

The Beck Junior High orchestra rehearses for a concert



BJH Principal, Jeff Stocks and campus teacher of the year, Carrie Gay



The Bulldogs represent their school on the field



The Bulldog cheerleaders host a food drive to give back



Campus Snapshot

BECK JUNIOR HIGH

Nurturing a Community of Lifelong Learners

Written by Natalie Cook Clark

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When you walk into Rodger and Ellen Beck Junior High, you find a place where students feel safe to learn and take chances toward their academic, athletic, and future endeavors. "We want anyone who visits our school to feel at home and know that the staff, teachers, and students want them to excel and that we'll embrace them from wherever they are from," explains BJH Principal, Jeffrey Stocks.

Beck Junior High Fast Facts

LOCATION 5200 S. Fry Rd.

OPENED 1996

SCHOOL COLORS Maroon & White

MASCOT Bulldog

MOTTO Discover the Possibilities

PRINCIPAL Jeffrey Stocks

ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS

Kevin Weber, sixth grade, Dan DeYoung, seventh grade, and Marsha Dufner, eighth grade

HIGH SCHOOL Cinco Ranch High School

Building a Sense of Community

This was a particularly enjoyable assignment for me since I attended BJH in Katy ISD as a seventh grader in 1996, when the campus first opened. Visiting the school, it didn't take long for me to see that the foundation of academic excellence, community, and family I loved in 1996, still stands strong today. "At Beck, we set high expectations, but with a sense of community," says Stocks. Perhaps the greatest example of this sense of community is that many of the teachers at Beck have been there from the beginning. They don't want to leave. Just like any great business, this speaks volumes about the positive work environment and contributes to school morale.

"Everything that everyone does trickles down to impact the students," says Stocks. "The teachers, staff, and parent volunteers do what they do because they want to provide a healthy environment for the students to grow and excel in. And the students get this sense through their actions."

Setting a Shining Example

Success is evident around every corner at BJH. This year, the campus was named a higher performing school by the National Center for Educational Achievement. BJH also earned an Exemplary rating by the Texas Education Agency in 2009.

Student groups help the campus shine even more. This year, the BJH Destination ImagiNation team proved its skill in problem-solving using subjects like math and science when it came in seventh at the global competition. The school recently celebrated a gold winner in the Scholastic writing competition, and several students earned accolades at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. Athletes also excelled, with several different teams making it to the district championship in their sport.

Students regularly reach out to the community with a variety of service projects, helping more than 15 different charities and learning the importance of giving back. "At Beck we are blessed," says Stock. "The students know this and are always eager to turn such blessings back around to help the community both [locally and globally]."

The Picture of Bulldog Pride

The BJH library is now home to a unique mural, which took four years to complete, showcasing the spirit of the school. Beck's library media specialist, Marilyn Garretson had seen a similar mural in the library at McMeans Junior High and loved the work of artist, Tera Yoshimura. "As a librarian, I had always wanted this, but never had the wall space until I came to Beck Junior High," explains Garretson. One side of the mural reflects popular and classic literature, while the other side illustrates different themes of nonfiction.

As a former Bulldog, it was an honor to see how the school has grown while maintaining its core values. BJH students and staff members continue to excel in all areas and strive for even more success in the future. "Our goal is to maintain [a] high level of excellence," says Stocks. "We will embrace diversity while maintaining the standards that we are known for, even as our make-up changes in the future." KM

NATALIE COOK CLARK is living the dream by working from home as a freelance writer in her hometown of Katy. She lives with her wonderful husband, Stephen, beautiful baby girl, Angelina, and dog, Oscar.

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