

In this issue >>>

Reflections of Dedication

Identity Crisis

Betty Corelle Scholarship

Welcome New ACEA Members!

Seeking Recommendations

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A full color electronic version of this newsletter can be found on our website.

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The Advocate

Reflections of Dedication

For nearly two decades, ACEA has been dedicated to supporting our community through our annual collection for the local Toys for Happiness program. And the dedication to this program and our area children cannot be denied. This year, the staff of Allegany County Public School facilities donated **177 toys**, as well as **\$2,204.35** during the recent **19th Denim Day for Toys For Happiness**, held on Tuesday, November 28. A special thank you to all the representatives and coordinators at each facility who helped collect, organize, and work with ACEA to get the many donations to our offices in time for the grand presentation to Chuck Koelker and his elves from the Toys For Happiness organization. We also appreciate the continued cooperation of Mr. Blank and the members of the ACPS Board of Education for their support of this annual ACEA event which benefits children in our region. **Thank you and Happy Holidays to All !**



National ESP Day Celebration: It is impossible to describe an ESP without the word dedication. These ESPECIALLY important people work hard every day to help our students and teaching staff to be successful. To show our appreciation, ACEA hosted an event just for our ESP members at *The Toasted Goat* on National ESP Day, November 15. Several of our members, as well as two from GCEA, attended and enjoyed the fabulous food and relaxing activities that were planned. If you don't want to take our word for it, check out the pictures below...



Identity Crisis

There are moments in life when we must fit into different roles. In my 47 years, I have fulfilled many roles-daughter, wife, mother, student, teacher, community organizer, and friend. In my new role as a UD, I often experience overlap in my roles which cause somewhat of an "identity crisis". I am a 21-year veteran teacher, know what it is like to teach today, know about the day-to-day operations of schools, have friends who are working in ACPS in various positions, and have a daughter currently in the ACPS school system. My job requires me to stay focused on the pressing issue at hand, advocate for our membership, and keep my other roles in check. Somedays it feels like whiplash and other days it is like a revolving door- but the identity crisis is real.

I know that sometimes ACEA has an identity crisis of its own. Who are we really? Are we a part of the Allegany County Public School system? To whom do we answer? Who oversees ACEA? I thought I would take some time to answer these questions and to be sure that our identity is clear to members and those who would be interested in joining us.

ACEA is the organization that serves and supports members of Unit 1 and Unit 4. We are not affiliated with ACPS, but rather a separate legal entity. As an organization who represents members in ACPS, we do attend meetings on policies and programs that directly impact members and negotiated contract items. Additionally, we attend Board of Education meetings to ensure that our members' interests are represented to the elected representatives. But that is where our connection to ACPS ends-we are a separate entity.

ACEA is part of MSEA (Maryland State Education Association), a union organization that is 75,000 members strong. They are the state organization that supports the work done at the local level. NEA (National Education Association) is the parent association to MSEA and ACEA; they are a 3-million-member organization from every level of education. If you are an ACEA member, you are automatically a member of MSEA and NEA, getting the benefits and coverage of their organizations. The backing of the two parent organizations is vital to our work, helping the local to remain strong and supported.

As you can see, ACEA's identity and mission is clear- we are here for you. We negotiate and defend contract related issues, impact local education policies on your behalf, and listen to your voices when you call. You are our only link to ACPS, and when you call or email it gives us an idea of what is happening that may need our attention. We are here for you, as your colleagues and friends, to lend a helping hand or listening ear. Our identity is grounded in the work of helping you to do what is best for students as you work each day in our schools. Keep doing the good work and know we are here for YOU!
Cresta Kowalski, UniServ Director

BEVERLY CORELLE SCHOLARSHIP

MSEA is pleased to announce *The Beverly Corelle Scholarship* which provides two scholarship opportunities for MSEA members pursuing degrees in education.

In accordance with her wishes, MSEA launched October 31 the application for the Beverly Corelle MSEA Educator Scholarship. This will be a one-year, non-renewable scholarship. Information detailing the scholarship criteria and a link to the applications are posted on the MSEA website. The deadline to apply is 5:00 p.m. on January 16, 2024. Late applications will not be considered.

There are two application forms. Please be sure you complete the correct application. All applicants must be members of MSEA. A link to the application can be found on the MSEA website, or through a link on the Home page of our website.

Welcome New ACEA Members!

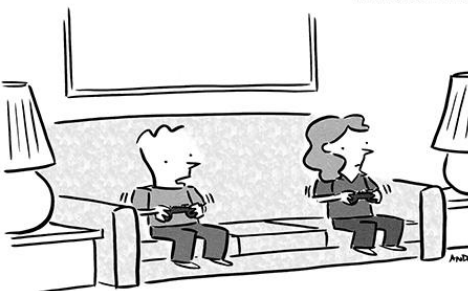
Unit 1

Jamie Keister SP

Unit 4

Emmely Bostic BE
Crystal Day MS
Margie Long CA
Stephanie Swanger SP

WWW.ANDERSTOONS



"It's interesting - Mom hates early Christmas sales, but she loves early back-to-school sales."

Seeking Recommendations

ACEA has a building maintenance project for which we need your recommendations. If you have successfully worked with an area contractor who you believe provides quality work on interior projects and is insured and bonded, then we would love to know. You can email your recommendations to Kim at ksloane@mseanea.org.

WWW.ANDERSTOONS



"According to the report, the officer hollered and you only paused for a moment, which is legally not a full and complete stop. Just pay the fine."