



GOOSE CREEK

CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

2010 Exemplary Migrant Students from The University of Texas

Alejandra Rojas and Jessica Sigala, seniors from Robert E. Lee High School, were selected as 2010 Exemplary Migrant Students from the University of Texas at Austin Migrant Student Graduation Enhancement Program.

Rojas and Sigala were recognized and awarded with an Exemplary Migrant Student award on March 29, 2010, along with 38 additional Exemplary Migrant Students. Parents, migrant educators and guests from the state legislature and the university community were present at the ceremony in Austin.

Rojas migrates with her parents, Benito and Maria Rojas, and her older brother every other summer to Ocoee, Florida, where her parents work packing tomatoes.

Instead of focusing on the hardships that result from a migrant lifestyle, she appreciates the opportunities that come her way. With her teachers' support, Rojas will become the first one in her family to attend college this fall. "I want to do something with my life," she says, "I want my whole family to be proud of me." Rojas plans to obtain a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and one day work for the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Sigala migrates with her parents, Antonio and Maria Sigala, her two brothers and sister twice a year to Lubbock, Texas, to work sorting peppers. Sigala believes one of the advantages of migrating is the one-on-one attention she received from her migrant educators. She passed a UT Migrant Student Program credit by exam with a 90. "UT courses gave me a second chance that I thought I was not going to have," says Sigala. Graduating from high school is an accomplishment that Sigala earned through dedication and many sacrifices. Like Rojas, Sigala also plans to obtain a bachelor's degree in criminal justice. She aspires to become a correctional officer.

"I think that it is great that our migrant students get recognized for the things that they do," says Coordinator of Migrant Enid Lindsey, "When you look at their lifestyles and their situations migrating from one place to another you think, wow, they really deserve the best."

Dr. Toby York, Goose Creek CISD Superintendent of Schools, echoes Lindsey's sentiments. "I am so proud of Alejandra and Jessica. They are very deserving of this recognition and serve as an example to other migrant students that they, too, can overcome obstacles and be successful."



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William Powers, Jr., president of The University of Texas at Austin, states that recipients of this prestigious award truly embody the term "exemplary" in their academic and personal lives. Within the 2010 Exemplary Migrant Student publication are forty individual testimonials that, together, create a very powerful voice.

"This voice," says Powers, "speaks of courageous students who defied the challenges of a migrant lifestyle and transformed themselves into leader of their classrooms, communities, and families."

Since it began more than two decades ago, the Migrant Student Graduation Enhancement Program has enrolled more than 25,000 students in its mission to increase the graduation rate of high school migrant students in Texas. With funding from the Texas Education Agency and gifts from the Beaumont Foundation of America, the Exxon Mobil Foundation, the John G. and Marie Stella Kenedy Memorial Foundation and the Microsoft Corporation, the program helps Texas migrant students earn high school credits through distance learning courses that meet Texas curriculum requirements.

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Physical Address:
Goose Creek Consolidated
Independent School District
4544 Interstate 10 East
Baytown, Texas 77521
281.420.4800

Mailing Address:
Goose Creek Consolidated
Independent School District
P.O. Box 30
Baytown, Texas 77522
281.420.4800

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