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Mission Statement: We are committed to the success of every student!

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Santa Fe High School 'legacy' named district's School Related Employee of the Year

Santa Fe High School has played a big part in Julie Rye's life. Now she is playing a big part in the lives of students and staff at the school.

Rye has been a clerical assistant at SFHS for the last seven years, but her ties to the school go back much further. Both her parents graduated from the school, as she did. Her son is also a SFHS alumnus, and her daughter is a current student.

The school's principal and coworkers consider her the 'face and voice' of Santa Fe High. Stationed just behind the school's front desk, Rye is the person who greets students, families and staff first thing in the morning and responds to questions (and problems) throughout the day.

"Serving in such a role can be demanding and stressful," said principal Dr. Tim Wright. "But Julie makes parents and students feel welcomed and valued. She listens intently to their questions and reassures them that she'll help them with their situation."

Rye says her long-standing connection to the school and the community are a big help in her work.

"I know a majority of the kids here and I went to school with a lot of their parents," she said. "They know they can call me personally if they need something, which is really nice."

Rye's contributions to the school are not limited to her work in the front office. She also sponsors a number of student groups and teams, including Student Government and the Junior and Senior classes. Evenings and weekends, she can often be found at games, concerts, fundraisers and other activities in which students are participating, both on and off campus.

"I love being a part of their lives," said Rye. "I hope it inspires them to see that I care about them whether they're at school or out in the community."

For her dedication to the school and its students, Rye has been named Alachua County Public Schools' School-Related Employee of the Year. She is one of 44 district employees nominated for the honor this year and will now go on to represent ACPS in the Florida School Related Employee of the Year program.

"I'm very honored," said Rye of her selection. "I feel really appreciated."

The district plans to recognize all of this year's honorees at a special celebration in May, the district's first in-person event for the School Related Employee of the Year program since the pandemic began. Since the program was established in 1993, honorees have received a check for \$110 to represent the 110% they give to their work. Community fundraising makes those awards possible.

Anyone interested in contributing to the School Related Employee of the Year program can do so online through The Education Foundation at edfoundationac.org. They can click on the red DONATE button near the top right-hand side of the page and select the 'School Related Employee of the Year Program' when asked to designate their donation.

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