



The District 200 Education Foundation is proud to announce that the recipient of the 2018 Sue Palmore Award of Excellence is Ron Bendis.

Ron has been a community member since he moved to Woodstock in 1982 to teach business education before serving as Assistant Principal for twenty-six years at Woodstock High School. It is in this role that Ron succeeded in the goal that drove him into education: making a difference in students' lives.

Ron's unusual path to education began after he joined the Chicago Police Department. While serving on the police force he came to the realization that he would rather be proactive and help youth before the need for law enforcement intervention. Ron began teaching in 1975 in Ottawa Illinois before moving to Woodstock to teach business education at Woodstock High School in 1982; soon after he moved into the position of Assistant Principal.

John Headley, retired Woodstock High School teacher, nominated Ron and described in his submission letter: "Ron worked tirelessly behind the scenes to allow students to have a chance to succeed...I saw students come into his office very upset, but Ron had a calm demeanor that eased the students enough to be constructive with their problem. He has a thick skin and broad shoulders, nothing seemed to rattle him. Ron simply solved problems"

While at Woodstock High School, Ron instituted the "Academy of Changes" at the high school, a computer based curriculum that helped students in danger of failing earn enough academic credits to graduate. As the Assistant Principal in charge of student discipline he worked at updating the Saturday morning detention program so that it became a tool to help students stay in the classroom and graduate.

Dr. Corey Tafoya, Harvard CUSD 50 Superintendent, worked with Ron for many years. "Ron's blend of toughness, empathy, humor, and commitment is a model for administrators...he never cared about the student's background or excuses why they couldn't do it—he forced them to believe in themselves even when everyone else had given up."

Ron retired from the school district in 2008 but continues to serve the community by volunteering at the Woodstock Food Pantry, delivering Meals on Wheels, and preparing meals for the PADS homeless shelter.

The D200 Education Foundation award is named after Susan Palmore who during her time as a member of both the District 200 Board of Education and the District 200 Education Foundation, Sue Palmore exemplified service to her community. Following her death in 2012, the District 200 Education Foundation Board wanted to find a way to honor Sue's legacy of serving the children and families of District 200, and so renamed the Foundation's Award of Excellence the "Sue Palmore Award of Excellence."

Each year, the award is given to a recipient who has shown exemplary service to the students and staff of District 200. Previous recipients of the award are Bud Swarhout (2011); Barb Banker (2012); Bill Schuette (2013); Jim Campion (2014); Miguel Rodriguez (2015), Joy Aavang (2016); John Van Fleet (2017).

The award will be presented to Ron at the foundation's Annual Groundhog Dinner and Auction on Saturday, February 10, 2018 at the Woodstock Harley-Davidson. Tickets for the event are available on the Foundation's website at <http://d200edfoundation.org> and at the D200 District Office.

Billie Cornell
Chairman, D200 Education Foundation

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That Ordinarily
Would Not*