

*Pasco Education Foundation, Inc*



# S.T.A.R. AWARDS

STAFF THAT ARE REMARKABLE

*Honoring our Teacher, School Related Personnel,  
Noninstructional Nonbargaining, and  
Administrators of the Year*



**THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 2024**



Hilton Garden Inn  
26640 Silver Maple Pkwy.  
Wesley Chapel, FL 33544

Presented By:

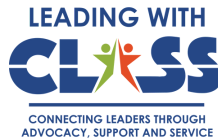


# The following sponsors are proud to be a part of the 2024 S.T.A.R. Awards

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# Pasco County Administrator of the Year

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## Daniela Bruno

Office for Leading and Learning  
MTSS Specialist



Ms. Daniela Bruno started her career in Pasco County 18 years ago as a teacher at Gulf Middle School. She quickly rose as a teacher leader and transitioned into an instructional trainer coach where she supported teachers in planning and facilitating high quality lessons. In 2017, Ms. Bruno joined the Office for Leading and Learning as an ELA Curriculum Specialist where she supported several elementary schools in the development of strong literacy systems that focused on high levels of learning for each one of our students.

Most currently, Ms. Bruno serves as one of the Elementary MTSS Specialists. She partners with school leaders, district curriculum specialists and instructional coaches to ensure schools have strong systems to support the learning for all. Daniela is highly respected by those that work with her. Her calm, gentle, yet intentional nature makes this position a perfect fit for her. The schools she supports and those that work alongside of her are stronger as a result of her leadership.



# Pasco County Assistant Principal of the Year

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Jill Cortier

J. W. Mitchell High School  
Assistant Principal



Ms. Jill Cortier began her journey with Pasco County Schools in 2007 as a Science Teacher at J.W. Mitchell High School, where she taught Integrated Science and Biology for three years.

While teaching, Ms. Cortier was instrumental in rewriting the Pasco School District curriculum maps for Integrated Science. She also served as the committee chair for the formation and implementation of Mustang University – Ninth Grade Academy.

In July of 2010, Ms. Cortier was promoted to Assistant Principal at J.W. Mitchell High School. She is a valued leader who takes decisive action to improve teaching, learning, and student success. Not only does she oversee the school counselors and academic advisors, but she also develops the school's master schedule. Ms. Cortier ensures all students and families are well informed of each opportunity available to them. She conducts classroom walkthroughs and supports teachers' professional development and the evaluation process. She monitors PLC (Professional Learning Community) groups, coordinates quarterly data chats, and participates with other school leaders on the district-level Secondary Design Team. Ms. Cortier also coordinates the Extended School Year remediation program.

Ms. Cortier has a full plate but always makes time to develop strong, genuine relationships with students as she is involved in school-sponsored clubs and the Band Booster.



# Pasco County Principal of the Year

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## Christopher Dunning Wendell Krinn Technical High School Principal



Dr. Chris Dunning has been an educator in Pasco County for over 30 years. He started his career as an elementary school teacher and quickly advanced to elementary Assistant Principal and then Principal. He also spent time as the district's Chief Negotiator in the Office for Employee Relations.

Dr. Dunning was selected to open Paul R. Smith Middle School, where he led his team to become the highest-scoring Title I School in the district. Following this, he went to Seven Springs Middle School and led them to become the highest-scoring school in the entire district. Given his successes, Dr. Dunning was asked to move to our only double "D" high school and in just one year, his leadership assisted the school in raising their grade and getting them off the state watch list. Currently, he is the Principal at Wendell Krinn Technical High School, the district's first magnet high school that has been recognized as a Demonstration Magnet School and provides opportunities for students in 14 career areas.

Throughout Dr. Dunning's professional life, he has been an active volunteer in the community. Even before having kids of his own, he coached at the YMCA and was a leader of a cub scout pack. He has served on multiple chamber boards as chairman and has been a member of multiple rotaries. Dr. Dunning continually gives back to our community in meaningful ways. He and his wife Jeannie are also first responders in the foster care system and have hosted almost 40 children in the past three years.



# Pasco County Non-Instructional Non-Bargaining Employee of the Year

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## Billy Wade

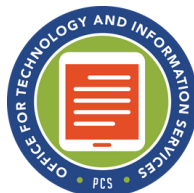
Office for Technology and  
Information Services  
FNS Systems Analyst



Mr. Billy Wade was born in Rota Spain and lived there until he was 4, when his father got stationed in Chesapeake, VA. He resided in Chesapeake until he joined the United States Marines at the age of 17. He would serve in the Marines for the next 6 years where his career in information technology began. After his service, Mr. Wade would attend college pursuing a deeper knowledge and acquiring a bachelor's in information technology. Shortly after graduating, in 2019, he began his career at Pasco County Schools as a Technician for the Office for Technology and Information Services.

In his dynamic IT career, he has consistently demonstrated a commitment to delivering exceptional customer service, with a particular emphasis on ensuring users' comfort and proficiency with their devices. Recognizing the crucial role of user satisfaction in the IT landscape, he advanced to the position of Systems Analyst. In this role, he applied his accumulated experience to analyze and enhance entire systems, ensuring seamless integration and a positive user experience. His journey from Technician to Specialist to Systems Analyst reflects his unwavering dedication to delivering exceptional customer service and adapting to the evolving needs of the IT landscape.

In his off time, he enjoys an active lifestyle and spending time with his daughter and 2 dogs. He is a licensed foster parent who, in the time working for Pasco, has helped foster 6 children while they await adoption/court decisions.



# Pasco County School-Related Personnel of the Year

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## Tami Milner

Cypress Creek Middle School  
Data Entry Operator



Mrs. Tami Milner began her career with Pasco County Schools in August of 2015 as a high school secretary and in 2017 became a data entry operator. Although often tedious and done quietly behind the scenes, data entry work is what keeps the school districts operating flawlessly. Tami is professional, efficient, and always helpful, but it's what she has created outside of her data entry "job responsibilities" that has captured the attention of everyone around her.

Mrs. Milner is a contributor to the very culture at Cypress Creek Middle School. She is a fixture in the school courtyard between periods, encouraging students to get to class and do their best. She also welcomes "lunch duty" as an opportunity to establish meaningful relationships with kids.

Mrs. Milner has also developed a strong rapport with families as her genuine care and positivity radiates each afternoon in the car loop during dismissal time. It's common knowledge that Mrs. Milner's office is always open to anyone who needs a warm and welcoming place to talk or just relax for a bit in her office recliner. Most recently, she saw a need on her way to work and decided to become a district-approved driver in order to transport students to and from school.

What Mrs. Milner has created above and beyond her Data Entry Operator responsibilities has made her so near and dear to all who know her. Her love for her school and community is inspiring!



**CYPRESS CREEK  
MIDDLE SCHOOL**

# Pasco County Teacher of the Year Finalists

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## Stephanie Bertig

Kirkland Ranch Academy of Innovation  
Digital Media Instructor



Mrs. Stephanie Bertig earned a bachelor's degree in Telecommunications from the University of Florida and worked in video production and training before taking a hiatus to spend time at home with her daughters. Entering back into the workforce, Stephanie started substitute teaching with Pasco, where she discovered her love for the open-minded, quizzical nature of high school students.

In 2010 Stephanie began teaching video and journalism at Bishop McLaughlin High School. In 2015, Stephanie became the instructor for The Academy of Digital Video Technology at Wesley Chapel High School. There, she created a robust program where students learned video while achieving Adobe certifications. In 2022, Stephanie transitioned to Kirkland Ranch Academy of Innovation to lead the Digital Media Program. She enjoys the focus and drive of the students and staff at this unique, hands-on school.

Stephanie and her husband, Bob have two wonderful daughters, Meghan and Maya, who both attended Florida State University after graduating from Mitchell High School. Meghan also earned a master's degree from Boston University and currently lives in Tampa working as a marketing analyst. Maya will graduate with honors from FSU this May and will attend graduate school for her MBA.

Stephanie is honored to work in the district that prepared her children for success. She is grateful for the administrators that guided her and the amazing teachers that inspire her every day.



**NAVIGATORS**  
KIRKLAND RANCH ACADEMY OF INNOVATION



# Pasco County Teacher of the Year Finalists

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LeAnne John

Zephyrhills High School

Agriculture Teacher



After growing up showing animals in 4H and FFA (Future Farmers of America) and graduating from the University of South Florida, Leanne John began her Pasco County career at West Zephyrhills Elementary School and served students there for 14 years. In 2017, she decided to combine her love for 4H, agriculture, and Pasco County Junior Cattlemen by accepting the agriculture instructor position at Zephyrhills High School.

When Ms. John took over the school's Agriculture Program it had around 90 students. Leanne realized that the FFA program needed new life and created three main goals: to grow student enrollment with enough consistency to earn a second AG teacher allocation, to have students winning awards on a National Stage within 5 years, and to create a Junior FFA chapter. Leanne achieved all of those goals within 3 years! Under her guidance, the Zephyrhills FFA program has grown to over 200 students, has two instructors, and earned National Chapter 2 Star recognition.

Leanne also serves as a Mentor Teacher and as the District Career, Technical, and Adult Education PLC (Professional Learning Community) Lead for Agriculture. She was selected to participate in the Agriscience Educational Leadership Program in the 22-23 school year, and her passion for helping students grow into leaders in the Zephyrhills and agriculture communities is evident in the activities, events, and challenges she incorporates into her lessons and student experiences. She has created a leadership standard that her students carry forward when working with new and younger students. The culture and climate she has created in her classroom, lab, and barn encourage students to be creative problem-solvers and incorporates critical thinking with real-world applications.



# Pasco County Teacher of the Year Finalists

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## William Rutherford

Gulf High School

Band Director



William (Bill) Rutherford is a product of the Pasco County School system as he started in the first grade at Anclote Elementary in 1976, attended Gulf Middle School, and graduated from Gulf High School in 1988. Inspired by his own elementary, middle, and high school band directors, Bill attended the University of South Florida, graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree in Music Education, K-12 in 1994. Upon his graduation from USF, he became the Band Director at his alma mater where he has taught for the past 30 years.

As the Director of Bands at Gulf, Mr. Rutherford oversees the GHS Marching Buccaneer Band & Color Guard, the GHS Jazz Ensemble, and the GHS Concert Band. He also teaches piano, AP Music Theory, International Baccalaureate Music, and TV Production. Bill is a member of the Florida Bandmasters Association (he served as District Chairman from 1999-2001), the Florida Schools Music Association, and the Music Educators National Conference. He served for 10 years as the chairman of the Pasco All-County Jazz Band.

Bill and his wife Kelly (a Gulf High graduate and a Pasco County educator for 33 years) have three children – Elizabeth (also a Pasco educator), Brittany, and Andrew... all Gulf High graduates. His goal is to instill a love of music for his students and hopes that they carry music with them throughout life.



## Teachers of the Year

1969 - 70 Lauzanne Sims Casson  
1970 - 71 William Moble  
1971 - 72 Artiste Parsons  
1972 - 73 Joan Pryor  
1973 - 74 Lorenzo Coffie  
1974 - 75 Caroline Marlette  
1975 - 76 Orlando Puig  
1976 - 77 Education Celebration was not held  
1977 - 78 Ronald Ray Robison  
1978 - 79 Dr. Robert Marsh  
1979 - 80 Bonnie F. Palmer  
1980 - 81 Yvonne Sickler  
1981 - 82 Mary H. Upman  
1982 - 83 Margaret A. Jones  
1983 - 84 Ronald E. Eckstein  
1984 - 85 Charlene Daniel  
1985 - 86 Rita Billett  
1986 - 87 Joan Piraino-Weinberg  
1987 - 88 Frank Roder  
1988 - 89 Alice Roll  
1989 - 90 Frances McCrimmon  
1990 - 91 Pauline Sullivan  
1991 - 92 Maria Angeliadis  
1992 - 93 Jerry Stacy  
1993 - 94 Heather Fiorentino  
1994 - 95 Debora Wichmanowski  
1995 - 96 LaVon Dormeyer  
1996 - 97 Kristi Theurer  
1997 - 98 Darrell Huling  
1998 - 99 Celisa Walls Cook  
1999 - 00 Sister Roberta Bailey  
2000 - 01 Linda Gordon  
2001 - 02 Ed Dillard  
2002 - 03 John Keon  
2003 - 04 Freda Abercrombie  
2004 - 05 Patty Hughes  
2005 - 06 Suzanne M. Beane  
2006 - 07 Melody Johnson  
2007 - 08 Tom Adams  
2008 - 09 Lesley Wade  
2009 - 10 Kathryn Bylsma  
2010 - 11 Sean Gaudet  
2011 - 12 Dan Wolfe  
2012 - 13 Carla Nolan  
2013 - 14 Paula Berry  
2014 - 15 Patrick Connolly  
2015 - 16 Beth Hess  
2016 - 17 Donald Blake

## Teacher of the Year Cont.

2017 - 18 Robert Patterson  
2018 - 19 Susan McNulty  
2019 - 20 Holly Mickler  
2020 - 21 Jennifer Dixon  
2021 - 22 Yan Li Gazda  
2022 - 23 Ryan Bintz  
2023 - 24 Kim Theurer

## SRPs of the Year

1989 - 90 Margo Scranton  
1990 - 91 Mary Kash  
1991 - 92 Claudette Davis  
1992 - 93 Eugene Scott  
1993 - 94 Patricia Reeves  
1994 - 95 Kathy Johnson  
1995 - 96 Sheri Harmeson  
1996 - 97 Anne Palow  
1997 - 98 Arthur Tongen  
1998 - 99 Lisa Schaefermeyer  
1999 - 00 Pat Mikolajczak  
2000 - 01 Rebecca Mohrle  
2001 - 02 Doreen Pattermann  
2002 - 03 Kathy Rinaldi  
2003 - 04 Joan George  
2004 - 05 Janet Anderton  
2005 - 06 Joanne Amann  
2006 - 07 Rose Aiello  
2007 - 08 Helena Fletcher  
2008 - 09 Monica Russ  
2009 - 10 Donna Lyons  
2010 - 11 Clara Barlow  
2011 - 12 Pamela Paone  
2012 - 13 Laura Hauser  
2013 - 14 Christie Mitchell  
2014 - 15 Karen Zummo  
2015 - 16 Julie Beardsley  
2016 - 17 Bruno Buonsanto  
2017 - 18 Sharaya Janes  
2018 - 19 Pamela Paone  
2019 - 20 Kathleen "Katie" Jeffcott  
2020 - 21 Andrea Morrow  
2021 - 22 Pamela Paone  
2022 - 23 Joann Ortiz Ramos  
2023 - 24 Anita Dienes

### Administrators of the Year

1995 - 96 Wendell Krinn  
1996 - 97 Renee Sedlack, Ed.D.  
1997 - 98 Alan Knight  
1998 - 99 Ed Mutell  
1999 - 00 Oma Pantridge  
2000 - 01 Jay Feliciani  
2001 - 02 Tammy Rabon  
2002 - 03 Joy Salerno  
2003 - 04 Rob Aguis  
2004 - 05 David Scanga, Ed.D.  
2005 - 06 Arlene Bodden  
2006 - 07 Ray Bonti  
2007 - 08 Peggy Jones, Ph.D.  
2008 - 09 Monica Verra  
2009 - 10 Terry Rhum  
2010 - 11 Kevin Shibley  
2011 - 12 Beth Brown  
2012 - 13 Saybra Chapman  
2013 - 14 Chuck Hutinger  
2014 - 15 Vanessa Hilton, District-Based  
2014 - 15 Jason Joens, School-Based  
2015 - 16 Kim Davis  
2016 - 17 Saybra Chapman  
2017 - 18 Rebecca Musselman  
2018 - 19 Tammy Rabon  
2019 - 20 Lea Mitchell  
2020 - 21 Samantha Del Valle  
2021 - 22 Vaughnette Chandler  
2022 - 23 Melissa Musselwhite  
2023 - 24 Iravonia Abiola

### Assistant Principal of the Year

2019 - 20 Amy Riddle  
2020 - 21 Josh Borders  
2021 - 22 Andrea Altman  
2022 - 23 Melissa Caruso,  
2023 - 24 Cheryl Macri-Grim

### Principal of the Year

2019 - 20 Carin Hetzler-Nettles, Principal  
2020 - 21 Joanne Glenn, Principal  
2021 - 22 Joel DiVincent, Principal  
2022 - 23 Danielle Johnson, Principal  
2023 - 24 David Salerno, Principal

### NNBs of the Year

2007 - 08 Mary Olson  
2008 - 09 Karen Bryant  
2009 - 10 Leroy Christopher  
2010 - 11 Edward Flicker  
2011 - 12 Vonnie Maples  
2012 - 13 Betsy Eanes  
2013 - 14 Stephan Gandy  
2014 - 15 Joshua Nelson  
2015 - 16 Lori Karpinski  
2016 - 17 Josh Zappe  
2017 - 18 Jenatte Smith  
2018 - 19 Maria Correia  
2019 - 20 Michael Witfoth  
2020 - 21 Michelle Bolin  
2021 - 22 Joseph Zollo  
2022 - 23 Aimee Starkey  
2023 - 24 Kimberlie Glogowski



PASCO EDUCATION  
FOUNDATION

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Mark Lyon

Gary Braken

Vickie Chansler

Jerry McCarthy

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# PASCO EDUCATION FOUNDATION'S EMPLOYEE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

## Looking to further your education?

Whether you want to go back to college, attend a conference, or have another professional development opportunity available. The Foundation can help you achieve those goals. Our collective future depends on strong public schools, and we are honored to be your partner in accelerating student success.

### Applications Available

April 1, 2024 - May 31, 2024

*\*Funds awarded in July*

For more information contact:  
[csadler@pascoeducationfoundation.org](mailto:csadler@pascoeducationfoundation.org)  
813-794-2705  
[PascoEducationFoundation.org](http://PascoEducationFoundation.org)



PASCO EDUCATION  
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On behalf of Florida Prepaid, thank you for preparing students academically for a postsecondary education while we help families prepare financially. The job you do every day is invaluable.

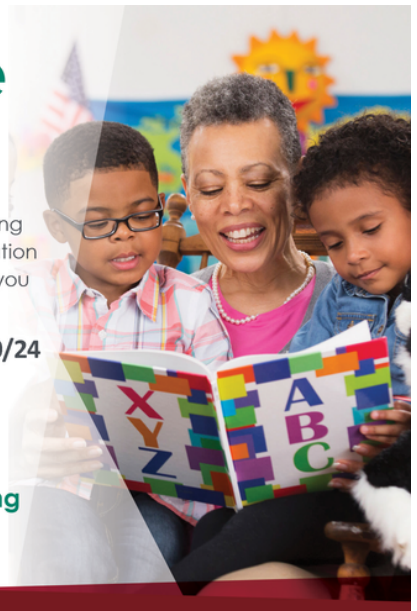
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🌟 Suncoast Credit Union

# **2024 S.T.A.R. Awards Banquet**

**Presented By:**

**Pasco Education Foundation and Suncoast Credit Union**

**Tonight's Emcee: Sean Daly, ABC Action News**

Megan Harding, Chairman  
District School Board of Pasco County

Kurt S. Browning  
Superintendent of Schools

Stacey Capogrosso, President  
Pasco Education Foundation, Inc.

Kourtney Berry, Executive Director of Youth Outreach  
Suncoast Credit Union Foundation

## **Dinner**

**S.T.A.R. Awards Recognition**  
**District Administrator of the Year**  
**Assistant Principal of the Year**  
**Principal of the Year**  
**NNB of the Year**  
**SRP of the Year**  
**Teacher of the Year Finalists**  
**Teacher of the Year Announcement**