

School trustee, administrative assistant honored with NASB awards

Carson City School District

Carson City school Trustee Lupe Ramirez was honored as the 2020 Nevada Association of School Boards New School Board Member of the Year and Renae Cortez was honored as the Administrative Assistant of the Year.

Once a year, NASB recognizes the achievements and contributions of school boards, school trustees, teachers, administrators, educational advocates and others from across the state of Nevada.

The New School Board Member of the Year award recognizes the dedicated service of Nevada's newest school trustees. Ramirez is dedicated to public education and the CCSD. She has been a valuable addition to the Carson City School Board from the outset. She attends all trainings, all school board meetings and serves on the Student Attendance Review Board (SARB). She is also a member of Partnership Carson City. She passionately advocates for the importance of education and culture within the Hispanic community and within the school community.

Her background experience as the Latino outreach coordinator at Western Nevada College provides valuable input to issues that arise before the school board. She regularly attends Latino student events at Carson High School and speaks with parents and

students on the benefits of attending college and embracing their cultural heritage. She supports the elementary schools as well. Ramirez has been a guest speaker at Mark Twain Elementary School to educate Latino parents about the role of the governing board or its recent topics addressed. She also was invited to speak to the families at the first Gala Parent Dinner at Empire Elementary School. She inspired the families by sharing her story about coming to this country and her desire to further her education to be successful and to advocate for others.

In her service as a trustee, Ramirez is an important liaison and role model to the Latino students and community. With her assistance, CCSD held its first bilingual board meeting. An agenda item included a presentation of the English Learner program, which was given in Spanish and then translated into English. Additionally, Ramirez, on her own initiative, coordinated for the school board meeting on school reopening to be translated into Spanish in real time. She ensured that Spanish-speaking families knew about and provided feedback regarding school reopening.

The Administrative Assistant of the Year award category recognizes the vital role board secretaries, administrative assistants and other

support staff play in working behind the scenes with local school board members and superintendents to facilitate board decision-making and activities to improve student achievement, extend family engagement or enhance community awareness. As stated in the nomination narrative, Cortez consistently distinguishes herself as a skilled technician, expert diplomat, intelligent problem-solver and invaluable associate. She demonstrates the highest level of professional commitment and competence in her work.

Her duties require proficiency with office operations; knowledge of local, state and federal policies, regulations and laws; understanding of collective bargaining agreements; the intellect to make informed decisions independently; the capacity to accomplish numerous, concurrent tasks and the skill to work positively with the public. Additionally, given her longevity with the district, Cortez has working experience and institutional knowledge about the bulk of all of the school district operations. She often is contacted and consulted by office managers and principals alike to help answer questions and find solutions. Even if an aspect of the work is unknown, Cortez has great capacity for finding answers, offering sound judgment and providing common-sense feedback.

In her role as



COURTESY

Front: Carson City School District NASB award winners Lupe Ramirez and Renae Cortez. Back, from left: Trustees Richard Varner, Laurel Crossman, Donald Carine and Mike Walker, Superintendent Richard Stokes, and Trustees Stacie Wilke-McCulloch and Joe Cacioppo.

administrative assistant to the board and superintendent, Cortez is equally skilled in soothing the soul of an upset citizen or explaining a district policy to a patron. Cortez has the unique blend of tranquility, competence, nerve and compassion that make her valuable during times of crisis or calm. Given her position, Cortez is regularly called upon to be a last-minute host, event planner, travel agent, negotiator, record-keeper, mediator, clerk, logistics expert, furniture mover, psychiatrist and problem-solver. In each of these tasks, Cortez excels at her work and completes her duties with grace, honor and professionalism.

OBITUARIES

John Robert Duarte

Jan 31, 1936 – Oct 28, 2020

John passed peacefully in Portland, Oregon with his family by his side.

John was born in Winnemucca, Nevada to John Roger Duarte and Jeanne (Crawford). John grew up in Winnemucca where he participated in Sports, Band, and Boys State. He went to UNR, graduating in 1956 in Business Administration.

John lived in Carson City, Nevada for most of his life. John worked for a variety of state agencies including: Bureau of Land Management, Department of Motor Vehicles, Welfare, Education and Mental Health and Human Services.

John retired in 1992 to Sublimity, Oregon where he enjoyed his grandchildren and listening to old radio shows.

He was preceded in death by his father John, mother Jeanne, and brother Roger.

Survivors include; sons John (Leslie) and Andrew (Betsy); grandchildren Madison, Sabra, Rochelle, Jacob, Stephen and Ian.