Connections

Class of 2011 Challenged to Embrace the Changes Ahead

Erika Sy, Valedictorian, and Emily Brown, Salutatorian, are among 104 proud students, including 10 students from Eagle Academy, who graduated as the Hillsboro High School Class of 2011 on May 27 at Eagle Football Stadium. This year’s graduating class earned an impressive $275,300 (and counting) in scholarship awards.

In high school Brown played varsity golf, served as an FFA officer, and was a junior varsity and varsity cheerleader. After a trip to Florida, she will spend the summer working and enjoying family and friends before attending Texas A&M University Mays School of Business this fall. After receiving her undergraduate degree, Brown plans to attend law school and become a criminal attorney.

Valedictorian Erika Sy addressed her fellow graduates with a challenge to embrace the many changes that are about to take place in their lives and how those changes will facilitate learning and growth. She also reminded them that ambition, pride and individuality are key qualities essential to continued success in life.

In addition to earning the top ranking in her class, Sy participated in band as a tuba player, competed at UIL academic, and served as student council president. This summer she plans on working part-time at her parents’ restaurant and enjoying a break from her studies. She will attend Texas A&M University this fall to study industrial engineering. She also aspires to earn a Masters in Business Administration.

Following the students’ speeches, Larry Cole of the Hillsboro Optimist Club announced special student award winners, and Nancy Divin, HISD Assistant Superintendent, recognized students with special honors. Dr. Buck Gilcrease presented the Class of 2011, and Board of Trustees President Christopher Teague accepted the graduating seniors.

Hot Summer Means Cool Camp for Academically Advanced Students

“I’m bored!” -- two words you will likely NOT hear this summer from students attending Camp Gateway, Hillsboro ISD’s first-ever summertime advanced academic camp. First through sixth grade gifted and talented students and fourth through sixth grade accelerated class students will explore, discover and create through challenging lessons in science, math, agriculture, technology and engineering.

Nearly 50 students are registered for the July 11-15 activities and will be organized into two groups – grades one through three and grades four through six. The agenda for day one is all about science and will be led by Dr. Craig Wilson of the Agriculture Service Center in College Station, Texas, and Tad Duncan, Director of Agriculture Education with the Texas Farm Bureau. Students will discuss a variety of topics from agriculture to space science.

Three graduate students under the supervision of Dr. Trena Wilkinson, Associate Professor of Curriculum and Instruction at Baylor University, will facilitate day two’s lessons on robotics, mazes, and other technology concepts. Day three, facilitated by Cheryl Raice of the Hill County 4-H, includes a field trip to a cotton gin, farmer’s co-op, veterinarian clinic, and silo. Four graduate students supervised by Dr. Sandra Cooper, Associate Professor of Curriculum and Instruction at Baylor University, will lead students on day four in an investigative project utilizing math concepts.

The last day of camp will focus on the field of engineering and engage students in a challenging project that puts theories to the test.

“With such highly qualified instructors from higher education and the hands-on activities planned for the students, this experience is going to be both academically beneficial and just a whole lot of fun,” said Lynda Duncan, HISD Director of Student Academic Services. “The community is very excited about this unique offering for our students.”
Connections: schools + community

High School Band Receives Excellent Rating at Music Festival Competition

In their final competition of the year, the Hillsboro High School (HHS) Golden Eagle Band received a second division excellent rating at the Peak Music Festival held at the University of North Texas in Denton, Texas. The band performed “Advance Guard March,” “Salvation is Created,” and “Cumberland Cross” and received positive comments from all three judges. Also receiving recognition was Senior Percussionist Jimmy Staggs for his snare drum solo in the March. The flutes and tuba sections received certificates as outstanding sections in the band. The HHS Band featured their contest selections and other popular music at their Spring Concert on May 16 in the Hillsboro Junior High School auditorium.

Lady Eagles Powerlifters

Earn Medals at Regional, State Meets

Sophomore Nikki Green took first place in the 420-pound weight class at the Texas High School Women’s Powerlifters Association regional 3-A meet in Gainesville on March 5. She set a new regional record with her 330-pound bench press, with a total for all three lifts of 945 pounds. The second place winner came in at 40 pounds behind her total. Green went on to the state meet in Corpus Christi on March 14 to earn a third place bronze medal in her weight class.

In the 97-pound weight class, Sophomore Jaymyn Washington earned second place at the regional meet, qualifying her to compete at state where she took first place. Her total weight for all three lifts was 595 pounds, coming in 15 pounds ahead of the second place winner. This is Washington’s second year to compete at the state level.

The Lady Eagles Powerlifters, which also include Sophomore McKenzie Piar and Freshman Rosie Dominguez, took third place in the team standings at regional and fifth place at state.

Challenges....cont from front

After the presentation of diplomas by the Board of Trustees and the turning of the tassels and ring by Danielle Rutherford, the class song, “I Believe I Can Fly” was played followed by the closing and benediction by Sarah Sampson. The ceremony concluded with graduates singing the Hillsboro School Song, the class song, “Be Kind—to All Who Know Her” and the HHS Alma Mater. The recessional was with graduates singing the Hillsboro School Song, and the boarding and benediction by Sarah Sampson and Issac Harrell.

The Results Are In:

UIL Regional and State Competitions

Hillsboro High School (HHS) theater arts students took third place at the UIL One Act Play regional competition in Lubbock in April and served as alternates for state.

Sarah Sampson competed in Prose Speech with 1,000 students at district, advanced to regionals where she earned first place, and qualified to state where she took an impressive second place.

Seven HHS students advanced from district to regional UIL academic competition, also in Lubbock, competing with some of the best students in Texas and placing in the following areas:

- Calculators: Erika Sy, Aaron Sy
- Math: Erika Sy, Jonathan Wilson, Jesse Hughes
- Also competing at regional UIL academics in Ready Writing was Emily Brown, and in Social Studies was Beatrice Trejo and Keyshaun Boyd.

Congratulations to all of these students for their admirable performances!

Outstanding Teachers Recognized at Annual Luncheon

Hillsboro Independent School District (HISD) announced its top educators for 2010-2011 at the annual Staff Awards Luncheon on May 27.

The 2010-2011 Campus Teachers of the Year are:

- Franklin Elementary – Mariana Whedbee, Pre-Kindergarten Special Education
- Hillsboro Elementary – Pam Jones, Literacy Coach, Reading Intervention
- Hillsboro Intermediate – Pam Hamilton, Gifted/Talented and Art
- Hillsboro Junior High – Patty Leek, Eighth Grade English Language Arts
- Hillsboro High School - Rosie Grindstaff, English as Second Language
- Patty Reesman was honored as Elementary Teacher of the Year, and Patty Leek was named Secondary Teacher of the Year.

One Act Play cast members pictured above (left to right, back row) are Peyton Custodier, Jahn Garrett, and Megan Ford, (front row) Sarah Sampson and Issac Harrell.

Excellence in Education is the Mission at Summer Academies for Teachers

The goal of HISD’s third annual Summer Academies for teachers is to promote excellence in educational strategies used by professional and paraprofessional staff and to help office staff sharpen skills and discover new tools.

Offerings include both required and optional courses on a range of topics including reading, language arts, math, library science, technology, music, specialized curriculums, discipline, CPR and first aid, and more.

New courses this year include “A Day in the Life of a School Office,” “Getting Started with the iPad,” and “Roots and Wings,” a class on ways to add theatre games and imagination exercises to stimulate creativity in the classroom.

With continual curriculum updates, textbook changes and technology advances, teachers need ample opportunities to stay informed. By offering courses on HISD campuses, they have a convenient and inexpensive way to gain the continuing education credit required without traveling too far from home.

Teachers and staff typically earn continuing education hours during four training days offered throughout the school year. With this program, they will earn comp days during the summer so training days can become extra days off scheduled at strategic times of the year, such as Thanksgiving and Christmas break.

The ultimate goal of Summer Academies is to improve student performance in the district and meet the needs of students.

Hillsboro Independent School District

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Hillsboro, TX 76645

Superintendent Buck Gilcrease is pictured with the HISD Teachers of the Year (from left to right) Erika Sy, Aaron Sy, Jonathan Wilson, Jesse Hughes, Patty Leek, and HISD Assistant Superintendent, Lifelong Learning, Karen Grindstaff.
Eagle Legacy Awards Banquet
Honors Top Students

More than 200 people gathered on May 21 at the second annual Eagles Legacy Awards Banquet to celebrate the outstanding accomplishments of the top ten percent students of Hillsboro High School’s Class of 2011. Sponsored by the Hillsboro ISD Education Foundation, the event also honored the teachers these students selected as their most influential educator.

Foundation Board Member Matt Thomas opened the ceremonies, and Foundation Board President-Elect Lee Auvenshire emceed the evening which began with entertainment from Hillsboro Elementary School’s Rhythm Rascals and Hillsboro Intermediate School’s Showtime. After Dot Clark, Foundation Board Member, offered the invocation, guests enjoyed a traditional barbeque feast and instrumental piano music performed by Jonathan Trejo, Hillsboro High School student. National Junior Honor Society students served beverages and desserts to attendees.

The evening concluded with an address by Superintendent Buck Gilcrease and a presentation to each honored student of an iPAD 2 that will serve as a valuable resource during their college careers.

The Class of 2011 top ten percent students are:

Erika R. Sy (Valedictorian)
College: Texas A&M University
Major: Industrial Engineering
Most Influential Teacher: Esther Lopez (Spanish and Student Council Sponsor)

Emily E. Brown (Salutatorian)
College: Mays Business School at Texas A&M University
Major: Business Administration, then attend law school
Career: Criminal Attorney
Most Influential Teacher: John Epps (Coach and Biology)

Hector J. Ramirez
College: Hill College, then transfer to a 4-year university
Major: Computer Science, Technical Engineering, or Music
Most Influential Teacher: Jerry Stout (Math)

Chantel N. Rueb
College: Texas Tech University
Major: Dentistry
Career: Dentist
Most Influential Teacher: Julia Brown (Retired HISD Teacher)

Danielle K. Rutherford
College: Baylor University
Major: Nutritional Studies
Career: Registered Dietitian
Most Influential Teacher: Michelle Steeke (Librarian)

Sarah R. Sampson
College: Texas Christian University
Major: Film-Television-Digital Media and Theater Performance (double major)
Career: Film Media, Broadcasting or Theatrical Arts
Most Influential Teacher: Karen Eng (Theater)

Patrick O. Smith
College: Texas A&M University
Major: Civil Engineering
Most Influential Teacher: Bill Woody (Vocational Agriculture)

Jasmin C. Mosca
College: The University of Texas at Austin
Major: Biomedical Engineering
Most Influential Teacher: Sherri Thomas (Community Service)

Hannah F. Ward
College: Hill College, then transfer to Texas Wesleyan University
Major: Law Enforcement
Most Influential Teacher: LaDonna Lewis (Social Studies)

Morgan E. Whitworth
College: Hill College, then transfer to Texas State University or Tarleton State University
Major: Wildlife Biology
Most Influential Teacher: Ann Teel (Librarian)

All plan to attend college this fall. (See photo captions for college and career plans and the teachers they selected.)

The Foundation extends its deep appreciation to all board members and sponsors, faculty, administration, parents and students who contributed to the success of the event.

Congratulations to the top ten percent students for their achievements, and best wishes.

ERIKA R. SY (VALEDICTORIAN)
Emily E. Brown (Salutatorian)
Hector J. Ramirez
Chantel N. Rueb
Danielle K. Rutherford
Sarah R. Sampson
Patrick O. Smith
Jasmin C. Mosca
Hannah F. Ward
Morgan E. Whitworth
District Honors Retirees at Reception

After years of dedicated service in the education field, four employees of Hillsboro Independent School District (HISD) are retiring and were honored at a reception on May 23.

Holly Holland served as the Information Services Coordinator for 15 years for HISD. Her career totals 21 years including work for ESC Region 12, McGregor ISD and Waco ISD.

Gloria Mojica completed 11 years as a teacher in HISD and four years in El Paso ISD, with a total of 15 years of service in education.

Mike Palmer finishes his career with a total of 25 years including his last two as a teacher and coach with HISD. He previously worked in Malakoff, Azle and Springtown ISDs.

Harold Tate has been with HISD for 14 years as a teacher and Hill County Behavioral Health-Alternative Director, with a total of 21 years of service including Corsicana and Rice ISDs.

“I admire these employees for their commitment through many years of service,” said Buck Gilcrease, HISD Superintendent. “We wish them the best as they move on to a new phase of life.”

High School SkillsUSA Team Earns Top Awards at State Competition

The Hillsboro High School (HHS) SkillsUSA team participated at state competition March 31 through April 2 in Corpus Christi, Texas. The team entering their cabinet making projects earned 14 blue ribbons and two red ribbons.

Francisco Gonzalez competed in Skills Cabinet. In this event students receive blueprints and must calculate the omitted measurements, cut the pieces exactly, and build the furniture in five and a half hours. The piece must be ready for finish work when completed.

Gonzales competed against 13 other first place district level winners and earned first place in the state of Texas. He is the first HHS student in 11 years to place this high. Gonzales will represent Texas at the national level in Kansas City in June.

HISD Superintendent Buck Gilcrease is pictured with retirees (from left to right) Harold Tate, Gloria Mojica, Mike Palmer, and HISD board of trustees member Karen Smith.

Our Partners in Education
Contact Katharine Matthys at (254) 582-8585, ext. 221, or matthys@hillsboroisd.org about giving and sponsorship opportunities.

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Well's-Mart
Wells Fargo Bank
Wendy's
Whataburger
Whitefield Insurance
Wilson's Paint & Body
Wise Oil
Woodmen of the World

Education Foundation Board Receives State Recognition

After less than two years of operation, the Hillsboro ISD Education Foundation is already making its mark statewide, earning the Outstanding Board Award and a $1,000 cash prize at the Texas Pioneer Foundation annual conference in San Marcos in April. Out of 1,200 school districts in Texas, 278 have education foundations, so the award is quite an honor.

The Foundation Board was selected for several reasons, including each board member's wholehearted support of its mission. All are actively engaged in effective fundraising and willing to do whatever is necessary to help the Foundation reach its goals. From securing major contributions to handwriting thank you notes to donors, no task is too great or too small. The Board truly embodies a spirit of generosity, servant leadership and progress.

Board members represent a diversity of businesses in the community. They also have a 100 percent commitment to personal giving and near perfect board meeting attendance. The board's annual retreat includes extensive training and team building to prepare them for success in their roles.

“It’s quite an honor to be recognized this soon in our efforts,” said Bob Crabtree, HISD Education Foundation Board Member. “It speaks to the extraordinary character of the people on the board and their strong commitment to the students in our district.”

Fred Markham (middle), Executive Director of the Texas Pioneer Foundation, presents the Outstanding Board Award to Bob Crabtree (left), HISD Education Foundation Board Member, and Katharine Matthys (right), Executive Director, HISD Education Foundation Board.

Now More Than Ever, Giving to Hillsboro Education Foundation is Essential

The Hillsboro ISD Education Foundation partners with the community to provide resources to enrich teaching, inspire learning, and maximize innovative opportunities for all students in the district.

Only $13,115 from our goal!  
$66,885 Raised

Total Goal $80,000

Fred Markham (middle), Executive Director of the Texas Pioneer Foundation, presents the Outstanding Board Award to Bob Crabtree (left), HISD Education Foundation Board Member, and Katharine Matthys (right), Executive Director, HISD Education Foundation Board.

With regular state funding serving basic educational needs, and with recent budget cuts to public schools made by the state legislators, it is now more important than ever to give to the Foundation to ensure their ability to continue to support innovative academic opportunities for HISD students.

Because of the generosity of the community over the past two years, the Foundation distributed grant funding to teachers allowing them to implement unique classroom strategies and provided resources to graduating seniors as they pursue higher education.

With three months left in this year's campaign, the Foundation has raised $66,655 — 83 percent of its total goal of $80,000.

"We are asking community members and businesses who have not yet contributed to consider this important investment in the future of our students,” said Jennifer Nowlin, Foundation Board President. “We are almost to our goal but we need everyone in the city to pull together to help us reach it.”