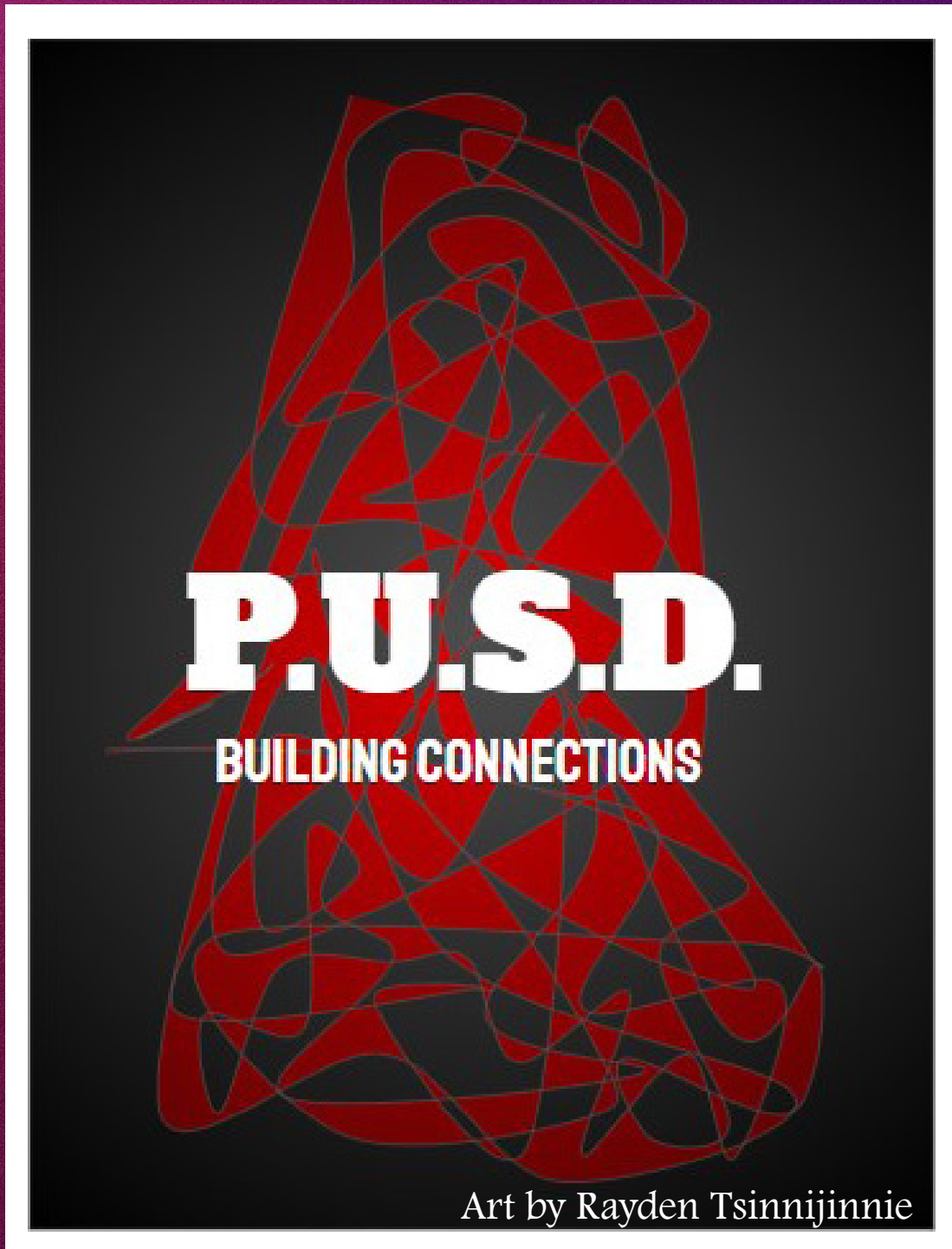


PAGE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Monthly Newsletter January 2021



www.pageud.org

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Vision

A community of learners who direct our collective actions and resources toward the unique learning needs of every child in order for all students to become college and career ready and successful in a global society.

Motto

Collectively Committed to Every Student, Every Day, Every Minute.



Mission

Our schools are passionate about the learning-for-all mission and understand that every student matters. We are responsible and accountable for the education of every student that walks through our doors every day.

BOARD CORNER

Ya'at'eeh, shik'ei doo shidine'e. Hozhoogo Ninaanaa-hai Dooleel!

Shi ei Desiree Fowler yinishye. Tabaaha nishli, Kinlichii'nii bashishchiin, Naakai dine'e dashicheii, Tod-ich'ii'nii dashinali. Akot'eego dine asdzan nishli.

Greetings, happy new year!

My name is Desiree Fowler, I am of the Edgewater Clan, born for the Red House Clan, my maternal grandfather is the Mexican People Clan, my paternal grandfather's clan is Bitter Water Clan. That's how I introduce myself as a Diné women.

It has been a phenomenal journey working with the board. I would like to recognize the Governing Board members and the newly appointed board member, Charles Weiss for their selflessness to represent the children of Page Unified School District. Their dedication to the Governing Board has reflected the amount of years each member has served on the board.

As I reflect back on the past four years, I must say, that was one wild roller coaster ride. I've had my share of challenges and celebrations, I'm humble to continue my work into my second term. I'm grateful to have had Delores "Dee" McKerry to mentor me throughout my first term, through many of our travels to and from conferences. I have learned much of Dee's personal journey and her desire to serve the children of Page Unified School District and willingness to serve others.

My board advocacy has grown beyond our local school district, I recently completed my two-year term on the Arizona School Board Association Board of Directors as the Hispanic and Native American Indian Caucus President. This opportunity only led to bigger opportunities on the Equity Committee, Legislative Committee, Advocacy Day at the State Capital, and the recent hiring of the New ASBA Executive Director, Dr. Sheila Harrison. It was an honor to introduce the 2020 Teacher of the Year, Lynette Stant (Navajo) when she received the 2020 ASBA Golden Bell Award. Mrs. Stant is the first Native American Teacher to receive the Teacher of the Year.

It was important to continue my work with the Board of Directors to ensure the scope of ASBA's Mission and Vision were inclusive of our demographics. This past fall I was elected as the 2021-2022 Coconino County Director with the support of Coconino County board members.



Des Fowler
Board Member

I felt it was important to challenge my advocacy at the Executive Board level, once my application was approved by the ASBA Nominating Committee I was informed I was one of six candidates. The elections of new Executive Board took place at the 63rd Annual ASBA Conference this past December, as I won the first round of election with 16 votes as well as the second round with 63% of the votes. As the newly elected Secretary, my role and responsibility called for larger capacity at both state and national level. Often this position is filled by a member from Southern Arizona, as I've felt it was critical for the Executive Board to represent our demographics in Northern Arizona which as we know consists of Rural Schools, Native Americans, and border line school district in need for having the challenges and barriers first hand addressed. Our State representatives need to hear our stories to insure our children receive better equitable education. After recent changes in my position, I had to vacate my position as the Coconino County Director.

I am humble to represent the children of Page Unified School District, as they deserve this recognition for all their hard work and dedication towards a successful and promising future. They have shown their strength and resilience through these trying times with the assistance from parents, grandparents, guardians, Page USD staff and teachers. We appreciate and thank you for your endless support to educate our future leaders.

Ahehee'.

Charles Weiss Sworn In as New School Board Member

Fowler and Kidman also sworn-in to new terms.

The Page Unified School District is pleased to announce that Charles Weiss will serve as its new board member. Weiss will replace outgoing board member, Ed Franklin, who has served as a PUSD board member since June 2017.

Because of restrictions on in-person meetings due to Covid-19, Weiss was sworn in December over the phone by Coconino County Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Tommy Lewis. Weiss will serve as a board member until the end of 2024.

Weiss is married to Melissa Weiss. With three school-aged children, Charles was looking for an opportunity to take a more active role in the school district, and he hopes to share his ideas regarding ways that the district and its schools may improve.

"Watching my sons go through school from the time they were in pre-school, I've seen some struggles and issues I thought the school was having, particularly in the transition between elementary to middle school and from middle school to high school," said Weiss. "With my background, and knowing what I know, made me want to be more involved with our schools and with my input and insights I think we might be able to find some solutions to those problems."

Weiss is half Navajo, half white and he believes having a background from those two backgrounds will be beneficial in a school district with a student population that's part white, part Native American.

"I spent some time living on the Navajo reservation and went to a boarding school," Weiss said. "I'm familiar with the struggles our native students deal with. I know they face some struggles with culture and technology. I want to use my knowledge to help the board and the district make some better decisions."

Weiss is employed at Glen Canyon Dam, where he works as an IT specialist for the Bureau of Reclamation. He spent part of his childhood in Page and moved back in 2005 to raise his family here, and spend more time with his mother, who also lives in Page.

Weiss also serves in the Navy Reserves, something he's done for 17 years. He did two deployments with the Navy to the Persian Gulf and the Horn of Africa during Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation Enduring Freedom.



Charles Weiss
Board Member

"Our schools and our students face a lot of challenges today, and those challenges have only increased with the Covid-19 situation, but I want to help our students and our schools rise to meet those challenges," Weiss said. "Overall, I'd like to see good quality education for Page schools."

School board members Des Fowler and Sandra Kidman were re-appointed to their seats and sworn-in for their new terms, which will expire Dec. 31, 2024.

PHS SENIOR ACCEPTED TO STANFORD



Neve Redhair



Redhair, a team captain for the Lady Sand Devils, practices free throws last week.

In early December, Page High School senior, Neve Redhair, learned that she has been accepted to Stanford University.

Redhair is an active student. She serves as the Student Body Public Relations Coordinator, and she's on both the basketball and volleyball teams. She has played on the basketball team's varsity team since she was a freshman. As a freshman and sophomore she was part of the team that was crowned 3A champions, and last year she took second in state. This year the talented senior will be one of the team's starters and one of its team captains. You'll see her on the court as the team's shooting guard.

Her basketball coach, Ryan Whitehorse, has been working with Redhair on the court and in his classroom since she was a freshman and wasn't surprised to hear she's on her way to Stanford.

"As a person, she's mature for her age," said Coach Whitehorse. "She has very supportive parents who have instilled in her that education is a top priority. She's the perfect example of the kind of student all teachers want in their classrooms. She's hardworking, she has great ethics and she has taken the initiative to find opportunities to benefit her future."

As you would expect from a Stanford-bound student, Redhair is also an exceptional student. She's maintaining a 4.0 GPA, and is on track to be one of this year's valedictorians.

Page High School Principal, Anne Martin, is happy to witness Redhair's success.

"Neve is an asset to our Sand Devil Nation," Martin said. "We are very proud of her accomplishments. Her determination and commitment to her education has earned her many distinctions. I know that Mr. Albert sees her as an exceptional writer and Ms. Moore brags about her leadership skills all the time. I enjoy interacting with her. She is a friendly student. Her organizational skills and kind demeanor make her video announcements of the highest quality and entertaining."

Redhair learned that she'd been accepted to Stanford while she was Christmas shopping in Flagstaff with her mother. While walking through Hobby Lobby, Redhair checked her email on her phone and saw she had an email from Stanford. "I opened it right then and there," she said.

Redhair, aware this was a pivotal moment in her life, borrowed her mother's phone and used it to record the moment. Her mother, who was standing with her, learned that her daughter had been accepted to Stanford while they were recording. After that, Redhair began calling her friends and family and telling them the good news.

Aramark Donates Sleeping Bags to PUSD



Aramark employees delivering a load of sleeping bags to PUSD's Student Support Services in November.

Aramark donated approximately 300 sleeping bags to Page Unified School District in November, and with the arrival of cold weather they're proving to be a very hot commodity.

More than half of them have already been given away. Some were given directly to families who requested them, and others were left with Navajo Chapter House representatives to be given out later.

Page-based Wilderness River Adventures operates guided tours through the Grand Canyon from April to October, and the company provides each guest with a new sleeping bag. At the end of the river season WRA has accumulated a large surplus of bags. Prior to delivering the bags to PUSD, Aramark washed and dried each bag.

The idea to donate sleeping bags to the school district came from Brittany Brink, Human Resources Manager for Lake Powell Resorts and Marinas. Her husband, Josh Brink, teaches music at Desert View Intermediate school, and Brittany knew from previous involvement with the school district that it sometimes needs items such as sleeping bags, coats and other cold-weather items.

The sleeping bags made their way to the school district's Student Support Services, and McKinney-Vento program, a federal program that provides money and resources to youth

and their families who are experiencing homelessness.

"The sleeping bags have been a very popular item with some of our families this year," said Tashina Williams, Director of PUSD's Student Support Services. "The sleeping bags make it easy for our families to take with them if they need to. It's often easier to use a sleeping bag rather than trying to find bedding to fit a particular bed."

Student Support Services distributed the first round of sleeping bags as part of its Thanksgiving holiday box deliveries.

Having the sleeping bags has allowed Student Support Services to be pro-active in their efforts to help PUSD's students and their families through the cold part of the year. "It's much better than trying to address the situation after the fact," said Williams. "We have been offering them to all the families we meet, and so far none of them have declined."

The sleeping bags have been especially popular with families who live on the Navajo Nation. This year has been a difficult one throughout the Page school district as families have dealt with the effects of the Covid-19. The Navajo Nation has been particularly hard-hit during the pandemic, which has left some families entering the winter months with fewer resources.

es than they'd have during a normal year.

Many Navajo families live in remote areas and their houses aren't connected to public utilities. They're responsible for providing their own home-heating sources. Some heat their houses with wood stoves, some with propane.

Since the pandemic struck in March, the Navajo Nation has endured many stay-at-home orders, and numerous weekends when it was in full lock-down. At other times, family members have taken prolonged absences from work to care for family members who were ill with Covid. One of the results has been fewer hours at work, or fewer hours spent gathering wood and now

many families find themselves less-prepared for winter than they'd like to be. And because the families living in remote locations aren't connected to a public utility, they can't ask for a grace period or extension on an overdue bill. When the fuel runs out, it's out.

"We are working with several families who are living in tents," said Williams. "They have really appreciated receiving the sleeping bags."

Having a room containing 150 sleeping bags gives Williams a certain level of comfort too. "It gives me peace of mind knowing we have a ready and easy solution to help families who may have to face cold days and nights this winter."

Student Support Services expects to give out another round of sleeping bags as part of its Christmas box deliveries, and she expects they'll continue to be popular for months to come.

"I really appreciate the donations from Aramark," said Williams. "Finding solutions to keep families warm is a hard one. It's hard to coordinate getting propane, or wood. A sleeping bag is an easy, ready-to-use answer to that while we figure out a more long-term solution. The sleeping bags have had a bigger impact with some of our families than I think Aramark realizes."

"It is our pleasure to make this donation to our Lake Powell neighbors," said Kelly Zwierchowski, Vice President of Operations for Lake Powell Resorts. "Aramark has a deep respect for the Navajo Nation and we remain committed to protecting and building the Page and Lake Powell community."

REDHAIR from pg. 3

As soon as Redhair returned home she accepted Stanford's offer and paid the enrollment fee, which had the gratifying effect of making it official.

Redhair applied to other universities, but Stanford was her first choice. Being accepted by the prestigious institution was almost more than she dared hope for, said Redhair. "In my head I really doubted myself on the application. It's still kind of sinking in."

Redhair plans to major in biology on her way to pre-med, then med-school. "I definitely want to do something in the medical field. For a long time I've wanted to be a nurse practitioner or physician assistant, but lately I've been thinking about becoming a surgeon."

Her acceptance to Stanford has been a big boost to her confidence. "I feel like I can now do anything I put my mind to," Redhair said.

Redhair's interest in the medical field came from her mother, Florinda Tracey, who works as a physician assistant at LeChée Clinic. "My mom was the one I looked up to," she said.

Redhair's interest in the medical field deepened further two years ago when she spent six weeks at Vanderbilt University where she attended a bio-medical research program as a research intern.

"I loved it out there," Redhair said. "It was my preview into what college will be like. I lived in a dorm, read scientific articles, worked with Phd researchers and attended classes from nine to five.

"I was so interested in what I was learning there, and too busy to get very homesick."

Redhair will attend Vanderbilt's bio-medical program again

this summer.

Redhair visited the Stanford campus when she was in sixth grade and seventh grade during summer basketball camps. She was part of a club team, called the Lake Powell Gunners, coached by her father, Joshua Redhair. The team did car washes and other fundraisers to earn enough money to travel to the California camp. She was immediately captivated by the learning atmosphere and the beauty of the campus.

"That visit is what first planted the idea of attending college there," she said. "The event that sticks with me the most happened during Spirit Week when they celebrated what they called 'Nerd Nation.' Nerd Nation is a big thing there. They embrace being nerdy, and that event erased the stigma that being is a nerd is a bad thing."

As part of the camp, the Lake Powell Gunners worked with members of Stanford's girls basketball team. "That was the first time I saw that someone can be good at both basketball and academics. That was the first time I'd ever experienced anything like that and it really changed my mindset."

Redhair hopes the pandemic won't prevent her from attending Stanford in person this fall.

"I really hope I can be there in person," she said. "I was on their campus before. They have such a beautiful campus, and I'd love to experience the whole college experience."

If the pandemic prevents her from attending Stanford in person, Redhair says she'll make the best of attending virtually.

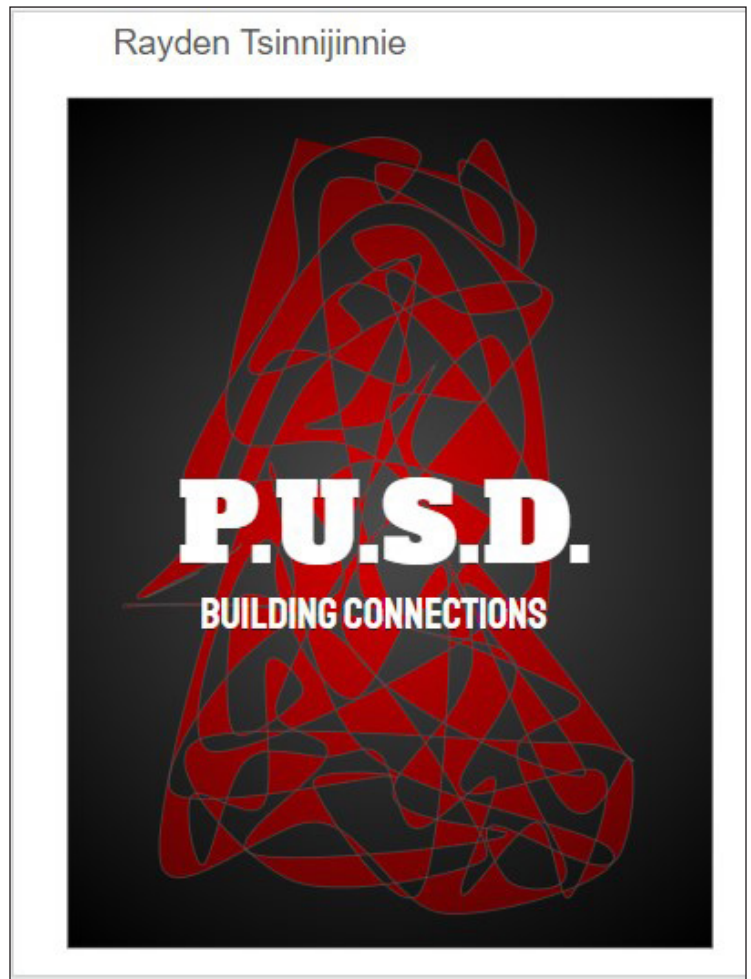
"I haven't struggled with online learning, and I've developed affective online techniques and I could do that again for my Stanford classes, but I'll be a lot more excited if I can attend in person."

"Building Connections" Art Contest Winners

PUSD's theme for the 20-21 school year is Building Connections. As part of that effort, the school district held a contest which ended in December in which we asked art students from the middle school and high school to create and submit a logo that conveys the "Building Connections" idea.

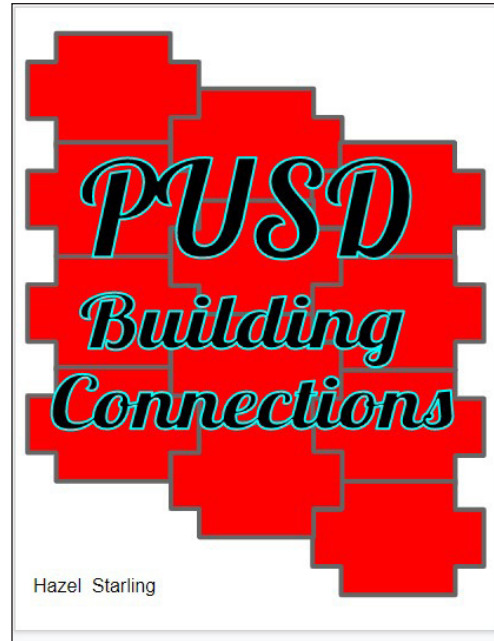
We received dozens of excellent submissions, and after careful consideration three winners were selected. First place winner was Rayden Tsinnijinnie. His art appears on the cover of this newsletter. Second place was Hazel Starling. Third place was Alesandra Tejada.

Congratulations! And thank you for your amazing contributions!

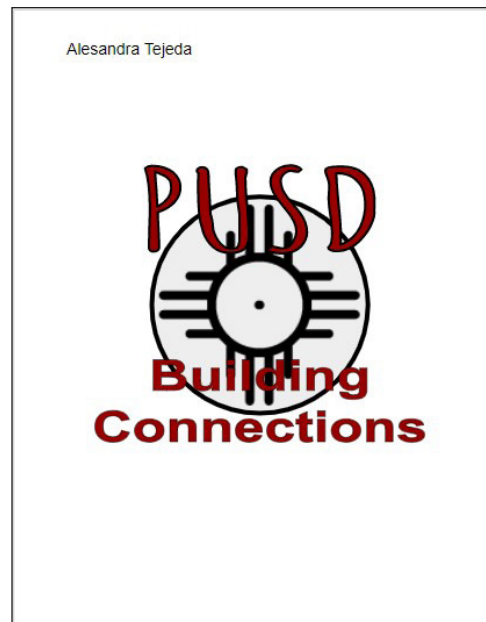


Rayden Tsinnijinnie
6th grade
1st place
Received \$100

"Building Connections" Art Contest Winners



Hazel Starling | 7th grade | 2nd place | Received \$50



Alesandra Tejada | 7th grade | 3rd place | Received \$25

EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH

Classified Employee of the Month - Oct. 2020



William Tresh

Certified Employee of the Month - Oct. 2020



Kori Fitch

STUDENTS OF THE MONTH



Amorina Wright
Lake View Primary



Emmalynn Wischmann
Desert View Intermediate



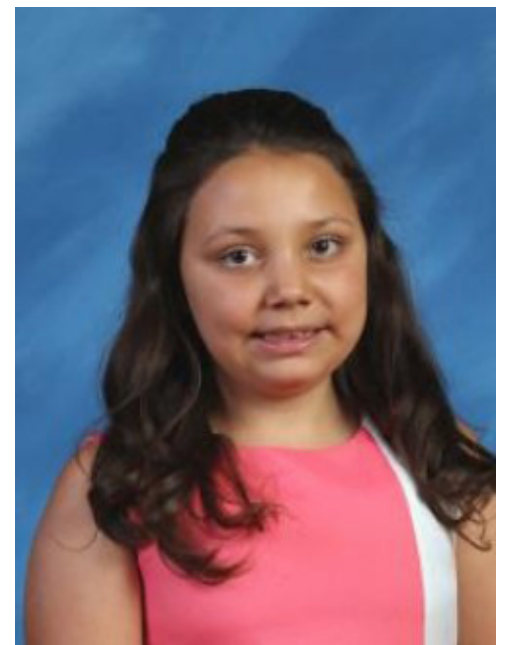
Shandiin Gatewood
Page Middle School



Trystan Conley
Page High School



Savana Dach
Manson Mesa High School



Lexandra Kocjan
Sage & Sand Virtual Acad.



Announcements

PLEASE KEEP YOUR CAMERAS ON



Parents, while in our remote-learning environment, please encourage your student to keep their computer's camera on and have them sit in front of it while attending classes virtually.



STUDENTS WHO SIT IN FRONT OF THEIR CAMERAS ARE:

- More accountable for their actions and role as a student.
- More engaged with their teachers and classmates.
- More likely to pay attention to the lessons and curriculum.
- Perform better on tests and quizzes.

THANK
YOU!

It's Tax Credit Season

Taking advantage of the Arizona State Tax Credit is a great way to help out Page school students while also saving money on your taxes.

Individuals can donate up to \$200, couples can donate up to \$400.

You can specify what school, and even what program in the school you'd like your contribution to go to.

You'll find a Tax Credit Form at the top of our website at pageud.org