

ISD 196
Food and Nutrition Services Department
Heart of the Program Award
Minnesota School Nutrition Association

I would like to take this opportunity to nominate Marilyn Eykyn as a candidate to receive the MNSNA Heart of the Program Award. Marilyn started with District 196 in 1983 as a Food Service Associate. She worked her way up to Assistant Head Cook and in 1992 at a middle school and then on to our central kitchen. In 1998, she became the Food and Nutrition Manager of 2 schools, Eagan High School and Dakota Hills Middle School, and has been so ever since. She is certified through SNA to level 3, and stays current with her Food Manager Certificate through the Minnesota Department of Health.

Marilyn's strength is her production skills. She is able to problem solve any production issue that comes her way. She serves approximately 1,200 school lunch meals, besides any ala carte meals, and breakfast daily. Because of her many years of experience and her vast knowledge of large production, she is looked up to by her peers.

Another of Marilyn's strengths lies in her communication skills and her rapport with her kitchen staff, school staff, students, parents and administration. She has built many close relationships over the years and has developed trust with the people she works with. She does many caterings throughout the year for the entire district, some feeding up to 500 people. Since she is so good at what she does, she is asked every year to put the food on for our annual school district's all employee picnic. The attendance for this is usually around 3,200 people! I'm always amazed at how effortlessly she completes this task. Her forte is her ability to remain flexible while many demands are placed on her.

Besides operating a lunch and breakfast program for two schools, Marilyn also devotes her "extra" time to School Food Services in other areas. She is an active member of our River Valley Chapter and currently oversees fundraising activities. She spends many hours organizing pan and food sales, two events every year. Marilyn is also a member of the Secondary Menu Committee. She is involved with continuously developing new menus, creating and testing new recipes, and assisting with new menu sampling event. We rely heavily on her experience. She also holds many promotions throughout the year to get students excited about school lunch. This year she did a whole grains promotion, and a promotion during National School Lunch Week.

One word to sum up Marilyn.....AWESOME. She is organized, dedicated, flexible, and always gets the job done. We can always rely on her.

Please accept our nomination of Marilyn Eykyn for the Heart of the Program Award

Food Service Director _____

School Principal _____

School Food Service Supervisor _____

Date _____