

October 9, 2014

Nomination process underway for District's Teachers of the Year

The selection process has begun to recognize SAISD's outstanding educators.

All campuses are being invited to choose a Teacher of the Year as the first step in ultimately picking Districtwide honorees for three levels: elementary, middle and high school.

This trio will comprise Distinguished Teachers of the Year, who will become the District's nominees for other honors such as the Trinity (University) Prize for Excellence in Teaching, H-E-B's Excellence in Education, the Education Service Center Region 20's Teacher of the Year, the KENS-5 and San Antonio Credit Union's ExCEL (see story below) and other recognition programs.

The exception will be SAISD's Rising Star recognition program focusing on teachers who are new to the profession.

All District principals received an information email on Oct. 1.

Schools are asked to make their campus Teacher of the Year selection by either peer or self-

nomination and to submit names to the principal prior to preparing the school ballot, which is in a written format.

Teachers will vote for their school's nominee. Votes will be tallied by the campus administration with a run-off vote conducted in the case of a tie.

Each campus Teacher of the Year will be provided the opportunity to submit a written application for SAISD Distinguished Teacher of the Year, which will require providing evidence for a profile whose qualifications include: three or more years of teaching experience; possessing a passion for teaching and a commitment to all students; providing rigorous, relevant and engaging learning opportunities for all students, including the use of technology and other innovative resources to enhance learning; establishing a culture of learning in the classroom that is student-centered, positive and motivational; actively engaging in professional learning and reflective practice and serving as a teacher leader and community builder within the

school and school community.

SAISD's Teacher of the Year recognition program debuted last school year.

Upcoming deadlines are:

- **Ongoing thru Oct. 23** - Campus selection process for Teacher of the Year.
- **Oct. 24** - Applications due to HR by the end of the business day.
- **Oct. 27-31** - Nominees complete application packet.
- **Nov. 3** - Nominee applications due to HR by the end of the business day.
- **Nov. 4** - Committee process for selection of Teacher of the Year begins.
- **Nov. 12** - RSVPs to reception due to HR.
- **Nov. 18** - Reception honoring all campus nominees. Teachers of the Year and SAISD's Distinguished Teachers of the Year for 2014-15 will be announced.

Throughout November, schools also are asked to recognize their Teacher of the Year publicly.

For more information email Rosa Linda Lomas, administrative officer: rlomas@saisd.net.



Veteran Edison HS teacher 'ExCEL's among area educators

SAISD's 2014 Distinguished Teacher of the Year for the high school level is being honored throughout Bexar County for excellence in her field.

In a surprise announcement during an assembly at her campus, Edison HS Advanced Placement history teacher Michelle LaFontain learned she is the District's recipient of the ExCEL Award, presented by KENS5 and the San Antonio Federal Credit Union.

"Ms. LaFontain believes in our students," Principal Charles Muñoz said about her selection.

"She models TLC: teaching, learning and caring. She works long hours and cares about the total Edison community."

Besides AP history, the 27-year veteran, all of which at Edison, has taught U.S. history, world geography and Latin.

"I love teaching because it allows

me to share my passion for history and to help students discover their own strengths and passions," LaFontain said.

In addition to teaching, she currently chairs Edison's social studies department. LaFontain also has served in a variety of capacities including five years as Academic Decathlon coach, during which Edison advanced twice to the state competition and earned numerous regional medals.

Her other past roles include serving as freshman class sponsor, Latin Club sponsor and as the Edison Redesign Team's co-facilitator.

LaFontain holds a bachelor's degree in letters from the University of Oklahoma and a master's in history from the University of Texas at Austin.

Early last school year, she was one of three SAISD educators selected Distinguished Teachers of the Year from a pool of Teachers of the Year, representing each District campus.

The ExCEL Award includes a golden apple trophy, \$1,000 cash prize and a feature story that aired on KENS5. It can be viewed at: www.kens5.com/on-tv/excel-awards.



Accepting a 2014 ExCEL Award is Michelle LaFontain. Gathered to congratulate her are (l to r) Principal Charles Muñoz, SACU Board of Directors member David Velasquez, KENS5 anchor Deborah Knapp, Associate Superintendent of Human Resources Toni Thompson and School Board Vice President Olga M. Hernandez.

Jefferson HS continues to shine in the national spotlight

It's been a momentous week in Mustang country.

First, Jefferson HS staff and students learned their school will remain among an elite group recognized as national demonstration sites for AVID,

Advancement Via Individual Determination.

Then came news that a second graduate has earned a Nobel Prize in chemistry.

'AVID' for higher education

Jefferson, which was named a national model school for the AVID college-prep system in 2012, will retain this status at least through 2017.

"This honor reflects our vision of being a college-readiness institution," said Principal Orlando Vera.

"I am quite proud of our students and staff." The school earned the three-year extension following a successful revalidation visit.

In addition to Jefferson, SAISD's Longfellow and Whittier middle schools are national demonstration sites and are among approximately 140 in America selected through an application process, screening and review that included site visits.

Nobel Prize winner

An honor bestowed upon 1971 graduate Dr. W.E. Moerner brought added prestige this week.

While not a personal friend of Moerner's, his classmate, Associate Superintendent of Human Resources Toni Thompson, recalls his intellect and involvement, stating:

"Because of those qualities, he stood out among the 950 students in our graduating class."

He is the second Jefferson alumnus to win a Nobel Prize in chemistry, joining 1950 graduate Dr. Robert Floyd Curl Jr., a 1996 recipient.



Dr. W.E. Moerner in his senior class photo. He is one of three scientists to share the 2014 prize.



Students and staff celebrate Jefferson HS' continued status as a National Demonstration School, including Principal Orlando Vera and AVID coordinator Judith Torres, shown far l and r, respectively, at the banner.

Entrepreneurial Owls employ design skills to fund NYC trip

Highlands HS architecture students have a novel approach to the age-old quest to raise money for a school field trip. They are using their design and entrepreneurial skills plus, a new 3-D printer, to produce and sell smartphone and tablet cases.

While the goal of this yearlong project is to raise a good portion of the money needed to pay for a trip to the Big Apple in May to study the city's rich architecture, important lessons are being learned in the meantime to help prepare them for college and prospective careers.



Highlands HS architecture teacher Al Gamillo and a student view a cellphone case.

The idea to create the cases evolved from a brainstorming session among about a half dozen Highlands educators on how to teach students not only to use the printer, but its real-world applications as well, said architecture teacher Al Gamillo.

"What a better idea than to have them design their own products? And every kid has a cellphone so this would be something interesting for them to design."

Students design the cases using a 3-D modeling software called SketchUp. Then they print them on the MakerBot Replicator 2 printer.

Each case is created by adding thin layer upon layer until the final product is completed, a process that takes about 45 minutes for the phones and a bit longer for the tablets.

Because the printer is able to produce a more accurate model of the students' designs, time is saved that, in the past, was spent hand-crafting models.

Students start by creating a prototype, an early sample model of the product to test its viability, just like the professionals using 3-D printers in a variety of fields such as architecture, engineering, medical

and automotive and airplane design.

"If they can learn the skills and learn them well, they can be employed in any of these fields," Gamillo said.

This is one of two 3-D printers at Highlands. The other is used by engineering and robotics students.

Both were partially funded through the SAISD Foundation and are part of the school's growing science, engineering and technology program.

The only other District high school with 3-D printers is New Tech at Sam Houston, which also has two.

Place your order now!

Take advantage of this unique opportunity to own your very own custom-designed phone and/or tablet case while supporting a worthy cause at the same time.

Starting prices are between \$8 and \$14 each, depending on the level of customization.

For more information and/or to place an order email Gamillo: agamillo1@saisd.net.

All-American honor

Returning to the scene of their original glory days are two of SAISD's gridiron greats. Gary Green (adjacent photo), representing the 1970s and Gabe Rivera (far right) from the 1980s, are the latest SAISD collegiate consensus All-American honorees. They join Weldon Humble, 1940s; Kyle Rote, 1950s; and Tommy Nobis, 1960s, in having bronze plaques placed at Alamo Stadium's entrance way commemorating their consensus collegiate All-American status. They were recognized during a ceremony prior to kickoff of their alma mater's Sept. 27 football match. Green now is head coach at the high school for which he once played as a student: Sam Houston, while Rivera is a Jefferson HS alumnus.



SAISD Foundation provides funding for school supplies

New teachers representing 52 schools across all grade levels Districtwide and their more than 7,000 students are better supplied for teaching and learning this fall.

Thanks to the SAISD Foundation, 118 recipients were presented \$100 New Teacher Supply Grants during an Oct. 8 ceremony at Travis Early College HS.

Teachers requested funds to support projects



Courtesy photo

that include: tools for developing a hydroponic watering system, books to build classroom libraries, educational posters on health and wellness, supplies for science experiments, math manipulatives, student

dry- erase boards, educational CDs for phonics and hands-on science models.

Since fall 2007, the SAISD Foundation has funded nearly 800 new teacher grants.

Support the District to benefit students through annual United Way campaign

District employees wanting to contribute to the SAISD Foundation or to support local agencies can once again do so through the District's United Way campaign.

The SAISD Foundation again is offering six \$1,000 grants to recognize giving for the highest-participating secondary school and the top two elementaries or academies in both the overall campaign and the highest percentage of employees designating a gift to the SAISD Foundation.

A school can win in both categories. All employees giving \$10 or more to the SAISD Foundation will also receive a thank you gift.

Departments will be recognized at a reception hosted by the foundation to honor

the highest participation in both categories.

This year's overall goal for the 2014 Make a Difference campaign is \$230,000.

Last year more than 60 percent of District employees gave to the overall campaign and 18 percent made a dedicated gift the SAISD Foundation. You may direct your gift or a portion of your gift to directly benefit our schools and students by designating SAISD Foundation Agency Code #8031.

The campaign runs through Friday, Oct. 31.



Planning to retire in 2014-15?

Employees considering retirement anytime this school year are invited to attend information sessions sponsored by SAISD's Human Resources office of Employee Benefits, Risk Management and Safety.

Information about the retirement process, including important deadlines and dates, along with details on District benefits available to retirees, will be discussed.

Employees also will be provided assistance on requesting an estimate of retirement benefits and a retirement packet from the Teacher Retirement System of Texas.

Upcoming sessions will be:

Oct. 15 and 16 - 5 to 7 p.m.
Cooper Learning Center cafeteria,
1700 Tampico St.



in the Spotlight



SAISD Foundation presents fourth-annual INSPIRE Awards

Past and present shining stars took the spotlight Sept. 30 for the INSPIRE Awards, where they were honored for making a significant difference.

This fourth-annual event was sponsored by the SAISD Foundation to recognize innovative educators, outstanding alumni and organizations.

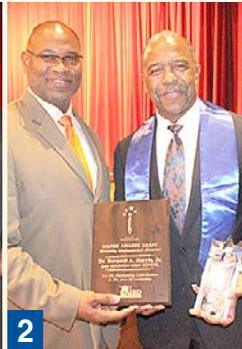
Honorees are shown left to right. Award

category, recipients and the schools they represent are: **1) Innovation Award** - Maggie Rath and Rebekah Ozuna, Knox ECEC; Maria Elena Arellano, Briscoe ES and Jennifer Lankes, Fox Tech HS. With them is Superintendent Dr. Sylvester Perez. **2) Leadership Award** - Dr. Bernard Harris, former astronaut and president of the Harris Foundation - Sam Houston HS. His presenter was Darnell White, his alma mater's principal. **3) Excellence Award** - Jesse Treviño, award-winning and renowned artist, Fox Tech HS. His presenters (l and r)

were Judy Geelhoed, SAISD Foundation executive director, and Annette Castillo, his alma mater's principal. **4) Service Award** - Ernest Bromley, CEO and founder of Bromley Communications - Jefferson HS. His presenter was Orlando Vera, principal of his alma mater and **5) Friend of SAISD** - Tom C. Frost, Frost Bank chairman emeritus and longtime District supporter.

For more information on the INSPIRE Awards, visit:

www.SAISDFoundation.com.



Band bonanza

Hitting high notes at the annual SAISD Marching Band Showcase were middle and high school musicians throughout the District. These included two earning first-division ratings, the event's highest honors. The bands and their head directors (not shown) are: Brackenridge, Alfonso Alvarado and Jefferson, Roger Duran. Brackenridge also earned outstanding honors for marching, hornline, drum majors and duet. Jefferson's outstanding honors were for color guard, percussion and soloist. Each fall the showcase features performances from high school and middle school marching bands across the District.



Brackenridge HS



Jefferson HS



Come join us!

Providing prospective students and parents information about their school's offerings are Harris MS staff members. This campus specializing in scientific inquiry was among schools represented at the SAISD Charter and Magnet Fair held earlier this month. Teacher greeters, shown here gathered immediately around the table (l to r), are Susan Cullinan, Deborah Tinsley Pledger and Staci Kelly. Principal Dr. Carol Velazquez is shown back row, far right. Applications for these schools open to students from throughout Bexar County now are being accepted for 2015-16. For more information visit: www.saisd.net.



A fusion of future and past

Capturing the contrast between the Ogden ES that has been and the one yet to be is this photo of construction underway at the 91-year-old campus. While the new school will be thoroughly modern, the charm of the old one will remain through re-use of its historic 1920s bricks. The \$18.6 million project, to include a new cafeteria and kitchen (inset photo), two-story classroom addition and other amenities, is funded through SAISD Bond 2010. For more information on this and other projects visit: www.saisd.net/Bond2010.




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