

Published December 7th, 2011

Stanley Teacher Brian Mangold Wins Award

By Cathy Tyson



From left: Brian Mangold and Toni McShane Photo
Cathy Tyson

Christmas came a bit early for Stanley Middle School Special Education teacher Brian Mangold. He was honored by the Warren Eukel Teacher Trust as an instructor who has exhibited extraordinary commitment to his students. He wins a monetary grant of \$10,000, a generous amount to recognize his hard work in the classroom that is truly appreciated.

Annually the Trust accepts nominations for fantastic teachers in Contra Costa County, ultimately selecting three who each receive a \$10,000 grant. Dance instructor Victoria Tukeva of Richmond High and Jesse Hansen, a history teacher at San Ramon High, also won.

Mangold has been teaching special needs students at Stanley Middle School for the last five years; he graduated from the University of California, Davis and then received a Master's Degree and Special Education Teaching Credential at Columbia University Teachers College.

"We're lucky to have him," said Stanley Assistant Principal Toni McShane, "Brian is impressive to watch as he develops teaching strategies for his classes." She proudly explained that he started a peer tutoring program for the mainstream kids to work with the special needs kids that

students are "clamoring to get into." Fridays at lunchtime, Mangold started the very popular Karaoke Club for the special needs students, where everybody pitches in to help with the show.

At the awards dinner at which all three teachers were honored, Mangold reflected on his experience, "I've learned to look at things from a different perspective, to question boundaries and expectations that have become the norm. I've learned that by labeling people by their disability or by what they can't do, we limit our thinking, limit our approach and often handicap the individuals who are labeled." Commenting on lessons of perseverance, bravery and patience, he continued, "Watching my students struggle to express themselves, I've learned how frustrating and traumatizing it must be to feel like you have no voice, no say, or no one to listen."

Mangold credits the talented and dedicated faculty at Stanley for being so supportive, and described the many challenges that special education teachers face. "Generally you can't set up a single program that addresses all of your students' needs. Each child has different repertoires and deficits and there is no single strategy or approach that works for all of the students," he said.

On a personal note, he's not sure what he'll spend the money on. He became a father a little over two months ago, "so I may end up writing that check directly over to our diaper service."

He was also honored at a recent City Council meeting with an official proclamation that included: "Mangold has brought honor to himself, his profession and the Lafayette community for his work and achievement in the field of education." He humbly accepted the proclamation, thanked the Council, "It's quite an honor to receive this award. This is a special community to teach in.....Thank you for supporting education."

Reach the reporter at: cathy@lamorindaweekly.com

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA