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Bonita Unified Recognizes Value of Community Partnerships with Purpose Award

SAN DIMAS/LA VERNE – Recognizing the valuable contributions of strong community partnerships that support Bonita Unified staff, students and families, Superintendent Matt Wien presented two local volunteers with the Bonita Purpose Award – the District’s highest honor – during the Oct. 9 Board of Education meeting.

Wien presented the award to Project Boon executive director and co-founder Chris Suchanek, as well as Bonita Council PTA vice-president Vicky Maliszewski.

“We do not achieve our accolades alone; strong community partnerships are crucial for the District,” Wien said during the meeting. “Tonight, we recognize two of our outstanding community partners, who because of their work and sacrifice, model valuable life lessons to our students about generosity, community, and the power of giving back.”

Project Boon is a nonprofit organization founded by Suchanek in 2011 to combat food insecurity and provide volunteer opportunities both locally and internationally. Suchanek reached out to the District in 2021 to offer backpacks to students in need. Over the last four years, Suchanek and Project Boon have donated nearly 500 backpacks filled with school supplies to Bonita Unified students. Additionally, Project Boon has distributed nearly 400,000 meals to people in need and provided more than 50,000 hours of volunteerism.

“Chris is a former student of Bonita Unified and looks at Project Boon as an opportunity to give back a little of what has been given to him,” Wien said. “Our District is just one small piece of the incredible work Project Boon is doing.”

Maliszewski has been a District volunteer since moving to La Verne in 1994, and has served as a PTA member and office holder for Grace Miller and Allen Avenue elementary schools, Lone Hill Middle School, Bonita High School, and Chaparral-Vista High School. Additionally, Maliszewski is also a member of the La Verne/San Dimas Educational Foundation, Bonita Athletic Boosters, San Dimas Chamber of Commerce, and the Soroptimist International of San Dimas and La Verne.

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In addition to her volunteer work, Maliszewski has provided scholarships to graduating seniors, contributed to San Dimas High School's "Every 15 Minutes" program, donated to Bonita High School athletics, sponsored Bonita High School's eighth-grade parent nights, created gift bags for school sites, and occasionally served breakfast and lunch to school staff.

"I'm shocked Vicky had time to come and accept the award tonight," Wien said. "When you pause for a moment and consider all that our Purpose Award winners have done, it's incredible and staggering. The world would be a significantly better place if we had more people like Vicky Maliszewski and Chris Suchanek in it."

PHOTO:

BUSD_PURPOSE_VOLUNTEERS: Bonita Unified Superintendent Matt Wien, left, and Board of Education president Greg Palatto, far right, present Project Boon executive director/co-founder Chris Suchanek and Bonita Council PTA vice president Vicky Maliszewski with the Bonita Purpose Award – recognizing their volunteer work in support of Bonita Unified students – during the Oct. 9 Board meeting.

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