



WEST CHICAGO ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Together for Excellence ★ ¡Juntos por la Excelencia!

312 East Forest Avenue
West Chicago, IL 60185
630.293.6000
www.wego33.org

#D33Pride Awards

3rd Trimester - 2025

The #D33Pride Awards are given to individuals who have significantly impacted the students, staff, and families of the District 33 community. This year, the Recognition Committee added a new category - the Rookie Award for Certified and Classified Staff. Staff members who have worked in the district for at least one year but under three years can be nominated for this award.

Nominations are accepted and presented at the end of each trimester. The members of the Recognition Committee judge the nominations, and winners are selected in each category. All names are removed from the nominations before being given to the committee members for judging. **A total of 8 nominations were submitted for this award cycle.**

#D33Pride Certified Staff Winner – **Gaby Mancera, Leman Middle School**

Gaby Mancera is a quiet force of compassion, leadership, and dedication. She creates a safe, welcoming space for newcomer students, celebrates their cultures, and advocates fiercely for their success. From coaching Special Olympics to mentoring colleagues, Gaby brings heart and humanity to every corner of D33. Her impact is felt far beyond the classroom - she truly changes lives.

#D33Pride Certified “Rookie” Staff Winner – **Julie Odom, Leman Middle School**

In just a short time, Julie Odom has transformed after-school athletics and activities into something vibrant, inclusive, and deeply meaningful for students. She’s a behind-the-scenes powerhouse who brings energy, organization, and heart to everything she does - from launching new programs to personally supporting students in need. Julie leads with joy, kindness, and an unshakable commitment to kids.

#D33Pride Classified “Rookie” Staff Winner – **Maria Fernandez, Indian Knoll Elementary**

Maria Fernandez is a steady, positive presence who makes a big difference at Indian Knoll. Whether she’s supporting students with complex needs or stepping in to help colleagues, Maria brings calm, care, and a can-do spirit to every situation. She’s known for her warm smile, her dedication to inclusion, and the extra mile she walks for every child, every day.