

Celebrating Excellence in Education

ROTARY TEACHER *of the Year* 2010

TUESDAY, MAY 25, 2010



Rotary International



Clear Creek Independent School District

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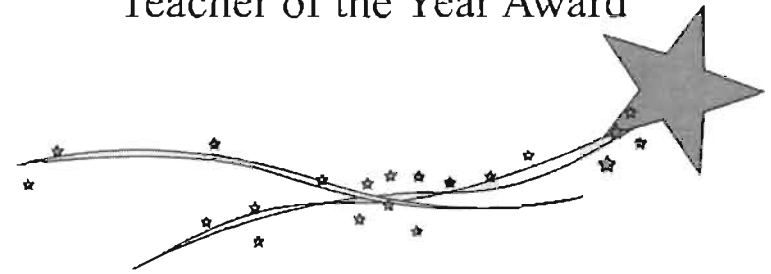
2010

11:30 A.M. ~ 1:00 P.M.

SOUTH SHORE HARBOUR RESORT
& CONFERENCE CENTER



Teacher of the Year Award



Each year the Texas Education Agency hosts a state-wide search for Teacher of the Year for Elementary Education and Secondary Education. To achieve recognition through this program, a teacher must first be chosen as a campus and a district Teacher of the Year, and ultimately a regional honoree. State-wide, there are 20 regional elementary awardees and 20 regional secondary honorees selected. From this group of teachers, six finalists are chosen and interviewed by an independent panel of judges. The state's top elementary and secondary teacher is selected from the six outstanding finalists.

Today, the Clear Creek Independent School District and the Rotary Clubs of Space Center, League City, and Seabrook are recognizing the 42 teachers selected to represent their CCISD campus, acknowledging the six finalists, and ultimately announcing the two teachers who will move forward and represent Clear Creek ISD in the regional competition.

The teachers we are honoring today are known for developing positive relationships with students, reflect on his/her teaching practices, go the extra mile for their students to be successful, serve as a positive team member who finds solutions to problems, keep open lines of communication with parents and the community, and are lifelong learners.

Program of Events

Welcome

Invocation

Pledge

About the Rotary

Teacher of the Year Award History

Lunch

Teacher Honorees

2010 Teacher of the Year Announcement



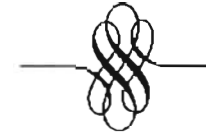
Dear Teachers and Distinguished Guests,

On behalf of the Rotary Clubs of Seabrook, Space Center, and League City, welcome to a very special luncheon honoring the teachers who exemplify what we as Rotarians strive for every day, Service above Self. We are honored to recognize 42 exceptional teachers in Clear Creek Independent School District and we are equally as excited to announce the two teachers who will go on and represent Clear Creek Independent School District in the search for the Regional Teacher of the Year. We have no doubt these two teachers will advance to the State competition representing the best in education.

Our clubs are affiliated with Rotary International, the world's first service club organization. While separated by countries and bodies of water, the 1.2 million Rotary members work together to provide services to others and advance goodwill and peace through fellowship. Locally each of our clubs is entrenched in our communities, conducting service-learning projects from reading mentors at area schools to raising funds to better the neighborhoods in which we live, work and play. It is through our local and international efforts we recognize the value of a strong education system, and the need for all of us to continue to play a hand in the future of our children. We would like to thank you for helping us celebrate excellence in education!

Sincerely,

Jon R. McKinnie, President Space Center Rotary
Robbie Schubert, President League City Rotary
Nick Geeslin, President Seabrook Rotary



Dear Honorees and Guests,

The Clear Creek Independent School District is fortunate to call this community home! Today is a great example of how our neighbors, businesses, and friends come together to recognize and thank our teachers for leading the way in education. Our schools are only as strong as the community which supports them.

Each of the 42 teachers here represents the best from his/her respective campus. Their teaching style and ability to engage children in lessons has the students taking home more than just homework. Beyond educating students, these teachers have also been identified as leaders on their campus, working collaboratively with others to improve the school culture.

On behalf of the teachers and principals of Clear Creek ISD, I would like to thank the Rotary Clubs of League City, Seabrook, and Space Center for hosting today's luncheon and assisting in the difficult selection of the Elementary and Secondary Teachers of the Year for Clear Creek ISD.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Greg Smith".

Greg Smith, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools



Lisa Nicklow
Armand Bayou Elementary
Years of Teaching: 25

I chose teaching as a profession to work with children. There is a large amount of curriculum covered each year but there are also lives involved—not just reading, math and science. I believe that the children in my classes have not only learned the curriculum but develop a joy for learning and leave the class knowing they can do

anything they want to, that an adult believes in them, loves them and wants them to always do their best.



Jennifer Dixon
Henry F. Bauerschlag Elementary
Years of Teaching: 9

My students know they can open up, make mistakes, and be themselves. We work hard, seeking deep conceptual understanding as our goal. We get messy along the way, sometimes disagree, but always come back together in the end. We have become a family of learners, which is the greatest reward to me.



Cathy Nerios
James F. Bay Elementary
Years of Teaching: 29

I feel if I am called a teacher, I need to strive to meet my student's needs. I should try to find their special way of learning. I should find activities that are multi-sensory and provide interest. I need to be there for them. It is not always an easy task to teach those young open minds, and it certainly doesn't always work like I plan. But I

believe I should try!



Linda Barrington
Brookwood Elementary
Years of Teaching: 18

Children learn more if they discover the answers than if they are told the answers. Science is an ideal subject for exploration and experimentation. By providing hands-on activities, students are able to test their ideas and make conclusions based on the results. As a teacher, my job is to provide the equipment and the problem, and let the students figure out the answer.



Megan Korce
Clear Lake City Elementary
Years of Teaching: 2

It is critical that I instill a love of learning in my students. I must be an inquirer, a researcher, a reader, and a writer alongside my class. On a daily basis, I model the traits I want to see in my students. They need an environment where they feel safe in order to take chances. I believe I build that safety net in my classroom by letting

my students know that education is not a destination but a lifelong journey.



Heather McMahon Adams
Falcon Pass Elementary
Years of Teaching: 14

These young minds that I refer to as my family, make me want to do more just like I preach for them to do. I think of their little faces looking at me for answers and guidance and I want to give it my all. Then I hear the class singing the words, "this little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine" to prepare for our musical and I am over-

whelmed. They CAN all shine in some way and I know I have the power to make them believe it!



Terri Conklin
Lloyd R. Ferguson Elementary
Years of Teaching: 31

If I show a passion for teaching, my students will develop a passion for learning. Passion is defined as strong liking for or a devotion to an activity and is most definitely the feeling I have for teaching. I have never thought of my job as an eight hour day, only taking place within the four walls of my classroom. Instead, I am invested in the

lives of past, present and future students.



Tricia Trout
Gilmore Elementary
Years of Teaching: 12

Being a teacher is both an honor and a privilege. I feel blessed to spend my day building relationships with students and to influence their academic life as well as build their character. Students spend a large portion of their time with me and I need to seize this opportunity. My goal is to inspire students to open their hearts and minds to

every new situation.



Maria Scardasis-Wyatt
Goforth Elementary
Years of Teaching: 14

My greatest reward is also bittersweet for the goal at the end of the year is to get my students ready to move on without me. As June approaches I hardly recognize the sheepish, unsure, awkward kids who entered my room in August. They had become something altogether new: confident, problem-solving, independent thinkers. I can

see it in their bright eyes. I can hear it in their sure voices. They don't need me any more. And that's the most profound reward of all.



Virginia Gamache-Benjamin
P.H. Greene Elementary
Years of Teaching: 2

There is no better feeling than seeing that struggling reader use one of the strategies that I have taught them to read through a tough word. It not only makes me proud that they used a tool that I equipped them with, but when their face lights up because they figured it out all by themselves, that is the true reward.



Samuel H. Credle
Walter Hall Elementary
Years of Teaching: 32

To be fully equipped, students must not only access, learn and evaluate knowledge; they must also apply it. Therefore, I believe we must teach students to think and problem solve, to approach problems from more than one perspective and utilize multiple methods in problem solving.



Cheryl Birch
I.W. and Eleanor Hyde Elementary
Years of Teaching: 17

I am happiest and my students are most successful when we are immersed so deep in conversations (many at once all around the room) that we hardly notice when someone walks in. Listening to children, really listening, lets them know we care and can be trusted. Trusted to guide them in the right direction. Trusted with their feelings.

Trusted in all things. This is powerful. It is a power I never take lightly or for granted. I am constantly aware of how important I am in the lives of these children and their families. That awareness keeps me on my toes and pumped up for every new day.



Karen A. Hearn
C.D. Landolt Elementary
Years of Teaching: 4

I believe the key to locking into a child is you have to allow them to feel success with a subject. The success empowers them to take risks and achieve as a learner. My most significant contributions and accomplishments in education are my abilities to communicate children's worth and potential so clearly that they are inspired to see it in themselves. As long as I am able to tap into one thing that that child can succeed in, I can lead that child to see the potential they have had all along.



Paula Tanner
League City Elementary
Years of Teaching: 36

I think that people become teachers because they sincerely want to make a difference in a student's life and help the child to be successful. Some people come into education so they might continue the happy experiences they had in school. Teaching is not a career for someone to, "fall back on." One must be dedicated and have the true desire to help students and constantly work cooperatively with coworkers, supervisors, administrators, and parents.



Lynnette Novoa
McWhirter Elementary
Years of Teaching: 2

My philosophy of teaching is very simple yet profoundly successful. I strive to treat all my students with the love and compassion that every human deserves. In doing so, it allows for learning and personal growth to blossom. Although my students are in Special Education, that does not define them or restrict them from success. It is my duty to provide them with the essentials to become independent and self-motivated.



Peggy Shoemaker
Sandra Mossman Elementary
Years of Teaching: 21

I have a passion for learning and for teaching. According to "Strength Finder" by Tom Rath, my top strength is learning. I use this strength to help my students learn. They see my passion when I read aloud to them and notice something I had not noticed before. I invite them to learn with me. Learning is not a competitive activity; it's a collaborative activity.



Dawn Castille
North Pointe Elementary
Years of Teaching: 4

Every day that I step foot into the classroom, I anxiously wait for my students to walk through the door. I look forward to greeting them with a smile and to wishing them a good morning. It is the little things I feel make a difference. I want every child to know how much I truly care and value them. As a teacher, I feel my biggest accomplishment has been creating a love for school and learning in my students. This is something students take with them for the rest of their lives.



Iva Walker
Ralph Parr Elementary
Years in Teaching: 9

I once heard someone say that, the kids in our classroom are infinitely more significant than the subject matter we teach. Take the time to make them laugh and to laugh with them, get messy with them, learn new things with them, and enjoy them. Together we can provide encouragement, we can instill confidence, and we can ignite greatness in the minds and hearts of our children. I would thank them for all that they do to help a teacher to help reach his or her goal. . . which simply put is to help each child reach theirs.



Holly Bess Kincaid
G.W. Robinson Elementary
Years in Teaching: 16

Respect for each other, yourself and the things around you are the basic rules in the art room. When a child is kind to their fellow classmates and never says a negative word about someone's creation, they learn to listen to another person's expressive voice, and to be open to different points of view.



Vivian L. Davis
James H. Ross Elementary
Years of Teaching: 18

As an educator I want to instill a love of learning in students and feel that I should be a good example. I am always on the look out for hands-on activities and labs to share with my students and fellow colleagues. When I can be excited about learning it is contagious to my students and hopefully to my fellow teachers. With advancements in technology, now is an exciting time to be in the fields of education! Learning something new all the time is exciting for students and teachers.



Margaret Suarez
Stewart Elementary
Years of Teaching: 13

Coming from a family of encouragers, I feel that my job as a teacher is to be an encourager to my bilingual students. As a second grade teacher, I have the opportunity to help my students transition into English reading and writing while they continue to build their Spanish skills. Each year presents a new challenge for me to provide support for building the self-esteem and confidence needed for my students and their parents. Everyday I am constantly encouraged by talking to former students who continue to share with me their dreams and aspirations that I have helped to instill in them.



Kristina Digman
John F. Ward Elementary
Years of Teaching: 5

When I reflect on my academic career those who have given me the most inspiration are not those who taught the most elaborate lessons, they are the ones who pushed me to become a better person academically, emotionally, socially, and physically. My biggest accomplishments are not in teaching a lesson perfectly, although I cherish every lesson that I can take a step back and think "Wow!" My accomplishments lie in knowing that I have impacted my students and helped them grow as human beings.



Nancy Watson
Weber Elementary
Years of Teaching: 17

Each year, each day, each hour and minute, I attempt and use every effort to become an outstanding teacher. Some days I come closer than others! If I want to be an effective teacher, I firmly believe that I must be a life long-learner. I must keep up with educational research so that I am the teacher that each student deserves.



Tammy Oldani
Wedgewood Elementary
Years of Teaching: 21

My most significant contribution to education is to never forget where I came from and know, like many of my students who may be facing their own challenges, that education is a gift that you can grab and hold on to. I am constantly encouraging my students to step up and be the best they can be, to make a difference in their homes and communities.



Anthony Nastasi
G.H. Whitcomb Elementary
Years of Teaching: 12

When I am teaching my students, I really like to try and have fun with them and the material we are working with that day. You may hear from other people that I sing, tell jokes, or do impressions while I am teaching a lesson and I want to set the record straight. . . I do ALL of those things. It's not that we aren't working; we just try to enjoy our work and be passionate about what we are doing for the day. That's something that I hope my students bring to their everyday lives as they grow and establish careers some day.



Deborah Bacon
Ed White Elementary
Years of Teaching: 20

"Fair is not everybody getting the same thing, but everybody getting what they need." My students quickly come to know that each one of them will be treated fairly while being honored, respected and loved in our classroom. My connection to the children is such that I can tell at first glance if they are in need of an extra hug, to be left alone or to be close to me as we move throughout the day. They are confident in knowing that their "fair" need will be honored, their voice will be heard and their individuality will be respected.



Diana Quinn Cotton
Brookside Intermediate
Years of Teaching: 19

I love teaching! I love the rhythm of it—grabbing students' attention, sparking their interest, making connections, and turning dull subjects into a celebration of learning. And the greatest reward is seeing my students reach their fullest potential, each and every one of them!



Summer Brauer
Clear Creek Intermediate
Years of Teaching: 7

It is hard for me to imagine teaching any other age level than intermediate school. It is the age where "believing in oneself", along with the ability to laugh, is critical to my students' success. There are not very many people in this world that have the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of so many young people. My realization of this responsibility is an honor and it intensifies my commitment to making sure that every student I have knows that I believe in him or her, and that they, too, have the power to believe in themselves.



Sharlene Kahlich
Clear Lake Intermediate
Years of Teaching: 18

Enjoying light hearted moments with my students shows my human side, my personal side, my fun-loving side, and allows me the reward of forming lasting real positive connections with my students. My reward is a classroom full of students longing to inhale knowledge, share it with everyone they meet, and inspire others to do the same.



Erika Bondy
Creekside Intermediate
Years of Teaching: 7

The connections teachers make are directly related to success in the classroom. I am rewarded when students feel comfortable asking me for help and sharing ideas, struggles and successes. I believe that I am not just a math teacher but an educator which means I support my students and help them in any undertaking. Their aspirations and achievements are important to me and I will make obtaining an education a valued experience and a stepping stone to all they can accomplish in life.



Kary Rendon
League City Intermediate

Everyday I enter my classroom and feel the excitement of what my students might say and what they will learn. Each day brings a new insight as to how I can become the best at what I do. I am willing to take the risk and step outside the box to try new ideas. To marvel at the end product each year and feel the excitement of what next year will bring is what makes me love education. To be able to mold a young student's mind is a very important and powerful tool for the future.



Paul Edwards
Seabrook Intermediate
Years of Teaching: 16

I believe that learning is a noble deed and that learning can take place any time, anywhere, and in a variety of different places. I believe every person has abilities and value. In addition, I believe every student has the right and responsibility to gain the highest education possible so that they may maximize their potential and become well-rounded, self-fulfilled, productive, respectful members of society.



Rhonda Dearmond
Space Center Intermediate
Years of Teaching: 12

I preach and teach to my kids to believe in themselves, to believe that they can do anything they set their minds to, that they have a mind to think with, and a voice to be used, that they have something to offer this world, to be brave, and to be heard. I learn from them. They are my greatest teachers.



Daniel Dodson
Victory Lakes Intermediate
Years of Teaching: 2

The rewards that I find in teaching are seen on the smiles of my students as they enter my class, as well as the successes that each of them achieve daily. Intermediate school is a difficult age to teach, so rewards are exhibited not in outright appreciation by students but by the subtlest joy exhibited in daily classroom activities.



Latanga Spencer
Westbrook intermediate
Years of Teaching: 14

Once I accepted that I was put on this earth to teach, everything else became much simpler. So despite the fact that my journey to the classroom wasn't easy, I honestly wouldn't change a thing. Those challenges made me the person, and the teacher that I am today. When that happened, lives began to change-especially mine.



Patricia Jones
Clear Brook High School
Years of Teaching: 33 ½

There have been so many defining moments because I am simply not the same teacher I was five years ago or ten years ago or even yesterday. I had to build on qualities I possessed, not the ones someone else had. In fact, that's a message I convey to my students. The great teachers are the ones who impart the positive message. There is always progress when students recognize that a teacher cares.



Molly Herring
Clear Creek High School

Every small action, every smile, every instruction that is given to a student will land upon their heart in some way. In the days of high stakes testing and forward-moving curriculum demands, remembering the small things is not always acknowledged as important. But to me, doing small things in student's lives is the essence of teaching.



Jarrod Massey
Clear Horizons Early College High School
Years of Teaching: 10

I love history, not because the discipline conveys any special insight into the behavior of characters in the past and not because of the stories of triumph and tragedy to be found. I rather love history because of the process. It is the only discipline that holds both certainty and uncertainty of equal value; the only discipline that can take even a mistaken interpretation and utilize it to gain deeper insight into the *zeitgeist* of an age.



Carrie Arnett
Clear Lake High School
Years of Teaching: 7

My goal is to create a learning environment in which students can transform from a tourist into a true classroom citizen. Instead of walking through the doors and sitting and watching, I ask them to become citizens of our community. Being a citizen in our classroom means taking an active role in daily tasks, activities, and procedures.

Through this classroom management style, I have been blessed to have the opportunity to connect with students who would have been happy, and content, with just being a tourist. Instead, they too are now an active part of our classroom community and have made new friends along the way.



Richard Cockerham
Clear Path

Without trust, the student will not engage in the learning process. Students trust you when they know that you care that they are in your classroom and when they know that you have an interest in them as an individual. It's in this trust that encourages them to pay attention when you tell them that the subject matter is relevant to their lives now and in the future.



Jacob Clark
Clear Springs High School
Years of Teaching: 3

Service-orientated involvement and raising global awareness is an essential component in educating students to become life-long learners and equipping them with the skills necessary to become productive members of society. The most significant contribution an educator can make is to inspire and motivate students to make the world around them a better place, by making themselves better people first.



Michael D. Houston
Clear View Education Center

I am rewarded daily by the work I do and see in the classroom. Some would say I thrive off the success of my students, but it is not just their success that compensates me. It is also their aspirations and future endeavors. I consider myself a teacher of teachers. The students I teach will inevitably teach others, and it probably will not be about the wonderful lesson we did discussing the quadratic formula or Cramer's Rule. My students may simply tell their friends or future children about what it means to genuinely care about someone else's success. The reward I receive is the legacy that I am able to leave through the hundreds of students I have taught and will teach.

There are many students to thank for making this event a memorable one for our special teachers.

*Thank
You*

- The beautiful corsages and boutonnieres were produced by the Floral Design students in Ms. Kori Adams' class at Clear Lake High School
- The, "Honor Unit with Distinction", JROTC Cadets from Clear Creek High School, accompanied by SFC (Ret) Marcial Sepulveda, presented the colors at today's event.
- The nationally recognized Orchestra students, led by Mr. Joe Munoz, from Clear Lake High School provided the musical entertainment.