

HENRY L. SHATTUCK

PUBLIC SERVICE AWARDS

2018 Henry L. Shattuck Public Service Award Recipient

Maria Rodriguez, Lunch Monitor, Tobin K-8 School, Boston Public Schools

As a **Lunch Monitor** at **Tobin School**, **Maria Rodriguez** provides constant support for students. She is the glue that holds the community together and is an inspiration to children and adults. Children love her. Adults revere her principled approach to situations and her concern for everyone.

In her quiet, but loving way, Maria is a role model. She is an educator who has conversations with children on how to improve their learning and health habits and a friend who makes recess safe.

Ms. Maria is unfailingly supportive of every child at the Tobin School. She has an extraordinary ability to recognize and respond to children's needs, whenever she is in contact with them. She is the embodiment of a team player and never hesitates to support a student or staff member.

A prime example of Maria's concern for her students occurred after an accident that involved Maria and a young boy. When Maria was asked to describe the situation, she advocated for the child despite her own need for medical attention. Her only request was that she be present at the parent meeting so she could talk with the student and parent. She wanted to be there to help the student develop an understanding of how accidents occur and how he could be safer with his body. Her efforts demonstrated that Maria is a principled individual who is less worried with punishment and more concerned that principles are followed and children can continue both their academic and social learning.

The "Maria effect" on students happens almost as soon as they enter the Tobin School and even includes children's discussions of healthy foods. As Maria visits with the children at their meal times, she also surveys what they eat and cajoles them into trying healthier snacks and veggies. When she becomes aware of students who bring unhealthy snacks to school, she also secures the cooperation of teachers to encourage changes. The long-range result of this is that even first graders have been heard to compare the sugar content on regular and chocolate milk containers and discussing which choice *Ms. Maria* would recommend.

For additional information, please contact Boston Municipal Research Bureau at 617-227-1900