

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

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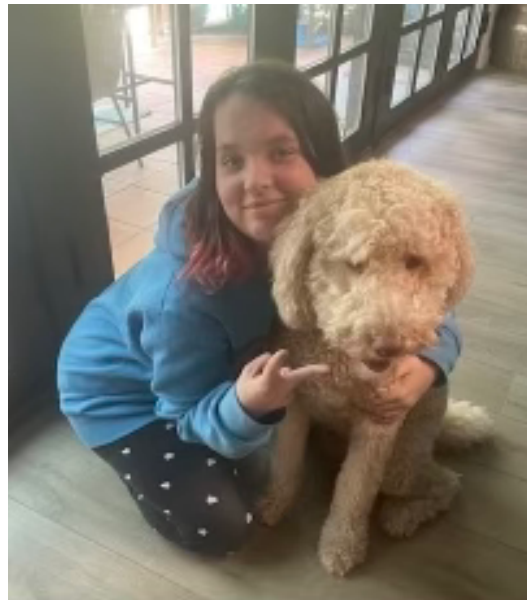
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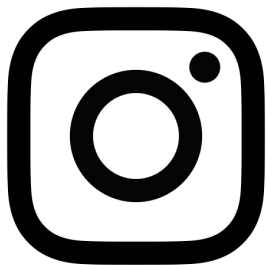
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Julia Hyché

Julia Hyché is a junior at AHHS. She and her family moved back to Texas to be closer to family and chose Alamo Heights 10 years ago after living in Cincinnati, OH. The community they lived in was very similar to Alamo Heights- small, having excellent resources and committed to education. The Hyches felt that the smaller district where



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Julia could be known and followed throughout her school career would be an ideal learning environment for her. Lisa, Julia's mom, remembers that from the moment she contacted Alamo Heights about enrolling Julia at Cambridge, she knew she'd made the best choice. She adds, "many parents dread their annual ARD meetings, but we have always been pleased with the thoughtfulness and care shown to Julia and us".

Julia was diagnosed with epilepsy at 3 months. "It was a scary and sad time as we adjusted to our new normal. We were told she would likely have developmental delays, and we had no idea what that meant at the time. My knowledge of what it meant to have a child with special needs was zilch and the fear of the unknown that lay ahead for her and us was very difficult", reflects Lisa. Julia began receiving physical, occupational and speech therapies from a very early age. When she was 3, with the guidance of her neurologist, the Hyches made the decision for Julia to undergo brain surgery that would remove the sections of her brain from where her seizures were originating.

Since then, Julia has enjoyed periods of time when she was free from seizures, but they've never had complete control. Julia has an intellectual disability that requires her more time to process and a slower pace of instruction to learn new information. She has always had support and accommodations since she started pre-K and the Hyches appreciate that her teachers in AH have walked the fine line of meeting Julia where she's at, while also challenging her. Lisa shared that she's always appreciated that all of her teachers and aides have taken the time to get to know Julia and understand how to best support her. Julia has benefited from small-group instruction and a modified curriculum and has made great progress. She is particularly proud of her accomplishments in math and will tell anyone who will listen, "I'm just a math girl".



Julia has been in choir since 6th grade and is in her 3rd year of martial arts. Lisa notes, "She has gained so much confidence through martial arts and intends to achieve her black belt". Julia also loves art and spends a lot of her free time creating different kinds of art pieces. Her art class with

Coach Gold is her favorite this year.

Julia has a younger brother, Daniel, who is a freshman at AHHS. The Hyches are comforted that the two are very close and sweet to one another. Lisa adds that, like many siblings of those with a disability, Daniel is extremely empathetic and patient with the stressors that her epilepsy places on the family as well as on Julia. The family has a few pets: Storm, a standard poodle and Julia's service dog and two cats, Fiona, a Scottish Fold and Homer, a Siamese mix. The family enjoys spending their free time



watching movies, having family game nights, attending concerts and swimming in the summertime. They also love to travel. Favorite vacation spots include NYC and beaches, and exploring new states. They hope to visit all 50 states one day, at present they have visited 23 states as a family! Julia is also a K-pop fanatic. Lisa says she has an encyclopedic knowledge about all things K-pop- all the various bands and their songs!

When asked to recall teachers or staff members who have gone out of their way to make Julia seen and heard, Lisa insists, "Too many to count!" But has fond memories from Julia's days at Cambridge of Pam Wanieck, Stefanie Hancock, Christi Criss, Holly Jones and Jennifer DeLeon. Lisa includes Erica Melle and Rachel Holiday at the JS and Libby Rokowski, Tim Brown, Christy Zamarron, Bella Martinez and nurse Lisa Padilla at the HS as being part of Julia's village and instrumental to her academic and socio-emotional success.

Lisa shares that relationships with peers can be challenging for Julia. Like almost all teens, Julia wants to fit in and feel a sense of belonging, which Lisa points out isn't always easy given Julia's health challenges and the uncertainty that accompanies them. Lisa is grateful that Julia has found a good balance in being involved in school activities, to the extent she feels comfortable, and has also found a small core group of friends at school who have made a huge difference in her life. The uncertainty of when she might have a seizure has, not surprisingly, increased Julia's anxiety. Having supportive school nurses and ACE teachers over the years has been a

huge reassurance for her that there is always someone to help her if she needs it.

Looking forward, Julia thinks about a future working with young children, possibly children with disabilities, but also dreams about going to art school. She continues to grow and gain confidence in herself through the challenges she surmounts and the successes she achieves both in and out of school. Lisa hopes that Julia will graduate confident in the fact that, with support, she can have a fulfilling life and not let her disability limit her in achieving her goals.

Leica Flores

Howard SST Teacher



You will readily recognize Leica Flores all across Alamo Heights. When she's not at the soccer pitch or football field cheering for her son, Linus (and everyone else she knows) or driving her daughter, Daisy, to Unified Champion events, she's a teacher at Howard Early Childhood Education Center. This year, Leica is working with the youngest students who receive Special Education services in our district. While the title is new, Leica has years of experience working with students with varying abilities. She first entered the education field 24 years ago when she worked as an Assistive Technology Assistant. She helped create PECS books for students and realized she wanted to work with this special population in the role of teacher. Leica holds a degree from UTSA in

Interdisciplinary Studies, Early Childhood-4th grade. She taught kindergarten at Judson ISD for 8 years, 5 years at NEISD (3 as a special education co-teacher, 1 as a 3rd grade teacher and 1 as the ALE/Resource teacher) before moving to Alamo Heights. Leica joined the team at Howard as the Pre-K Head start teacher in 2018.

Leica has very practical advice for parents, “As a parent of a child with disabilities, I would say to go to AACOG to get on every service** [interest list] as early as you can because it takes a long time to come up on their lists of services. If she could go back and give her younger self any encouragement, it would be, “It’s OK! Everything seems so scary and impossible because [you’re] in uncharted waters. Find a mom/dad support group that can listen to you when things seem impossible”.

When asked what she enjoys most about her role in her student’s lives, Leica shares, “I enjoy the differences in each student and trying to find out what works for each one. I love teaching them new ways to be successful in whatever they attempt”.

Leica loves working in her yard on weekends; she loves everything from mowing the lawn to gardening. She usually spends the first half of her summers teaching summer school or enrichment classes at Summer at Heights and then the latter part sitting on the beach and relaxing as often as she can.

Leica is a San Antonio native; she’s lived here all but 5 years of her adult life. She, Daisy and Linus share their home with Charlie, a 12 year old rescue pup. Both Daisy and Linus will complete their schooling at AHHS this May. Daisy will continue to learn and grow as she attends the ‘09 Academy in the fall and Linus will head to college where he hopes to ultimately pursue a medical degree as a psychiatrist.

Leica adds one more piece of advice, “Allow your child to be who they are and help them grow to be kind, loving, and respectful to all. Teach them that we are all different. Different is beautiful, it is what you do with your difference that makes the world a better place.”

Life will certainly be quieter next year, but I suspect Leica will still be on the sidelines cheering for students when she can. If you see her and the ray of sunshine named Daisy who is usually at her side, make sure to say “hello”.

HAVE AN IDEA FOR A FUTURE NEWSLETTER ARTICLE OR KNOW SOMEONE
WHO SHOULD BE HIGHLIGHTED? SEND SUGGESTIONS TO
MHARRISON@AHISD.NET

All Smiles at Howard

Unified Champions Club contributed by Leica Flores

The youngest set of inclusion champions in Alamo Heights all attend Howard Early Childhood Center. The Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools program has as its goal the promotion of “social inclusion through intentionally planned and implemented activities.” As an offset of Special Olympics, the three pronged model has sports as its foundation which is combined with activities that empower young people to create sports, classroom and school climates of acceptance and inclusion. Unified Champion schools are environments where students with disabilities are welcomed, routinely included in, and made to feel a part of *all* activities and opportunities.

Some of the events the Howard club participated in are: Festival of Learning and Howard Unified Field Day. The club’s sponsors are Leica Flores and Stephanie Lopez



Howard Unified Field Day



Howard Unified Obstacle Course at District Festival of Learning

Cambridge Unified Update

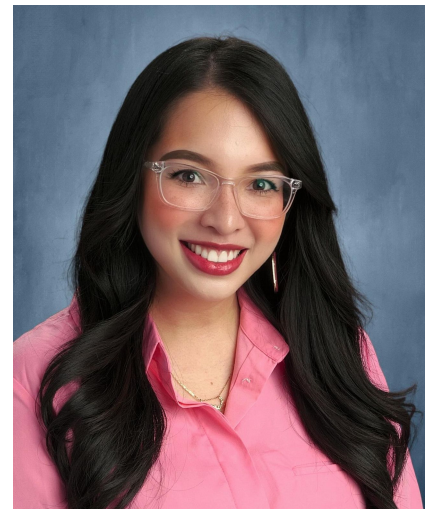
The students at Cambridge have been taking learning out of the classroom and into the community. Besides the usual community based instruction often paired with Special Olympics sports practice (the students participated in bowling and pickleball this spring), Mr. Hendricks and Mrs. De los Santos' classes enjoyed field trips to the Robert L Tobin Land Bridge, the San Antonio Stock Show Grounds, and UIW's Amazing Race. Some of the events were also attended by Unified partners (typically developing students) who lend an extra set of eyes and hands and serve as age appropriate models and companions.



Betsy Manriquez

Reflections from a bilingual special education teacher

This is my fourth year as a bilingual special education teacher at Woodridge Elementary and I'm grateful for the journey that led me here. I have not taught in any other districts- I have been at Woodridge for all four years. This is my first teaching job since graduating college, and it has always felt like the perfect fit. Even in college, I would tell my professors that I was determined to come back and teach at Alamo Heights- and I'm so grateful for the opportunity.



My passion for special education blossomed during my time as a student at Alamo Heights Junior School and High School, where I served as a peer tutor to students with disabilities. The remarkable teachers and mentors I encountered there, such as Erika Guerrero and Alison Monnich, fueled my desire to pursue a career in education. Now, I strive to carry their inspiration forward as I work to support and empower my students at Woodridge. I am a bilingual special education teacher, catering to all students 1st through 5th in both dual and immersion classes. I provide resource instruction and in class support, as well as serve as a case manager for my students and families. I facilitate ARDs and staffings, interpret ARDs for my Spanish speaking families, prepare ARD paperwork, and serve as an advocate for my students, their families, and their needs. In addition to my case manager role, I am also our campus' Unified Champions Schools (UCS) sponsor. The Unified Champions Schools Program at Woodridge Elementary is dedicated to creating a supportive and inclusive environment where students with diverse abilities actively participate in intentionally planned and implemented activities. These activities have a profound impact, fostering school-wide change and promoting the values of AHISD's mission statement. When I was a student at AHHS in 2014, I was part of the founding cohort of Unified for AHISD. Now, I am proud to bring Unified to Woodridge and give the same opportunities to our students that my teachers gave to me.

Working with my students is an absolute joy that fills my heart with gratitude every day. They walk into my classroom with a fresh perspective and a hunger for knowledge that inspires me endlessly. When we encounter challenges, we tackle them together, turning each obstacle into a valuable learning opportunity. In our shared moments, we laugh, we cry, and we create memories that will last a lifetime. But beyond academics, my students teach me invaluable lessons about resilience, empathy, and the power of human connection. They continuously push me to refine and improve my teaching practice, guiding me towards becoming a better educator with each passing year. Every small achievement in our classroom is cause for celebration, reinforcing the strong bond we've formed as a little family in room 412. Watching my students grow and evolve, gaining confidence and self-awareness, fills me with immense pride. As they move on from Woodridge, I cherish the opportunity to reflect on our journey together and marvel at the progress we've made. I wouldn't trade for anything in the world!

Advocating for your child in bilingual and/or special education is a journey filled with love and dedication. Engage in open, heartfelt communication with educators during annual ARD meetings, ensuring your child's unique needs are understood. Seek out resources and support groups that resonate with your shared experiences, fostering a community that uplifts and guides. Stay informed about your child's progress, rights, and available services, empowering you to make decisions aligned with their aspirations. Remember that your child deserves the same opportunities as their peers in general education, both within and outside school walls. Encourage and participate in activities that bring joy to their hearts, cultivating a sense of belonging and fulfillment. In advocating for them, you not only shape their academic journey but also nurture a future filled with endless possibilities.

Born and raised in the charming community of Alamo Heights, I am proud to call myself both a Woodridge Elementary and Alamo Heights ISD alum. Growing up surrounded by the vibrant culture and rich educational opportunities of this area instilled in me a deep appreciation for learning from an early age. I went to college at Our Lady of the Lake University and my majors were bilingual education and special education.

Growing up in a cozy home nestled in Terrell Hills, my family's journey reflects the American dream woven with our Mexican heritage. Both my parents bravely immigrated from Guanajuato, Mexico, and now proudly hold US citizenship. Their resilience and hard work inspire me daily. Alongside them, I cherish my two feline childhood companions, Lucky and Kitty. Education runs deep in our family; my older sister, Araceli, mirrors our parents' dedication as an educator, imparting knowledge of Mexican American Studies in SAISD. Meanwhile, my brother is carving his path through college, pursuing a degree in Marketing. All three of us were fortunate enough to be alumni of Alamo Heights.

Presently, I share my life and home with my sweet significant other, Elroy Hendricks, both of us contributing to the AHISD community as he is an SST teacher at Cambridge Elementary, continuing the legacy of dedication to education that runs deep in both of our families.

In my spare time, I have a few favorite activities that I love to indulge in. First off, I'm a regular at pilates classes – they're my go-to for unwinding after a long day. Cooking is another passion of mine, and I'm always

excited to try out new recipes in the kitchen. And of course, self-care is important, so I make sure to schedule in some shopping days and pedicures whenever I can. When it comes to entertainment, I'm a concert junkie and I have a soft spot for reality TV – guilty as charged! Whenever I get the chance to travel, I head to Guanajuato, Mexico, to visit my family and immerse myself in the vibrant culture and delicious cuisine. Back home in San Antonio, I'm constantly on the lookout for local events like comedy shows and festivals to enjoy with friends. And when the weather's nice, you can find me and my boyfriend, Elroy, hitting the road on his motorcycle, going for hikes, or playing pickle ball together.

I have a diverse set of hobbies that keep me busy and happy. I enjoy journal writing as a way to express my thoughts and reflect on life. Pilates is my go-to for staying active and centered. Creating designs on Canva lets me unleash my creativity, while baking new recipes satisfies my sweet tooth. Fashion is another interest of mine, and I love staying updated on the latest trends. Lastly, I channel my passions into blogging and social media, sharing my experiences and connecting with like-minded individuals.



Working in my current role with the students, families, and staff is an immense blessing that fills me with gratitude every single day. It's a privilege beyond words to have the opportunity to learn from my students, who teach me more than I could ever impart to them. Witnessing their growth

and progress fills my heart with joy and makes every day in my classroom a celebration. I want every student who walks through my door to feel like they're entering a second home, a place where they're valued, supported, and encouraged to reach their fullest potential. I am committed to providing each of them with opportunities to shine, to be challenged, and to build the confidence they need to achieve incredible things in the future. In my classroom, our focus extends beyond academics; we prioritize empathy, advocacy, consideration, and leadership skills, nurturing well-rounded individuals who will make a positive impact on the world. My passion for bilingual special education drives me forward, and I feel incredibly fortunate to be able to share that passion with the amazing students I have the privilege of working with every day.

Hannah Rosenblatt

Woodridge Resource Teacher

Hannah Rosenblatt is one of the newest and possibly youngest faces at Woodridge Elementary. This is her 1st year in Alamo Heights as a resource teacher offering small group and one-on-one support to students in math, reading and writing. Hannah comes to Alamo Heights from NEISD where she worked with students from PreK to 4th grade in a similar capacity.



Hannah became interested in becoming a special education teacher while a student at Churchill High School where she participated in a club named SMILE (Students Motivated to Impact, Lead and Enrich) which is similar to Unified here at Woodridge. The group allows general education ambassadors to be buddies for students with disabilities. The group would participate in recreational and competitive sports through Special Olympics. After participating for several years, Hannah became the president during her senior year under the direction of our own VI instructor, Monica Deutchman. That time in SMILE cemented her decision to pursue a career in special education.

Hannah serves 1st and 2nd grade students as both an in-class support and resource teacher in both math and reading. She also serves as a case manager for 16 students. Hannah says, “The most rewarding thing about being a resource teacher is being able to meet the students where they are, see them understand what is being taught and allow for maximum growth”. She also enjoys being a support for students who are struggling and guiding them to accomplish their classroom goals. She finds it very rewarding to be part of the team that helps a student achieve academic success. To that end, she encourages parents to be enthusiastic participants of their child’s ARD process, taking the time to review data in advance, ask questions and share their perspective of their child’s strengths and areas for improvement. She is happy to discuss concerns or offer suggestions with parents. The best way to reach her is via email at hrosenblatt@ahisd.net but she is happy to schedule phone calls during her conference period. Hannah is a native of San Antonio and has spent her

entire life here. She graduated from Churchill High School and UTSA where she holds a degree in interdisciplinary studies with a concentration in special education.

Hannah reflects that while reading was one of the subjects that was the most difficult for her in school as a child it is now one of her favorite ways to pass the time. “I read all kinds of books for fun!”, she says. Another of Hannah’s favorite pastimes is cultivating and planting succulents. Hannah shares her home with her miniature Goldendoodle, Ollie. Ollie loves agility courses and going anywhere he can be carried in his doggie backpack. Ollie’s agility classes are one of the things Hannah enjoys doing during her free time and over the summer. Summer also offers the opportunity to catch up on movies, travel and spend time with her family, particularly her niece, a high school freshman, with whom she is very close.

Living Unified at Woodridge

Woodridge Unified Club had a busy spring, starting with members enjoying an off-campus activity for their “Pizza My Heart” field trip to Gattiland. On campus, club members held a Fiesta shoebox parade where they were the Fiesta royalty, bedecked with paper flower crowns and greeted parade watchers including Dr. Bashara. The semester culminated in a big showcase, the WE Walk with Unified Walk-a-thon. The whole school was invited to walk the track to practice inclusion, acceptance, kindness and to encourage making new connections. For the second half of the Walk-a-thon, Unified athletes, accompanied by their partners, and cheered on by the rest of the school body, competed in various races. The event included a pep rally and a medal stand complete with an Olympic rings-style background for photo opportunities for the athletes. Club sponsor, Ms. Betsy Manriquez created this [hype video](#) to promote the Walk-a-Thon and to share with the community what inclusion means to the athletes and partners.



JS Unified Update

Contributed by Ms. Naiomi Salcedo

This spring AHJS Unified Champions Club spread love to our little Mules at Howard, Cambridge and Woodridge by making Valentine's Day cards for each school.

We also enjoyed our annual official Unified Champions Schools event, "Fans in the Stands." Students made posters and signs as well as shared pom-poms to cheer on our athletes. According to Special Olympics Wisconsin, "Fans in the Stands is a program designed to promote unity and encourage students, friends and families to get groups together to make posters, banners or organize pep rallies for Special Olympics athletes in their schools and communities".

Thank you to all our volunteers, Unified partners, our AHJS band and all our Administration for supporting Unified Champions Schools events.

We also opened up a Kick Time opportunity for students to work together on a poster session choosing a disability they would like to research and tell about. The goal is to place the posters around campus to highlight various disabilities/ neurodiversities along with facts, and celebrities who are neurodivergent themselves as an educational tool for all to see.

As a student led club, we love to hear ideas, goals and more from our students to support inclusive activities and efforts across our campus and community.



L to R: standing, Emory Castillo, Leadership board, valentines for students at elementary campuses, Kyle Simmonds and Mr Mike.

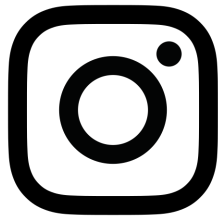
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Alamo Heights Junior School



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Alamo Heights Junior School



Left: Fans in the Stands showcase- foreground- Berkley Hanna, Talley Wilson, Ms. Karrie and Ella Contreras. Right: Fans in the Stands athlete Matteo Alvarez.



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Josh Farquhar

High School English Co-Teacher



Josh Farquhar loves teaching students of all abilities. He particularly loves encouraging students to read for leisure. He attributes his love of teaching, and specifically, working within special education, to his mother who taught in a self-contained classroom for twenty years at his alma mater. Mr. Farquhar cites her passion for her students as his inspiration for becoming a special education teacher.

Before coming to Alamo Heights, Mr. Farquhar worked as a substitute for 2 years and as a full-time teacher for 7 years. He has taught in Louisiana, Comal ISD and now at AHHS. This

is Mr. Farquhar's second year at AHHS where he co-teaches English I, II and III as well as serves as case manager for "eight AMAZING students, grades 9-12". He says one of the things he enjoys most about his role is seeing the progress his students make from year to year. "One of the best parts of teaching multiple grade levels is getting to build deeper connections with students", reflects Mr. Farquhar.

He encourages parents to have candid conversations with their students often to tease out what their dreams and passions are. Once a parent knows their student's strengths and interests, they can help them develop them into skills and concrete plans. He also welcomes open communication between home and school and is available to parents via email at jfarquhar@ahisd.net for any questions or concerns.

Mr. Farquhar was born in Philadelphia, PA but grew up in Lake Charles, LA. He graduated from McNeese State University with a degree in Behavioral Sciences. Upon graduation, he received his teaching credentials through the iTeach program. He is currently pursuing a M.Ed in Special Education through Lamar University.

Mr. Farquhar has one brother who lives in Wilmington, NC and his parents still live in his hometown of Lake Charles, LA. Mr. Farquhar shares his home with a pit bull/lab mix named Gunner. During his down time Mr. Farquhar enjoys playing volleyball, soccer and going to the gym. He also enjoys playing video games and writing music; fun fact: Mr. Farquhar plays the ukulele, guitar, multiple brass instruments and sings! Most summers, he applies to teach summer school because he can't get enough of teaching and encouraging students. He hopes to have many more years shaping students here at Heights.

Fabian Welch

Biology Co-Teacher/Football & Baseball Coach

Fabian Welch knew in high school that he wanted to be a teacher. As a senior in high school, he was enrolled in his high school's chapter of Future Teachers of America where he enjoyed watching students learn and grow. Once he'd become a teacher, he began to enjoy working with students

receiving special education services more and more and so began the process of becoming certified in special education over the last few years. Mr. Welch earned his BA in Kinesiology from UTSA. He has taught in NEISD for 12 years, Judson ISD for 4 years and now at AHISD.



Mr. Welch's role includes serving students as a case manager. He ensures that his students are keeping up with their school work, answers questions they may have about their classes, assignments, schedules or any other questions that relate to their academic success. He also co-teaches three sections of biology. When asked, he replies that the most enjoyable part of working with students is building relationships with them and watching them grow as individuals. Like most teachers, Mr. Welch believes strongly in parental involvement from course selection, mid-year and ARD meetings to advocating for their student and teaching them to do the same. In addition to his role in the classroom, Fabian is also known to some of his students as Coach Welch; he coaches on both the football and baseball teams. Whether you call him Mr. Welch or Coach Welch, Fabian has conference hours on gold days and can be reached by email at fwelch@ahisd.net to schedule a call or meeting.

Fabian grew up in Monahans, Texas, about 35 miles west of Odessa but has called San Antonio home for 21 years. He and his wife Kimeberly (a 6th grade science teacher) have "two amazing kids", Bryson and Kynleigh, aged 5 and 1, respectively. The family shares their home with Griffey, a soft coated Wheaten Terrier. The family enjoys beach vacations during the summer and spends free time visiting local spots like the zoo, Doseum and the Pearl. Fabian also enjoys any opportunity he can to play golf. Please make Fabian feel welcome if you see him around the district.

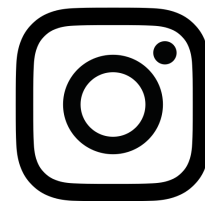
Spring Unified Events

The spring semester brought many opportunities for the members of the Unified Club at AHHS to spend time together. In February, Unified shared some love during a Valentine's lunch. Many of the partners and athletes

worked all spring in Unified theater to put on an adaptation of Peter Rabbit. The class is such a hit with both athletes and peers that there are two sections. Each of the classes put on a performance on back-to-back days in mid April. April also brought about the Junior/Senior Prom held at Sunset Station. The students looked great in their prom best all had a ball (pun intended) dancing at the luau themed prom billed as "Prom in Paradise". The entire group had a final opportunity to hang out together and send off the graduating seniors at a Fiesta themed pool party



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Amy Valdez

'09 Program Teacher

Amy Valdez' career has come full-circle as she returned to teaching special education in Alamo Heights this school year. Amy has been involved in special education all of her career. The 23-24 school year marks 21 years as a special education teacher. Amy has taught in various special education roles across several school districts in the greater San Antonio area. Her first go round in Alamo Heights was at AHHS. She worked first as a paraprofessional for 5 years and then led the class as an SST teacher for another three. When her daughter was born, Amy needed to find a position that provided more flexible hours. She spent 5 years at Lanier HS in SAISD, as an English co-teacher and as a reading specialist working with students grades 9-12. She moved to NEISD to shorten her commute and be a little closer to home. There, she served again as an English co-teacher, resource reading teacher and resource English teacher for students grades 6-8 for 6 years before taking another break to focus on her growing family. After 3 years she returned to NEISD for another six years before coming back to Alamo Heights this school year.



Amy first knew she wanted her life's work to be in special education when her younger sister had an aneurysm at age three, leaving her with a disability. This personal experience gives Amy a more robust perspective as she understands how a disability can affect the family dynamic. Her role now is lead teacher in the '09 Academy, one of Alamo Heights' two-pronged approach to postsecondary transition programs, commonly referred to as 18+ programs.

As the 09 Academy teacher at Robbins, Amy wants to make sure students have multiple opportunities to expand their learning through community based instruction.

Amy is an Alamo Heights alumna and attended University of the Incarnate Word, majoring in special education and reading. She has lived in San Antonio her entire life. She and her husband head up a blended family with 5 children between them. Her daughter is currently working on her masters

at UIW. The oldest son (his) is a senior at AHHS, followed by another son at AHHS (hers), one at East Central (his) and a third grade boy at Woodridge (theirs).

Like any mom with 4 sons, when asked how she spends her free time, Amy replied, “Uber-ing my youngest to baseball practice and attending [many] school functions”. On the rare occasion she gets to unwind, Amy enjoys reading.

Summer and longer school breaks are spent at the beach or pool with family. Amy is excited to be back “Home”.

Congratulations!

Austin Amaro was recently appointed Assistant Principal at AHHS beginning the 2024-2025 school year. Austin is a an Alamo Heights alum and former peer tutor. He began his career in AHISD as the lead teacher at the '09 Academy, a role he held from August 2013 to December of 2019 when he became the campus coordinator for Special Education at AHHS.

We also congratulate **Dr. Libby Rokowski** who will take over the role of campus coordinator at AHHS. Like Austin and countless other terrific AHISD teachers, Libby is a former alum and peer tutor who decided on a career in special education based on her experiences in Alamo Heights.

We are fortunate to have outstanding, service-minded educators like Austin and Libby and offer our congratulations and continued success in their new roles.

Michelle Harrison

Parent Liaison



Each of our campuses boasts an active Unified club and I've really seen those efforts playing out this year in the rich relationships between athletes and partners. The class of 2024 is the first group of peer tutors/future Unified partners that I witnessed interacting with students first hand through the peer tutor program when my son, Wyatt, entered the 6th grade at the Junior School. Our students are living out what it means to be a Unified Generation. It is heartwarming and encouraging to see so many of these athlete/partner pairs socializing and enjoying activities outside of school planned events. The UC partner class of 2024 has had such a positive impact

on what Wyatt's middle school and high school experience has been and I know I'm not the only parent who feels that way. We will miss these phenomenal young people as they move into the next stage of life, but we look forward to seeing them continue to grow into the caring, considerate people we know they are becoming.

The mantra of living Unified will continue as we see the growth of programs at Woodridge and Cambridge flourishing. Many of these students will be the partners who choose to use their electives to join the peer tutor programs and maybe eventually choose to enter careers in speech, occupational or physical therapy or perhaps they'll go into public health to advocate for persons with disabilities. If we're very lucky, maybe they'll come back to Alamo Heights as special education teachers like so many of their peers before them. I say it often, we are very fortunate that our children attend school in a district where inclusion is valued and encouraged. I encourage you to learn more about the Unified programs at each of your students' campuses, whether they participate as an athlete or as a partner, the experience is a worthwhile one for both and can have a huge ripple effect.

It's a great day to be a Mule!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michelle Harrison". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.