He understands the youth and he is very much in tune with what is going on in the community. He is passionate about what he does and he is wholeheartedly dedicated to helping every student succeed.

The students and parents at the school recognize this, too. The trusting relationships he has built has allowed them to open up to him. As a result, Cesar is able to educate students and parents and pair them with the right resources they need. Our Acknowledge Alliance counseling program at Selby helps many students; but without Cesar’s guidance, these families may not have reached out for counseling support. He is a connector, a bridge builder.

I remember one incident where a young student was deeply upset and not responding to counseling. We asked Cesar for help. He immediately took the child to the school garden where they picked vegetables together. An hour later, the student was walking around the campus happily offering vegetables from his basket to school staff. Once again, this shows how intuitive, nurturing and calming Cesar’s presence can be.

Cesar is an excellent example of people who make the world work as well as it does!

*— Jane Haddow, MFT, ATR
Resilience Consultant*

Nick Jasso



Nicholas "Nick" Jasso graduated from Sequoia High School in 2015, as a student in the Transition Program at Acknowledge Alliance. During that time, he was also able to attend a monthly day-retreat with Wildlife Associates – an animal sanctuary which brought him closer to the spirit of service. Since graduating from Sequoia High School, he has been able to become an EMT, an AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps alumni, a Dean's List college student and the Club President of Project Change at the College of San Mateo. He spends much of his time now volunteering with organizations such as Fresh Lifelines for Youth and Youth Law Center. He hopes to transfer from community college in the fall and eventually practice law.

*Transition Program Graduate
Sequoia High School Class of 2015*

**OUTSTANDING
ROLE MODEL**

Acknowledgment

From 2012 to 2015, Nick Jasso worked with our Transition Program therapist during his time at Sequoia High School. He was new to the school and had endured some difficult life transitions. He was mature beyond his years and he always carried himself in a way that conveyed open acceptance of others. He worked hard to graduate on time and became involved in more school programs, sports and other resources. Once a student graduates, our services end and we no longer have ongoing communication. At that point, we can only hope that each student will continue to grow and thrive with resilience. Last fall, we were able to reconnect with Nick when we unexpectedly saw him as a panelist at a conference. What a rare and special surprise – it's been three years since we've last heard from him! His dedication to give back to the community by all that he is involved in and all that he is striving to achieve is sincerely inspiring. He continues to be an exceptionally positive, driven, friendly and hopeful person. We feel proud and honored to have worked with such an incredible young man. — *Beth Walton, MFT, Transition Program Director*

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