

February 23, 2012

Trustees set to discuss interim superintendent qualifications

Dr. Robert J. Durón - who has been the District's superintendent since July 2006 - resigned this position during the Feb. 20 School Board meeting.

The resignation will become effective the first day an interim is hired, and Trustees will meet tonight to discuss qualifications.

Once an interim is named, Durón will remain a District employee, serving as executive director for research and special projects through Feb. 15, 2013 or earlier should he begin full-time employment outside SAISD.

In this role he will report to the Board president and new superintendent, assisting with project planning and serving in an advisory capacity.

"It has been an honor and privilege to serve the parents and students of this community. It has been equally a privilege and honor to lead the dedicated staff of SAISD," Durón read in a prepared statement at Monday's meeting.

Trustees are moving forward to determine the process of a superintendent's search with the goal to hire a permanent successor by this summer,

Board President Ed Garza said Monday.

Garza also stated "Dr. Durón has been a positive force. His contributions as superintendent will be long lasting.

"The [voluntary separation] agreement recognizes a unified step forward in what Dr. Durón and the Board collectively believe is in the best interest of the District and in building a strong Team of 8."

Educator who strives for greatness named Trinity nominee

A second-year teacher already recognized for his leadership both inside and outside the classroom will represent SAISD for one of Bexar County's most prestigious honors.

James Hammond of Jefferson HS has been selected by a District committee as SAISD's nominee for the 2012 Trinity Prize for Excellence in Teaching. Later this spring, two Bexar County-area recipients will be announced at an awards ceremony hosted by prize sponsor Trinity University.

"Although he is one of the youngest members of the faculty here at Thomas Jefferson High School, James Hammond has already demonstrated a considerable capacity as a teacher and a leader," principal Joanne Cockrell wrote in her nomination letter.

"The life of a new teacher can be daunting as James soon found out, but he rose to the occasion and met the challenges head on."

To increase his effectiveness, the Teach For America corps member created several new teaching tools. Strategies he developed for his 12th-grade Advanced Placement literature students resulted in their passing the AP exam with SAISD's highest percentages.

While new to teaching, Hammond was no novice to overcoming challenges. His decision to



Trinity Prize nominee James Hammond assists students in his AP literature class.

seek a career in education is attributed to a teacher whose question, "Do you want to be great?" inspired the-then Lewisville (Texas) HS 10th-grader to conquer speech defects.

By senior year, Hammond was a national oratory champion and his new-found confidence would soon help him to thrive at the University of Texas at Austin, where he earned his bachelor's degree in 2010.

"I never forgot Ms. Squibb's charge - greatness is in reach of those hands that stretch to grasp it - and I never forgot that it was a teacher, just one unspeakably devoted teacher, who had given me

my new life," Hammond wrote.

"Upon graduating, I knew that the greatest cause I could think of, the cause I wanted to devote my life to, was extending to others the opportunities that Ms. Squibb had extended to me. I knew my future was in education."

In addition to AP literature, Hammond teaches AP language and English language arts IV.

After school and Saturdays are spent helping students prepare for their ACT and SAT exams, as well as for college entrance essays. Through his tutelage, many have earned scholarships in the six figures. Among the highest was a scholarship for more than \$500,000.

When not in the classroom, Hammond provides professional development and has taken the initiative to redesign Teach For America - San Antonio's diversity curriculum.

Hammond also spent this past summer working with the mayor's office as a policy analyst/researcher to help ensure a higher-quality of education for the city's public school students.

He currently is pursuing his master's from UTSA, leading by example through "his own quest for knowledge," Cockrell wrote.

"I am quite sure that we will be hearing great things about James Hammond in the future."

Former city councilmember appointed to fill District 3 vacancy

Debra Guerrero, vice president of governmental affairs for the NPR Group, public servant and longtime community advocate, is bringing her leadership skills to SAISD.

She was selected by Trustees at the Feb. 20 School Board meeting to complete the unexpired District 3 term of Carlos Villarreal, who resigned from the position he had held since May 2004.

Guerrero's appointment is effective until the May 2013 election.

As a city councilmember from 1997 to 2001, she also represented the city's District 3. Both comprise San Antonio's Southeast Side.

The 45-year lifelong resident of this area also has served as trustee of the San Antonio Library Board,

director of the HemisFair Park Redevelopment Corp., member of the VIA Intra-City Rail & Streetcar Commission and for numerous other community entities.

Guerrero holds a doctorate of jurisprudence from the University of Texas at Austin school of law, a master's in public affairs from UT's LBJ School of Public Affairs and a bachelor's in political science from St. Mary's University.



Debra Guerrero is sworn into office by SAISD's Executive Director of Governmental & Community Relations Carmen Vázquez-González.

Highlands has a heart for humanitarianism



Go Green Highlands HS students sort through the more than 1,600 pairs of jeans they collected for a nationwide effort to help homeless teens.

Whether human or four-footed, students and staff at Highlands HS are united in helping the homeless.

In conjunction with Aéropostale Inc. retailer and DoSomething.org., members of the Go Green club recently collected more than 1,600 pair of jeans for homeless teens.

Their contributions are part of the nationwide Teens For Jeans campaign.

In a separate humanitarian cause, the school's Voices for Animals club members are using the \$10,000 Pepsi Refresh Project grant they received this school year for food and shelter to board stray pets until they find their forever homes.



Voices for Animals club members (l to r) Aaron Vega, Valerie Diaz and Diana Rodriguez and sponsors Mary Shearer, Tammie Bennett and Brooke Orr check on dogs they rescued. The canine's board at the Southeast Animal Hospital is funded through a Pepsi grant.

Thanks, chief!

SAISD Police Chief Jeff Ward expresses his appreciation to Sam Wolf for his 38 years of service to the District. The former SAISD police chief was recognized at the Feb. 20 School Board meeting for his contributions that led to the District's current department, which repeatedly has been ranked among the nation's best. When hired in 1954, Wolf was one of two officers charged with providing security for SAISD's properties. By the end of his tenure there were 150 certified officers.



Outstanding alums

Exemplifying their alma mater's academic excellence are honorees at the Jefferson HS 80th-anniversary celebration. Recognized alumni representing eight decades included: (l to r) Boone Powell, lead designer and principal in charge for Ford, Powell & Carson Architects; Alfred Valenzuela, retired U.S. major general; Toni Thompson, Human Resources Department associate superintendent; Ed Garza, School Board president and former San Antonio mayor; Joaquín Castro, District 125 state representative; and Laura Saldivar, executive director for Teach For America in San Antonio. Honorees unable to attend were Mayor Julián Castro, Bob Polunsky, longtime San Antonio radio, television and newspaper film critic and Bernard Rapoport, American Income Life Insurance Co. founder and philanthropist.



Texas top counselors

Displaying the banner representing their repeat selections as Counselors Reinforcing Excellence for Students in Texas award winners

are Kelly ES's Laura Serrato (left) and Jamie Ledford of Green ES. This is Ledford's fourth consecutive year and the third that Serrato has earned the award for outstanding counseling programs. They recently were honored at the Texas Counseling Association Growth Conference held in Galveston.

Courtesy photo



For Your Benefit

Taking your medications wisely is imperative for maximum health



Knowing how, when and why to take your medicine helps to ensure that you stay in good health while avoiding prospective medical errors at the same time.

In this issue of For Your Benefit we share the following tips on getting the most benefit from your medications.

Know your meds

- Keep a list of their names, what they are for, their strength, why you are taking them and for how long.
- Understand any special instructions, such as "take with food" or "avoid alcoholic beverages."
- Tell your doctor all the drugs you take so

that he or she will be aware of any interactions they may cause. Over-the-counter medicines and even some foods can interact with your medication.

- Talk to your doctor about problems or side effects so that he or she can decide whether a change in dosage or a different medicine is necessary.
- When picking up a new prescription or refill, make sure the drug and strength match what your doctor prescribed.
- Take each dose exactly as prescribed.
- Ask your pharmacist to help you organize your medicines if you have trouble remembering to take them.
- Don't keep medicines past their expiration date because old drugs can be ineffective or

dangerous.

Make a complete list

Update regularly, keep handy and make sure someone else knows where to find information on:

- The prescriptions and over-the-counter medicines you take
- Vitamins and supplements you use
- Your drug allergies

Humana can help

As a Humana member, you can keep track of this information quickly and easily.

Enter, save and print your medical history with "My Health Record," a page that can be found in the "Health Resources for Members" section at: www.humana.com



in the Spotlight



Courtesy photos

SAISD's super cyber patrolman

Ready to stop computer hackers in their tracks is Kenny Bias. The Brackenridge HS senior's skills are so extraordinary that he is part of the only Texas team headed for CyberPatriot IV - the National High School

Cyber Defense Competition to be held March 22-24 in Washington, D.C. There, teams will be charged with defending computer systems from the attacks of cybersecurity experts. The 12 teams to compete in the finals earned the right based upon their performances at three previous qualifying rounds. Kenny's team - Alamo Academies - also is composed of students from four other area school districts. Offered in partnership with the Alamo Colleges, Alamo Academies provides participants a jumpstart on college and careers.



Kenny Bias (seated top photo) and some of his Alamo Academies teammates look for computer system vulnerabilities.

Sarah King's own queen

If Sarah Hargis' 2nd-graders ever forget that their teacher believes education reigns supreme, all they have to do is see her tiara and royalty ribbon to remind them. After recently being crowned Miss Collegiate San Antonio, she wore them to school and told her Sarah King ES students



Courtesy photo

about her winning platform on literacy awareness. As winner of the Miss San Antonio Collegiate Scholarship Pageant Hargis will advance to the Miss Texas Pageant, a preliminary to Miss America.

The gift of reading

Margil ES 3rd-graders show off some of their favorite books from among the 3,000 provided by H-E-B. In addition to reading them at school, children were allowed to take some for their home libraries. Baskin ES also will receive books through the grocer's Read 3 program.



Rodeo girl

Laura Ashley allows her principal Donna Finch the privilege of holding the first-place trophy she won at the San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo. The 2nd-grader took top honors in Mutton Bustin' in which contestants must last at least six seconds for a bumpy ride aboard the back of a sheep.

Courtesy photo



An ideal model

Capturing momentous events that occurred in 1968 Memphis during the Civil Rights movement are these exhibits on display in the Burbank HS library. The "I AM A MAN" sign and the overturned garbage can represent the sanitation workers' strike that the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King came to town to support. While there, he was assassinated on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel, now the National Civil Rights museum. After touring it, librarian Jane Cavazos (left) wanted a model in honor of Black History Month. This was made possible by senior and student library assistant Dariela Espinoza.



Courtesy photo



Honoring African-American women

Providing opening remarks for the Wheatley MS Black History Month program was District 2 Trustee James Howard. Other speakers included (l to r) Bishop Rosa Wilson and Betty Williams, former Sam Houston HS principal. This year's theme was "A Celebration of Black Women in American Culture."



Courtesy photo

Helping Habitat for Humanity

Contributing their efforts toward constructing homes in the new Southwest San Antonio community of Coleman Ridge are all 10 of the District's high school chapters for the new generation of Girl Scouts. On this particular day Gamma Sigma Girls representing Brackenridge, Burbank, Edison, Sam Houston and Travis Early College high schools helped Habitat for Humanity.



Courtesy photo

Higher education advocate

These New Tech HS students and their Sam Houston HS classmates have a high-ranking ally when it comes to helping them make their college dreams come true. Mayor Julián Castro provided them with a personal meeting while at the East Side school to promote Student Aid Saturdays, a program that offers free one-on-one help with completing state and federal aid applications.



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

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