



# GOOSE CREEK

## CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Second group of students inducted into Impact Early College High School

The second freshman class at Goose Creek CISD's Impact Early College High School at Lee College was inducted at a ceremony in the Lee College Arena on Monday, Aug. 1.

The 97 new students come from all five Goose Creek CISD junior schools.

As the name indicates, Impact Early College High School at Lee College is partly housed on the college campus and blends high school and college work with the goal that students will graduate with a high school diploma and an associate degree or 60 college credit hours toward a baccalaureate degree — tuition free.

The early college high school program targets students underrepresented in higher education such as low-income, first-generation college goers, English language learners, and students at-risk of not graduating.

Impact is an acronym for Intelligent Minds Participating in Acts of Courageous Talent.

The purpose of the induction ceremony is twofold; to impress on students and parents the importance of their decision to take on the challenge of a rigorous education and demonstrate to students, parents and the community the support that both Goose Creek CISD and Lee College have for the new school.

Impact Principal Karen Smithson told her newest freshmen that they are just as unique as last year's group and bring their own special personalities and talents.

"It is both an honor and a privilege to stand before you my new freshman class, this evening as your principal and welcome you into this amazing Spartan family. If you are anything like the students who started last year, you are sitting there feeling a million different emotions and asking yourself a million different questions," she said.

"I can assure each and every one of you that you are here because you deserve to be and because you can bring something new and exciting to this diverse learning community. So welcome," Smithson said.

Smithson also thanked the parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents, assorted relatives and friends of the new class in attendance. "Your attendance shows the students seated here just how important their decision to graduate high school with college hours and potentially an associate degree is to you and your family," Smithson said.

Both Goose Creek CISD Superintendent Dr. Toby York and Lee College Vice President of Learning Dr. Cathy Kemper welcomed the students.

Dr. Kempner spoke about the importance of setting goals and looking for role models and mentors as they moved through college.

Dr. York told the new students they had big shoes to fill. He outlined the accomplishments that the first group of students reached.

In its inaugural year, Impact Early College High School opened its doors with 105 students. Those students earned a combined total of 925 college hours.

Thirty-three students took summer courses and earned 116 college hours for a total of 1,041 college hours earned.

This year, 97 new students will join 102 students who are returning.

Because of some facility issues at Lee College, Impact students will shuttle between two campus locations — Lee College and the Peter E. Hyland Center — throughout the day.

Impact sophomore Azalia Sprecher also spoke to students, saying she feels blessed to be a part of this school.

"Fear of the unknown, fear of the challenges lying ahead. But of course, that's why the students of Impact are known as pioneers, because we ventured into foreign territory, which many other students were not willing to do," she said. "Some of us are even pioneers within our own families. I know I am, because I, like many of you freshman, am a first-generation college student."

Azalia said that ever since she could remember, she has always had one goal in mind: going to college.

"Even when I didn't have a concept of what it was, other than more school after high school, I still had the notion that college was the place for me. And when I was given the opportunity to apply at Impact ECHS, I took hold of that opportunity," she said.

"... Just like me, you have been given a great gift. What are you going to do with that gift?"

Impact students Tierra Stewart and Gil Rosas also spoke to their incoming classmates.

The first day of school for all Goose Creek CISD schools is Monday, Aug. 22.



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