

May 14, 2010

Governor and other state leaders host District college fair

SAISD has friends in high places in its quest for students to have access to quality higher education.

Gov. Rick Perry, joined by state Supreme Court Justice Eva Guzman, Commissioner of Higher Education Raymund Paredes, and District 26 State Rep. Leticia Van de Putte, promoted the value of a well-educated workforce for Texas' future at "Generation Adelante! ¡Generación Forward!" held May 13 at Brackenridge HS.

"Education is the factor that can help set you on a course for continued success, greater prosperity and a brighter future," Perry told students.

In addition to the Texas elected leaders,

representatives from more than 30 of the state's colleges and universities were present to answer questions and provide information.



DRT selects SAISD educator as 'Teacher of the Year'

Students of Barbara Pierce will no doubt never need to be reminded to "Remember the Alamo." Her innovative teaching methods and infectious



Courtesy photo

Sarah King ES 4th-grade Texas history teacher Barbara Pierce poses with some of the prizes she received as DRT Teacher of the Year.

love for the Lone Star State's history will help them to recall their lessons long after they leave her classroom.

Pierce's enthusiasm and ability to make learning fun is among the reasons she is the Daughters of the Republic Texas' 2010 Teacher of the Year, an honor that recognizes educators who inspire students to learn the state's rich history in ways other than a textbook.

The 23-year teaching veteran - 15 of which spent at Sarah King ES - was nominated by DRT member and retired SAISD Department of Social Studies Senior Coordinator Dr. Amy Jo Baker.

Along with letters of recommendation, Pierce's nomination included her philosophy and passion

for teaching 4th-grade Texas history.

"I love to teach my students the incredible history of Texas through many hands-on

activities, projects, living history re-enactments, and literature," she said.

"I enjoy sharing my passion for Texas history, and developing their interest in our state's foundation, culture and people, and am honored to be recognized by the

Daughters of the Republic of Texas as the Texas State history teacher for the Alamo Chapter of the DRT."

In addition to a cash prize, the award includes a biography of David Crockett, a book of the state's geography, and a Texas flag flown over the Alamo.



San Antonio Living gives 'Kids in the Kitchen' five stars

Move over Jamie Oliver! The popular UK celebrity TV chef and his "Food Revolution" have nothing on these Barkley-Ruiz Academy pre-kindergartners.

"Kids in the Kitchen," their cooking

segment highlighting healthy meals, has gone far beyond its regular Friday schoolwide newscast time slot to the greater South Texas airwaves.

After attracting the attention of San Antonio

Living producers, a WOAI-TV camera crew and program host Shelly Miles visited the pint-sized culinarians and their teachers for a story that was broadcast on May 10.

In addition to teaching the fine art of cooking, "Kids in the Kitchen" also combines lessons in math, science, public speaking and social skills.



During a taping for WOAI-TV, San Antonio Living host Shelly Miles (left photo) interviews the Barkley-Ruiz Academy 'Kids in the Kitchen' program culinary stars before joining them on set. They are pre-kinder teachers (l to r) Yvonne Mendez, Laura Tristan, and Amanda Skloss, and students Michelle Urbina, Alyssa Pena, and Nadia Rodriguez.

'Excellence in Education' now accepting grant applications



Is your vision for innovative learning opportunities bigger than your budget? If so, the SAISD Foundation for Excellence in Education wants to hear from you!

Applications now are being accepted for grants to fund projects for the 2010-11 school year. The application process is not limited to educators, but is open to all employees.

Amounts ranging from \$500 to \$5,000 will be awarded in the categories of classroom; grade level; campus or groups of campuses; subject area; and new teachers.

Applicants will be notified of their status during surprise visits this fall.

This will be cycle six of grants awarded by the foundation, formed to fund innovative instructional activities in support of District goals to benefit the largest possible number of students.

Mailed applications must be postmarked by Monday, June 7, or hand delivered by 4:30 p.m. that day. Address them in care of Carmen Vázquez-González at SAISD Central Office, 141 Lavaca St.

Forms can be downloaded at www.saisd.net. For more information call 299-4060.



Teeing off 'fore' education

Ready to hit the fairways for a good cause are (l to r) Joe Rinert, School Board Vice President Carlos Villarreal, Dave Foran and John Hall of the Raymond James & Associates Inc. team. The golfers were among 28 teams and more than 100 individuals participating in the May 3 Golf Fore Excellence tournament with all proceeds going toward the SAISD Foundation for Excellence in Education. This year the annual event netted \$105,000.



Courtesy photo

Conservation makes good ¢

Superintendent Dr. Robert Durón and School Board President James Howard (far left and right, respectively), accept a \$643,857 rebate check from CPS Energy representatives Clayton Kruse and Bruce Evans for cost saved through the lighting retrofit program. SAISD led all other area school districts in its participation in this incentive that rewards commercial customers for their conservation efforts.

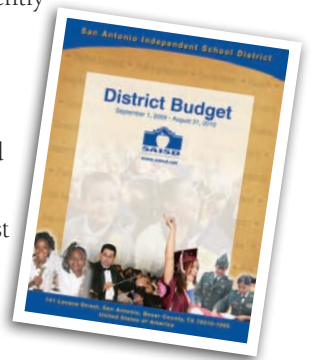
Accolades abound for the District's quality of budgeting

In its third recognition this year, SAISD recently earned the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States.

This is the fifth time the District has received this award reflecting "the commitment of the governing body and staff to meeting the highest principles of governmental budgeting."

To be chosen, entities must satisfy nationally-recognized guidelines designed to assess how well their budget serves as a policy document, financial plan, guide for operations and communications device.

GFOA is a nonprofit professional association serving 17,500 government finance professionals.



Financial Forum

A look at the current and prospective state of SAISD's finances

In the first of this two-part series we reviewed our financial progress thus far.

Using that information, we attempt some predictions for the remainder of the 2009-10 fiscal year ending on Aug. 31.

General Fund

Outlook: To be determined.

Overview: Before the year started the outlook was positive based upon an expected increase in Medicaid revenue. However, this likely will be completely offset by revenue losses due to: student attendance much lower than expected based in part upon both the regular and H1N1 flu; and higher-than-expected expenditures for the Head Start program. We expect to break even.



School nutrition fund

Outlook: Positive.

Overview: Staff levels are being reviewed, and equipment replacement and upgrades, especially in refrigeration, are long overdue because capital investments for SAISD kitchens had been on hold for some time. Investments also are being made in improving the quality of meals served.

Debt service fund

Outlook: Mixed but overall positive.

Overview: This fund is expected to incur losses because: the interest and sinking tax rate is unchanged; and lower tax collections (on a percentage basis) and a lack of taxable value growth. Good news is this fund has a healthy balance.

Bottom line

Outlook: Sense of urgency still needed

Overview: It is undeniable that our financial situation has improved dramatically. However, we still have many challenges to overcome, including:

- declining enrollment, which results in less state revenue
- the cost of maintaining aging and under utilized facilities, which means less money for instruction
- the recession, which may cause a decrease in projected state funding
- providing teacher pay - and, most importantly - quality educational offerings for our students, comparable to some neighboring school districts.

in the Spotlight



Gates Millennium Scholar

Lanier HS senior Maria Urbina shows her Vok pride by posing with the school mascot to announce her promising future. As a Gates Millennium Scholar, Maria has full funding - including stipends - to college through the Ph.D. level. She plans to major in medicine at the University of Texas. Maria is one of 1,000 students nationwide to earn funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.



'Kreme' of the crop educator

Lesley Sallee (center) is treated to doughnuts and other prizes from local Krispy Kreme store general managers Mike Melzow, and Melissa Trejo. As second runner up of the confectionery's Teacher of the Year award, she also received \$100 for herself and \$100 for her school. The 8-year veteran educator - all which at Washington ES - teaches 4th-grade. Sallee was nominated by her principal, Mary Olson, for her dedication and encouraging her students to do their best, resulting in consistently-high TAKS scores.



An expression of appreciation

Dr. Robert J. Durón, (l to r) School Board Secretary Thomas López, and Assistant Secretary Olga Hernandez (far right), present State Sen. Leticia Van de Putte with a resolution recognizing her efforts to ensure adequate and equitable funding for Texas public schools. Durón was among 46 of the state's superintendents who signed the resolution in their role as Equity Center executive committee members and board of directors.



Poster children for proper healthcare

The images of happy, healthy children in the "100% Campaign" poster represent the quality of life SAISD wants for all students. It was unveiled during the kickoff for a partnership between SAISD, Children's Defense Fund, Community First Health Plans and United Way to link the families of uninsured children with healthcare. The campaign was coordinated by the Department of Governmental & Community Relations. Executive Director is Carmen Vázquez-González (left) with Family Services Coordinator Lisa Lashley and Parent & Community Partnerships Director Janice Hannon.



All that jazz!

Placing second at the recent St. Mary's University Fiesta Jazz Festival is just the latest well-deserved recognition these swinging Connell MS musicians (shown with their director, George Hinojosa Jr., far left) are receiving. Their performances recorded there are scheduled to air the last week in May on 91.7 FM KRTU's Jazz Break at noon program. As a grant recipient from the city of San Antonio's Office of Cultural Affairs, university professors from St. Mary's, Trinity, Texas State, and UTSA are conducting jazz clinics at Connell.



Contributors to the cure

With nearly 900 members strong, Team SAISD marches in the annual Komen Race for the Cure. For the third consecutive year the District comprised the city's largest contingent, raising more than \$25,000 for breast cancer research.



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insider is produced by the **Communications Department**.

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