

Spotlight on Kindness: PACER's National Unity Awards

PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center's Youth Advisory Board presented the second annual Unity Awards on May 25 at the Bloomington Center for the Arts. It was an exciting evening as PACER honored individuals and groups for their outstanding leadership in bullying prevention. Honorees were from Minnesota and across the nation.

"We hear hundreds of stories every year about individuals who make a positive impact and we are excited to honor a few of those amazing individuals," said Julie Hertzog, director of PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center. "The Unity Awards are a celebration to show how much we appreciate the special contributions that are being made across the country to prevent bullying."

FOX-9 reporter and anchor Leah Beno was the evening's emcee. Sixteen-year-old musical sensation Tristan McIntosh, an American Idol finalist, traveled from Tennessee to perform at the Unity Awards.



Tristan McIntosh performs during the Unity Awards.

The national honorees were:

- **Alexis Saldana**, a California eighth grader who stood up to students who bullied her during her campaign for class president. Alexis won the election and dedicated herself to building a school environment that accepts and includes all students.
- **Meredith Warren**, a Tennessee middle schooler who befriended a student who experienced panic attacks and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) after being bullied. "Meredith looked beyond her friend's disability, and gave her something that she hasn't seen before: confidence," her nominator wrote. "She is a wonderful person and has helped countless others."
- **Patricia Mastropolo**, an Arizona teacher who was nominated by a student she helped with a bullying situation. "Now I can go to school comfortably and with ease because of her," the student wrote. "She is the nicest person I know and she deserves recognition for all the kindness she has given."
- **Students from the Primary Explorers, Artists and Future Architects Club and Performing Artists in Action Club of Lockhart Elementary School**, in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, were nominated by a teacher who wrote: "This club practices inclusion daily, as many of the members come from other islands and know little or no English, and others have various disabilities. They are kind and helpful to their younger schoolmates and

Continued on next page



The Notes of Kindness Crew from Rochester, Minn. accept their Unity Award.

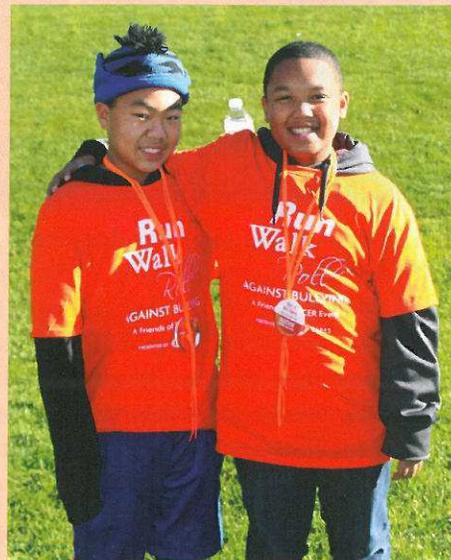
especially our students with special needs. They help bridge the gap between rival students by getting them involved in group activities.”

Minnesota honorees included:

- **The Notes of Kindness Crew**, sixth graders from Rochester. The girls spent two weeks writing 1,400 notes and placed them on each student’s locker. The notes included messages such as “Smile, it looks good on you” and “You are amazing in so many ways.”
- **Orono High School Unified Club**, 120 students who organize sporting events, social opportunities, academic mentoring, community awareness, and bullying prevention campaigns. The Unified Club is so successful that other schools in the area are catching on to the unified movement and the Orono students are assisting schools in starting Unified Clubs.
- **Lakeview Elementary Kindness Council**, 25 fifth grade students from Lakeville who organize and implement a variety of activities throughout the school year to promote kindness toward others. “These young people are an amazing example of how simple acts of kindness can change the climate of a school and improve learning for all,” wrote Renae Ouillette, the educator who nominated them.
- **The TEAM (Together Everyone Achieves More)**, 7-12th graders from Slayton, Minn., who organize Kindness Week every year, implement activities in their school and community, such as writing affirmations for each student and teacher, hold a Random Acts of Kindness Day, and a number of other community activities.

Run Walk Roll AGAINST BULLYING

The 10-year anniversary of National Bullying Prevention Month kicks off on Saturday, Oct. 1 with the popular Run, Walk, Roll Against Bullying. PACER’s fun, family-friendly event mobilizes community support for bullying prevention. It will take place at Mount Normandale Lake Park in Bloomington, Minn.



Supporters are encouraged to form teams to walk, run, or roll together to raise money and awareness for bullying prevention. Those with the largest teams will have a chance to win prizes and recognition at the event!

The day begins with registration at 9 a.m., followed by a chip-timed four-mile run or a two-mile fun walk or roll (including strollers and wheelchairs). The event will conclude with a program featuring speakers, entertainment, activities, prizes, and more.

Registration, which includes an event T-shirt, is free for ages 6 and younger, \$10 for ages 7 to 15, and \$20 for adults ages 16 and older. Register today to show that the end of bullying begins with you!

For information and to register, go to PACER.org/RWR.

Write in PACER for your United Way pledge

Choose PACER this fall when making donations through your workplace giving (payroll deduction) campaigns. You can be a Champion for Children! Here’s how to contribute.

United Way Donor Choice Program

On the United Way pledge card, you can write in PACER Center, 8161 Normandale Blvd., Minneapolis MN 55437 under the “Donor Choice” designation.

PACER is not a United Way agency organization and therefore doesn’t receive support from United Way’s general funds. However, PACER can still benefit from the donor choice funds when you write in PACER Center.

Name of Agency PACER Center
 Address 8161 Normandale Blvd.
 City Minneapolis, MN 55437