Outstanding Rural Support Staff - 2020

**Vonda Berendzen**

 Cole Co. R-V School District

Vonda Berendzen serves as the JH/HS Secretary for the Cole County R-V School District in Eugene, Missouri. She has loyally served the district for the past 25 years. She will be retiring in May of 2021.

Principal, Mark Richard, had this to share, "Being a building principal and having a good secretary is a must, having a great secretary is a blessing and I am truly blessed. People say that everyone is replaceable, but I am not sure that this is true. No matter the chaos of the day she makes it run smoothly. She takes even the most hectic of days in stride and says, "it is what it is and we will make it." Vonda puts everyone's needs before her own and every student and staff member is her priority."

Jess Adrian, School Counselor, states that "Vonda's record of punctual attendance, participation in social activities, positive attitude and energy have given our school more than we could have ever asked for. Her skill set, knowledge and willingness to help others is nearly impossible to replace. She is definitely one of a kind."

Kelly Hoelscher notes, "Vonda is loved by our student body. She is their go-to person to share good news, seek advice or a shoulder to cry on when things are tough. She is a tireless worker whose enthusiasm, dedication and "can-do" attitude make our days here at Cole Co. R-V better. Vonda would be the first to say that she does not deserve an award, but many of us disagree. Her days in the HS office can be very overwhelming, but she performs her myriad tasks with style and grace."

Jennifer & Makayla add, "Vonda's support goes beyond what she does in school. She knows no enemy and she radiates optimism toward everyone in every situation. We would argue that Vonda is the backbone of our school. Our school would not function as it does without her genuine love and support."

It is most fitting that Vonda Berendzen be recognized as the 2020 MARE "Outstanding Rural Support Staff Member." Congratulations!