

January 12, 2012

Schools to reap further benefits from second 'Promise' grant

Just over a year after San Antonio was selected for a federal education planning grant comes the good news that nearly \$25 million in additional funding was awarded for project implementation.

The money will be allocated over five years with the first \$4.6 million used to bolster the \$312,000 Eastside Promise Neighborhood Project grant for school and neighborhood revitalization received in the fall of 2010.

"This type of collaboration can bring about true transformation, making not only our community but our city stronger," said Superintendent Dr. Robert J. Durón when this grant was announced.

The focus is on neighborhoods that correspond with Wheatley MS, including Bowden, Washington and Pershing elementaries, Tynan ECEC and Sam Houston, their feeder high school.

Recipient of the implementation grant is the United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County, which plans to leverage \$3.1 million in additional funds over three years to SAISD.

"We are building this road together, none of us could do this alone," said United Way's Senior Vice President Toni Van Buren.

In addition to United Way and SAISD, the East Side Promise Neighborhood partnership is in collaboration with the city of San Antonio, the San Antonio Housing Authority, Family Service Association, the P-16 Council, City Year, CINOW and neighborhood leaders.

Plans include a range of services from improving a neighborhood's health, safety and stability to expanding access to learning technology and Internet connectivity and boosting family engagement in student learning.

"This will be a day we look back on a few years from now and say that's when San Antonio fundamentally changed its philosophy toward education," Mayor Julian Castro said. "This grant recognizes the intersection between families, strong neighborhoods and schools."

The local United Way was one of only five entities

nationwide to earn an implementation grant. All also are eligible for Department of Justice funding to support their public safety strategies.



Dr. Robert J. Durón speaks during a Dec. 19 news conference at the Ella Austin Community Center where the grant was announced. Joining him for the announcement were Bowden ES students and Mayor Julián Castro.

YWLA art instructor lauded for her work with young women

An educator at San Antonio's only all-girls public school is the 2012 recipient of the Carrie Nordlund pre-K-12 Feminist Pedagogy Award.

Maria Elena Botello Mogas will be honored at a March 6 awards ceremony during the National Art Education Association's Convention in New York City.

Since 2002 the honor has been bestowed upon art educators who demonstrate "outstanding feminist teaching that is fair, equitable and inclusive" of all students.

"Ms. Mogas is one of the most professional teachers with whom I have ever worked. A teacher like her should not go unrecognized for her efforts and accomplishments," wrote SAISD Fine Arts Department Coordinator Isabel Romero in her nomination letter.

"Her knowledge is deep but more importantly she knows how to impart that knowledge on her students through the activities she has them engage in. She is a great influence on her students' work and their knowledge of their history and their world. She sets very high standards, guides her students through the path and celebrates their successes with them at the end."

The eight-year veteran educator - two of which spent at the Young Women's Leadership Academy -

said she includes a women's studies unit for her 6th-through 10th-graders along with their regular art instruction of drawing, painting, design, ceramics and sculpture.

She begins with activities to help them understand feminism and what it means to be a feminist. Many initially confuse these words with feminine, which they define as "girly."

"They are usually surprised to find out that feminism is a cause supporting the rights of females, and that a feminist is an advocate for women's rights," she said.

Highlighting the unit is a lengthy study on feminist artist Judy Chicago's "The Dinner Party"



Teacher Maria Elena Botello Mogas and 10th-grader Veronica Macias prepare for the women's studies unit by perusing magazines for images to incorporate into a notebook-cover collage.

that depicts place settings for 39 mythical and historical famous women. Created with the assistance of numerous volunteers between 1974 and '79, the goal of the artwork was to "end the ongoing cycle of omission in which women were written out of the historical record."

The YWLA students then create their own "Dinner Party." Other assignments include students interviewing older female relatives about their personal experiences of gender discrimination.

"The results are amazing to me," Mogas said.

While the students say they enjoy these opportunities to learn more about the lives of their mother and grandmothers, most had no idea they had ever been treated unfairly because they are female.

During the study students also compose gender statements. Many write:

"Girls can do anything boys can do."

Ultimately, Mogas said she hopes that through knowing their own history, her students "will learn to become self actualized, confident and bold as they enter their future."

In addition to being honored at the awards ceremony, Mogas will make a presentation on her teachings for Women's History Month.



Generosity rewarded

Dave Carletti, United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County's senior vice president of resource development, presents (l to r) Jefferson HS principal Joanne Cockrell and secretary Hope Garza the organization's prestigious Platinum Award. Jefferson is the first SAISD school to earn this honor rewarding employee groups whose contributions are equivalent to all employees giving two hour's pay per month for 12 months.



Fox Tech HS earns second national Blue Ribbon nomination

An SAISD high school is one of 26 Texas public schools nominated for recognition to honor academic excellence and significant progress in closing the achievement gap.

If selected, this would be Fox Tech's second national Blue Ribbon School Award. Its first was awarded in 2000.

This year's nomination is in the category of dramatically-improved student performance to high levels on state tests.

Nominees serve as models of best practices for schools statewide, and were chosen through an objective evaluation of student achievement statistics and other data. Those selected also have demonstrated success in closing the achievement gap, and have an economically-disadvantaged population of at least 40 percent.

The nominated schools will now

complete a rigorous application process through the U.S. Department of Education. The award winners will be announced in September and recognized at the Blue Ribbon School conference in Washington, D.C.

Since 1982, this program has honored more than 6,000 of America's most successful schools, including 538 Texas public schools.



Join team 'Passion for the Cure'

Again this year SAISD employees and their families can enjoy a fun, healthy activity while rallying around the cause to fight breast cancer.

Runners and walkers now are being sought for the annual Komen San Antonio Race for the Cure.

The District's team is Passion for the Cure, and this year's goal is 1,000 participants.

Registration now under way

Categories - 10K competitive run, \$45; 5K competitive run, \$40; and non-competitive walk/

run, \$35.

Payment - SAISD only accepts cash or checks (made payable to Komen San Antonio Race for the Cure). For more information email team captain Carmen Ng, Fox Tech HS secretary, cng@saisd.net or call 226-5103, ext. 125.

Credit cards are accepted by registering at: www.komensanantonio.org



Registration deadline - Thursday, April 26
Race Day - May 12, starting at the Alamodome



Happy historians

Proudly exhibiting their ribbons earned at SAISD's annual Social Studies History Fair are middle (left photo) and high school first- and second-place winners in a variety of categories. By virtue of performances at this competition, students from the following campuses will advance to the regional contest: Bonham and the Young Women's Leadership academies; Connell, Poe, Rhodes and Whittier middle schools; and Brackenridge, Burbank, Fox Tech and Travis Early College high schools.

Hands up for Academic Decathlon

Signaling their responses by raised pencils to a question posed for a Super Quiz Relay drill are students representing high schools Districtwide. They were among teams of students preparing for the Jan. 20-21 regional Academic Decathlon at an SAISD-sponsored practice session. The District's competing teams, categories and competition sites will be: Burbank, Brackenridge, Edison, Fox Tech, Lanier and Jefferson, medium schools, and Highlands, large schools, at Warren HS in the Northside ISD and Sam Houston and the Young Women's Leadership Academy, small schools, at King HS in the Corpus Christi ISD. Each year Academic Decathlon teams composed of A, B, and C students compete in the categories of honors, scholastic and varsity, respectively. Their knowledge is tested in 10 subject areas, including the arts and music.



Come say thanks

The public is invited to join us in expressing appreciation for SAISD's dedicated and hard-working elected leaders at the:

**Texas School Board
Recognition Month Reception
Jan. 17 (Tues) - 4:30 to 6 p.m.
Burnet Center, 406 Barrera St.**

The reception will be hosted by Superintendent Dr. Robert J. Durón and underwritten by the SAISD Foundation. Each year this observance provides the public an opportunity to thank Trustees for their service to the school district and its community.

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Mascot makeover

Crosstown high school rivalries took a backseat when Lanier automotive collision instructor Orlando Lizcano's expertise was sought for a very special restoration project. Under his guidance, four students including Audriea Armijo (left) and Gina De la Fuente are sanding and painting Edison's beloved Golden Bear back to its glory days. Cost for the iconic octogenarian's makeover - far less than that of a commercial automotive body shop - will be paid for by Edison alumni. The results will be priceless.



Tops with tots

Winner of the San Antonio Children's Museum's Kids' Choice Award is this towering treat created by Jefferson HS Architecture Club students. The pagoda-styled confection was among entries at the museum's and Architecture Foundation of San Antonio's Fourth-Annual Gingerbread Design Challenge. Posing with it are (l to r) Debbie Hutcheson, foundation executive director, Cathryn Le Vrier, SA Kids executive director and David Garcia, architecture magnet program coordinator.

Art SAISD style



Appreciating their work site's very own art gallery are Student Support Services Building-based employees (l to r) Mary Darilek, Marcos Castillo, J. Gilbert Candia II

and Marcelino Perez. The photos they are admiring were taken by students from Longfellow and Wheatley middle schools and Jefferson HS for the smARTCHITECTURE competition, and all showcase the architecture of historic SAISD schools. The exhibit is on loan from S.M.A.R.T. (Supporting Multiple Arts Resources Together), and can be viewed at the SSS site, 1702 N Alamo St., weekdays during regular business hours.

Warm hearts

Thanks to these caring Briscoe ES PALS members and counselor Michelle Bain, SAMMinistries is able to keep San Antonio's homeless warmer this winter. They collected enough blankets, coats, hats and gloves to fill eight large boxes for donation to the service provider.



Prepared for flight



All ready to fly the friendly skies are Phoenix Middle College students Nicholas Cardenas and Stephanie Gutierrez. Their Civil Air Patrol orientation flight certificates were earned following training that included a two-and-a-half hour Saturday morning excursion high above the Texas Hill Country during the winter break. Each was given basic instruction and allowed to operate the controls during portions of the flight. Pictured with them is pilot Capt. Dave Badal.



All the right moves

Mission Academy 4th-graders Salvador Delfierro and Serena Fernandez hope practice makes perfect, while teacher Felix Fierros (background) goes over strategy with their Chess Club colleagues. The game board enthusiasts were preparing for SAISD's 16th-annual chess tournament honoring the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. their school will host on Jan. 14. The official MLK weekend event is open to students from throughout Central and South Texas.

SHARING HIS DREAM

All SAISD schools and most offices will be closed Monday, Jan. 16, in observance of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day holiday honoring the Civil Rights leader's life.

Have a safe and happy holiday!