

Cabrillo luncheon celebrates 'distinguished school' honor

By Ryan McMaster/Staff Writer



The end of the hamburger production line at the Cabrillo High School celebration Thursday was manned by a group of students having a great time as they put burgers together for the school. From left: Jacob Ramsey, Adrian Gusland, Jessica Denton, Josh Nutter, Sean Allen and Arjun Ayyar. //Ian Vorster/Staff

First came the honor. In April, Cabrillo High School was named one of California's distinguished schools.

Then, Thursday, came the celebration.

Hamburgers for everyone.

Boxes of burgers were prepared by volunteers and delivered by student volunteers into classrooms during fourth period, when students usually break for lunch. Meals were also delivered to staff members, as well as librarians and custodians. Students and staff also helped themselves to fruit on the patio outside the cafeteria, and were served ice cream later.

The school's 1,500 students, and the staff, were served, courtesy of volunteers from various organizations that helped prepare and delivering the food on campus, including

the Vandenberg Village Lions Club, Parent-Teacher-Student Association, National Honor Society and the student body organization.

“I promised them we would do something and this is it,” said Principal Betty McCallum. “I asked the kids and staff what they thought would be good. ... They thought food would be a good idea.”

The free burgers were a huge hit with the students, said Gary Kesselring, who teaches U.S. history.

“My kids went crazy for it,” he said. “The coolest part was having the food delivered to the classroom. ... The novelty of it is really good.”

Cabrillo was selected as a distinguished school by the California Department of Education based on student test scores, curriculum, instructional programs and school climate. It was the only school in Santa Barbara County to earn the award this year. Having graduated from a distinguished can help students earn admittance to highly regarded colleges and universities.

Natalie Hay, a 17-year-old junior who will serve as the National Honor Society president at Cabrillo next year, helped organize the luncheon.

“I think it's a cool thing and it went well. If there's ever a need to do it again, we know how to get it done,” she said.

“We've had a ton of help. Everybody's been willing about the whole process,” she said, after delivering boxes of hamburgers, chips and bottled water. “It's been a lot of fun.”

Other students said they appreciated the teachers thanking them for becoming a distinguished school.

“We came earlier to help make the burgers,” said 16-year-old sophomore David Fraats, who suggested more luncheons be held, perhaps one each semester. “I think it's a good idea.”

Activities Director and School Dean Bob Lawrence, said he enjoyed helping put on the luncheon, but politely disagreed about the need for more of them “I think once a year is enough,” he said.

Sophomore Bethany Pandes, 16, liked the event as well.

“I think it's good because we are being rewarded for all the hard effort we've put in for our grades and to make the school distinguished,” she said. “We had an assembly line going for the hamburgers.”

Pandes said it's important for the students to feel rewarded. She also said her burger was delicious, just as the wrapper proclaimed.

Arthur Cuadros, 17, a junior, said he enjoyed helping out.

“It was actually fun working to get the food prepared,” he said. “It was kind of a rush.” He said students were excited about not having to pay for lunch.

PTSA Executive Board Member Deanne Nelson said she was happy with the outcome. “We think this is really awesome,” she said. “It's really to thank the kids for working so hard.”

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