

## **Friend of U-High: Bruce Hurley**



Bruce Hurley, University High School custodian, has served U-High and its students, faculty, and staff with commitment and enthusiasm, so much so that the student senate chose him to receive their own Pioneer Award a few years ago at the May Awards Assembly. At that time, the student senate described Bruce as “definitely the best friend U-High has!”

Bruce came to U-High several years ago, after 15 years of laboring in various capacities with the Illinois State University physical plant in Normal. He especially noted in his new position that the high school students treated him with kindness, an experience that changed his attitude about young people and enabled him to begin reaching out to them. His sensitivity to the students and his dedication resulted in his receiving two other awards, including honors from the Illinois State Board of Education’s prestigious “Those Who Excel” program and from the Girl Scouts of Centrilio Council. When asked how he managed to earn three awards within a two-month period of time, Bruce joked: “It’s certainly not for my cleaning!”, and then got more serious: “I’ve got a heart for the students here—I would go through fire for these kids.”

Bruce’s typical day begins at 7 am, when he makes a quick check of his “areas” and formulates a cleaning plan for the day. As the hallways begin to fill with students, teachers, and administrators, each one seems to have something to say to Hurley, who often gives back a positive word of encouragement for the day. In his time at U-High, Bruce has certainly turned a “job” into a labor of love, becoming a devoted caretaker for both his school and the people who study and work there. As he has stated, “I came over here to make a living and I ended up making a life.” He is truly a Friend of U-High.