

May 12, 2011

Jeff's Joanne Cockrell named a national 'Change Leader'

An SAISD veteran educator who answered the call to come out of retirement to lead a historic high school back to its storied past is being honored by the National Principals Leadership Institute.

Joanne Cockrell - now in her second year as Jefferson HS principal - is one of two recipients of the 2011 Change Leaders Award.

This tribute recognizes individuals who have demonstrated through their words and actions a commitment to creating exemplary schools that serve the needs and aspirations of all students.

"This is a great honor," Cockrell said. "It is nice to know at my advanced age, students and teachers still have a positive reaction to people who love and only want the best for them."

Her career with SAISD - and her lifelong passion for education - all began in 1965 as an algebra teacher at Rogers JHS, now a middle school.

More than 30 years later that passion was instrumental in leading Fox Tech HS from low performing to the District's first *recognized* high school, first National Blue Ribbon School, and runner-up to TIME Magazine's best U.S. high school. And if that wasn't enough to cheer about, the basketball team won a state championship.

It was there that she first caught NPLI's



No doubt school namesake Thomas Jefferson - whose image graces the foyer - would be proud of Joanne Cockrell's selection as a 2011 national Change Leaders Award recipient.

attention in 2001 when the organization selected Fox Tech as one of six National School Change winners.

Her initial attempt at retirement occurred that next year. Instead, she repeatedly postponed those plans or returned to work part-time when asked to mentor new principals or serve as a high school interim principal.

Cockrell's last "temporary" assignment was made permanent in 2010 when she accepted the Jefferson principalship following a period as interim. Since then the school - like Fox Tech before it - has risen to the Texas Education Agency's second highest ranking.

"Although I have not shared this honor

with my faculty and students - when I do they will know that we are all taking the steps necessary to recapture the glory that was Jefferson for so many years," she said.

"Everyone has worked really hard on our 'Return to Glory' experience, and going from unacceptable to *recognized* was just the first step."

NPLI CEO Dr. Lew Smith - quoting playwright George Bernard Shaw - wrote in the letter announcing her selection:

"Some see things as they are and ask why? Others see things as they might be and ask why not? These simple words capture the soul and spirit of Joanne

Cockrell.

"You have asked educators to reflect on their efforts. You have challenged educators to reach for higher horizons - and to take their students with them. You have urged educators to challenge the status quo.

"You are a Change Leader."

Since 1998 NPLI has provided an exemplary leadership experience for more than 3,000 educational leaders from 45 U.S. states, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and three Canadian provinces.

The organization will honor Cockrell during the 12th-annual National School Change Awards ceremony July 11 at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts' Walter Reade Theater in New York City.



Students enjoy their new playground at Briscoe ES, the first of seven schools to receive them.



Associate Superintendent of Construction Management Kamal ElHabr speaks at the Edison HS community meeting hosted by Board Assistant Secretary Olga Hernandez. This was the final of seven held in all Trustee districts to provide Bond program information.

Ready. Set.. Bond!

Work on the District's \$515 million Bond is well under way, with students already reaping the benefits.

In addition to safety and security enhancements - a top priority for SAISD Bond 2010 - delivery of new computers and related software has also begun, as well as installation of new playgrounds.

Work will continue throughout the summer, to include: all-weather resurfacing of high school athletic tracks, and the first installation of a career technology lab at Davis MS, one of 11 middle schools to receive these labs to provide early exploration of career pathways.



Tafolla MS 6th-graders (above) check out their new netbook computers that were delivered by (right) Technology Department

Chief Information Officer Marcos Zorola. Delivery began in May and will continue this summer for a total of 12,000 computers to schools across SAISD.



Trio of schools receive \$1.5 million to 'chart' new courses

Thanks to funding from the Texas Education Agency, three SAISD campuses will have the resources needed to help make their new ventures a success.

Travis Early College HS, Rhodes MS, and Highland Park ES each are \$500,000 Public Charter School Start-Up Grant recipients for their in-district charters.

The funding will go toward professional development, technology, furniture, and instructional supplies and materials.

As in-district charters, this fall they will join a dozen SAISD campuses that have chosen this educational path providing increased flexibility to develop programs designed to meet their students' unique learning needs.

In addition to a well-rounded curriculum,



Travis Early College HS students Lillian Galindo and Claudio Treviño collaborate on a chemistry experiment.

in-district charters feature a particular area of emphasis, and enrollment is open to students throughout Bexar County.

About the new in-district charters
Travis Early College HS. Increased resources will be provided for students wanting to earn dual high school and no-cost college credit - up to 60 hours or an associate's degree - in partnership with San Antonio College.

Rhodes MS. As an in-district charter, the school's established Technology Magnet Program will be expanded to infuse technology throughout the curriculum.

Highland Park ES. Staff will be better able to expand the school's focus on critical thinking methodology through coordinating monthly, schoolwide, themes.

Girl Scout supporters

Deputy Superintendent Betty Burks accepts a Community Partner Award on behalf of Dr. Robert J. Durón from Girl Scouts of Southwest Texas CEO Anna Maria Chávez (left) and Board Chair Jackie Gorman-Johnson for his exceptional support. Others receiving recognition included Executive Assistant Cora Johns, who was presented an Honor Pin Award for repeated outstanding service, and SAISD Foundation Board Chairman Carri Baker Wells, given the Executive Award for volunteers who have made significant contributions. This school year, teens representing all 10 District high schools are piloting the Scouts newest service organization, Gama Sigma Girls.



Courtesy photo



Courtesy photo

Be true to your school!

School spirit is in such abundant supply at Schenck ES that students were invited to let their colors fly as presenters at the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports Showcase. Leaders of the school's 18 clubs and organizations shared how membership and involvement help to increase student attendance. The showcase was held at the Education Service Center Region 20. Among those there to cheer them on were Dr. Robert J. Durón and assistant principal Nora Mozingo (far right), who also serves as the Recycle Club sponsor.

Coyote and Owl collaboration

On campus to bring the \$20,000 check Voices for Animals won as a Team Up Challenge victor is the Spurs mascot. The happy Highlands HS Owl recipients include (l to r, back row) assistant principal Chris Castro, principal Lorna Klokkenga, and sponsor Brooke Orr. Also, (front) student Diana Rodriguez, sponsor Mary Shearer, student Jessica Guerrero, sponsor Tammie Bennett, and student Melanie Jackson. The money will go toward ongoing care efforts for strays and abandoned pets. Highlands was one of five schools selected to receive funding for community service projects from Silver & Black Give Back.



Someone to look up to

The expression "friends in high places" now has a whole new meaning for Lamar ES 4th-graders. The youngsters recently had the opportunity to meet basketball player Geethu Anna Jose when the 6-foot-2 native of India was in town to try out for the Silver Stars. Prior to signing autographs, the Women's National Basketball League MVP spoke on the important role healthy living plays in success.

Summit to focus on summer learning

A break from school need not mean children also take a break from education, as parents will learn at the:

'Sailing into Summer Learning' Parent Summit

May 20 (Fri) - 8 a.m. (registration) to 3 p.m.
 Norris Conference Center
 Wonderland Mall of the Americas
 4522 Fredericksburg Road

The keynote speaker will be Dr. Carey Latimore IV, co-director of African-American studies for Trinity University.

The annual summit is sponsored by the SAISD Department of Governmental & Community Relations.



SAISD May 14 election

District 2

James Howard, incumbent and School Board president, and challenger Joy McGhee

District 5

Sharon Abigail Monreal and Patti Radle

District 6

Olga M. Hernandez, incumbent and School Board assistant secretary, and challenger David Soto

Voting information: www.co.bexar.tx.us/elections

in the Spotlight



Gates Millennium Scholar

Highlands HS senior Jasmine Rodriguez shows off her announcement as a Gates Millennium Scholar. Jasmine - who has full funding through the Ph.D. level - plans to major in chemical engineering at Texas A&M University. She is one of 1,000 students nationwide to earn funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.



Dell Scholar

Indicating her choice of colleges is Burbank HS senior Alejandra Cortes, who will major in political science in preparation of a law degree. The aspiring attorney ultimately plans to be an advocate for sexually-abused children. Her University of Texas at San Antonio education will be financed through a \$20,000 Dell Foundation Scholarship.



Courtesy photo

All hail Yale!

Honoree Desi San Martin of Jefferson HS accepts a 2011 Yale Book Award, presented to recruit the nation's brightest high school juniors. Celebrating the honor are (l to r) assistant principal Randolph Kowalik, counselor Nora Potthast, Dr. Maricela Oliva of the Yale University Club of South Texas, and Honoree's mom Roseann San Martin.



Courtesy photo

Award-winning historians

Bound for next month's National History Day competition in Washington, D.C., are Burbank HS students (l to r seated), Eliza Almeida and Adrianna Ayala. Also, Lee Jimenez, Mayra Almeida, and Christopher Aragon. They qualified by placing second for their performance of "Writing the Treaty of Versailles" at the recent Texas State History Fair.



Cooper Academy's 200th grad

Gathering for a milestone in the life of Jessica Rodriguez – and in the success of the Cooper Dropout Recovery program – are Jessica's mom Irma Lopez and principal Joseph Zatarain (seated), and school staff (l to r back row), Geri Barnes, John Johnson, Louis Robles, Armando Flores and Luis De La Garza. Also, Mercy Alatorre, Bertha Gonzalez, Annie Shipman, Margarita Mendoza, and Helen Ramon. Now that she has graduated, it's on to Texas State University where Jessica will major in education.



Courtesy photo

Master planners

Jefferson HS architecture students (l to r) Roger Galvan, Sarai Martinez, Trisha Ortiz, and William Betchel display models for a proposed visitors center and other facilities at Woodlawn Lake. The structures were presented at a charette on infill designs appropriate for historic neighborhoods where Jefferson's was named "The Most Developed and Marketable Project" of all entries.



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