

UNITED INSIDER



CLASS of
2019
CONGRATULATIONS
Graduates

UNITED INSIDER



Greetings,

As we spend the summer months preparing for the 2019-2020 school year, I would like to applaud you for your great teamwork. Our success as a school district is a direct result of your diligent efforts and the partnerships we have forged with United ISD parents and our community. I am also very pleased to see that our students continue to thrive and improve across all academic areas. I have seen significant progress and improvement in their end-of-year STAAR results, and thank our teachers and counselors for always giving them the guidance and support that they so richly deserve.

During the summer break, we are putting the finishing touches on two new campuses, which are set to open in time for the 2019-2020 school year. United ISD will open the doors to the highly anticipated Lyndon B. Johnson High School 9th grade campus and the new Salinas Elementary campus, which replaces the old campus. Both campuses feature state of the art facilities, which will ensure that our students receive the very best education possible.

In addition, the District is currently analyzing all elements of the most recent legislative session. Specifically, House Bill 3 which encompasses teacher and staff pay raises.

The District will make recommendations for pay raises to our Board of Trustees later this summer. We will keep you posted of all developments through your district email address.

I look forward to working with all of you as we prepare for the forthcoming school year. It is my distinct honor to serve as your Superintendent and I appreciate all of the great things that you do for our district and our students. Have a safe and enjoyable summer.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Roberto J. Santos".

Roberto J. Santos
Superintendent



U.S. Naval Academy Appointment

Mateo Avington Simpson



United States Naval Academy Blue and Gold Officer Dave Driskell with Mateo A. Simpson

United High School senior Mateo Avington Simpson accepted his appointment to attend the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. Mateo was accepted into the academy after being nominated by Congressman Henry Cuellar based on his exemplary test scores and achievements. "Each year, I only nominate the best and brightest from the 28th Congressional District of Texas for acceptance into military academies. Mateo is an outstanding student with a bright future, and I am honored to announce his acceptance

into the U.S. Naval Academy. I know he will proudly represent his family, his community and the 28th Congressional District. I also wish to commend Mateo's parents and United High School for doing a great job of preparing him for this pivotal moment", said Cuellar. Mateo is the son of Maria E. Simpson and Robert A. Simpson and is a member of the National Honor Society and National Piano Guild at United High School's Engineering Technology Magnet. He maintains a 3.8 GPA, has participated in sports, and volunteered

hours for numerous public service organizations. Mateo has always wanted to serve his country, and cites an uncle as a major influence on his decision. "I went to visit Camp Pendleton with my uncle (Brian Phelps), who is a retired Marine Corps Officer. That journey helped me get more acquainted with military life. This is something I have thought about for a long time, and now I will have a great opportunity serve my country and pursue my interest in aeronautical engineering. I am grateful to Congressman Cuellar for nominating me and making this possible", said Mateo.



L-R: Robert A. Simpson, Mateo A. Simpson and Maria E. Simpson Back, L-R: United High School Principal Alberto Aleman Jr., UISD Board Member Judd Gilpin and Congressman Henry Cuellar (TX-28).

NURSES National School Nurse Day

2019

Proclamation

National School Nurse Day (May 8) recognizes that school nurses play an essential role in the health of not just students, but the overall schools in which they work. UISD celebrated and recognized the contributions of their nurses during a brunch held at the Falcon Bank reception center. Musical entertainment was provided by the Alexander High School Mariachi Monumental De Oro, and a School Nurse Day proclamation was read by Mayor Pete Saenz and Webb County Judge Tano Tijerina. "Our nurses provide excellent health care and maintenance to all our students so that they can learn, play and participate in activities with their peers. They also work with our families and medical teams to ensure that all 43,096 students in our District are safe, healthy and ready to learn", said Irene Rosales, UISD Director of Health Services. The highlight of the event was the awards ceremony honoring the District's 54 nurses and 23 health technicians. School Nurse Day is celebrated on the Wednesday within National Nurse Week, which concludes on May 12, the birthday of Florence Nightingale, who is credited with the founding of modern nursing.



Cynthia Sanchez, Lyndon B. Johnson H.S.
School Nurse of The Year



Jennifer Hernandez, Zaffirini Elementary
Outstanding Nurse of The Year



Ruth Hernandez, Borchers Elementary
Health Technician of The Year



Outstanding Teamwork Awards
From Lyndon B. Johnson H.S. Team
**Gladys Hanks, Cynthia Sanchez and
Jacklyn Cantu**



Monica Medellin
Outstanding Service to the
Health Services Department Award





NATIONAL STAFF APPRECIATION

After School Adventures

In honor of National Staff Appreciation Week (April 22-26), our After School Adventures (ASA) program had a staff appreciation dinner for our over 250 employees. In addition, the program recognized Program Coordinator Ms. Elsa Cantu and Executive Director Dr. Alicia G. Carrillo, who are both retiring this school year with a plaque. The dinner was held on April 25 at the old United High School on 8800 Mcpherson.



WELLNESS 2019

SPRING INCENTIVE DRAWING

USD Wellness Committee

United ISD's Wellness Committee held its bi-annual incentive drawing. The Wellness Committee was created to encourage employees to create and maintain healthy habits in their lifestyles. The committee works with Blue Cross Blue Shield to help teach employees about making healthy choices and keeping track of their progress. Employees keep track of their progress through the district point system, where they can log preventative doctor visits, exercise, healthy eating choices, and more. By accumulating points, the employees become eligible for an incentive drawing. The bi-annual drawings include items that are health related, such as yoga kits, fitness trackers, Bluetooth weight scales, and many, many more great incentives. United ISD and the Wellness Committee are committed to encouraging employee health and wellness.

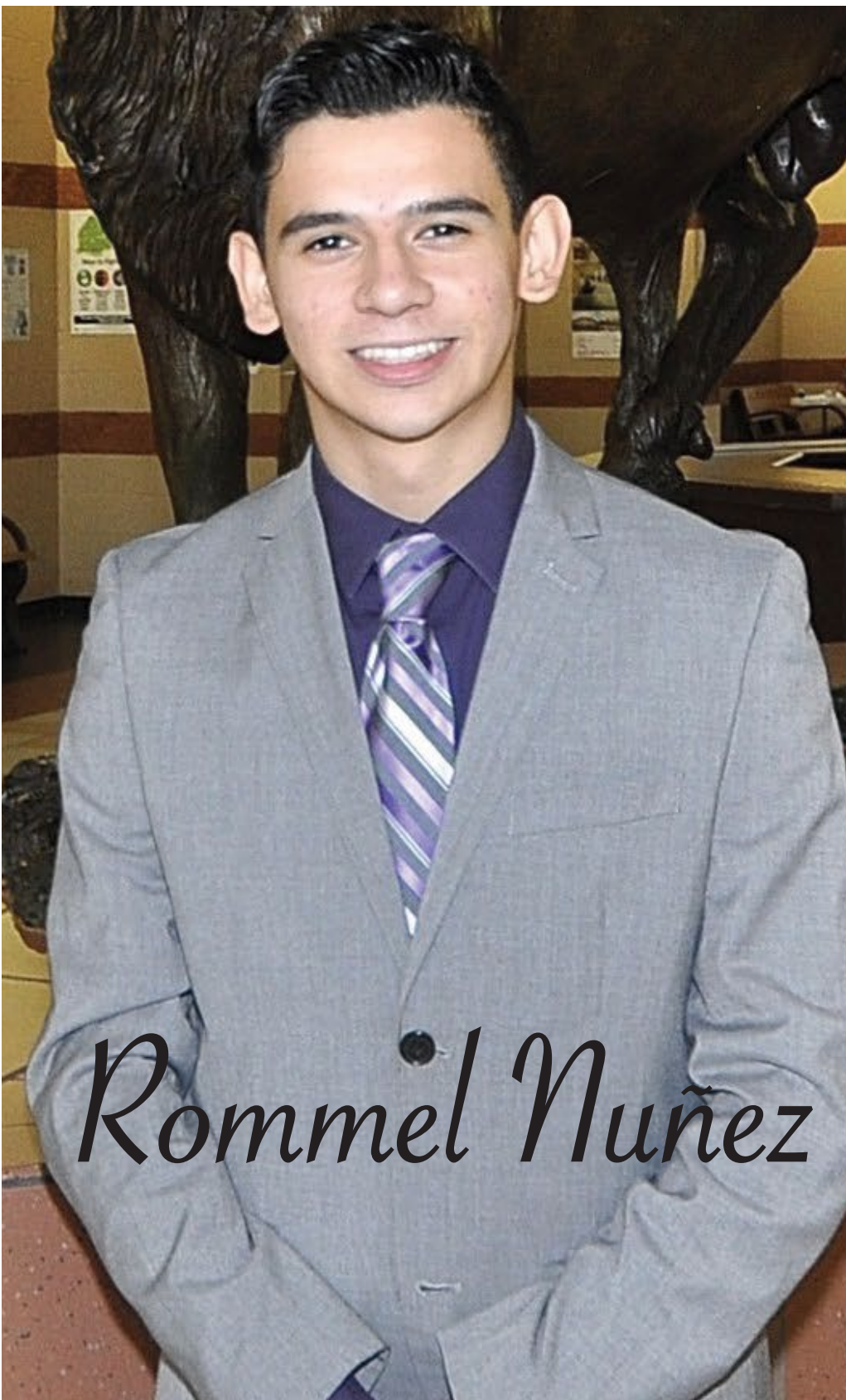


Members of United ISD's Wellness Committee, bottom row (l-r): Michelle Vaughn, Laida P. Benavides, Abraham Hernandez, and Ofelia Dominguez. Top row (l-r): Vanessa Asencio, Alexa Saldaña, and Roman Garcia.

UHS

GATES MILLENIUM

2019 SCHOLAR



Rommel Nuñez

Congratulations to United High School (UHS), senior Rommel Nuñez, who was recently selected for a 2019 Gates Millennium Scholarship. Rommel is one of 1000 students across the nation who received the scholarship which can be used to pursue a degree in any undergraduate major and selected graduate programs at any accredited college or university. Students are selected based on their notable academic achievements, leadership skills and record of community service. Rommel maintains a GPA of 4.87, and is an active member of the National Honor Society and the U.H.S. Robotics Club. He is also student President of the United High School Engineering Magnet, and performs with the UHS Mariachi Del Mar. Rommel also attained his First In State title for alto saxophone in 2017.

Rommel's history of community service includes donating time to coordinate saxophone ensemble performances for local nursing home residents and serving his faith community at El Tabernaculo church. His ambition is to pursue a degree in mechanical engineering at Columbia University in New York. "I want to thank my parents, teachers, Magnet instructors and my counselor Joanna Garcia. They have been instrumental in my success, and have allowed me to diversify myself in many ways. My goal has always been to evolve academically and personally, and the opportunity to earn a Gates Scholarship has been a strong motivator. I've been working hard for this and it has paid off", said Rommel, who is the son of Omar and Lydia Nuñez.

The Gates Millennium Scholars (GMS), Program is an academic scholarship program for higher education, available to high-achieving ethnic minority students in the United States. It was established in 1999 and is funded by Microsoft founder Bill Gates through the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation with the goal of developing Leaders for America's Future. Each year, the GMS program enables many students to attend and graduate from 800 of the most selective private and public schools in the country, including Ivy League colleges, flagship state universities, and minority-serving institutions.

SPECIAL STUDENT HONORS AWARDS

2019

Administrators and educators from UISD and LISD gathered at UISD's Student Activity Center for the 2019 Special Student Honor Awards. The awards recognize academic achievement, community involvement and determination to succeed. This year, 33 students from both districts were nominated for recognition by their respective campuses. "Working as special educators allows us to develop unique bonds with our students. We help them create and achieve goals on a daily basis. It is rewarding to witness their progress, and this ceremony celebrates what we work hard to achieve for our students and their families", said Claudia Dovalina-Guzman, UISD Special Education Director.



PERFECT ATTENDANCE WINNERS

Matias De Llano Elementary

Katia Chapa (chromebook)

Eliana Cordova (x-box)





Alexander Bulldog Soccer

Set A New Record

After a season full of surprises, victories, and upsets, Alexander High School's Boys Varsity Soccer Team advanced further than any other school in the city has before, making it to the "sweet sixteen" in the State Championship. The mighty

Bulldogs set a new record for the school and the city. Webb County Judge, Tano Tijerina, congratulated the team and coaches on their accomplishment by presenting them with a plaque, honoring this milestone in the School's history and

encouraged them to keep working hard to go even further next time. The judge also took a moment to congratulate Coach Hermosillo, named "Best Coach" by the Laredo Morning Times.



AHS Soccer Team: 1 Sebastian Brenis, 2 Lyndon Lepovitz, 3 Jose Coreas, 4. Bernardo Gonzalez, 5. Pablo Rivera, 6. Emilio Servin, 7. Alejandro Tamez, 8. Jesus Nuñez, 9. Hildebrando Ruiz, 10. Adrian Martinez, 11. Emiliano Rangel, 12. Ewyerk Garcia, 13. Nicolas Cedeño, 14. Omar Cabrales, 15. Fortunato Mireles, 16. Sebastian Mercado, 17. Roberto Ahumada, 18. Reynol Hinojosa , 19. Brit Gilpin, 20. Emiliano Monroy, 21. Rodolfo Sanchez, 22. Alejandro Sanchez, 23. Diego Rocha, 25. Brandon Grajeda, 26. Alder Martinez, 27. Samuel Valencia, 36. Christopher Ayala.
Head Coach: Daniel Hermosillo, Assistant Coach: Arturo Alva, Assistant Coach: Juan Hermosillo

POLICE

2019

K9 Handler Ben Bondoc

Wins Nationals

United ISD K9 Handler Ben Bondoc and K9 Partner Kyra took 6th place at the National Narcotic Detector Dog Association (NNDDA) Competition in Fort Worth, Texas. A total of 120 law enforcement K9 teams competed to be "top dog" in the areas of accurate, timed

searches for narcotics. This year they offered a unique training opportunity at the Bob Bolen Public Safety Complex, a town within the complex to provide multiple training situations. NNDDA is a professional, nonprofit organization dedicated to the utilization and profi-

ciency of scent detector dogs for the benefit of Law Enforcement and Private Industry. The purpose of the NNDDA is to provide training pertaining to the laws of search and seizure, utilizing scent detector dogs and a method of certification for court purposes.



MALAKOFF

2019

Nation-Wide Spring Into *Reading Challenge*

Recently, Epic! Creations, the creators of digital library app Epic!, held a nation-wide reading challenge to promote literacy at the elementary level. The challenge was to read 50 books per classroom in one week (May 6-May 10) to total ten million books across the country. Mrs. Vanessa Long's 3rd grade class at Malakoff Elementary read 7,935 books in one week! Mrs. Long's students came in 8th place in the nation and will win a prize package including an ice cream party, a 6-month home subscription for every student in the class, and an Epic! Swag pack. Congratulations to Mrs. Vanessa Long's 3rd grade class for their hard work and dedication!

VANESSA LONG'S 3RD GRADE CLASS





Dr. Anna Steinberger *Texas Educator Award* Marco Franco

The Texas Holocaust and Genocide Commissions (THGC), is behind the Dr. Anna Steinberger Outstanding Texas Educator Award, which recognizes the Texas teacher most dedicated to Holocaust and/or genocide education. This year, THGC received applications from all regions of the state, and United High School ESL teacher Marco Franco was selected as this year's recipient of the award. Principal Alberto Aleman Jr. and his staff kept the award a secret until THGC staff arrived on May 14 to present Mr. Franco with the award and a \$1,000.00 check. THGC Commission Chair Lynne Arnoff told the audience of students and teachers that the honor was well-deserved by Mr. Franco.

"After carefully examining applications from all over the state, the Award Selection Committee is confident that Mr. Franco upholds the highest standards in Holocaust and genocide education", said Arnoff. Mr. Franco was nominated for the award by UHS Magnet Dean Maria Alarcon, who noted that Franco consistently demonstrated excellence in engaging students so that they understand the cruel impact of Holocausts and genocides the world over. The THGC is firmly committed to supporting efforts to teach the next generation about Holocaust and/or genocides in Europe, Cambodia, Rwanda, the Balkans, Sudan (Darfur), and in the Middle East (Iraq and Syria).



Photo, L-R: J.E. Wolfson, THGC Education Coordinator; Cheyanne Perkins, THGC Program Coordinator ; Matt Verdugo, THGC Executive Director ; Maria Alarcon, UHS Magnet Dean; ESL Teacher Marco Franco; Lynne Arnoff, THGC Committee Chair; UHS Principal Alberto Aleman Jr., and Christian Acevedo, THGC Outreach Coordinator

ARNDT Law Enforcement Agencies

2019

Making A Difference

Local, state, and UISD law enforcement personnel visited Arndt Elementary School to cheer on students preparing for the annual STAAR assessment tests. "Our students were very enthusiastic and happy to see so many people wishing them the best of luck on the upcoming tests. I thank our law enforcement and security officers for taking time to lift our student's spirits." said Principal Juanita Zepeda.





USBP Youth of the YEAR

Mateo Simpson

United High School senior Mateo A. Simpson has been selected as the 2019 Laredo Border Patrol Youth of The Year! Laredo Sector Acting Asst. Chief Patrol Agent Jose A. Martinez made the announcement during a formal ceremony hosted by the International Bank of Commerce on May 14, 2019. The ceremony is a culmination of the monthly Youth of the Month program, which recognizes top seniors from Laredo area high schools. At the conclusion of each school year, one of the 99 Youth of The Month honorees is selected to be Border Patrol Youth of The Year. Mateo A. Simpson is a member of the National Honor Society and National Piano Guild at

United High School's Engineering Technology Magnet. He maintains a 3.8 GPA, has participated in sports, and has volunteered many hours for numerous public service organizations. Later this year, Mateo will attend the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, where he aspires to become a aeronautical engineer and Navy officer. "I want to thank the U.S. Border Patrol and IBC for this honor. I also wish to thank my parents and my teachers at UISD who taught me to strive for excellence in all things. I know that I am well prepared for the challenges ahead," said Mateo . His proud parents are Maria E. Simpson and Robert A. Simpson.



Laredo sector Acting Asst. Chief Border Patrol Agent Jose A. Martinez and Mateo A. Simpson



Maria E. Simpson, Mateo A. Simpson, Robert A. Simpson, and IBC Executive Vice President Nativido Lozano

CSBS Danzerettes

2019

Redline National Champs

Colonel Santos Benavides Elementary (CSBS) Danzerettes competed at the two-day Redline Championship Competition at Texas State University in San Marcos, TX. The talented young ladies took home several accolades, including First place titles in Prop, Lyrical, Jazz, and Pom. Additionally, to cap off their winnings, they were named National Champions. Each of the Danzerettes received National Championship jackets to commemorate their big win. The Danzerettes are under the direction of Mrs. Victoria Cardenas, Mrs. Alejandra Flores and Ms. Brenda Garcia.



MAKING THE GRADE 2019

Ten UISD middle school students were amongst a group of 22 finalists who prevailed as Outstanding 8th Graders of The Year. The finalists were culled from a pool of 144 local middle school students who had been celebrated as Outstanding 8th Graders of The Month during the 2018-2019 school year. All former honorees were commissioned to compose essays, and the authors of the top 22 dissertations earned the title of Outstanding 8th Graders of The Year.

Yaniel Ayala from Lamar Bruni Vergara Middle School won the 3rd place trophy, and Valentina Moreno-Cruz from United Middle School garnered the 1st place trophy. Both received an estimated \$420.00 in prizes from sponsors, and the remaining 19 winners received a trophy and an estimated \$150.00 in prizes from sponsors. This year's UISD roster for Outstanding 8th Graders of The Year also includes: Valeria Villarreal, Antonio

Gonzalez M.S.; Zarah Mondragon, Clark M.S., Juan Leal Jr., Washington M.S., Alanis Magallanes, Los Obispos M.S., Vanessa Garza, Raul Perales M.S., Milqueas Alvarez, Salvador Garcia M.S., Viviana Martinez, Trautmann M.S., and Augusta Martinez, United South M.S.

"All of these students have done a great job of maintaining high academic scores and contributing to projects that benefit the community. They are also amazing role models for their peers. Their families, campuses and community are tremendously proud of them", said Laredo Police Department Chief Claudio Treviño. The Outstanding 8th Grader program is sponsored by the Laredo Police Department, KGNS/ABC Laredo/Telemundo/CBS 13/ The CW Channel, Friends of The Family, Paul Young Family Nissan, Laredo Emergency Room, and Rosaura "Wawi" Tijerina, Attorney at Law.



Outstanding 8th Grader of the Year 1st Place Winner Valentina Moreno-Cruz from United Middle School. Pictured with her parents Blanca Cruz De Moreno and Jorge Moreno



Laredo Police Chief Claudio Treviño; Yaniel Ayala, Lamar Bruni Vergara M.S., 3rd place winner- Outstanding 8th Grader of The Year; Valentina Moreno-Cruz, United M.S., 1st place winner- Outstanding 8th Grader of The Year, and Zaida D. Gonzalez, UISD Director for Bilingual/ESL/DUAL/- Foreign Language

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE



Healthy South Texas Impact

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension recognized the entities that have been instrumental in the success of their Healthy South Texas initiative. Dr. Elaine Fries applauded UISD schools' efforts in making the program a great success and contributing to making Webb County number one in Texas.

The eight schools awarded during the event were J.W Arndt Elementary, Nye Elementary, Col. Santos Benavides Elementary, San Isidro Elementary, Los Obispos Middle School, Washington Middle School, Borchers Elementary, and Bonnie Garcia Elementary. These schools contributed to the Healthy South Texas Impact with 1,549 students involved, 1,113 parents, 1,070 students teaching other students, and 6,313 participants in the Walk Across Texas initiative. Judge Tano Tijerina and Mayor Pete Saenz both expressed how proud they are of the efforts of these schools and their communities.

UHS

Alejandra Aguirre

United High School (UHS), senior Alejandra Aguirre has received commendations from the College Board for her performance on her Advanced Placement (AP), Spanish Language and Culture exam in 2018. Trevor Packer, Senior Vice President of AP and Instruction for the College Board, indicated that Alejandra's superior performance on the exam fell into a select category. AP exams are scored on a scale of 1 to 5, where a 5 is equivalent to a grade of A in the corresponding college course. Alejandra not only received the top score of 5; she was also only one of only 100 students in the world to earn every point possible on the AP Spanish Language and Culture Exam, receiving the maximum score on each portion of the exam. "This outstanding accomplishment is likely a direct reflection of the top-quality education being offered at United High School. We applaud Alejandra's hard work and also the AP teacher responsible for engaging students and enabling them to excel in a college-level course", said Packer.

Alejandra will attend La Universidad Autonoma de Nuevo Leon in Monterrey Mexico and plans to study veterinary medicine. "I have a strong work ethic which has helped me grow academically and personally. I wasn't shooting for a perfect score on my test, but my AP teacher Ms. Maria A. Brewer, along with my friends and family, encouraged me to do my best," said Alejandra, who also expressed praise for her Principal and high school. "I would like to offer Mr. Aleman, his administration, my A.P. teacher Ms. Brewer and the rest of the United High School faculty and staff a round of applause. Together, they created a network of support that fosters both academic and personal success. My experience goes to show that working hard and having a great support group can produce results that exceed all expectations", concluded Alejandra.

College Board Commendations



UHS Principal Alberto Aleman Jr. presented Alejandra Aguirre with a framed copy of the College Board letter proclaiming her milestone achievement on the AP Spanish Language and Culture Exam.



David Canales, Executive Director of Middle School Instruction; David Gonzalez, Associate Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction; Zaida Gonzalez, Director of Bilingual/ESL/Dual Language/Foreign Language Studies; UHS A.P. Teacher, Maria A. Brewer; Alejandra Aguirre, her mother Claudia Perez, and grandmother Maria Navarro Perez; Alberto Aleman Jr., UHS Principal

RPMs

2019

Achieve Masters Distinction

United ISD is delighted to announce that every 8th grade Algebra I student at Raul Perales Middle School not only passed their End of Course (EOC) exam, but each also earned a Masters Distinction! The End of Course (EOC) exam is a state

mandated standardized assessment required for high school graduation. Algebra I is a high school credit level course, and the 8th grade students were subjected to a rigorous curriculum to ensure that they are prepared for upper level high school math

courses. Congratulations to the 8th grade Algebra I students at Raul Perales Middle School on their outstanding academic success and getting one step closer to graduation.



BONNIE GARCIA ELEM.

Honor Society

Making A Difference

Bonnie L. Garcia National Elementary Honor Society members participated in several service projects throughout the 2018-2019 school year. Among those projects were a food drive for the homeless, a toy drive for Christmas gifts, a pet drive for animal shelter, a blanket drive for elderly home, and a bottle cap

drive for cancer patients. They attended the Bethany House Walk for Hunger, visited the Laredo Animal Care Facility to read to dogs, and visited with elderly at Regent Care Center. As part of NEHS, students are reminded of the four pillars that qualified them to be members; Scholarship, Responsibility, Lead-

ership, and Service. The sponsor for the group is school counselor, Nelda Ceballos. The 2018-2019 officers were Andrea Santos (President), Elaisha Vela (Vice-President), Jazmine Renteria (Secretary), and Samantha Terrazas (Treasurer).



GWMS 2019

Reading Challenge *Celebration*

Over 340 Washington Middle School students were rewarded with an opportunity to dunk Principal Beth Porter after satisfying reading challenge objectives for the school year. Several students attempted to release the dunk booth platform by hitting a target with softballs. After many "close calls", Porter finally got dunked when 6th grade student Osiel Muñoz threw the perfect pitch. "This is the second year that we challenge our students to read, and we reward them with a chance to dunk their Principal. It is an incentive that works, and it's a fun way to wrap up the school year" said Porter. The event was organized by Washington Middle School Librarian Laura Gonzalez-Ortiz.



6th Grade student Osiel Muñoz hits the target, sending Principal Porter into the wet zone!



A contingent of Washington Middle School students prepare Principal Beth Porter for the inevitable plunge!



Washington Middle School student Osiel Muñoz and Principal Beth Porter

USHS Precious Panthers 2019 Reading Garden

United South High School hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the construction of the Precious Panthers Reading and Vegetable Garden. Lowe's Home Improvement Store awarded the school with a \$4,000 grant to cover costs of the garden. Precious Panthers (Intellectually Disabled Students) are enjoying the opportunity to work together with general education students to learn the skills of gardening, planting and harvesting fruit trees and vegetables.

Adaptive PE Coach Maria Sandoval initiated this project with one goal in mind, to provide her students with a meaningful

life activity, one that would provide them with not only a skill but also with inclusionary opportunities to forge lasting bonds of friendship and acceptance. United South High School FFA and Vocational Teachers Jose Barrera and Carlos Lozano along with their students were recognized for their significant role in making this day a reality for our students.

"This garden is a place that has begun to build bridges to a better understanding and acceptance of each individual's unique gifts, and to compassion and unconditional love," said Cynthia Ramirez, Executive Director for Special Education.



UHS&AHS

2019

Graduates

Visit Their Elementary

A few graduates from the class of 2019 at United High School and J.B. Alexander High School traveled down memory lane when they visited Malakoff Elementary School. Attired in their graduation caps and gowns, the seniors walked the halls, greeted students and shared fond memories of their first campus with teachers, staff and Principal Anna Martinez. The visit was of special significance since all of the seniors were among the first to attend the campus when it opened in 2005. "It's amazing to see these students return to their roots. It also makes one realize that they have come a long way since their elementary school days. We wish them the best in the future and congratulate them for their accomplishments" said Martinez.

