



GOOSE CREEK

CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Carver project spurs 5th-graders to start thinking about college

To get children thinking about college early, George Washington Carver Elementary School handed out college T-shirts to the 100 or so fifth-graders at the school.

The project titled "Planting the Seed Early" kicked off on Friday, Sept. 7 and is the brainchild of first grade teacher Joy Powers.

"I've had the idea for several years and finally decided to act on it. My inspiration is the students at Carver Elementary — they are college material and we wanted them to know it. So what better way to inspire than to plant the seed early?" she said.

Mrs. Powers says she wears her University of Georgia shirt constantly and some student always asks her about it: 'Where is that place? Why do you like them? Why is there a bulldog on your shirt?' Now we can ask them about their shirts and they can tell us what they know."

The aim is to expose students to the possibility of a four-year university — truly not something far, far away — just seven or eight years for these students. The idea is not to stress out the children or talk about the specifics of the application process. Rather, it's about building excitement.

Furthermore, for kids who live in poverty as many in Goose Creek CISD do, it will take a childhood to break down myths about college and instill the belief of college attainment at a young age before their mind is made up about what they can or can't do.

"We are proud of our students and know they will make a difference in the world tomorrow," said Mrs. Powers.

Ultimately, the hope is that Carver students will aspire to a lifelong path toward higher education and deeper learning that ends with a degree.

"Mrs. Powers created a great opportunity to promote higher education for our fifth grade students and entire campus. Our faculty, staff, and school community participated with overwhelming enthusiasm," said Carver Principal Rachel V. de Leon. "Our expectation here at G. W. Carver Elementary is that all our students will be college bound. We thank our school community for helping support that goal."

While many of the T-shirts sported Texas institutions — the University of Houston, Texas, A&M and Texas Tech — there were also some from faraway such as the University of Alaska, Colorado State, UCLA Berkeley, Arizona State, Mississippi Southern and Kansas University just to name a few.



Goose Creek CISD photo/Myla Holland

George W. Carver Elementary School fifth-grader, from left, Heaven Green, Desaree Rocha, and Nathalie Gonzalez wear their new college T-shirts given to them on Friday, Sept. 7. [Click here to view more photos.](#)

Shirts were gathered through donations from teachers, friends, and family.

And after an appeal appeared in the Baytown Sun, even strangers dropped off shirts to the school, and several were received through the mail.

"It was almost magical how shirts appeared," said Mrs. Powers. "We have a terrific community here in Baytown who are willing to help if asked."

And after the fifth-graders get their shirts, each student will do a little research about their school shirt and ask several questions such as location, date established, colors, mascot etc, then write two interesting facts they have learned.

A picture of them in their shirts will be attached to the research and displayed at Carver.

Also, the students will write thank you notes for their shirt donations.

Mrs. Powers hopes the project becomes an annual event. "Hopefully for many years to come, so send us your college shirts," she said.

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