

For Immediate Release
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Tustin School Psychologist Honored by Statewide Association

Mary Merchant, a school psychologist with the Tustin Unified School District, was honored as Orange County's Outstanding School Psychologist by the California Association of School Psychologists.

One school psychologist from each of 10 regions receives the award every year for going far beyond his or her job description in assisting students, school communities and advancing the profession.

Ms. Merchant started in the Tustin district in 2000 as a student intern. She is known for her involvement in school and community activities, as well as for being organized, enthusiastic and, as colleague Gwen Behrstock of Arnold O. Beckman High School put it, "kind to everyone." More importantly, Ms. Merchant re-organized the team that assesses pre-school students for special education and other educational needs. She also does individual and group counseling, behavior management plan development, and provides continuing education for school staff members.

A licensed marriage and family therapist, she is also pursuing a doctorate in psychology, which will expand her perspective of the individual student and family dynamics.

CASP, with 3,000 members, is the largest state association of school psychologists in the nation. For more than 55 years, CASP has advocated on behalf of all of California's students. School psychologists offer student assessments, classroom management, program development for at-risk students and many other education and mental health services to schools and their communities.

For more information about school psychology, visit the CASP web site at www.casponline.org. For a photo of Ms. Merchant, please contact Heidi Holmblad at communications@casponline.org.