As I write this article, it is American Education week, and ESP members across the country just celebrated on Nov. 14. On this day, I spent much time thinking, reflecting, and reminiscing. Instead of being happy and excited for “our day,” I was saddened that our most celebrated ESP member was not there to help us honor the great work our ESPs are doing.

As you are aware, our number one ESP, Dolores McCracken, passed away on Nov. 13, one day before ESP Day. Dolores was our PSEA president, tireless advocate, and friend. She was a paraeducator in the Council Rock School District for nearly 20 years. In Council Rock, she served as president and vice president, negotiated local contracts, and advocated for her members.

Dolores knew she could make a difference on a larger stage. In 2011, she successfully ran for PSEA treasurer. After two terms as treasurer, she was elected PSEA vice president in 2015. In 2017, she made us all proud as she became the first ESP member to serve as PSEA president. She was extremely proud of this accomplishment, and we were all proud for her.

Dolores never forgot where she started and always made it a point to visit with and connect with our ESPs across the state. She was well respected at the local, state, and national levels. As PSEA president, Dolores led by example and related well with all members. She understood our needs and advocated for us at all levels.

Dolores was strong and a fighter. However, her fight against cancer was one she could not win.

I have had the honor and privilege to work alongside Dolores for most of my career as a member and ESP region president. We were each other’s sounding boards when we had to vent. We often talked and sometimes disagreed on issues, but we never took anything personally and always remained close.

Dolores may not be here, but her legacy will live forever. We will move forward just as she would want us to. She touched so many lives and advocated to make things so much better for us all. She positively influenced both our professional and personal lives.

Dolores was very proud to call herself an ESP, as you should be. I am proud of the work you do each day for the students and public education. You are the foundation on which education is built. Together we will achieve great things and make Dolores proud.

I will miss her smile. I will miss her Philly accent. I will miss our long talks and many visits. I will miss her strength, leadership, and positive outlook. Most of all, I will miss my friend.

Dawn Bandle
ESP Region President
PSEA’s 2019 Summer Leadership Conference

PSEA’s Summer Leadership Conference at Gettysburg College is July 21-25, 2019. There are several scholarship opportunities for ESP members interested in attending.

If you would like to be considered for a scholarship to attend ESP Core School, contact your local president and UniServ representative. Specific questions regarding Core School can be sent to Nate Greenawalt at ngreenawalt@psea.org. Participation in this school is by invitation only.

The PSEA-Retired School will award three scholarships to retired ESP members. If you are retiring before the conference and are interested in being considered for this school, please contact Norb Paunovich at 412-606-9519 or npauno@gmail.com with “ESP Scholarship” in the subject line.

The “PSEA ESP Jack Connolly Gettysburg Scholarship” is awarded annually to an ESP member. This scholarship was established in memory of ESP board member and dedicated advocate Jack Connolly, who passed away in 2014 after a courageous battle with pancreatic cancer.

Go to www.psea.org/esp to view the application form and scholarship guidelines.

Applications are due by 4 p.m. on Feb. 22, 2019.

Elections to be held for division officers

The PSEA Central, Eastern, Mideastern, Southern, and Southwestern divisions will hold elections at their spring meetings. Officers will serve three-year terms. Members interested in running for office should contact their respective division president:

- **Central**: Janet Hill 570-724-4212 nealhill@ptd.net Meets on March 30
- **Eastern**: Roe Paolucci 570-839-3139 rjpaolucci@hotmail.com Meets on March 27
- **Mideastern**: Christine Cooke 215-300-9352 c Cooke335@gmail.com Meets on March 5
- **Southern**: Pat Petruska 717-272-5796 ppeturuska@comcast.net Meets on March 19
- **Southwestern**: Terri Pajak 724-872-0650 Pajak.terri065@gmail.com Meets on Feb. 25

PSEA-ESP Elections

Elections for the following officers and committee positions will take place at the ESP Region House of Delegates at Kalahari Resort, April 5, 2019. Members wishing to run for election to any of these positions should complete the Statement of Candidacy form. Candidate forms submitted to the Credentials and Elections Committee will be published in the March issue of Dispatch. The candidates will have their names printed on the election ballots.

Statement of Candidacy is due Feb. 8, 2019. The following positions will be up for election:

- **REGION OFFICERS**: Term 2019-2021
  - President
  - Secretary
  - Treasurer

- **RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE**: Term 2019-2021
  - Three (3) Committee Members
  - Three (3) Alternate Members

- **LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE**: Term 2019-2021
  - Three (3) Committee Members
  - Three (3) Alternate Members

- **INSTRUCTION and PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (IPD)**: Term 2019-2021
  - One (1) Committee Member

- **PACE DIRECTOR**: Term 2019-2021
  - One (1) Committee Member
ESP Region Statement of Candidacy

Name

Address

City __________________________ Zip Code ________________________

Home Phone ___________________ School Phone __________________

Membership Category: ❑ Aide ❑ Custodian ❑ Maintenance Personnel ❑ Food Service ❑ Secretarial/Clerical ❑ Bus Driver ❑ Paraprofessional ❑ Confidential Personnel ❑ Other

Local Association/Division

Candidate for the office of

Candidate for Committee/Term

Association positions held

Statement of Candidacy

SUBMITTED CANDIDATE FORMS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN 4 PM, FEBRUARY 8, 2019 at:

ESP REGION CREDENTIALS AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE
c/o Candace Kuba, Field Assistant
PSEA
P.O. Box 1724
Harrisburg, PA 17105-1724
**Denise Kennedy – ESP of the Year**

When Denise Kennedy started work as a school secretary in the Upper Darby School District, she figured it was a short-term thing. Twenty-two years later, Denise is still the first person parents in her building see and the one who wipes away students’ tears and helps them solve their problems. She is also a key part of her school’s budgeting, purchasing, financial reporting, and data maintenance operations.

As much time as she spends in school, she still finds time to serve as vice president of the Upper Darby Education Support Professionals Association and president of Southeastern region’s ESP Division.

Now, she's PSEA’s 2018 Education Support Professional of the Year. Congratulations, Denise!

**Dates to Remember**

- **NEA-RA voting**
  - December 17, 2018 - January 30, 2019

- **ESP Local Audit Certificate Due**
  - in PSEA Headquarters
  - January 31, 2019

- **PSEA Minority and Women’s Leadership Training, Intermediate Unit Conference, Urban Local Conference**
  - March 8-9, 2019

- **NEA ESP Conference**
  - March 22-24, 2019

- **ESP Region Leadership Conference and House of Delegates, Kalahari Resort, Pocono Manor, PA**
  - April 5-6, 2019

**Vote for ESP representatives – 2019 NEA-RA**

Remember to take a moment to vote for the ESP members who will represent you at the 2019 NEA Annual Meeting and Representative Assembly (NEA-RA) in Houston, Texas on July 2-July 7, 2019. Online voting for delegates opens on Dec. 17, 2018 and closes at 5 p.m. on Jan. 30, 2019. For more information visit [www.nea.org/RA](http://www.nea.org/RA).