



T-BIRD *times*

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KASTNER INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL
7676 N. FIRST STREET, FRESNO, CA 93720

Tony Hoffman Gives Virtual Red Ribbon Speech

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Hoffman speaks to Kastner Intermediate students about the dangers of drug abuse and his personal journey of recovery through a YouTube Live Assembly on Monday, October 19, 2020.

T-BIRD tweets:



Nothing, not even a global pandemic, stopped members of Kastner's Random Acts of Kindness Club from spreading goodness and cheer! Students from the club packaged and donated 20 boxes this November with hygiene products, toys, and school supplies to send to children around the world during the holiday season.



Mr. Paul Rigby hung up his hat after 37 years as a P.E. teacher and coach at Kastner Intermediate. He was celebrated with a plaque, lunch, and a retirement parade on Friday, October 30, 2020.

By: Ena W:

On Monday, October 19, 2020, Tony Hoffman visited Kastner Intermediate school and shared his story. He brought awareness to subjects like drug abuse, mental illness, and more.

He visited Kastner to speak for Red Ribbon Week. Tony talked about the dangers of drug use and addiction.

"We chose Tony because he has an amazing life story about how to reach out when you need help and the importance of staying drug free," said David Castle, the leadership teacher and activities director at Kastner. "He grew up in Clovis and knows what challenges our students face. His experiences are relatable and he does a great job talking to students."

A student at Kastner, Mia H. said, "The assembly and speech made me feel sad because an addiction can really happen to

anyone. It's scary to think that anyone like your friends, family, or even you can turn out with a drug addiction or mental illness. However, his story inspired me to think about my future and showed me that obstacles and challenges in life can be overcome with hard work."

Hoffman shared some of his obstacles in life and how he overcame them. He said that a quote was what really changed his life. Hoffman walked into his prison cell and laid down and that was when he saw what was written on the cell ceiling. It read, "Be careful what you think because your thoughts become your words. Be careful what you say because your words become your actions. Be careful what you do because your actions become your habits. Be careful what you make a habit because your habits make your character. And your character becomes your destiny."

Hoffman explained that many

people he knows overcame drug addictions and mental illnesses in different ways. One was recovering and continuing in life and one was on a death bed.

In order to really succeed, according to Hoffman, you have to start with the small things and slowly build up to your dreams. After he was released from prison, he started to live out his dream of being in the Olympics, but due to an injury he was not able to continue competing as an athlete. However, he is now a motivational speaker, he founded the Free Wheel project, and has a podcast. His story inspired many students at Kastner.

Red Ribbon Week is a tobacco, alcohol, drug, and violence prevention awareness campaign. It happens in October in the United States and around the world.

The Red Ribbon Week campaign theme for this year is: "Be happy. Be brave. Be drug free."

New Faces in New Spaces:

Meet our new Kastner staff members

MRS. MOUA, *principal*



By: Zoie A.

Kastner's new principal, Mrs. May Moua, is happily married to her husband of 15 years, and she has a daughter and a son. She loves to try new recipes and cook, in her words, "as a form of relaxing my brain from work or daily life." In addition to this, Mrs. Moua can speak two languages fluently — Hmong and English. She stated, "Lastly, food, especially pastries, and carbs are my weakness...they are so yum-

my!"

Mrs. Moua loves working with children and even said, "If I was not working at a middle school or in the educational field right now, I would be working in a hospital serving in the role of a registered nurse taking care of children who are ill."

Her job at Kastner is to keep students and staff safe while leading the school in a direction where continuous success is the goal. She included, "More importantly, my job is to take care of our Kastner students

and staff so that our students can be socially and emotionally ready to learn and successfully master academic content."

Mrs. Moua's motivation to become a school principal is getting the opportunity to work closely with students and build long lasting relationships with them. She wants to see them grow throughout their educational career. "When I became a teacher 15 years ago, I told myself that I wanted to be a changing agent in the educational setting and leading a school is the perfect place to do so," she stated.

This school year has been a growth opportunity for the Kastner staff, students, and Mrs. Moua, even though it has been a unique experience. She misses interacting with students on campus. Mrs. Moua said, "I am hopeful this will change very soon. I'm looking forward to meeting our new 7th graders and returning 8th graders!"

Her goals for this school year are to build strong relationships with her students and staff. She also mentioned how she wants to learn as much as she can about the Kastner culture, systems, and in her words, "great things Kastner is already doing in order for me to plan, lead, and keep Kastner on this successful track academically, athletically, and also socially and emotionally."

"I know it's a unique time for all of us with the new learning platform," Mrs. Moua said, "but you are all doing amazing, so continue to persevere and have GRIT! We've got this and we are in this together! Our Kastner staff cares a lot about each one of you!"

MS. MCGEE, *7th grade academic block & avid*

By: Nikki S.

Ms. McGee is one of the new teachers at Kastner Intermediate this year. Many say she is a kind, warm-hearted person.

"I wanted to become a teacher because I believe in the power of education to change lives, and I love helping others," she said.

Many people like Kastner for different reasons. "Some things I like about Kastner are: the friendly staff, my amazing students, the incredible 7th grade AB team, the mature landscaping (tall trees), and squirrels," Ms. McGee stated. "I moved to Kastner to pursue a personal dream of teaching English/Language Arts (ELA) and History. This year so far, my students are generally eager to learn, resilient in the face of this challenging situation we find ourselves in, and they tolerate my corny puns and jokes."

Ms. McGee commented on how online learning has affected her school year by presenting new and interesting challenges and pushing her to learn new skills quickly.

Most teachers have their own hobbies and favorite things they like to do. Ms. McGee said, "Outside of school, I enjoy spending time with friends and family, especially my daughter who is a senior at CW, reading, traveling, trying new food, and gardening."

"In regard to being a teacher, I most enjoy the relationships with students!"



MRS. CLOYD, *health assistant*



By: Kambri M.

Mrs. Cloyd is a new health aide at Kastner. She works closely with our school nurse, Mrs. Hopkins, to make sure that Kastner staff and students are safe and healthy.

While Mrs. Cloyd said that there is a lot of paperwork that goes along with her job, she also mentioned that, "I like all

the team work. Everyone is working hard to help the students and staff achieve success with online learning."

Mrs. Cloyd decided that she wanted to work with students after working in skilled nursing for a while. "I wanted to take a different path in nursing and that led me to apply with Clovis Unified," she said.

In her free time, Mrs. Cloyd stated she likes riding with her husband on their Harley Davidson motorcycle to see the countryside and visit new restaurants.

"My advice [for Kastner students] would be to learn all you can and ask a lot of questions," she said. It is very important for everyone to adapt to the new learning experience this year, especially because it is such a drastic change from what we are used to in the past.

We are excited to welcome Mrs. Cloyd and have her as a new Kastner staff member.

MR. VILLAGOMEZ, *guidance instructional specialist*



By: Paige W.

Mr. Sam Villagomez is Kastner's new Guidance Instructional Specialist (GIS), and we are so excited to have him here!

He has decided to come work at Kastner because he felt that it will be a great fit, and he knows just how amazing Kastner is.

"I felt like I was ready for the next step in my life. My goal has been to lead students who need that second chance in life and to get them back on their feet with a

great education," Mr. Villagomez said. His role as GIS puts him in a place where he gets to interact with a variety of students at Kastner in order to help them succeed in the educational setting.

Mr. Villagomez grew up near Clovis in a town called Sanger. He said that his family always enjoyed coming to Clovis and visited the area often as a child.

Mr. Villagomez loved to play sports his whole life, and in high school he had some amazing coaching role models. They were very inspirational, and from then on he knew that he wanted to go into education and be a Physical Education teacher and a coach.

Mr. Villagomez's message to all students this year is—"Kastner students, I'm looking forward to meeting every single one of you. Go T-Birds!"

MR. LYONS, *7th grade science*

By: Ella L.

Mr. Lyons is a new part of the Kastner staff. He teaches 7th grade science. "I was very excited to come work here this year. My last school was almost an hour away, now it only takes me 10 minutes to drive to work. I also coach basketball and having the opportunity to coach at Clovis West was very exciting to me," Mr. Lyons said.

Before coming to Kastner, Mr. Lyons used to teach in Visalia at Redwood High School. He says he got into teaching because his mom teaches and so do his two brothers. The main reason he teaches is because he had some awesome teachers that made a huge impact on his life when he was a student.

Mr. Lyons loves teaching science. He thinks it is the best subject because it's all about making mistakes, then learning from them and trying again. According to him, "The lightbulb took over 3,000 designs until one finally worked. Most people would focus on the 3,000 fail-

ures and get discouraged or maybe even quit, but in science we recognize that is just part of the process and it just makes the success all the more sweet when you finally get it right."

Some fun facts about Mr. Lyons are, he got to live out his dream of being in NCAA March Madness when he was in college at Long Beach State, he married his high school sweetheart, and he can hum and whistle at the same time.

If Mr. Lyons could give any advice to middle schoolers he would say, "Wear deodorant (not the spray kind)! But seriously, this is the time to start figuring out what you are passionate about. It's always the right time to start doing what you love and don't be afraid to try new things."



MS. JAURIQUE, *transitions & math*



By: Annika B.

Ms. Jaurique is currently teaching Math and Career courses on Edgenuity and coaches girl's basketball this year at Kastner.

She comes to us having spent some time teaching for UC Merced's specialized math programs, which organize math concepts so that students see how the concepts connect to and build on each other. She also student taught at Reyburn Intermediate and Clovis West.

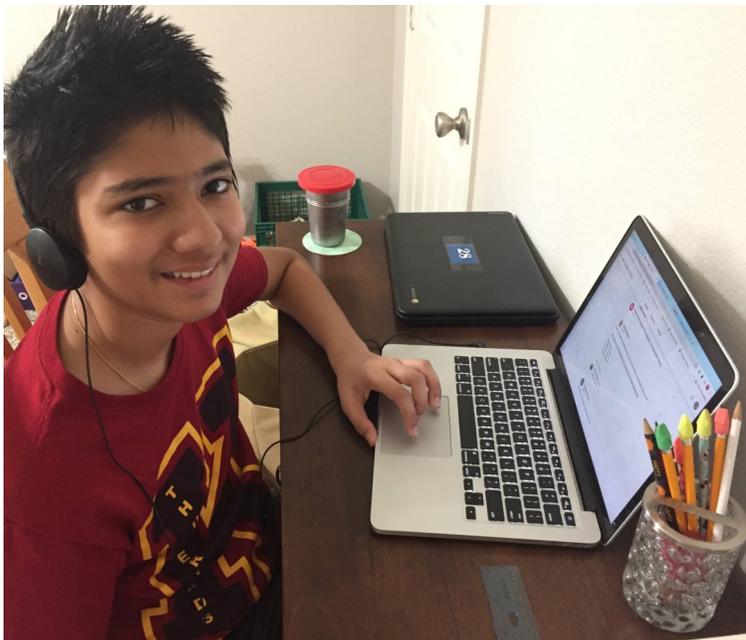
"I have always enjoyed math and love helping students achieve their goals," she expressed. The fact that she loves helping students achieve their goals might explain why she began teaching Careers, an elective

that gives students an idea of what career they might want to pursue in the future. "[Careers] takes students through the job fields and requirements necessary for careers of interest," she said.

Not only does Ms. Jaurique teach, but she also continues coaching basketball since she loves it so much. "I take a lot of pride in previously playing and coaching for our Clovis West Area girl's basketball program. Watching our kids start playing in kindergarten and progress all the way to graduating their senior year is so special. We love to see the academic and athletic success within our basketball team," she explained. She really enjoys coaching, as the team becomes like another family.

As a word of advice, she suggests to students that they stay organized with their planners and states that communication, such as emailing your teachers, is key to your success. She is proud to have attended Kastner as a student and even more to have returned as a teacher. We are glad to welcome back to T-bird territory, Ms. Jaurique. "Once a T-Bird, always a T-Bird!"

Digital and Distanced: 2020-21 School Year and Student Perspectives



Seventh grader, Abhidivya S. (left) sits ready for virtual classes to begin for his first year at Kastner Intermediate. Ms. Parks (right) on Zoom welcoming her students to campus on the first day of the 2020-2021 school year at Kastner Intermediate.

By: Avery M.



Wow! What a crazy way to begin my 8th grade school year!

All of the coronavirus stuff has been wild! On the last Friday of school before we went online, I kind of expected us to go online sooner than later. But I can't believe it has already been 15 weeks of online school, it feels like most of the year has gone by already.

I've basically gotten the hang of online school now, it's our new normal! Although I miss going to school everyday and seeing my friends, I've liked being able to wake up at 9:00am instead of 6:00am. I love the extra sleep.

Anyway, the downside of being online is that I hate staring at a screen all day and I wish I got the social interaction that I would be getting if we were still going to school everyday. However, the school is just doing their job and what is the healthiest and safest thing for us so we all need to just hang in

there! We will be back at school before we know it.

By: Aryana P.



My online school experience over Zoom is interesting, there have been

challenges and there have been parts that are giving me an easier time with school. Since this is my first year in middle school, I've needed to adjust to some differences between middle and elementary school. It was a pretty small change for me and I adjusted fairly quickly, but there are still some things to get used to.

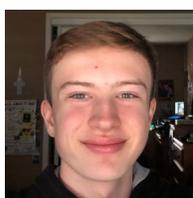
Some of the challenges for me are that it's harder to contact the teacher if you need help or are trying to explain some things you don't understand over the computer. Also not being as social as in not being able to talk to other students or get an in-person group conversation has been difficult.

Something that is easier about online school is that school starts later so I can get more

sleep and feel energized for the day and for the extra activities I do after school. Also I can work with less distractions like when kids are talking or just doing something that may be distracting. It's also easier because you don't have to remember where all your classes are, all you have to do is press on the link and you're there.

Online school has had some difficulties but also some things that have really helped me out, and overall this is an experience I won't forget.

By: Mason W.



Starting 7th grade, also my first year of middle school, online has been interesting, in positive and negative ways.

The positive ways that this impacts learning are being able to wake up later, and finishing the school day earlier. Furthermore, school online does make it easier to keep organized, due to the fact that it gives you an alert if you are

missing an assignment.

Online school also has lots of programs and practice websites that you may not have been able to do inside of class that help you with your school work.

There are also some negative effects, like a lack of social interaction and not being able to see your teachers and friends. Having online classes means sports are not happening, and that you can only practice in small groups. Online school makes it harder to stay focused, as there are more distractions at home.

Having school online has upsides and downsides. There are benefits to each, but in my opinion, I think that traditional school is better. I think this because it includes more social interactions, and co-curricular activities such as sports. People also miss out on things like drama and certain clubs that they aren't able to do to the full extent online. For these reasons, I think that traditional school is better, but both have their advantages and disadvantages.