

Nancy Stahlhut brings home top IEA honor back to Columbus Elementary

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE – Edwardsville School District’s **Nancy Stahlhut** recently came home with the annual Illinois Education Association Educational Support Person of the Year honor, fitting for her long time of service.

Stahlhut described it as “a great award” and something that she will never forget.

The Edwardsville woman is based out of the Columbus Elementary School operation.

“Nancy and I have worked together the last nine years and we have learned a lot from each other,” **Columbus Principal Vince Schlueter** said. “She is able to provide incentives for students and always does so much more. She takes 10 minutes during the day and let’s some of the students be a helper and that means a lot to the kids.”

Both Stahlhut and Schlueter are early risers, often getting to Columbus at 6 in the morning.

Schlueter said Nancy is often called to do weekend events throughout the **Edwardsville School District** and she means a lot the other administration. Schlueter said when the other schools are in a pinch and need help, they often contact Nancy after hours.

Nancy spent several years raising her children without someone’s help at home and she discovered to save money, she had to learn to do things and it ultimately led to her learning to do a multitude of difficult tasks in her head custodian role.

“You can’t always afford to pay someone to do something, so you learn to do it,” Nancy said.

Schlueter and Nancy are both concerned with how the outside of Columbus looks and every year they work together to devise a flower plan.

“For Nancy, it is not just taking care of the day-to-day cleaning, but we spend time talking what kind of flowers we will plant each spring, then do it,” Schlueter said. “She knows the mechanics of the building inside and out and does a lot of things that aren’t required of her. She is so deserving of the Support Person of the Year Award.”

Nancy has also served as a building rep for Region 45 and also takes that position seriously, always working to help others throughout the district.

The Columbus head custodian was nominated by one of the teachers for the Support Person of the Year honor and she said for that she is thankful.

“This was quite surprising to me that I won,” she said. “Normally it goes to someone from Chicago. I received it in front of 1,200 people and that very nice.”

Nancy has worked in the Edwardsville School District for 26 years, 20 in this capacity.

“I don’t like to be the center of attention,” Nancy said. “I recently read a Biblical passage that says “To enjoy your work and accept your lot in life is indeed a gift from God. The verse 5-19 of the Book of Ecclesiastes spoke to me.”

The Edwardsville woman is very active in her church, Eden Church of Christ, with a youth mentoring role, confirmation of girls. She is also on the church council and many committees as well.

“It makes me feel good to know that God has put me in this place,” she said.