

May 9, 2013

Whittier MS named a nationwide AVID model

For the second consecutive year, an SAISD school is joining an elite group recognized for successful use of a college-readiness system to prepare students for higher education.

Whittier MS joins Longfellow MS and Jefferson HS as national demonstration sites for AVID, Advancement Via Individual Determination.

"It is a tremendous honor to be selected as a demonstration school, and we are proud of our AVID program and our school as a whole," said

principal Janet Perez.

"The use of AVID strategies schoolwide has positively impacted students and staff, and we continue to see a more engaged and college-ready student body."

The designation follows a rigorous validation process conducted by the college-readiness organization.

Only about 135 of the nation's 4,900 AVID schools have earned this prestigious status, which is granted to campuses regarded highly successful in the program's implementation. Whittier also is among just 22 in the state. All three schools in Region 20, which represents South Texas, are

those from SAISD.

Each has an AVID site team composed of teachers, counselors and academic administrators, who receive intensive training in implementing the college-readiness system.

Through AVID, students are prepared for higher education by learning organizational skills, strategies and methodologies focusing on reading, writing, inquiry, and collaboration.

They also are required to take either a pre-Advanced Placement, AP, or Dual Credit class.

Now in its 17th year, SAISD was the first Texas school district to provide AVID when it was established as an elective at eight high schools.

It currently is offered at 26 campuses including all middle and high schools, plus Bonham and Mission academies.



Among those proudly displaying the Whittier MS AVID banner include (far left and right, respectively) School Board Secretary Olga M. Hernandez and principal Janet Perez.

Toni Thompson recognized for leadership



The District's associate superintendent for human resources was in the spotlight at the May 1 principals meeting for a well-deserved honor.

There to present her with the 2013 Excellence in Educational Leadership Award were University of Texas at San Antonio's Drs. David P. Thompson and Encarnacion "Chon" Garza.

UTSA nominated Toni Thompson for the

honor which recognizes "extraordinary commitment and support for the improved preparation of school administrators."

Award sponsor is the University Council for Educational Administration, an international consortium of prestigious research universities committed to advancing the preparation and practice of educational leaders for the benefit of children, schools and society.



Toni Thompson is presented the 2013 Excellence in Educational Leadership Award by (l to r) Drs. David P. Thompson and Encarnacion "Chon" Garza.

Smith ES teacher a System 44 Outstanding Educator

Her high expectations for her students and successful use of a reading program have earned Gloria Garcia a national honor.

The Smith ES special education teacher was recognized during a May 7 ceremony at her school as a 2013 Scholastic System 44 Outstanding Educator. She is the first in San Antonio to ever receive this accolade.

"This honor means that my students' success is being recognized," Garcia said.

"The rise in their self-esteem as System 44 students is remarkable and Smith can be proud of their achievement as they continue to impact and influence their peers!"

The award includes \$1,200 to spend as she pleases and \$1,000 worth of Scholastic



Celebrating with Gloria Garcia (in tiara) are (l to r) Trustee James Howard, Senior Executive Director of Special Education Dr. Vangie Aguilera and Scholastic representative Jack Darden.

materials for her school.

Garcia also will be recognized at a dinner this August in New York City and invited to participate as a member of the READ 180 and System 44 Advisory Board.

On a related note, a Beacon Hill ES 4th-grader was honored last month at his school as San Antonio's first ever student selected an All-Star for hard work and progress in reading through System 44.

More than 50 SAISD campuses use either this or the READ 180 System program, or both, to help struggling students catch up.

Schools rewarded for nourishing students' minds and bodies

Food for thought and that most important meal of the day highlighted presentations made to school leaders at the May 1 principals meeting.

Steele ES principal Natasha Pinnex (shown adjacent photo accepting congratulations from San Antonio Area Retired Teacher's Association member Frank Sierra) was one of 31 prize recipients of \$100 from the Kathleen May Gonzalez Fund.

An outstanding boy and girl in grade 5 or above from each of those schools will get \$25 and \$50 worth of books will be purchased for the library in the students' honor.

In a separate recognition, Edison HS principal Charles Muñoz (shown far right with CFO of Business Operations and Food Services Larry Garza) received a Breakfast Champion Participation Reward.

Edison, along with Navarro HS, Wheatley MS and Baskin and Lamar elementaries, were honored for highest participation in the Breakfast in the Classroom program.



Owls boys lacrosse coach named Person of the Year

A relatively new Highlands HS sports team already has scored a major victory in its friendly rivalry with the city's more storied and established programs.

Mary Mattia, who coaches boys lacrosse, has unanimously been voted the 2013 Texas High School Lacrosse League-San Antonio Person of the Year.

Voters are all San Antonio varsity lacrosse coaches who choose the person they believe best represents both the game and city, Josh Acut, THSL-L-SA director, wrote in announcing Mattia's selection.

"Over the years, I have seen some great candidates come out of our area, but your story, the kids' story, the Highlands' lacrosse story, is one that will inspire others to play the game we love," he stated.

As San Antonio's selection, Mattia will be among those considered for the state honor. That winner will advance to nationals.

"I am very humbled by this award, and I

feel undeserving. This was so much more than the effort of one person - it truly took a community," Mattia said.

Support included assists from competing teams through donations of equipment and money for its purchase, as well as volunteer assistant coaches from the University of the Incarnate Word and Austin.

Playing lacrosse has been a lifelong passion for the second-year Teach For America world geography teacher. She added coaching this sport - in which players toss and catch a small rubber ball in mesh bags attached to sticks and score by shooting the ball into the opponent's goal - to her repertoire after a student asked her to teach him how to play.

Mattia suggested he first get a team together

and the student returned with the names of 22 classmates representing a wide variety of interests and backgrounds.

Soon, all were united in a common cause and a common love for their new sport.

"I've been blessed to work with boys with more heart and determination than I could have asked for. They created something that they can call their own," she said, adding:

"This award is for these kids and for this incredible San Antonio lacrosse community."



The Highlands HS lacrosse team with assistant coaches (left, l to r) Jonathan Moreno and Adam Gil. Far right (l to r) are head coach Mary Mattia, coach Michele Farquharson and conditioning coach Matt Heerwald.

SAISD seniors join Destination College journey

Some 250 teens are one step closer to making their dreams of higher education come true. They were among high school seniors citywide who recently participated in a variety of events including publicly proclaiming their intentions to attend college during the third annual Mayor's Signing Ceremony at St. Mary's

University.

Other Destination College events included a summit at Palo Alto College where high-schoolers attended workshops on leadership, applying for college and financial literacy.

Events were not just for high school seniors. To let younger students and their parents know

that it's never too early to start thinking about higher education, SAISD campuses hosted Elementary School Night and Middle School Night.

The entire city also got into the act by participating in College T-shirt Day on May 3 to show support for higher education.



Mayor Julián Castro puts in a plug for his alma mater, Stanford University, at Signing Day.



Joining one of the nation's most venerable college rivalries are these students headed to the University



of Texas at Austin and Texas A&M University

Safety First

Keeping your cool during those hot summer days to come



As we all know, our San Antonio summers can be HOT! Beyond causing discomfort, heat also can result in some serious health problems. Especially at risk are those SAISD employees whose jobs require them to spend a great deal of time working outdoors.

Whether your summer will be spent primarily working outside or just communing with nature as a weekend warrior, this issue of Safety First offers tips to help you make it through the hot days ahead.

For outside work

- **Keep hydrated.** Prepare for outside work by first drinking up to 16 ounces of fluid (flavored water instead of plain is preferred because the improved taste may encourage more consumption) and 8 ounces every 20 minutes during the activity.
- **Acclimate gradually to the heat.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends gradually increasing exposure over five to seven days.

- **Take off that hat.** Since the body loses a lot of heat out of the top of the head, visors are a better choice.
- **Wear the right fabric.** Loose, thin, white, synthetic T-shirts are preferred because the material does not absorb sweat, allowing for quick evaporation.
- **Don't remove PPE.** Workers must wear all required personal protective equipment, even in hot weather conditions. If possible, take frequent breaks to help prevent heat-related health hazards.

Beware these ailments

- **Heatstroke.** This most serious heat illness occurs when the body's natural cooling mechanism, sweating, stops functioning. Body temperature may reach 106 degrees or higher. Symptoms can include very hot and dry skin, confusion or delirium, convulsions or seizures and loss of consciousness.
- **Heat syncope, aka fainting.** This can occur when: a person has not yet become acclimated to working in a hot environment; doing a job that doesn't require much movement; or prolonged standing still in

the heat. The result is blood pools in the legs, reducing the amount of blood that goes to the brain. Lying down in a cool, shady area for a while with legs slightly raised usually leads to a quick recovery. Prevent incidents by moving to help maintain adequate blood flow.

- **Heat rash.** While this is the least severe of the heat-related problems, heat rash can be very uncomfortable. It typically occurs in hot and humid environments where the sweat can't evaporate off the body. Symptoms include red, bumpy, itchy skin. But don't scratch! That may cause infection. Prevent heat rash by taking regular breaks in a cool place. Keeping skin as dry and clean as possible also helps prevent or treat heat rash.

Election Day May 11

Trustee District places 1, 3, 4 and 7.
For candidate information go to "Departments," and then "Governmental and Community Relations" at: www.saisd.net
Need voting information? Call 335-VOTE or visit: elections.bexar.org



in the Spotlight

Bright futures ahead for class of 2013

As the school year nears coming to a close, these graduating seniors have particular cause to celebrate their accomplishments.

Two students from Fox Tech and Lanier high schools have earned full college funding through the Ph.D. level as Gates Millennium Scholars.

They are among 1,000 students nationwide to receive this funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

In another scholarship highlight, two Edison HS seniors each will have \$20,000 going toward their college educations through Dell Foundation scholarships.

Funding for this program is provided by the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation.



Fox Tech HS Gates Scholar Jaclyn Muñoz will attend the University of Texas at Austin's McCombs School of Business and plans to major in business and psychology and later attend law school in preparation of a career as an immigration attorney. Shown with her (l to r) are counselor Marisa De La Cerda and Law Magnet coordinator Maricela Lazarin.



Lanier HS Gates Scholar Rudy Martinez will attend the University of Texas at Austin's McCombs School of Business, where he plans to major in accounting and go on to pursue a career with the FBI. Shown with him (l to r) are assistant principal Jesus De Hoyos, mom Pauline Barrera and counselor Eva Longoria.



Edison HS Dell Scholars Jennifer Mendez will attend UTSA where she plans to major in biology pre-med. Jeremiah Raygoza will attend UT-Austin. He also plans to major in biology pre-med.



Courtesy photos

Outstanding historians

Next stop for Young Women's Leadership Academy students Zoe Lopez and Alyssa Pacheco (shown left photo with their teacher Adrean Springer) is Washington, D.C. They qualified for this summer's National History Day contest by virtue of their strong performance at the State History Day competition where they won the Hispanic Heritage Award and placed second for group documentary LULAC: Change for Latinos. Also earning medals at state were Brackenridge HS students (right photo, l to r) Valery Lara, Ana Castellano, Thalia Ruiz and Joseph Mendez. Their teacher is Gilbert Flores. Brackenridge made it as far as the finals for group performance of *Los Desaparacidos*.



Elizabeth Lutz and Timothy Porter (l to r) of Appdiction Studios show Irving MS principal Michael Jordan the app Porter created to allow students to anonymously report bullying. Irving is piloting this program in partnership with Appdiction and The Health Collaborative.

Investing in literacy

Rodriguez ES students are all smiles for the ribbon-cutting ceremony of their library's makeover. The renovations were made possible through grants from Capital One Bank. The Heart of America's Foundation's READesign team provided 800 age-appropriate reading materials including 75 financial literacy-themed books while about



25 Capital One Bank volunteers worked to complete the library through decorating, assembling furniture and sorting and shelving books. Capital One Bank also donated five books for each students' home library.



A 'capitol' artist

Headed to our nation's Capitol where her award-winning work will be exhibited for a year is Brackenridge HS student Arianna Casteneda. The winner of the Congressional Art Competition for District 25 was honored at her school by (l to r) Interim Superintendent Dr. Sylvester Perez, U.S. Rep. Lloyd Doggett, art teacher Theresa Ybanez and principal Moises Ortiz.



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