



WEEK OF MARCH 4, 2019

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Of Note...

It's been a great week at HCDE! I am pleased to report that the Government Treasurers' Organization of Texas (GTOT) just awarded the Certificate of Distinction to HCDE for its Investment Policy. According to the communication from the organization, members of the Review Committee congratulate you, the Board, for its commitment to maintaining a comprehensive written investment policy that meets the criteria as set forth by the GTOT. The Department has always been, and will remain, committed to transparency as exceptional stewards of taxpayer dollars.

As usual, I began the week with a meeting of my Executive Leadership Team (ELT). I conducted a meeting of the Leadership Team this past Tuesday. I also attended the HISD Public Education Matters event that has replaced HISD's annual State of the Schools luncheon.

On Wednesday, I attended the North Harris County Education Alliance (NHCEA) meeting at Lone Star College, North Harris County location. I also hosted a meeting with representatives from Northwest Area Ministries (NAM) about partnering with that entity in the area of workforce development. Later in the day, I met with one of the Department's larger client school districts. Once again, another superintendent reported being pleased with the unique services we deliver.

I have been involved with Good Reason Houston for more than a year. Its mission is to increase the number of students succeeding in high-quality schools today and the workforce tomorrow. I attended its inaugural event, hosted for the public, yesterday. A successful event, it offered visibility for HCDE in the community that supports public education. I ended the week with standing meetings with staff.

This week, HCDE touched administrators, educators and teachers across Harris County in the area of teaching and learning by hosting and/or facilitating the following workshops and training sessions: National Incident Management System; HCDE Math Leadership Meeting; Harris County Bilingual/ESL Leadership; CPR and First Aid; and Skill Building for the Future. HCDE serves as an invaluable and affordable resource for Harris County school districts in the area of professional development.

In today's issue of **The Connector**, read about the advancements and great strides our programs and services are making. We salute CASE for Kids, in particular, as they celebrate 20 years of providing quality afterschool services for our client districts. This program is especially essential as studies have shown that it is during the hours of 3-6 p.m. that youth are most likely to participate in delinquent behavior. Our CASE program ensures a safe haven for countless students in Harris County school districts.

Please be reminded that HCDE will be closed next week for Spring Break, along with the school districts we serve. The Department will resume normal operating hours on Monday, March 18, 2019.

Although the Department will be closed next week, I will be traveling to Austin to fulfill my responsibility as a member of the UIL Board. I will depart Houston on Monday to attend Tuesday's State Executive Committee Meeting.

In closing, thank you for your service to HCDE. I hope you enjoy this issue of **The Connector**. Have a great weekend.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

HCDE Board Meeting—Wednesday, April 17, 2019

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Music Therapists Saluted During World Music Therapy Day March 1



March 1 was World Music Therapy Day. HCDE School-Based Therapy Services employs five-full time and three-part time board-certified music therapist. The Department provides 13 local school districts with music therapy to students who have been identified as having a need for such therapy.. Services may be provided

through direct service, consultation in the classroom or consultation with special educators or other school staff members. Thanks to our therapists for their commitment and dedication to make a difference in the lives of students. Read about one of our music therapists at <https://wp.me/p4QJFI-R3>.

ADVANCED TEACHING AND LEARNING BY TRAINING THE TRAINER

MARCH 5, 2019

National Incident Management System

MARCH 6, 2019

HCDE Math Leadership Meeting
Harris County Bilingual/ESL Leadership

MARCH 7, 2019

CPR/1st Aid

MARCH 8, 2019

Skill Building for the Future



CASE for Kids Publishes First Edition of Making Afterschool Cool Podcast

CASE for Kids published its first edition of Making Afterschool Cool, a podcast published through a platform called Podbean. The new podcast produced by manager Michael Wilson can be heard through the following link: <https://case4kids.podbean.com/>. More CASE for Kids podcasts are planned for the future as the division celebrates its 20th anniversary.

Students at Fifth Ward Celebrate Black History Month



Students at Fifth Ward Head Start celebrated Black History Month through a program at the Fifth Ward Community Center. Family and community members took part in the program that celebrated famous African Americans, including Martin Luther King and Michelle Obama.

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

2 in 5,000: Pasadena ISD's Sam Rayburn High School Artists Earn American Visions Nominations



It is an incredible honor to be named an American Visions nominee, especially with over 5,000 Harris County Department of Education Scholastic Art entries this

year. However, Sam Rayburn High School in Pasadena Independent School District is honored to have two students who were nominated for this prestigious art award.

Senior Axel Maldonado and junior Anthony Vega are two of the five American Visions nominations from our region.

Five works of art from each region are selected by HCDE's regional judges as American Voices & Visions nominees. Each receives a cash award of \$250 from HCDE. From the pool of five, a panel of jurors in New York City selects one artist from each region to receive an American Visions Medal. These Medalists from throughout the nation are celebrated during national events and exhibits in New York City in June.

"Five works, from across all categories and grades, are selected from those earning Gold Keys as the 'Best of Show' for each local program as nominees for the American Visions & Voices Medals," HCDE Scholastic Art & Writing Awards Regional Coordinator Andrea Seagraves said. "To have two from one campus is a reflection of both student talent and powerful art instruction."

SRHS has had students nominated for the American Visions award in the past, but never two at the same time.

"It's a great honor," SRHS Art teacher Victor Raygoza said. "I think it hits the educators a little bit more than the students because we feel that we are doing something right, and the students are appreciating what we are teaching them more." "The students are seeing that it's just not a picture, it has to tell a story and have some emotion behind it," SRHS Art teacher Gabriel Flores said. "They are learning to portray that within their images to get a story across."

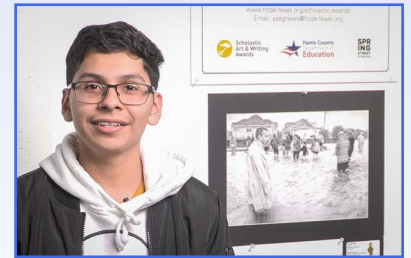
In his first year of entering the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, Maldonado also received a Gold Key for his painting, Push

Through. His inspiration for the painting came from a picture of a friend's brother touching a brick wall and taking a moment to think.

"You can see how he is trying to overcome certain obstacles in life, and I like the colors in the painting to bring it to life," he said.

From days of taking paper and placing it on the TV screen to trace objects that were being shown, Maldonado plans to pursue his love of art by attending an art school in the fall. He hopes to become a graphic designer/painter in the future and wants people to recognize him as an artist.

Vega's drawing and illustration, Salvaged Possessions, also received a Gold Key award. His drawing is of people walking through a flooded neighborhood after Hurricane Harvey hit the Houston-area in 2017.



"I chose to do this piece because it was a dark moment for us all and many friends and family were affected by the flooding," he said. "Seeing people struggling and losing their homes was emotional. I was able to capture their emotion in my artwork from a picture my teacher took after the storm."

Art gives Vega the chance to express his feelings and emotions into a piece for someone else to see.

He plans to continue creating art and make people feel great when they see his pieces.

The five nominees will find out the identity of the American Visions Medalist at the Scholastic Art & Writing Regional Gold and Silver Key Ceremony on March 26 and 27 at The Ballroom at Bayou Place.

Gold and Silver Key art pieces from high school students are on display until March 17 at Spring Street Studios, 1824 Spring St., Houston, TX 77007.

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

\$10,750 in Scholarships Announced, Teens Earn HCDE Regional Scholastic Art & Writing Awards



Photo: HCDE Trustees' Exemplary Award, Evieh'bi Jan Nia Braddy, Chester W Nimitz High School, Aldine ISD, teacher Jorge Vazquez

Student and teacher scholarships totaling \$10,750 were awarded to Harris County students in public and private schools as Harris County Department of

Education announces regional affiliate recipients of the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. The Scholastic Awards are the largest, most prestigious awards program in the country for creative teens in grades 7-12.

Including in the recognitions are students from Klein, Deer Park, Cy-Fair, Pasadena, Clear Creek, Galena Park, Spring, Aldine, Houston, Humble, Crosby, Spring Branch, Katy and Crosby independent school districts. Private school awardees are from St. John's School and the Village School. A teacher award is delivered to Pearland Independent School District. Student works now advance for judging at the national level in New York City.

"We are grateful to our corporate sponsors as well as Harris County Department of Education administration and trustees for providing these monetary awards for our students," said Andrea Segraves, coordinator for HCDE's Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. "Their support validates the significance of these students' fine arts achievements."

Corporate donors this year included Texas Art Supply, Glassell School of Art and an anonymous donation.

The following students have been awarded scholarships:

ART:

American Vision Nominees

(\$250 each, donated by HCDE):

- Carolina Colon, Clear Lake Intermediate School, Clear Creek ISD, teacher Terri Nicolosi
- Julia Espino, Cypress Woods High School, Cy-Fair ISD, teacher Charlotte Stuart
- Axel Maldonado, Sam Rayburn High School, Pasadena ISD, teacher Victor Raygoza
- Anthony Vega, Sam Rayburn High School, Pasadena ISD, teacher Gabriel Flores
- Annie Zhu, Home School, teacher Ping Zhao

Superintendent's Award

(\$250 donated by HCDE): Maria Cortes, Galena Park High School, Galena Park ISD, teacher Antonio Hurtado

HCDE Trustees' Incentive Award

(\$500 donated by HCDE): An Nguyen, Spring High School, Spring ISD, teacher Amanda Beisert

HCDE Trustees' Exemplary Award

(\$1,000 donated by HCDE): Evieh'bi Jan Nia Braddy,

(continued on page 5)

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

\$10,750 in Scholarships Announced, Teens Earn HCDE Regional Scholastic Art & Writing Awards (continued)

Chester W. Nimitz High School, Aldine ISD, teacher Jorge Vazquez

Texas Art Supply Award Winners

(\$500 each, donated by Texas Art Supply)

- Chloe Cornor, Langham Creek High School, Cy-Fair ISD, teacher Bohye Na
- Josue Hernandez-Navarro, Spring High School, Spring ISD, teacher Amanda Beisert
- Ashley Monroe, Meyerland Performing & Visual Arts Middle School, Houston ISD, teacher Christina Gonzalez
- Swapna Ramchandra, Clear Springs High School, Clear Creek ISD, teacher Lisette McClung
- Daniela Soto Borboa, Summer Creek High School, Humble ISD, teacher Lynnette Gilbert
- Marco Sosa, Sam Rayburn High School, Pasadena ISD, teachers Daniel Reyna & Victor Raygoza
- Ruby Zhou, Memorial High School, Spring Branch ISD, teacher Marilyn Guerinet
- Charles Danna, Klein Oak High School, Klein ISD, teachers Richard Cornall and Jennifer Schiebel
- Angel Luo, Cinco Ranch High School, Katy ISD, teacher Patricia Kuhn
- Issak Haffelfinger, Crosby High School, Crosby ISD, teacher Tyra Baxter

WRITING AWARDS:

American Voice Nominees

(\$250 each, donated by HCDE):

- Nyla Hartigan, St. John's School, Private, teacher Kemberly Kemp

- Kahani Malhotra, Village School, Private, teacher Diane Fanning
- Luke Stein, Klein Collins High School, Klein ISD, teacher Amber Wallace
- Jack Trent, St. John's School, Private, teacher Warren Rawson
- Elizabeth Willms, Deer Park High School, Deer Park ISD, teacher Joshua Nebrida

Superintendent's Award

(\$250 donated by HCDE): Khanh Dang, Albright Middle School, Alief ISD, teacher Adriana Hernandez

HCDE Trustees' Incentive Award

(\$500 donated by HCDE): Ahnia Leary, Lamar High School, Houston ISD, teacher Yi-Shan Chen

HCDE Trustees' Exemplary Award

(\$1,000 donated by HCDE): Rodrigo Milan, Klein Cain High School, Klein ISD, teacher Eric Cloninger

Susan O'Conner Educator of Excellence Teacher Award (\$500 anonymous donation):

Teacher Susan Henson, Pearland ISD

For more information about the Awards receptions and awardees, go to <https://hcde-texas.org/scholastic-awards/awardees/> . View our blog posts for more information about awardees and receptions: <https://wp.me/p4QJFI-U1> and <https://wp.me/p4QJFI-T9>

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

CASE Debates Wraps Up Year with City Championship Winnings



A Harris County Department of Education funded program called CASE Debates ended its second year

at the 2019 Houston Urban Debate League (HUDL) City Championships held at the Bob Casey Federal Courthouse on March 2. Several teams placed first and second and will move on to national competition.

The program operated by the Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids (CASE for Kids) is an expansion of a program designed by HUDL to serve Houston Independent School District. CASE Debates provides debate for other Harris County school districts, including charter schools. This year the program served 284 students.



engraved on a plate along with previous winning teams and schools. The trophy will stay at their school until the next year's City Championship.



Policy Debate (Cross Examination) Winners

1st Place

Alief ISD-Kerr High School
Queen Eche and Hillary Nguyen

2nd Place

Harmony Public Schools-
Harmony School of
Advancement
Khalida Amla and Riley
Hardwick



World Schools Debate Winners

1st Place

Alief ISD-Kerr High School
Rahawa Ghebrelul, Bao Nguyen and Catherine Nguyen

2nd Place

Spring ISD-Spring Early College Academy
Bodehousse HoundekonAhmad Howard, Kennedy Scott
and Ifeoma Neobolisa



The following schools and students will be advancing to national competition. These students also earned scholarships after placing first and

second at the city level, underwritten by the family of Benjamin Donald Hatfield and the HUDL Young Professionals Council.

Each first-place winning team receives a "Traveling Trophy" that features their names and school name

Systemic Achievement

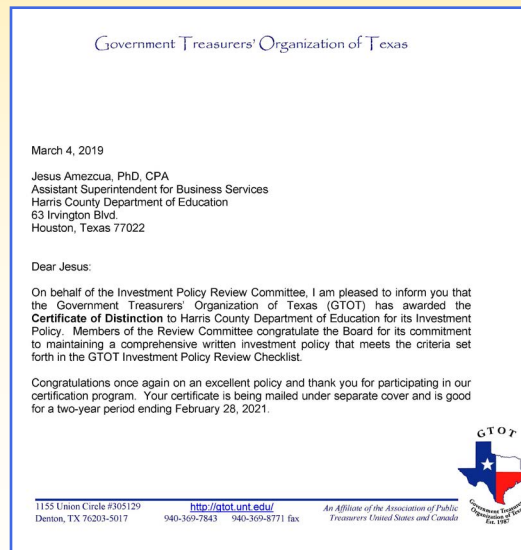
...with purposeful intent

Administrative, Fiscal, and Facilities

In an effort to meet the Board's expectations of me to achieve the elements of performance related to this goal to:

- **Oversee a budget development process that results in recommendations based on Department priorities and available resources;**
- **Oversee budget implementation in a way that ensures appropriate expenditure of budgeted funds and provides for clear and timely budget reports;**
- **Ensure the Department's investment strategies, risk management activities, and purchasing practices are sound, cost-efficient, and consistent with policy and law;**
- **Implement and oversee a planning process that results in goals, targets, or priorities for major areas of operation;**
- **Monitors effectiveness of operations against appropriate benchmarks; and**
- **Recruiting and maintaining high-quality, professional staff at all levels**

This week, HCDE was notified, via the Business Services division, that the Department has been awarded the Certificate of Distinction



through the Government Treasurers' Organization of Texas (GTOT) for its Investment Policy.

The GTOT commends the Board for its commitment to maintain a comprehensive written investment policy that meets the criteria set forth in the GTOT Investment Policy Review Checklist.

As a result of HCDE consistently ensuring financial transparency and compliance, with the guidelines and expectations of various financial governance agencies across the county and state, I am working to ensure that HCDE has sound financial processes in place. In doing so, it contributes to me serving as a fiscally responsible leader.

HCDE BOARD

Board President

Josh Flynn

Vice President

George Moore

Richard Cantu

Eric Dick

Danny Norris

Don Summers

Michael Wolfe

UPCOMING EVENTS:

April Board Meeting

Wednesday, April 17, 2019

