



GOOSE CREEK

CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

AVID Student Selected to Speak at Summer Institute

Laurencia Nwankwo, a Goose Creek Memorial High School senior, is one of 16 students selected from 1300 entries nationwide in the AVID Speaker Contest, an annual speech contest hosted by the National AVID Institute.

In their speeches, students share their stories about how AVID has helped them in the pursuit of their dreams of attending four-year universities.

AVID, an acronym for Advancement Via Individual Determination, is a program founded in San Diego, California, in 1980 to address the needs of students who were underrepresented in colleges and universities across America.

The program has expanded internationally and has created hope for hundreds of thousands of students in 48 states and 16 countries who otherwise would not have developed the tools for entering the world of higher learning.

AVID's mission is to close the achievement gap by preparing all students for college readiness and success in a global society.

Nwankwo is the first AVID student in GCCISD to be awarded this honor. In addition to being one of two student keynote speakers at the first San Antonio AVID Summer Institute for Teachers and Administrators, she will be awarded a \$500 scholarship for her efforts. She is the youngest of seven siblings, and she is determined to attend a four-year university.

Her heartfelt message includes gratitude to her mother for her love and sacrifice as she has raised her daughter; sadness and grief over the fact that her father who lives thousands of miles away in Africa has been unable to be physically present for many milestones in his daughter's life; and how her involvement in the AVID program has encouraged her and helped her to become the determined, focused young woman she is today.



Laurencia Nwankwo (center), a Goose Creek Memorial High School senior, poses with her AVID teacher Donna Hall and Lori Yarbrough, the GCM AVID Site Coordinator, after practicing her speech for the AVID Summer Institute in San Antonio in July.

"AVID is a part of me, it's my life. . . my friends in AVID have helped me intellectually because now I am open to new possibilities in my life," Nwankwo said.

Nwankwo's ultimate college dream is to attend Clark-Atlanta University in Atlanta, Georgia, and she feels that the skills she has learned and the support she has received from AVID will help her graduate with a college degree.

"Her AVID family supports her every endeavor and is proud of this great honor and tribute to the AVID system," said Donna Hall, AVID sponsor.

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