

October 11, 2012

## Garza receives Outstanding Homeless Liaison Award

The District's Transitions Program director is once again in the spotlight for her work as an advocate for homeless students and their families.

Estella Garza is a recipient of the Outstanding Homeless Liaison Award, which was presented by the Texas Homeless Network, Region 10 Education Service Center and Texas Homeless Education Office at the Sept. 28 Texas Conference on Ending Homelessness.

"Estella Garza works tirelessly on behalf of kids in homeless situations in the San Antonio area," said Barbara Wand James, THEO project director.

"Because of Estella's persistent advocacy, thousands of homeless kids in San Antonio have received the assistance they need to succeed in school," she said.

"My goal for the years I've worked with SAISD is to enroll and keep children in school," Garza said. "It does not matter what they come to

school with (personal issues). They all have an unconditional right to a free and appropriate public education. As educators we all need to be prepared to connect our children with the various resources that help to remove their barriers."

Garza's other most recent career highlights include:

- An invitation from U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan to take part in a conference call this past May with school superintendents across the country where she provided information on services available to students in homeless situations.

- Testifying before a congressional subcommittee hearing where she also shared some of the District's best practices.

- Taking the lead in facilitating the San Antonio metropolitan area's Unaccompanied Youth Task Force in preparation of the city's participation in a three-year project in collaboration with the National

Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth.

- Being featured in numerous online and print publications, including Education Daily.



Estella Garza with her latest honor, the Outstanding Homeless Liaison Award.

## SAISD earns more multiple honors for fiscal excellence



The District continues to be recognized for its quality of budgeting.

Most recent accolades include the Certificate of Achievement in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada and a rating of superior from the Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas.

The Certificate of Achievement is GFOA's highest

recognition for governmental accounting and financial reporting.

Likewise, a superior FIRST rating is the Texas Education Agency's highest ranking for fiscal accountability. The system was designed to encourage Texas public schools to manage their financial resources better in order to provide the maximum allocation possible for instructional purposes.

These are just the latest of numerous honors SAISD

has earned in 2012 for fiscal excellence.

The others include the: Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting and Meritorious Budget Award, both presented by the Association of School Business Officials; Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from GFOA; and the Leadership Circle Award from the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts.



## Upward Bound grant to benefit Edison and Highlands

Great news for nearly 60 college-bound teens at two SAISD high schools. Funding for a program offering Edison students added assistance to be ready for higher education when they graduate has been extended for another five years and also will be used to implement one at Highlands.

A \$1.25 million grant San Antonio College received from the U.S. Department of Education will pay for Upward Bound Math Science programs at

both schools. Edison's program has been in existence since 2009.

Upward Bound offers tutoring, mentoring, college-readiness instruction and other assistance to 56 select participants per school.

"This major grant allows us to provide the resources necessary to help students succeed academically

and move on to college," said SAC President Robert Zeigler.

"This grant fits in with San Antonio's vision to become a magnet for STEM employers, the CyberCity USA initiative and similar programs."

SAC also sponsors Upward Bound programs at Fox Tech and Lanier high schools.



## INSPIRE gala combines a great time with great support



SAISD patrons are invited to enjoy an evening of inspiring company and quality entertainment while contributing to enriched educational opportunities for District students.

SAISD alumni and teacher shining stars who are making a significant difference will be honored.

Outstanding SAISD alumni to be recognized and their categories include:

**Leadership**, Charles Gonzalez, U.S. District 20 representative and Karyne Jones, civic leader; **Excellence**, Dr. Robert Brown, Boston University president, his wife Dr. Beverly Brown, a BU director of development and David Frederick, attorney; and **Service**, Edith McAllister and Bill Sinkin, humanitarians.

Teachers will be honored in the **Innovation** category. They and their schools are: Virginia Boyce, Rogers ES; Daisy Medina, Highlands HS; and Kimberly Nwosu, W.W. White ES. Student showcases and performances from across the District will top off the evening.

This second-annual event is sponsored by the SAISD Foundation. The Foundation has awarded more than a million dollars in innovative grants, new teacher grants, gifts to schools and strategic District initiatives over the last five years.



### Second Annual SAISD INSPIRE Awards

Oct. 30 (Tues) - 5:30 p.m.

Villita Assembly Building • 401 Villita St.

\$75 per person, non employees

\$25, employees

Award-winning student entertainment  
Food and beverages by  
Acenar, Guenther House, Trini Cakes  
and SAISD culinary arts students

RSVP by Oct. 15

Call 554-2235

email: jgeelhoed@saisdfoundation.com

Sponsorships are welcome



## Community investment

SAISD Interim Superintendent Dr. Sylvester Perez welcomes attendees at a community meeting where the District's bond team provided updates on planned renovations to the historic Alamo Stadium and the Convocation Center. The presentation included a project timeline, overview of the facilities' varying city, state and national landmark designations and where athletic events will be held during the construction phase, expected to start this December barring any unusual circumstances. The \$35 million project funded under SAISD Bond 2010 is expected to be substantially completed in late 2013, and will include infrastructure involving electrical, plumbing, storm drainage system, sidewalks, parking, stone walls restoration, lighting, landscaping and irrigation and ADA access. Amenities for both facilities will include new play areas, seating, restrooms, locker rooms, concessions, press boxes, storage, sports lighting, sound systems and security systems. For the latest visit: [www.saisd.net/bondprojects](http://www.saisd.net/bondprojects).



## The 'write' stuff

Showing off their new journals are participants at the Oct. 9 Parent Summit. The journals are part of a Districtwide effort to increase rigor in reading and writing, and parents were asked to show their support for the endeavor by writing in them daily. The journal distribution took place during one of four sessions at this annual event providing moms and dads with resources to improve their parenting skills. Summit sponsor is SAISD's Community and Parent Partners Department.

## Jefferson celebrates James Hammond's ExCEL Award



No ordinary apple is a worthy gift for this educator.

Third-year Jefferson HS English teacher James Hammond recently received the golden variety - an ExCEL trophy - in honor of being SAISD's 2012 recipient of this annual award from KENS5 and the San Antonio Federal Credit Union.

"Mr. Hammond is a representation of the educational values that we prize at Thomas Jefferson. He works at improving his craft daily. Therefore, his students reap the rewards of a first- class education," said principal Joanne Cockrell.

"His classes are a joy to observe. Every one of my teachers work hard - so in effect he has won this prize for all the great teachers here at TJHS," she said.

"In my class, we develop skills to critically interrogate the world around us," Hammond explained, adding:

"The ExCEL award is a testament to my students' hard work, their dedication to excellence, and their unbounded academic potential.

"These students are our future, and I am honored to report that our future is bright."

Besides teaching, Hammond sponsors the Carpe Futura Club, which prepares students to take Advanced Placement tests in subjects varying from AP literature to AP psychology.

The writing strategy he created, known alternately as "Thesis Ant" or "Sentence-Pede," is being used by teachers Districtwide to teach analytical/expository writing.

In addition to the trophy, Hammond received a \$1,000 cash prize and was featured in a

KENS5 story which can be viewed at:

[www.kens5.com/on-tv/excel-awards](http://www.kens5.com/on-tv/excel-awards).



James Hammond accepts the 2012 ExCEL Award, along with congratulations from (l to r) principal Joanne Cockrell, KENS5 anchor Deborah Knapp, San Antonio Credit Union representative Sylvia Espinosa, Interim Deputy Superintendent Dr. Peggy Stark-Wilson and High School LED Sylvia Garza. Joining them are Jefferson students.

## District hosts Dig for the Cure

Again this year SAISD high school volleyball players are joining others nationwide in dedicating their games for breast cancer awareness through participation in Dig for the Cure.

T-shirts (\$12 each) may be purchased and donations made at the athletic office annex. All proceeds will go to WINGS, a local non-profit organization.

To request recognition of breast cancer survivors call Barbara Wise, assistant athletics director, 735- 9331, ext. 114, or e-mail [bwis1@saisd.net](mailto:bwis1@saisd.net).



## Dig for the Cure matches

Oct. 12 (Fri)

**Alamo Convocation Center**

- Lanier vs. Brackenridge, 5:30 p.m.
- YWLA vs. Highlands, 7 p.m.

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**Sam Houston HS**

- Hawkins at Sam Houston, 5:30 p.m.

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**Burbank HS**

- Fox Tech at Burbank, 7:30 p.m.

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**Jefferson HS**

- Edison at Jefferson, 7:30 p.m.

## Support SAISD through United Way

District employees wanting to contribute to the SAISD Foundation can once again do so through the United Way Campaign.

This year's campaign goal is \$225,000, and the Foundation is again offering \$1,000 grants to recognize the highest participating high school, middle school, academy or early childhood education center and the top two elementaries. The Foundation also will host a reception for the department with the highest participation.

You may direct your gift or a portion of your gift to benefit our schools and students by designating United Way code #8031. One hundred percent of all employee donations to the Foundation go directly to SAISD schools.

The campaign runs through Monday, Nov. 5.



## Get your flu shot

Flu shots will be offered to SAISD employees and their covered dependents at any of the following locations on these days and times:

- Oct. 15 (Mon) - 2 to 6 p.m. at Lanier HS
- Oct. 16 (Tues) - 2 to 5 p.m. at Smith ES
- Oct. 18 (Thurs) - 2 to 5 p.m. at Foster ES
- Oct. 19 (Fri) - 2 to 5 p.m. at Brackenridge HS
- Oct. 22 (Mon) - 2 to 5 p.m. at Sam Houston HS
- Oct. 24 (Wed) - 2 to 5 p.m. at Page MS
- Oct. 25 (Thurs) - 2 to 4 p.m. at Highland Hills ES

Employees will be required to present their Humana Insurance card.

For more information call 554-8674, or e-mail the District's representative Angel Orozco, [AORozco@Humana.com](mailto:AORozco@Humana.com).

# Gumbo glory

Reveling in their status as high school champs of the 32nd-annual Medina Lake Cajun Festival Gumbo Cookoff are Burbank HS culinary arts students and mentor Alice "Ma" Harper, owner of Ma Harper's Creole Kitchen. Her personal knowledge of the Bayou State's signature dish contributed to the authenticity of Burbank's award-winning Gumbo YaYa. This was one of the



Courtesy photo

reasons the Louisiana-native panel of judges loved the entry, so much so they raved it would have rated a top place if entered in the professional's category. In addition to the first-place finish among their high school competitors, the teen gourmets earned third place overall in all categories, as well as The People's Choice Award, decided by the general public. This honor encompassed the categories of best gumbo, best booth and most enthusiasm at festival. Their teacher is Carol Hausler. This is the second consecutive year that her students have won the first place trophy among area high school contestants at the festival's gumbo cookoff.

# in the Spotlight



## Great day in the morning!

Washington ES 2nd-grade bilingual teacher Zulma Vasquez receives \$1,000 in office supplies and a new chair from Office Max representatives during a surprise visit to her classroom. Joining in the celebration were principal Phyllis Foley-Davis and students. Vasquez was among 1,000 educators nationwide benefitting from the office supply retailer's annual A Day Made Better program recognizing teachers' extraordinary efforts.

## Spurs and SAISD 'Team Up' for service

Courtesy photos



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In these photos, students from a record-number nine District campuses are shown learning the joyous news their service learning projects were selected as semi-finalists in this year's Team Up Challenge, netting them \$2,500 each in seed money from Silver & Black Give Back. Theirs were among 20 projects submitted by area classes, clubs or student groups to receive the funding. At the end of the school year, five of the semi-finalists will be awarded a grant of \$20,000 to further their projects. SAISD recipients are: **1.** Brackenridge HS Fitness Club **2.** Burbank HS Student Council **3.** Edison HS Science in Action **4.** Sam Houston HS Young Leaders **5.** Davis MS National Junior Honor Society and PALS **6.** Lowell MS Science Club **7.** Page MS Sixth-grade World Cultures **8.** Rhodes MS National Junior Honor Society and **9.** Whittier MS National Junior Honor Society. In 2012 and 2011 the District's Rogers ES and Highlands HS, respectively, earned the top \$20,000 prize.



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