



HONORING KATY ISD'S 2011-2012

DISTRICT-WIDE

Elementary
Colleen Dominguez
Bear Creek Elementary
School

Secondary
Brittany Spurlock
Miller Career and
Technology Center

FIRST-YEAR

Elementary
Jessica Dunlap
Franz Elementary School

Secondary
Scarlett Elliott
Seven Lakes High School

ELEMENTARY

Alexander - Sharlene
Schlorholtz

Bear Creek - Colleen
Dominguez
Cimarron - Pam Guajardo
Crech - Lisa Mills
Exley - Kim McKinney
Fielder - Jenifer Wilkinson
Franz - Jennifer Lea
Middleton
Golbow - Kathleen
Landecker
Griffin - Jennifer Faist
Hayes - Mariah Collier
Holland - Christie Sell
Hutsell - Brenda Shaver

Katy - Shellie Colvin
Kilpatrick - Blanche Wriborg
King - Kim Auman
Mayde Creek - Beth Jordan
McRoberts - Marta Lopez
Memorial Parkway - Sharlu
Melville
Morton Ranch - Renee'
Bonin
Nottingham Country -
Jennifer Webb
Pattison - Jennifer Tang
Rhoads - Lindsey Woodring
Rylander - Christine Dail

Katy ISD and the Katy Chamber of Commerce recently honored local teachers of the year at an awards luncheon



TEACHERS OF THE YEAR!

Schmalz - Kristin Morris
Stanley - Kelli Graham
Stephens - Mónica Melchiorre
Sundown - Joanie Lathrom
West Memorial - Casey Gentry
Williams - Stacey Levin
Winborn - Elias M. Reyes
Wolfe - Susan Hayes
WoodCreek - Tanya Swindell

JUNIOR HIGH

Beck - Sandra A. Thomas
Beckendorff - Shalonda Dumas
Cardiff - Jessica Rainey

Cinco Ranch - Kelley Kerlick
Katy - Malinda Breen
Mayde Creek - Mary Dawson
McDonald - Wendy Walker Valdes
McMeans - Crystal Krolczyk
Memorial Parkway - Jenny Legler
Morton Ranch - Jeanette Lewis
West Memorial - Neisha Richie
WoodCreek - Sheryl Taylor

HIGH SCHOOL

Behavioral Transition Program - Frankie Lazard
Cinco Ranch - Kay Lynn Fenn

Katy - Jennifer Blair
Mayde Creek - R.W. Dillard
Miller Career and Technology Center - Brittany Spurlock
Morton Ranch - Josephine Tran
Opportunity Awareness Center - Randi Rea
Raines - Angel Gray Purdy
Seven Lakes - Kim Glasgow
Taylor - Jackie Scott

Congratulations to all of Katy ISD's outstanding teachers, and thanks for helping to make the community great!

Katy ISD's district-wide teachers of the year (from left) Colleen Dominguez of Bear Creek Elementary School and Brittany Spurlock of the Miller Career and Technology Center



Celebrating **KATY'S TEACHERS OF THE YEAR**

Local educators dedicated to making a difference in the lives of students

Written by Mary Hogan | Photography by Jason Lehecka

Albert Einstein once said, "It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge." In Katy ISD, talented educators go above and beyond every day, inspiring and encouraging students in their journeys of learning and life. For Katy ISD's district-wide teachers of the year Colleen Dominguez and Brittany Spurlock, that love of helping students has become a way of life.

Capturing Hope

Growing up, Colleen Dominguez never imagined she would one day become an educator. Now, as a self-contained bilingual teacher and team leader at Bear Creek Elementary School, she can't imagine doing anything else. The turning

point came when, as a pre-law major in college, she began tutoring a couple of elementary students who were struggling and needed extra attention. "I got to see and feel that moment when a child finds understanding and clarity where it didn't exist before," she shares. "I felt like I had captured hope – it was magical!"

She strives every day to teach her students the way she would want her own three daughters to be taught. "When I think about what I want for them in school, how I want them to be challenged and inspired, how I want them to feel safe and appreciated, I know that every parent wants that for their child," Dominguez shares. Seeing her students as they arrive at school ready for another day fills her with energy. "I don't

As a bilingual teacher, Dominguez is passionate about helping students develop language and vocabulary in the content areas of science, math, and social studies



know how you could spend even 10 minutes in a classroom and not feel motivated by these awesome kids,” she explains.

Working Together

Dominguez starts each year by writing a social contract with her students, placing importance on offering praise to one another, sharing good things happening in their lives, and being respectful and friendly. “When kids know you really care about them, they will learn from you, no matter what you are teaching,” she says.

As she works to support her students, she is grateful for the support of Katy ISD. “Our implementation of mobile learning devices and Smart technologies are revolutionizing the classroom, and the focus on differentiated instruction is motivating and impactful in a profound way,” says Dominguez.

Finding Her Life Calling

Brittany Spurlock, an English teacher at Miller Career and Technology Center, comes from a long line of educators and considers teaching a life calling. She still remembers lining her stuffed animals up in the backyard fort and spending many hours creating lessons on the chalkboard for them. “There has never been a time when I thought I’d have any other career other than as an educator, because, although it sounds cliché, I think teachers can truly make a difference in this world,” she shares.

As a Katy ISD graduate, she feels honored to work in a district that is so deeply student-centered. “I feel blessed to

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be a part of this district, because I know I am preparing our next generation for a bright future through a rigorous curriculum and teacher support,” shares Spurlock. Because she teaches students with specific career goals already in mind, she puts much effort into aligning English lessons with their area of specialty.

A Caring Attitude

Spurlock is a big believer that students don't care how much you know, until they know you care. “By building relationships with them in the classroom, they learn quickly that I care about them as an individual person, rather than just a numerical grade or a statistic on a standardized test,” she explains. “Once students realize this, I can motivate them to go above and beyond what they even think they can do academically!”

Rewarding moments, like overhearing a student talk about their newfound love of reading, make all of her hard work worthwhile. “Hearing back from my students after they have graduated and have established their own careers and family, motivates me toward the continued importance of building positive relationships with my next group of students,” Spurlock shares.

Honored and Humbled

Both Spurlock and Dominguez are humbled to be district-wide teachers of the year, noting the amazing work and heart of their fellow Katy ISD educators. **KM**

MARY HOGAN enjoys being associate editor of Katy Magazine and still remembers how her favorite teachers made a huge impact in her life.



As an English teacher, Spurlock strives to make lessons relevant to her students' professional areas of interest

A Child's Reflection

A Child's Reflection provides a pre-school environment where teachers, children, and families from all over the world come together to share their cultures and gain a sense of international awareness. Lessons learned and cultural activities shared create a positive environment filled with possibilities for long term friendships.

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