



GOOSE CREEK

CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



TWINS ARE CO-DIRECTORS AT GOOSE CREEK MEMORIAL HS

Co-directors of the Goose Creek Memorial Dazzlers Larisa (left) and Marisa Coy get ready to lead the team in stretching exercises before they rehearse with the band for the first football game halftime show.

Twins are Co-directors at GCM

It's often difficult to tell drill team members apart, especially in uniform, but at one Baytown high school, the same goes for the drill directors – no matter what they're wearing! That's because the new co-directors of the Goose Creek Memorial High School Dazzlers and JV Charms drill teams are identical twins Larisa and Marisa Coy.

Although they have taught in Goose Creek CISD since January 2009, working together has been the twins' dream, but they never thought it would actually come true. Last spring, they both applied for the drill director's position at GCM, and Larisa, who had been the assistant drill team director at Sterling for the past year, was offered the job. When the assistant drill director position came open, Susan Jackson, principal at GCM, knew that Marisa would be a good choice, but by district policy, Marisa couldn't work under the immediate supervision of a sibling. Problem solved. The sisters agreed to share the responsibilities equally and become co-directors, a first for Goose Creek.

The drill team world is not new to these young ladies, since they were members of the Ross S. Sterling High School Stars in high school, where they took Advanced Placement classes and were in the top 10 percent of the class. Marisa was colonel and Larisa was lieutenant colonel in 2002-2003. Their style combines drill team with studio dance, since they danced at Cheryl's Dance Studio from the age of three, performing with the competition team throughout high school.

Larisa and Marisa studied at Lee College for two years after high school and joined the Aeros Sonic Boom Dance Team for the 2004-2005 school year. In April of 2005, while students at the University of Houston, they became Houston Texans Cheerleaders as the first set of twins on



The Coy twins, Larisa (left) and Marisa, Texans Cheerleaders for seven years, prepare for a performance at Reliant Stadium. INSET: For the 2002 – 2003 school year Marisa Coy (left) and Larisa Coy served as colonel and lieutenant colonel, respectively, of the Sterling Stars drill team.

Marisa taught for 2½ years at Highlands Junior before going to Ashbel Smith Elementary for three years and then back to Highlands Junior last year to teach social studies and coach volleyball and soccer.

"This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for us. We always knew we wanted to work together," said Marisa. "Even when we were at different schools, each of us supported and helped the other at her school."

For the new co-directors, it will be a busy year, but since both have excellent communication and organizational skills, and Marisa likes to make to-do lists for Larisa to check off, it should be an exciting and fulfilling experience to work together this year.

the team. They graduated from the UH College of Education in December 2008 with degrees in Interdisciplinary Studies, and they both have certifications in 4-8 Math, 8-12 Dance and EC-6 Generalist.

For seven years, they performed with the Texans Cheerleaders, and they still help out with the V.I.P Sidelines and attend a few Texans Cheerleader practices. Although they spent many hours practicing, making appearances and performing, they also enjoyed their travel experiences while on the squad.

“Our first tour outside of the United States was for NFL Mexico in Guadalajara and Monterrey, which was an outreach tour to promote more fans for the Texans,” said Larisa.

They also participated in Beauties on the Beach, a competition among NFL cheer squads during the Super Bowl in Florida, including an obstacle course, volleyball, dance performance and tug-of-war. The group of six Texans Cheerleaders won the performance contest.

Perhaps their most exciting trip was in 2009 when they took a two-week tour to Kuwait and Iraq to help boost the troops’ morale, visiting different Forward Operating Bases and even watching the Super Bowl with the troops on one of the remote bases.

“In Kuwait, we wore the ‘battle rattle’ helmet and vest that weighed 21 lbs. We also rode Black Hawk helicopters and C-130s with the troops,” said Marisa.

Throughout all their exciting experiences, there was still no doubt in their minds that they wanted to return to Baytown to teach. After all, their mother Terry Coy has worked in Goose Creek CISD for 36 years, serving as assistant principal at Horace Mann Junior School for the past 20 years.

““We’ve always been Goose Creek proud,” said Larisa. “We attended Crockett Elementary, were cheerleaders at Baytown Junior and graduated from Sterling.”

In January of 2009, Larisa began her teaching career at Horace Mann Junior School, teaching 6th grade math, while Marisa went to Highlands Junior as a math teacher. Larisa’s next stop was Cedar Bayou Junior and then Highlands Elementary before serving as the assistant drill team director at Sterling last year.

“It was great to go back to my alma mater,” said Larisa.

“We set our expectations for the team from the ‘get go’ – what we want the goals to be for the team and what things are possible,” said Larisa. “We set high standards because we know they can reach them, and they’ve all been working extremely hard.”

With football season underway, the Dazzlers and JV Charms are in full swing and have chosen “Lights, Camera, Dazzle” as the theme for the year. Both instructors are thrilled that they have the opportunity to direct performances and also to teach dance classes.

“We love all aspects of teaching, and we have a passion for dance, so this brings it all together in this next chapter of our lives,” said Marisa.

Even though they were once Sterling Rangers, Larisa and Marisa are already starting to feel right at home as GCM Patriots and proudly wear the school colors of red, black and silver.

“The staff has been so welcoming,” said Larisa. “Some of our former teachers are here, and we already knew some of our students from the elementary schools and junior schools.”

Will they play any twin pranks on their students?

“We have never done twin pranks, but sometimes people didn’t know we were twins until they saw us together. They thought we were one person,” said Larisa.

For now, they are both Ms. Coy, so some of the girls call them L. Coy or M. Coy when they can tell them apart. Marisa is planning her wedding for January 2016, so her name change might be a little challenging for their students. Nevertheless, the Dazzler duo will be sharing their responsibilities and serving as role models for their students who want to live out their dreams.

“Our parents have always told us, ‘You’ve got one shot to give it all you’ve got,’ so we pass that on to our students,” said Larisa.

Jackson is pleased with the hard work and effort the Coys have put in so far, since they have already been working with their officers and teams for a month.

“I think we’re very lucky to have two people from the community to represent GCM in such a positive light. They were high academic achievers as well as Texans Cheerleaders,” said Jackson. “Our students are excited to have them at our school, and they will be wonderful role models.”

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