

“PORTRAITS OF SUCCESS” AWARD NOMINATION

Name of Nominee- **Daisy Tatum**
District- **Oxnard Union High School District**
School- **Pacific View High School**
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Category- **Administrator**

Name of Nominator- **Marie (Frankly) Ramirez**
District- **Oxnard Union High School District**
School- **Pacific View High School**
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Daisy Tatum is a professional, conscientious, and caring principal for two Alternative Education sites in the Oxnard Union High School District. Her enthusiasm and commitment to education is apparent to those people who have experienced the awesome benefits of her extraordinary leadership skills including: students, staff, parents, community, and in some cases, the children of the children that she once taught. There are lots of “Daisy’s Kids” in the community she serves. Since she must supervise staff and students at two separate facilities located on opposite parts of the town, she must model, promote, and reinforce professionalism and autonomy to effectively manage both environments. This enormous feat is done by utilizing her contagious enthusiasm, which she uses to creatively attract support for her many student-oriented endeavors and by employing her unique knack for multi-tasking.

She is responsible for the day-to-day operations of **Puente High School** for pregnant and teenage parents, which is located in the northern part of town. She applied for and received a Cal-Safe grant to improve the educational services to teens and provide onsite childcare, nutrition, and support to babies. She efficiently and fairly manages the students, staff, and all of their young children that attend this alternative educational site. The school provides increased opportunities for teen parents to access comprehensive educational programs to graduation and employment, provides teens with knowledge, skills and resources to maintain a healthy pregnancy and successfully parent their children, and provides a nurturing environment in which infants and toddlers can grow and develop at their pace under the guidance of trained staff.

In addition, she is also responsible for another site located on the southern part of town. **Pacific View High School Community Day School** for the school district’s expelled and most At-Risk students including: mandatory expelled students, all other expulsions, pupils referred by probation, involuntary transfers, and referrals from the referring school’s Student Study Team/Student Attendance Review Board (SST/SARB). Students work to improve attendance, academic performance, and behavior. The curriculum is aligned with that of the district’s comprehensive high schools and is based on the district’s state adopted content standards. Despite the challenges she faces administrating such unique groups of students, she manages to create an incredible work and school environment for her students and staff.

The students benefit first hand her professional and consistent guidance. The students count on her “no nonsense” supervision as she promotes high expectations for each of her students to succeed in reaching their individual goals. She embodies the “You Can Do It” spirit personified by Rosie the Riveter. She knows each student by name and is actively involved in the preparation and implementation of their educational and corrective discipline goals. Each day is a new *slate* in which the students can attempt to work on the issues that brought them to the alternative education site. Despite whatever discipline she dispenses on one day, the next day begins anew with the students getting a chance to apply what they’ve learned from the previous day. The students in turn, learn the necessary self-discipline skills needed to be more successful in their interactions with their parents.

The parents benefit immensely from the leadership style of Ms. Tatum. Many of the parents are fraught with worry and concern about the plight of their children. Many of their children have had negative academic and discipline experiences at their comprehensive sites and are in grave danger of not being prepared with enough credits or skills to graduate from high school. The parents can count on Ms. Tatum to teach, promote and reinforce effective behavior management skills while placing a high priority on academic credit recovery. Parents are always welcome to drop by and converse with Ms. Tatum and oftentimes seek out resources or referrals for other support programs such as parenting workshops, or

family counseling. Parents are most definitely a vital part of the triad of student, teacher, and parent commitment to academic success in the classroom. They are often invited to sit in the classes with their children to view first-hand the high-stakes, standards-based curriculum, so they can be more aware and supportive of the importance of attendance, attitude, and academic achievement.

The employees at both sites receive positive and effective leadership from a leader who must compartmentalize her time between all of her various duties. Despite her multiple responsibilities, she always makes herself available to work side by side with her staff. She engages in her principal duties as a team member and is the first to roll up her sleeves and pitch in wherever necessary. She is a passionate advocate for her staff and works hard to ensure that they have the appropriate tools needed to effectively deal with the day-to-day challenges they face working in an alternative education setting. She also serves as an extraordinary ambassador for promoting community collaboration.

The community is a big part of the Puente/Pacific View team. Ms. Tatum encourages community involvement in celebrating the success of our students. She maintains a great rapport with positive leaders in the community and shares this connection with the students to promote career exploration and to give the students excellent mentors to emulate. In addition, she strongly advocates for the students to participate in community and cultural activities that will enhance their awareness and understanding. She also encourages students to participate in their community by volunteering their time to participate in various community activities such as The Strawberry Festival.

In essence, Ms. Tatum's positive leadership style has a ripple effect on every person she contacts. The students reap the rewards of positive and consistent leadership by her fair disciplinary and educational practices. The parents benefit from a proactive educational placement dedicated to helping their children break the cycle of failure. The teachers profit enormously from Ms. Tatum's support, professionalism, and camaraderie. Most importantly, the community ultimately profits from the academic achievement of the students, as they will become an integral part of the future leadership of the community if they adhere to the basic components of Ms. Tatum's philosophy: "Anything is possible, if you want it bad enough and you're willing to work for it!"