

The women behind the line

Photo/N. Gully
Story/N.Gully

*Pictured left to right :
Lisa Lloyd, Alsie Carr,
Amber Schmidt, Reyna
Perales, Maria Rubal-
calva, Josefina Jacobo
Meza, Rolonda Sutton,
Violet Nations, Dawn
Weichman*

*Not pictured:
Carol Jenkins*

fun fact!

The cafeteria at East is called Jake's Place. It was named that because when East was renovating the connector building, they were given \$1 million from the district. They needed more money, so they were responsible for raising money with the help of the Eastsiders. They received many donations but one of the biggest donations came from the Jacobson group, so they named the cafeteria after the group.



Meet the ladies who are in charge of the lunchroom and learn a little more about a few of their lives outside of work.

In the early 19th century, school lunches did not exist. Students went to school all day and would not eat unless they packed a lunch. When serving students lunch started, it wasn't nationwide. Only a few small cities and states would provide basic lunches to their students. In 1894, Philadelphia and Boston implemented a school lunch program. They were the first big states to do so in the United States. Eventually everyone followed suit and lunches were being served to students all around the country. Could you imagine going to school without a lunchroom in 2022? Lunch ladies play a huge role in schools now, especially the lunch ladies at East High School.

Like any other high school lunch crew, the ladies must prepare and serve students for breakfast and lunch. So, it's not their work that makes them so special, it's who they are. They get to meet and talk to more students than probably anyone else in the building in one day. They love getting to know the students and learning their names even though not many students know any of their names.

"I love seeing the kid's getting food, and I love when they talk to me," Lisa Lloyd said.

Many students come into the lunchroom, grab a tray, get their veggies or fruit, they grab a milk and then checkout. Nobody asks the lunch ladies how they're day was, or even know their names. It may not be there fault, though. There's always a line in the lunchroom so there isn't much time for the students to hold a conversation when getting food. Then class starts and the lunch ladies must prepare for the next day, but the lunch ladies still value the small conversations they are able to have with some students.

"I think my favorite part about my job is getting to meet the kids and checking them out and talking to the students," Violet Nations said.

Nations has only been working at East since the beginning of last school year, but she's happy she chose to come here. She really

enjoys being able to help kids out. In her free time, she goes to church and helps the kids there. She also works as a part-time delivery driver for Pizza Hut. She's a little shy but she's happy she's able to what she does for the kids at East.

"I like to be with my friends, family, and my boyfriend. I really like to be with my cats, I'm an animal lover," said Lloyd.

Lloyd has been working at East for eight years. She knew after her first year she was going to stick with East. She's usually in the kitchen doing prep work and cleaning so the students may not see her a lot but when she's able to see and talk to them it really makes her day. She's a sweet lady and her coworkers love her. They consider her to be the sweetheart. So, she may not be one of the faces you see everyday in the lunchroom, but she's a beautiful lady with a kind soul who cares a lot about the students.

"I think the days that are the hardest for me are when kids are having bad days because I don't know how to help them. I really want to help them so not being able to help them is hard," Dawn Weichman said.

Weichman is the food service manager, and this will be her fourth year in this position. She doesn't only work for East; she also manages a middle school and two elementary schools. Weichman doesn't really have an assigned job when she comes in, she just hops in where she's needed the most. Weichman has two daughters, and two dogs. She really enjoys spending time with her family in her free time and then being able to be with the students at work. Like the rest of the crew, Weichman really loves the students and loves what she does for DMPS.

The rest of the crew are a little bit shy, so, the next time you and your friends are passing through the halls or cafeteria and see a lunch lady, say hi or ask how their day was. Take a little time when you're free to get to know these beautiful women at East.