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Athayde Wins Community Award Honoring Denny

By Cathy Tyson



Mike Anderson (right) congratulates Bob Athayde. Photo C. Tyson

It was one of the best kept secrets ever. The longtime music legend who has guided Stanley Middle School students for years, Director of Bands Bob Athayde, was completely surprised when he received the inaugural Ann Denny Memorial Community Award at the Spring Concert program. He was surrounded in the sweltering gym by his students in the Concert Bronze, Silver and Symphonic Bands, along with countless proud parents in the bleachers, and Lafayette Chamber of Commerce members.

Established in honor of former Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Ann Denny, who was president of the organization for a dozen years, the Ann Denny Award honors her commitment to the community. She retired from the position in 2005 after years of service and passed away in 2015.

The chamber set out to recognize an exceptional individual that models excellence, helps others and has inspirational leadership skills. With kind words about Denny's dignity, grace and wonderful sense of humor, Chamber President Dennis Garrison presented the very first Ann Denny Award to Athayde, who received a standing ovation.

Garrison was followed by a number of dignitaries who recognized Athayde for his incredible contributions and hard work, including Lafayette vice mayor Mike Anderson, who presented a city proclamation; council member and euphonium player in the Symphonic Band, Don Tatzin; and Teresa Gerringer, the current Lafayette School Board Member who also represented California State Senator Steve Glazer. Gerringer thanked the band director for his "Huge impact on students and the school district."

A representative from Congressman Mark DeSaulnier's 11th congressional district gave an official congressional recognition, and Lauri Byers, representing County Supervisor Candace Andersen, also presented a proclamation.



Bob Athayde, recipient of the inaugural Ann Denny Award, is surrounded by dignitaries at the Stanly Middle School Spring Concert. Photo Kerwin Lee

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