



ALAMO HEIGHTS ISD
SCHOOL
VIEWS Fall/
Winter
2023

HOME



Welcome Home!

The district welcomed around 60 new talented teachers to their new home in Alamo Heights ISD this year. They attended orientation in early August to learn about our curriculum and instruction practices, our AHISD Profile of a Learner, campus procedures and practices, and spent time preparing for their new students. They also took a bus tour of the District.

The school year kicked off for all employees at Convocation in mid-August. **Dr. Bashara** highlighted the traditions, values, and people that make AHISD feel like HOME and Fine Arts students dazzled the audience with their performances.



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COUNSELING & GUIDANCE

As the added stress of the holiday season approaches, you or someone you know may find some extra help is needed. Please take a look at the resources available through the District's Counseling & Guidance Department through the QR code or the link: www.ahisd.net/departments/counseling_guidance



GUIDANCE & COUNSELING MISSION STATEMENT

The Alamo Heights ISD Comprehensive and Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program advocates for all students by providing equitable access to a planned, strength-based program supporting each student's individual academic, career, social and personal development through trusting relationships and partnerships with families, school staff, and community members.

A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



In AHISD, we have long cautioned against an overreliance on high stakes testing because it is a system focused on a single test administration on one day of a student's performance in time, and it is not designed to measure a variety of important things valued by our community. The rich learning experiences that your children experience in Alamo Heights schools

cannot be reduced to a single score on one day.

AHISD is a school system that places a priority on high standards of academic achievement for all students, and we embrace accountability because it is the catalyst for action for the outcomes we desire for each of our students. To that end, we have embraced a comprehensive local Community Based Accountability System (CBAS) to anchor our continuous improvement efforts.

In AHISD, accountability is more than one test score. **Annually in our district we measure:**

- Student academic achievement and growth
- Student college and career readiness
- Recruitment, retention, and development of high-quality staff
- Supports for students to be well-rounded and engaged
- Community engagement in our schools
- Fiscal responsibility



Our local Community Based Accountability System (CBAS) relies on multiple data sources, authentic assessment opportunities, observations and feedback from stakeholders that identifies the accountability our community deserves and expects. The A-F accountability system only provides us with one piece of data to evaluate in that system.

This AHISD CBAS measures the community aspirations for the students in our schools. This is what we dedicate the mission of our daily work to everyday. This is accountability that champions our AHISD children.

The latest CBAS report and a new video are available for your review on our AHISD website, www.ahisd.net.

MULES UP!
Dr. Bashara

Top Scholars



Caroline Cordts



Caleb Rice



William Riggs

Congratulations to the following AHISD students who have been recognized by the National Merit Scholarship Program.

They entered the program by taking the PSAT, which served as an initial screen of entrants. Commended scholars represent the top 1 percent of high school seniors.

AHISD Commended Scholars are: **Caroline Cordts, Caleb Rice, and William Riggs.**

In addition, AHISD students received academic honors through The College Board's recognition programs which award academic honors to underrepresented students.

The National African American Recognition Program: **Zachary Haspil and Amarea Jackson.**

The National Hispanic Recognition Program: **Cash Alvarado, Gabriel Castillo, Kate Chica, Jackson DeLeon, Avelina Escudero, Victoria Farias, Magdalena Gutierrez, Zachary Haspil, Derik Haynes, Julianna Hildebrand, Lila Romero Kibler, Illeana Mena, Alicia Otero, Camila Proa, Elisa Ramos, Ryan Rodriguez, Jordan Tetro, Ryan Velazquez, Valeria Westerman, and James Westmoreland.**

Juliana Araujo Rincon, Emiliano Aguilar, Samuel Berenguer, Maria Alexa Cardenas Gonzalez, Audrey Davis, Adriana Dippel, Ana Donahue, Calvin Gamiz, Lauren Gracia, James Haymore, Emily Nento, and Julia Zelle.

The National Indigenous Recognition Program: **Maxwell Bacon, Ellis Anne Card, and Wilfrid Hamlin.**

Note- not all students listed are pictured.



Early College High School coming to AHISD

Beginning in the fall of 2024, Alamo Heights High School will launch the Early College High School and P-TECH (Pathway in Technology Early College High School) at Alamo Heights.

An Early College High School (ECHS) provides students with up to 60 college credit hours free of charge and substantial support to guide them into an Associate of Arts degree. It is an opportunity for students to blend high school and college in a coherent, personalized, and rigorous education program provided in partnership with St. Philip's College.

Through the P-TECH program with a pathway in teaching, students will earn an Associate of Arts in Teaching degree and engage in valuable work-based learning experiences in order to earn an industry certification in teaching (paraprofessional) along with opportunities for paid internships.

College credits earned during high school are designed to be transferred to a four-year institution.

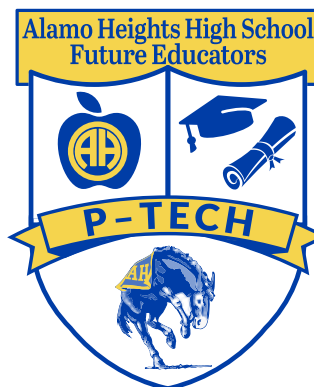
"These programs will provide a transformative educational experience where students seamlessly bridge high school and college and embark on a path to lifelong learning and success," said **Cory Smith**, AHHS Principal.

All college level courses will be taught by AHISD teachers and students will still be able to participate in Fine Arts, Athletics, and activities offered at AHHS.

Current eighth graders are eligible to apply. They must be in good academic standing, have a strong attendance record, submit an application packet, and complete a Summer Bridge program that will be hosted in AHISD July 22-26, 2024.

Students accepted into the program will begin taking college level courses as ninth graders.

Applications for the 2024-25 school year close the first week of December. To learn more, visit the Alamo Heights HS website at ahhs.ahisd.net.



This fall, Alamo Heights ISD launched "Mules with Mission," a cohort program for teachers interested in incorporating service learning as an integral instructional strategy in their classrooms. The program is aligned with a Heart of Heights recommendation to actively encourage all students to engage in community service opportunities, recognizing the invaluable role service plays in character development.

The "Mules with Mission" cohort was designed by a district writing team comprised of educators interested in furthering the district's support for service learning: **Valerie Alvarez**, Instructional Coach; **Lauren Boyher**, Counselor; **Shelly Bynum**, Fine Arts; **Alejandra Martinez**, Language Programs; **Courtney Crane Pruitt**, Elementary; **Todd Dorgan**, AP Academics; **Vanessa Henry-Valdez**, AHJS Science; **Brandi Rechtorovic**,

Special Education; and **Dr. Yadira T Palacios**, Director of Teaching and Learning.

Last month, educators from across the district gathered for professional development aimed at seamlessly integrating the tenets of service learning into their curricula. Instructional coaches provided valuable

feedback and comprehensive support to ensure successful implementation. The event also facilitated connections between local service learning organizations and teachers, offering a platform to explore how student-service learning experiences can align with the needs of nonprofits in the area.

The "Mules with Mission" initiative serves as a tangible realization of the AHISD Profile of a Learner. It nurtures compassionate citizens with impeccable character and a global perspective, all while students master a rich and comprehensive curriculum through the medium of service learning. This multifaceted approach equips students not only with academic proficiency but also with the empathy, character, and commitment needed to make a meaningful impact on their community and the world at large.

Students will present their service-learning projects at AHISD's Festival of Learning on April 1, 2024 at Alamo Heights HS. The community is invited to share in the celebration.



#ExtraordinaryAHISD Staff



New leader joins AHISD

MATTHEW STREGER
Chief Financial Officer

Matthew Streger joined Alamo Heights ISD in August as the new Chief Financial Officer. He previously worked in business operations at Blanco ISD, Boerne ISD, and Comfort ISD. Prior to joining public education as an employee in 2015, Streger worked for 12 years as a private contractor supporting school districts throughout south central Texas and California with grant and financial reporting. He also worked for non-profit organizations and as a State of Texas Auditor in Austin.

He earned his master's degree from Our Lady of the Lake University and his bachelor's degree from Texas A&M University in College Station. His wife Sharon is a teacher at Canyon High School in New Braunfels and the couple met when they were attending A&M. The Stregers are the proud parents of three children and they have two grandsons and a granddaughter due next spring.

"The environment at Alamo Heights ISD has been so welcoming," Streger said. "I appreciate all the support from everyone I interact with on a daily basis. It is invaluable. As our theme this year implies, AHISD is truly home."

NEW ROLES FOR AHISD LEADERS

NATALIE BROWN

Assistant Director for Special Education

Natalie Brown is the new Assistant Director for Special Education. She has worked with special education programs since 2007 and last year served as Elementary Academic Dean for three campuses.

Brown previously served as an SST teacher at Cambridge and was then promoted to the role of Special Education Elementary Coordinator where she was department chair for special education for both Cambridge and Woodridge. She left AHISD for one year to serve as a Special Education Director for multiple campuses and districts in a contractor capacity.

Her husband Tim teaches at the high school and their two young children attend AHISD schools. Brown is a 2002 Alamo Heights High School graduate.



DR. YADIRA TABOADA PALACIOS

Director of Teaching and Learning

Dr. Yadira Taboada Palacios is the new Director for Teaching and Learning. Dr. Palacios is a familiar face in Alamo Heights. She joined Heights in 2016, and served for six years as the Academic Dean for The Junior School. Last year, she moved into the Coordinator for Teaching and Innovation role at the Curriculum and Instruction office. Before coming to Heights, Dr. Palacios worked as a bilingual teacher, instructional coach, and district supervisor for bilingual programs. She is an Aggie through-and-through with her bachelor's, master's, and doctorate degrees all from Texas A&M University in College Station.

In her new role, Dr. Palacios will support curriculum and instruction, oversee language programs, family engagement, and service learning. Her husband Jesus manages the City of Uvalde golf course, and their son Yahir is a junior at Texas A&M University.



Powering the Profile



SARAH HOLMES

Alamo Heights High School

Develop a Healthy Sense of Self

Sarah Holmes, English Language Arts teacher from Alamo Heights High School was recognized for Powering the Profile and embodying the AHISD Profile of a Learner. She works every day to help her students “develop a healthy sense of self.”



MICHAEL MCELRATH (“COACH MAC”)

The Junior School

Employ Skills for Life

Michael McElrath, Texas history teacher at the Junior School, was recognized for helping students “employ skills for life.”

The Profile of a Learner is a guide that articulates the knowledge, skills, and attributes students will need to pursue individual dreams and positively impact the world upon graduation. The video series Powering the Profile, available on the Alamo Heights Mules YouTube channel, highlights Extraordinary AHISD staff as they bring the district’s Profile of a Learner to life for students.



FUTURE MULES

Our Future Mules are ready to rock their AHISD pride thanks to a special gift from Superintendent **Dr. Bashara**. When employees welcome new additions to their families, she sends a note and onesie to also welcome them to the AHISD family.

David Short, Choir Director at Alamo Heights High School, and his wife welcomed twin boys **Graham and Kellan** last December.

“We were so grateful for the adorable onesies from Dr. Bashara that arrived just days after bringing our twin boys home,” Short said. “I am always telling people that AHISD is one big family, and this unexpected and personal gift from the Superintendent is one of my prime examples why!”

Theodore “Teddy” Waters Barnett was born last Spring and posed for a picture in his new outfit when he was 3 months old. His mom **Camile** is a first grade teacher at Cambridge.



“Alamo Heights has been our home for more than a decade,” Waters said. “My oldest daughter is starting high school next year and my younger daughter is starting Mini Mules. We love our community and receiving a note from Dr. Bashara warmed my heart.”

Alamo Heights School Foundation's **GREATER HEIGHTS NIGHT**

The Witte Museum | November 8, 2023 | 6:00 PM

Presented By



Greater Heights Night is a night where our community comes together to support children, back teachers, and fund schools in AHISD. Thank you to our 2023 Sponsors and Underwriters for supporting our children, teachers, and schools in AHISD!

2023 GREATER HEIGHTS NIGHT SPONSORS: The Greehey Family Foundation, Cavender Auto Family, Joeris General Contractors, Pure Pastures/Laura and Lew Moorman, The Worth & Arriaga Families, The Ballantyne Family, The Fellbaum Family, Guido Materials, Jenger and Steve Waters, American Roofing & Metal Co., Inc., Baptist Health System, Beck, Dullnig, Dyer, Sanchez, Wolfe Families, Bowman, Goudge, Lammons, Lindner, Villanueva Families, Sara and Jeff Brouillard, Castano Ave., Crowell, Kimball, Kingman, Ledford, Szeman Families, Colette and Ty Edwards | Carey and Dave Hildebrand, Focal Point Vision - Drs. Ken Maverick and James Lehmann, Frost, Martha and Ben Gray, H-E-B, Heights Hoopsters, Independent Waste, Johnson, Love, Rangel Families, The Kiehne Family, Labatt, Moreno, Smith, Stokes, Wallis Families, Linebarger Attorneys at Law, LKCM, Malitz Construction, Methodist Hospital | Metropolitan, Montclair, Onward Learning, Laura and Clay Page, Corinna and JB Richter, Rt. Land & Cattle Co., Sunline Global, The Thad Ziegler Glass Family, WSM, 1900 Wealth, The Adame Family, Courtney and Scott Archer, Stephanie and Jeff Bailey, Courtney and Josh Balsam, Dana and Collier Bashara, Kim and Colton Batchelor, Kristen and Josh Bell, The Bishop Family, The Blake Family, Mrs. and Dr. Blake, The Boddy Family, The Bovenzi Family, The Brown Family, Lauren and John Browning, The Brownlee Family, The Bruton Family, Karen and Jeff Bryant, The Burney Family, Jennifer and Crain Canavan, Stuart and Kendra Carter, Camille and Chad Chamberlain, The Christian Family, Elizabeth and Travis Clifton, The Craig Family, Gretchen and Cody Cruthirds, The Taylor Dawson Family, Wesley and Michelle Deagen, The Dorbandt Family, Elena Schwem and Sean Elliott, Lynnette and Trey Embrey, Rachael and Adam Esquibel, The Evans Family, Meredith and Clay Fain, Ann and Rob Flannery, The Fravell Family, The Friesen Family, Kelly and Steven Fry, The Gamiz Family, Christine and Joe Gaughan, Amy and Christopher Gilene, Margaret and Ben Hammond, The Hargis Family, Jennie and Ben Hart, Ali and Chris Hatten, Kathleen and Mark Hebert, Christy and John Hinchey, Tara and Jason Hoelscher, The Charley Hollimon Family, Catherine and David Hornberger, Myra and Bobby Hoover, Stacy and Joel Hoyt, Lori and Garrett Karam, Becky and Jim Kelso, The Kieschnick Family, The Geoff King Family, Kate and Bill Kingman, Cally and Will Kothmann, The Kroll Family, Rebecca and Daniel Kurokawa, Chrissy and Thomas Labatt, Mary and Louis Labatt Family, The Lacy Family, O'Kelley and Paul Little, Ashley and Alcide Longoria, The Macdaniel Family, The Marceau Family, The Matthews Family, Kendall and Chance Mazurek, The McAlister Family, The McFarland Family, The McLaughlin Family, Emily and Brad McMurray, The Michelson Family, Lissa and Ty Mitchell, Roxanne and Carlos Mouynes, Jessica and Tucker Mudrick, The Mysliwiec Family, Lindsay and Brian Nash, The Naugher Family, Casteel and Will Ochse, Nancé and Alex Oliver, The Onstott Family, The Oxley Family, Margaret and Ryan Pape, The Park Family, Carol and Kirk Patterson, Kristin and Mike Payne, The Gardner Peavy Family, Enzo T. Pellegrino, The Pennington Family, Courtney and Chip Percy, The Ramirez Family, Stephanie and Robert Rinn, Sabrina and Raul Rios, Katie and Will Rogers, The Rohlf's Family, Caroline and Tom Rose, Whitney and Bryan Schones, The Seth Family, The Shannon Family, Stacy and Nathan Sharp, Carolyn and Robert Shaw, The Smaistrle Family, Marie and Paul Smith, The Smolik Family, Lauren and Alan Spalten, Kristin and Clayton Stanley, The Sutherland Family, The Sytsma Family, Brooke and Court Urban, The Walton Family, Lacey and Robert Watson, Kathryn and Mark Weaver, Drew and Robert Welch, Mrs. & Mr. Daniel Westmoreland, Amy and Matt Willcox, Amelia and Rob Williams, Jordan and Brandon Williams

2023 GREATER HEIGHTS NIGHT UNDERWRITERS: Britton Orthodontics, CHRISTUS Children's, LPA Design Studios, Preserve Title, Alamo Heights Dental, Brake Check, Clean My Bins, The Emergency Clinic Alamo Heights, Jefferson Bank, Marsh McLennan Agency, Papa John's, Phyllis Browning Company, XPEL, HUB Catto & Catto, Silver Eagle Beverages

Confirmed sponsors and underwriters as of 10.19.23

REUNITE *at Heights*

AN ALUMNI & HALL OF FAME CELEBRATION

Join us on Sunday, March 3, 2024, as we hold the fourth annual Reunite at Heights: An Alumni and Hall of Fame Celebration. This luncheon will take place at the San Antonio Country Club. Doors will open at 12:00 PM, and the program will begin at 1:00 PM.

The Alamo Heights School Foundation Hall of Fame is comprised of former students, faculty, and volunteers who have made significant achievements in many aspects of their lives. Three Distinguished Alumni Awards, one Lifetime Educator Award, and one Distinguished Service Award will be presented each year. All applications are considered for five years.

2024 HALL OF FAME HONOREES

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI

Dr. Bill Colglazier '62

Rick Shaw '70

Bobby Chesney '89

LIFETIME EDUCATOR

Mercille Wisakowsky

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

Suzanne and Jim Goudge '72

Become a Reunite at Heights Sponsor!

For available Sponsorship Opportunities, please contact The Alamo Heights School Foundation office at (210) 832-5957 or ahfoundation@ahisd.net

SPONSORSHIP BENEFITS

Presenting Sponsorship \$20,000 (one table)

Two tables of 10 with premium reserved seating
Name or logo on event signage
Name or logo on cover of event program
Name or logo on presentation slides

Mules Sponsorship \$10,000

Table of 10 with premium reserved seating
Name or logo on event signage
Name or logo in event program
Listing on presentation slides

Gold Sponsorship \$5,000

Table of 10 with premium reserved seating
Name or logo on event signage
Listing in event program
Listing on presentation slides

Blue Sponsorship \$2,500

Table of 10 with reserved seating
Name or logo on event signage
Listing in event program
Listing on presentation slides

THANK YOU!



Go Mules!

The Alamo Heights School Foundation (AHSF) is so appreciative of all our AH Partners as we conclude our second annual **Partners Card** event. All proceeds from Partners

Card sales benefit Alamo Heights ISD. Last year, we raised a collective \$42,000, and we can't wait to give this year's earnings to our AH-mazing teachers. Thank you to our 2023 AH Partners for helping us combat recapture by boosting teacher and staff salaries in AHISD.

2023 AH PARTNERS: Alamo Balloons, Alamo Heights Dermatology, AMP Studio, AnArte Gallery, Baker Tatum, Belle & Union, Belles & Beaux, CADEAUX, Capri by Sunset, Curated Boutique, Elizabeth Lanier Designs, Frosted Home, Grove Hill, Ltd, Hanley-Wood Fine Gifts, Hebdon Reblin Designs, Heights Tuxedo, Invitations, Etc., Joseph's Mens Store, J. McLaughlin, Julian Gold, Kismet, La Loteria, Learning Express, Margarita Mercantile, Meadow, Memory Lane, Michelle Sasser Designs, Nourish Healing Collective, Paesanos, Paloma Blanca Mexican Cuisine, PnJ embroidery & specialty gifts, Prep Rally Social, Revolución Coffee + Juice, Sabor Cocinabar, Saint Bernard, San Antonio in a Box, Satel's, Scout & Molly's Quarry Village, Shetler Fine Jewelers, Sloan/hall, Sparkles, Stylin Brunette, Sunset & Co., The Hayden, The Little Gym of Alamo Heights, The Spotted Mule, The Tiny Finch, The Union Fitness and Fun, Viva Heights, and Vivroux Sports

The Alamo Heights School Foundation's mission is to enhance academic excellence for every student with a focus on funding teachers and staff. For ways to support our children, back our teachers, and fund our schools, visit www.ahschoolfoundation.org.

Alamo Heights School Foundation

7101 Broadway, San Antonio, TX 78209

www.ahschoolfoundation.org

210-832-5957

ahfoundation@ahisd.net



**ALAMO HEIGHTS
SCHOOL FOUNDATION**
Funding teachers. Achieving excellence.

TRUSTEES AT WORK

David Hornberger, Board President

Communities erect signs to communicate important messages - stop signs, yield signs, and school zone signs. Then there's my favorite which says "Alamo Heights High School Stadium" with a pointing arrow. You likely have seen these types of signs. Ours sits on Broadway in front of the District's Central Office. Sure, this sign is informative and directionally oriented, but it means much more. It points to a location that we think is important, so it therefore reflects our values. We value the events taking place there. We value the children performing there. We value the public schools which call that stadium their home field. Like our schools, our stadium welcomes all families regardless of ability, background, or resources, so our sign directs everyone without exception. This sign means we are proud of our community, we care about our kids, and we are excited for you to see them perform. It also means we welcome you to our community and, of course, we hope to beat you. There's no other street sign like it.



In essence, these signs are the hallmark of a community. Vibrant communities share enduring values. While demographics might change over time, the values remain the same. This is the essence of Alamo Heights: we love our children, we set high expectations for them, and we will deliver whatever resources possible to help our kids meet those expectations. These values inspired the formation of our school district in the middle of a wilderness over a century ago. These values continue to inspire families to move into our community and they encourage others to remain here for generations. And so we have thrived.

Make no mistake, adversity knocks on our door often, but we collectively choose each time to rise above it and to thrive despite the circumstance. Our schools reflect this resilience. In the face of unprecedented budget constraints, the teachers in our schools continue to inspire our children to reach greater heights. Roughly 65 percent of the graduating class of 2023 attained the Advanced Placement Scholar Distinction, compared to the historic national average of 10 percent as calculated by the College Board. This not only exemplifies our efforts at graduating college-ready students, but also provides our families with the opportunity to save on college tuition costs. Further, about 1 out of 10 students in the class of 2024 achieved national recognition from the College Board due to performance on the PSAT. Other campuses celebrated student achievement on national assessments, where Howard kindergarten students significantly outpaced national norms in math, as did Junior School students in science. We also hold tightly to our community traditions like the Teddy Bear Picnic and Howdy Night, which bring together families across our community because of the strength of our common values.



Still, we know there is more to do. Our district pioneered the use of a continuously-updated Community Based Accountability System, and the Board and administrative team rely on this information to identify specific areas of improvement in our schools. This process drove us recently to develop our Early College High School and P-TECH programs, which empower students who choose these programs to graduate from Alamo Heights with an associate's degree (at no extra cost) while equipping them with 60 college credits available for transfer into any Texas public college or university. This is a powerful incentive for our students to meet high expectations while also significantly reducing the potential cost of a college degree, and it opens the possibility of college to families who previously may not have considered it. Our tradition of excellence expects nothing less.

It is clear that we have something valuable here in Alamo Heights, and your school board stands unanimously for our community and for what we've built together. As we have noted to you in a separate letter delivered to your home, these are unprecedented times for AHISD. The continued litany of unfunded mandates from the Texas Legislature plus skyrocketing inflation has pushed us, and many other districts, to perilous budget deficits.

In response, the state has done nothing (as of this writing), having last materially increased our operational funding in 2019. Now, a deeply-political issue distracts state politicians from fulfilling their constitutional obligation "to make suitable provision for the support and maintenance of an efficient system of public free school." Texas funds public schools from one pool of money; therefore, any funds diverted from this pool hurt all public schools and disproportionately hurt recapture districts such as Alamo Heights.

We are grateful to our advocates in the Legislature and to Representative Steve Allison in particular who stand in the breach, often at unanticipated personal cost, to support our public schools. We are grateful to all of you, our neighbors, who have called or written your state legislators. We encourage you to contact all legislators regardless of your voting district and to reach out to your friends and family across Texas and encourage them to do the same. Share the stories of success in our schools and celebrate our shared experiences on the courts, in the stadiums, in the band halls, and in the classrooms. Remind them that we have something valuable that should be supported and improved, not ruthlessly disregarded.

May we all personify that "stadium this way" sign: we love our children, we value our public schools, we welcome everyone without exception to our community, and we intend to win.

Calling all Grand and Senior Mules!

Are you a grandparent or senior citizen community member in AHISD? You're invited to our next Grand Mules/Senior Mules event of the school year on February, 9, 2024 at the Alamo Heights High School Barbara & Alan Dreeben Auditorium Foyer.

It's an opportunity to learn about AHISD schools directly from students and staff and tour classrooms to see learning in action.

The program began last year to engage all members of the Alamo Heights ISD community in the efforts of our schools.

Interested participants should RSVP by email to Cristina DeLaCerde, Superintendent's Secretary, at cdelacerda@ahisd.net or by phone to 210-832-5953.

Participants who live in AHISD will receive a Gold Card which grants free admission to regular season athletic events and free swimming at the Natatorium from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. weekdays.

STAY ENGAGED AND INFORMED

It is a critical time for our community to be engaged and informed. The District hosted a Legislative Update last month for staff and the community to learn more about the issues and how to advocate for public education.

Please continue to let our state legislators know the needs of our public schools. Contact them and ask them to increase the Basic Allotment, reject vouchers, and vote to increase teacher compensation. We will continue to push our elected officials to do what's right for students in Alamo Heights ISD and across the state of Texas.

Pictured left to right are Dr. Brian T. Woods, Texas Association of School Administrators; Texas Representative Steve Allison; Dr. Bashara; AHISD Board President David Hornberger, and Sophie Torres, Raise Your Hand Texas.



BOND 2023

ALAMO HEIGHTS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

AHISD has started work on designing School Bond 2023 projects starting with Alamo Heights High School. LPA Design Studios, the district's architecture firm, is working with high school staff in the schematic design phase of the project. This preliminary design phase ran until the end of October.

The District has asked for proposals from General Contractors on Project 1 which includes Alamo Heights High School, the design of a new Central Office/Learning Center located on property across from the high school, and the remodeling of the current Central Office which will house the district's Excel Academy and O9 Academy.

Bartlett Cocke General Contractors has been awarded the Project 1 contract. The district worked with Barlett Cocke in the 2005 and 2010 bond programs.

At their September meeting, Trustees also approved the purchase of four new school buses using Bond 2023 funds.

There will be opportunities for community input when designs are completed.



Dads of Great Students

Wednesday mornings have gone to the DOGS at Cambridge Elementary - Dads of Great Students!

This is the tenth year of the Watch DOGS program at Cambridge. Fathers, grandfathers, and other father figures serve as positive male role models for the students. They also provide an extra set of eyes and ears as they serve on campus for one day or many each year under the leadership of the school counselor.

Last year, the Cambridge PTO partnered with Watch DOGS to create an additional opportunity for dads. "Watch DOG Wednesdays" allow a dad that may not be able to volunteer for an entire day a chance to come welcome students on Wednesday mornings for 30 minutes before school.

They were recently featured in the video series, On Location with Dr. Bashara that's available on the District YouTube channel.

SCHOOL LIFE

Homecoming Howdy

There's no place like AHISD in October as our Blue and Gold spirit is vibrant all around as we celebrate our Homecoming activities!

Whether it's your first Howdy Week or you've been part of this tradition for years, the AHISD community is filled with pride and comes together for a festive, fun, and family-filled week of events.



HOMECOMING ROYALTY

*Congratulations to 2023
Homecoming Queen Grace Crocker
and King Will Broderick!*

CAMBRIDGE AWARDED PURPLE STAR

Cambridge Elementary School has been awarded a Purple Star Campus Designation by the Texas Education Agency. The Purple Star recognizes Texas district and charter schools that show their support and commitment to meeting the unique needs of military-connected students and their families.

Every fall, TEA awards the Purple Star Campus designation to campuses that apply and meet the established criteria. This year 150 campuses were awarded Purple Stars.

Cambridge is the first Alamo Heights ISD campus to be recognized with a Purple Star.

"Receiving TEA's designation as a Purple Star Campus lets our military community know that we are a proud military family-friendly school in the heart of "Military City USA," says Cambridge Military Family Liaison **Karyn Shelnutt**. "The resilience and perseverance of our military-connected students is highlighted and celebrated at Cambridge Elementary and our focus on this special group of students is to welcome them HOME to Cambridge Elementary and AHISD - for a short time, or for the entirety of their education! We recognize their unique attributes and challenges they may face, and we celebrate the service and sacrifice of their military family members and especially the service and sacrifices of these students. HOOAH!"

To receive the Purple Star Campus Designation, schools must designate a campus-based military liaison, create and maintain an easily accessible webpage that includes information for military-connected students and their families, institute a campus transition program for military-connected students, and support a military family assistance initiative. All Texas public schools are eligible to receive a Purple Star Campus Designation, regardless of their military-connected student population size. Applications for the designation are accepted annually.



EXCEL AWARD WINNER

Howard Early Childhood Center kindergarten teacher **Jessica Gonzales** is the 2023-24 EXCEL Award winner for Alamo Heights ISD.

Gonzales was surprised in her classroom and presented with the apple trophy and \$1,000 check. She has been an educator for 13 years and this is her 8th year as a kindergarten teacher.



"I chose to become a teacher to serve and give back to my community in the biggest, most impactful way," Gonzales said. "It brings me an immense amount of joy to be one of the foundational adults in such young and important lives. Teachers have the opportunity to introduce knowledge and intrigue to potential life long learners. I do not make light of this reality



but rather make it a challenge each year to foster such an environment that allows for lasting experiences and memories. What's greater than being a memory maker for a living?"

The EXCEL Award is sponsored by KENS 5 and Credit Human and representatives from both organizations came to celebrate Gonzales along with her family, Howard Principal Yvonne Munoz, and AHISD Superintendent Dr. Dana Bashara.

Teddy Bear Picnic

Howard Early Childhood Center is often called the 'happiest place on Earth' and it's not hard to see why when you attend events like the Teddy Bear Picnic.

The beloved school tradition is a celebration of family and an opportunity for students to learn about giving back to help others.

At this year's event, the school collected 290 teddy bears to donate to the Children's Bereavement Center. It's a beautiful example of the school's touchstone- "at Howard we use our thinking heads, our feeling hearts, and our helping hands."



Pictured is Howard Principal Yvonne Munoz with Tapley Burney.

Pictured left is Michele Johnson's Kindergarten class.



MULE NEWS BITS & BRIEFS



PUT A RING ON IT!

Put a STATE CHAMPION ring on it! During halftime of the first football game of the season, the girls golf team received their state championship rings.

ALL-STAR ATHLETE JACKSON HILDEBRAND

Jackson Hildebrand excels on and off the football field as a leader among his peers and in the community and that's why he was honored as the KENS 5/UPS Store All-Star Athlete for Alamo Heights ISD.

Hildebrand was presented the honor during a taping for the Great Day SA morning show. He was surrounded by his teammates, AHHS cheerleaders, and the Mighty Mule Band. He was nominated for the honor by Principal **Cory Smith** and Head Coach **Ron Rittmann**.

Hildebrand is one of the captains of the Mules Football Team. He has been a starter for three years on the offensive line and earned recognition as Academic All District and 1st team All-District Lineman. He was one of 400 football prospects nationwide selected to attend the All-American National Football Combine.

He is committed to attend Texas Tech University and continue his athletic and academic career.

During his sophomore and junior years, Hildebrand was also a member of the AHHS track team and competed in shot put and discus events.

He is currently pursuing the highest and most prestigious of honors with Boy Scouts



of America, the designation as an Eagle Scout. For his project, he built a swingset structure for special needs children at St. Andrew's Church in San Antonio.

Hildebrand volunteers with organizations like Meals on Wheels, the Young Men's Service League, and Operation Gratitude, and has been active in Young Life throughout high school.

He has been part of the Alamo Heights HS Business Incubator program for the past two years, finishing second with his team War Bands at the annual Pitch Night event in 2023. The program teaches entrepreneurial skills with students creating a startup business and pitching for seed money to launch their business endeavor with mentorship from local business leaders.



All-Star Football Game



Will Broderick, linebacker for the AHHS varsity football team, was selected to play in the San Antonio Sports All-Star Football Game. He'll represent AHISD as a member of Team Gold at the annual game on January 6 at the Alamodome. He's one of 116 players selected representing 67 area high schools.



Pictured left to right are Ruby Carter, Elizabeth Baker, and Clara Sharpe as they give a helping hand to Ella Bragan.

Extra Cheer!

The sidelines were filled with cheer at the Homecoming Football Game thanks to the addition of some future cheerleaders!



AHHS Cheer hosted their annual Friday Night Heights FUN-draiser which brought together current cheerleaders with the next generation of Mules!

Also pictured is Avery Utz throwing her Mules Up with a lift from Shelton Johnson.



PEANUT BUTTER BOWL 2023

When we feed people in need, we all win! The Alamo Heights ISD community came up big in this year's Peanut Butter Bowl, donating 7,102 jars of peanut butter! Overall, 74,636 jars of peanut butter were collected this year to benefit hunger relief organizations.

Thank you to the entire AHISD community for their generosity and support of this year's Peanut Butter Bowl!

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CALL: 210-824-2483

FAX: 210-822-2221

EMAIL: ahisdcommunications@ahisd.net

SURF: www.ahisd.net

WATCH: YouTube: Alamo Heights Mules



KINDER PREVIEW

Howard Early Childhood Center will host Kinder Preview events for new families on the following dates:

January 23, 2024

February 8 & 22, 2024

March 26, 2024

April 16 & 30, 2024

All events are at 9:30 a.m. Come learn why Howard is called the “happiest place on Earth!”

In order to register for kindergarten, children must be five years old by September 1, 2024. Contact the office at Howard with any questions at (210) 832-5900 or visit their website at howard.ahisd.net.