

September 10, 2010

## SAISD Foundation for Excellence in Education funds fall 2010 grants

Students at 15 District schools are the beneficiaries of lesson plans specially designed to pique their imaginations and interest through ingenious instruction.

Their teachers are recipients of a total of \$43,602 in grants thanks to the SAISD Foundation for Excellence in Education.

"The awards represent the continuing commitment from the community to invest in SAISD students and teachers," said Carri Baker Wells, SAISD Foundation for Excellence in Education board chairman and chief operations officer for the San Antonio office of Linebarger Goggan Blair & Sampson, LLP.

"We fund these awards to help teachers engage students in learning so they'll continue to aspire for academic success."

Those chosen for the grants were announced during an Aug. 31 news conference at Harris MS.

Afterward, recipients learned of their selection from foundation trustees, alumni and local supporters during surprise visits to their classrooms.

Grants for the two District 6 schools were given in honor of former SAISD trustees who represented that area and who also served as foundation board members.

The Edison HS grant is in memory of State District Judge, the Honorable Andy Mireles, who passed away last December.

Mireles resigned from the School Board in 1988 upon his election as judge of the Bexar County 73rd District Court. He was School Board secretary at the time of his resignation, and had served since 1984.

The Wilson ES grant honors his wife Margaret Mireles. The former School Board president who served 1994-98 was recognized for her tenure on the foundation board where she was an officer from its inception.

Since the fall of 2007 the SAISD Foundation has awarded \$389,990 for innovative grants and new teacher grants benefitting 35,671 students from 73 SAISD schools and departments.

Amounts provided to the award winners range from approximately \$1,000 to \$5,000 for the categories of classroom; grade level; and campus or groups of campuses. Recipients by project leader, school, projects and amount received are:

### Academy

- M.L. King, Jacquelyn E. Ali — "Clicking for Success," \$1,435.

### Elementaries

- Bowden, Jessica Bellows — "Solar System Unit," \$2,343.
- Briscoe, Renaii Ortiz — "Exploring Math, Science and Reading Through Literacy Bags," \$1,250.
- Franklin, Matthew Treviño — "Hear and Be Heard," \$1,500.
- Gates, Jenna Ondrusek — "Musical Styles and Keyboard Skills," \$948.
- Miller, Jenna Ondrusek — "Music History, Rhythm and Culture," \$749.
- Riverside Park, Victoria Casillas — "Virtual in Science Leaping Forward," \$1,915.

- Stewart, Adrianna Segura — "Tech Savvy Owls," \$382.
- Wilson, Mary Margaret Acevedo — "Life Cycles, Structures, and Processes throughout the Curriculum," \$2,818.
- Wilson, Yvette M. Cantu — "Integrating Math and Science with Reading," \$2,537.
- Woodlawn, Melissa del Torre — "Rising to the Top," \$2,363.

### Middle schools

- Harris, Javier De Hoyos — "Environmental Science: From Field to Lab for Life!" \$4,895.
- Page, Jason Siptak — "Vegetable to Market Entrepreneur Project," \$5,000.

### High schools

- Brackenridge, Ruben M. Pardo — "Study of Human Systems Using Fetal Pigs," \$4,460.
- Edison, Kathryn King — "Bacteria Wars," \$4,339; and "Discovering DNA," \$3,428.
- Navarro, Terika Baker — "CSI Project: Communicating Science Investigations," \$3,240.



1. The District's former superintendent Dr. Victor Rodriguez (right), SAISD Foundation for Excellence in Education board member Bob Raymond (background), and board Chairman Carri Baker Wells (center) recognize Margaret Mireles for her contributions. An inaugural foundation board member, Mireles also served as an SAISD School Board president. 2. School Board President James Howard (left), Vice President Carlos Villarreal (third from left, middle row), and foundation board member Javier Leal (far right) were part of the surprise patrol announcing that Jacquelyn E. Ali (shown with M.L. King vice principal Jannara Johnson and students) is a grant recipient. 3. Principal M. Lourdes Correa, whose Harris MS hosted the news conference site, was pleased to learn that teacher Javier De Hoyos also is a grant recipient.



## Getting out the Gen Z vote

Civic-minded Jefferson HS 18-year-olds Erica Gutierrez and Julie Maldonado (l to r) are assisted by Southwest Voter Registration Education Project intern Jimmy Galindo in signing up to vote at the convenience of their campus. Each school year government teachers at all SAISD high schools initiate voter registration drives as a community service to assist teens who are - or will soon to be - eligible to vote in time for fall elections. The final day to register for those wanting to cast a ballot in the Nov. 2 SAISD Bond 2010 election is Oct. 4.

## Invested citizens

SAISD School Board Secretary Tom López answers questions from grandparents Ruben and Rebecca Rodriguez about plans for Crockett ES under the \$515 million bond program voters will decide on Nov. 2. The District 5 Trustee's presentation made during the Principal's Breakfast is among many events School Board members are attending to provide the public with information about the proposal. The bond would address the needs for renovations and upgrades to schools across the District.



## Longfellow MS welcomes home native son Michael Garcia

Michael Garcia's students can count on it when he says he knows exactly where they are coming from. About a decade ago it was he who was sitting on their side of the classroom facing the teacher's desk as a 7th- and 8th-grader at Longfellow MS.

Today, he's the teacher.

"Being on this side, the teacher's side, makes you realize all the hard work that every teacher puts in for their students," the first-year, 8th-grade social studies teacher said.

Among them is James Gamble, his English teacher and basketball coach when he was a student, and whom he now is pleased to call a colleague.

"He always kept me on task and made sure I didn't fall through the cracks. I'm sure it makes him proud to know he's made an impact on my life.



Michael Garcia reviews a map of New England with one of his students. The first-year Longfellow MS 8th-grade social studies teacher certainly needed no map to find his new place of employment. He was a student there from 1998-2000, where social studies was among his favorite subjects. Photos behind him represent another of his favorites - basketball. He played at both Longfellow and Jefferson HS.

"I hope to do the same coaching alongside him this season in boys basketball and with the girls I coach in volleyball."

Longfellow Principal Liz Solis appreciates Garcia's enthusiasm, his high expectations for his students, and the unique perspective he provides as an alumni.

"As a product of this District, Mr. Garcia brings passion and commitment from a heartfelt connection to his experience as a former Longfellow student," she said.

"There's a lot to be said about returning to your roots. Mr. Garcia has returned to his roots at Longfellow and is planting new seeds of prosperity through his work as a teacher."

In addition to Gamble and his principal, Garcia also expressed particular appreciation to 8th-grade U.S. history teachers Raymond Pulido and Raymond Ruiz for their assistance.

"It's great to have the support I do here at Longfellow from the entire faculty. It feels great to be able to give back to my community."

## The Top 10 all-time tips can transform SAISD in at least 8,086 ways!

What better time than the start of a new school year than to review these tried-and-true ways to keep our customers satisfied?

And with 8,086 SAISD employees, this means every day we come to work there can be at least 8,086 opportunities for us to practice and provide Level 5 customer service.

Just imagine what could happen if each of us always exemplified these tips!

10. Keep frequently-requested information handy. Be ready to help callers and visitors with the most common requests such as school lists, the instructional calendar and the Student Code of Conduct.

9. Display customer-friendly signs. Make sure visitors can easily find school and department main offices.

8. Send thank-you notes. Volunteers, mentors, partners and SAISD colleagues will appreciate your thoughtfulness. People like to know they are appreciated!

7. Use simple language. Avoid educational jargon whenever possible.

6. Be a courteous customer. During your calls or visits to schools and departments, introduce yourself to the office receptionist.

5. Same day service! Strive to return calls the same day, if possible.

4. Allow customers to vent. Don't take the words or attitudes of angry callers or visitors personally. Most likely they are upset and frustrated by a situation and not you. Be empathetic and let them know you want to help.

3. Don't give customers the run-around. Don't provide "hot potato-pinball" service by passing them off to someone else unless you are sure that person can help.

2. Greet ALL visitors immediately. If you are helping others, acknowledge them with, "I will be right with you."

1. And the number one tip for good customer service is: Smile! Let people see and hear the attitude of "How can I help you?"

Bonus tip from Janice Hannon, customer service department director -

*"When you answer the phone, pretend that your favorite person in the whole-wide world is the caller! Let your face and tone of voice show callers how happy you are that they are calling! Try it and let me know how it works!"*

## Free flu shots for employees

Seasonal flu vaccine will be offered through the District's Humana Health Insurance Program on:

- Sept. 11 (Sat.) - 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Burnet Center cafeteria
- Sept. 17 (Fri) - 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in room 229 of the SSS building
- Sept. 20 (Mon) - 2. to 6 p.m. at Graebner ES
- Sept. 21 (Tues) - 2 to 6 p.m. at M.L. King Academy

The shots are free, and District 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



# in the Spotlight

## Remembering 9/11

Students at Cotton ES watch as new American and Texas flags donated by the Daughters of the American Revolution are raised for the first time at their campus. They were among a worldwide fellowship of those pausing to reflect upon the ninth anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks. The ceremony was led by the JROTC from Fort Sam Houston's Cole HS and commander Lt. Col. Bob Hoffman (not shown). In preparation of this annual event, Hoffman trains Safety Patrol 5th-graders in the proper etiquette of folding and raising the flag.



## Chili Bowl spirit lives on

Superintendent Robert J. Durón (left photo, l to r), School Board Assistant Secretary Olga Hernandez and Secretary Tom López enjoy a laugh while Fox Tech HS alum Dr. Carlos Orozco and Dr. Joe Bernal, who is a Lanier HS graduate, (right photo) engage in a good-natured teasing while announcing the First Annual Chili Bowl Gala. The fundraiser scheduled for Nov. 6 at the Freeman



Coliseum's Exposition Hall will include a dinner, dance, and live and silent auctions. Proceeds will establish scholarships for deserving students from both schools, and for supplies and other expenses for Fox Tech's new Health Professions Magnet Program.

## VIP connections

Jefferson HS Architecture Club and Future Business Leaders of America students meet Mayor Julián Castro (third from left, front row) and former mayor Lila Cockrell (not pictured) during a luncheon at the San Antonio Country Club hosted by the World Affairs Council of San Antonio. The Jefferson contingent represented the only high school students to attend this presentation on world affairs, the importance of San Antonio in developing and maintaining a global connection, and the mayor's trip to Shanghai for the 2010 World Expo. Funding for Jefferson's participation was provided by the Zachry Foundation. Shown with the students (far left) is Architecture Club sponsor David Garcia, and Theresa Mazuca (far right), who sponsors the Future Business Leaders of America.



Courtesy photo



## Three cheers for the new school year!

City Corps members and Twain MS students form a huddle and touch hands for a spirit break during a recent rally. The expression of unity and other early morning activities were designed to help provide youngsters with a powerful start to the school day by ensuring that everyone is well-prepared - both mentally and physically - for learning.

  
**SAISD**  
San Antonio Independent  
School District  
141 Lavaca St.  
San Antonio, TX 78210  
phone: 554-2250  
fax: 299-5790  
www.saisd.net

**Board of Education**  
James Howard, President  
Carlos Villarreal, Vice President  
Thomas C. López, Secretary  
Olga M. Hernandez, Assistant Secretary  
Rubén D. Cuero, Member  
Adela R. Segovia, Member  
Ed Garza, Member

**Superintendent**  
Robert J. Durón, Superintendent

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

Leslie Price, Executive Director  
René Lynn, Newsletter Coordinator  
John Lawler, Photographer  
Printing Services, Design and Layout  
insider is the intellectual property of the San Antonio Independent School District. Content may be reproduced upon permission and with appropriate attribution.

The San Antonio Independent School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law.

El Distrito Escolar Independiente de San Antonio no discrimina por motivos de raza, religión, color, origen nacional, sexo o impedimento, o por cualquier otro motivo prohibido por la ley.