



# GOOSE CREEK

## CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Student Workforce Connection Employer Appreciation Reception Honors Partners

By Susan Passmore

Community partnerships are important to the success of Goose Creek CISD students. For the sixth year, businesses as well as Goose Creek CISD schools and facilities were recognized at the Student Workforce Connection Employer Appreciation Reception for their commitment to providing work opportunities for GCCISD students.



Maggie Jean, general manager at Best Buy in Baytown, tells students at the Workforce Connection Employer Appreciation Reception to follow their passion.

The event began with hors d'oeuvres prepared and served by Tina Andrade and her Culinary Arts class from Stuart Career Center. Desserts were provided by the Culinary Arts classes at Goose Creek Memorial and Robert E. Lee high schools.

Table centerpieces were arranged by Hailey Haberman's Floral Design class at GCM, and head table plants were by Tracy Roder's Horticulture classes at Stuart Career Center.

After a video of pictures of students at their worksites to thank the Workforce Partners, Denise Ortiz from GCM led the pledges to the flags. Jennifer Jacobs, Student Workforce Connection liaison, welcomed guests and introduced those involved with the program.

"I'd like to thank all the business partners for their commitment to the students and to Goose Creek," said Jacobs.

Dr. Melissa Duarte, assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction, gave an overview of the Student Workforce Connection, explaining the importance of students graduating from high school fully prepared for



Henriella Riley (left), Career Preparation teacher at Robert E. Lee High School, was thanked by Stephanie Joseph at the Student Workforce Connection Employer Appreciation Reception for her help and encouragement.

"Co-operative education is a bridge between the employer, the student and the learning institutions, and everyone involved benefits," said Jean.

Jean told students that businesses are successful because of the quality of service they give to their customers, encouraging them to serve the needs of others in order to be successful themselves.

"So today, as we close another chapter that leads to your success, follow your passion. That thing that you feel within you is real, that thing that jolts you every time you think of it. That is the thing that is leading you, guiding you towards your success. Listen to it, work on it, don't ignore it, don't play it safe, work on your talents, work on your ambitions – success is waiting for you," said Jean.

First year Workforce Partners received plaques, and others received plates designating the current year to add to their plaques. Supervisors were awarded certificates for working with the students.

Other career prep and practicum teachers are Steve Barron, Jennifer Codutti, Jade Cox, Maria Gonzalez, Debbie Himsel, Whitney Lowery, Natalie Nichols, Linda Rye, Ian Sobczak and Wendy West.

college and careers and the role of the workforce partners in making this possible.

“The district has been blessed to have built amazing partnerships with the community, local businesses, industry and Lee College aligned to our career pathways,” said Duarte.

Dr. Tom Kelchner, director of special education, discussed the success of the Student Workforce Connection in providing opportunities for all students, regardless of program.

“Special Education and CTE have collaborated to create a seamless program that supports all students at GCCISD. What we’re doing will impact the communities of Baytown and Highlands forever,” Kelchner said.

According to Renea Dillon, director of career and technical education, the Student Workforce Connection recognizes existing partners and encourages more local businesses and industry to partner with the district to provide paid and unpaid workplace opportunities for students.

“We’re moving away from general co-op to connecting our students to jobs in the community that are connected to their career goals,” said Dillon. “If their jobs are connected to their career goals, students are more motivated and engaged in the workplace.”

Heartwarming testimonies were given by Cody Nethery from Ross S. Sterling High School, Emily Rupp from GCM and Stephanie Joseph from REL about the program and career preparation teachers Kelley Start, Misty Calhoun and Henriella Riley, respectively. Workforce Partner Maggie Jean, general manager of Best Buy in Baytown, commended the Student Workforce Connection.

Partners recognized were Academy, Aesthetic Family Dentistry, Animal Medical Center of Baytown, Archer Road Animal Hospital, BARC, Bayou City Wings, Baytown Animal Hospital, Baytown Christian Academy, Baytown RHC, Best Buy, Big K Ranch, Bucees, Burger King, Carl’s Jr., Cedar Bayou RHC, Chicken Express, Chick-fil-A, Chili’s, Community Toyota, Cracker Barrel, Dairy Queen, Diamond DM Productions, Discount Tire, Dreyer Ice Cream,

El Toro, Fiesta Mart #23, First Baptist Child Care Center, Fitness Connection, Food Town, Frank’s Collision and Fresenius Medical Center.

Also honored were Green Acres Nursing Home, Hallmark Car Wash, Heads or Tails, Holder Cleaning Co., Horizon Adult Day Services, Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital, It’s a Girl Thing Warehouse, J.A. Diaz Quality Cleaning Service, Jack-In-The-Box, Jason’s Deli, J.C. Penney, Johnny Carino’s, Jordan Health Services, Kohl’s, Kroger, Lafior de Michoacan, Little Caesar’s, Lowes, Louis’s Auto and Diesel Service Inc., Marshalls, Marvins Motor Cycles, Mary’s Cakes and Cookies, Maxxed Performance, McDonald’s, Memorial Baptist, Office Depot, Old Navy, Olive Garden, O’Reilly Auto Parts, Outback Steakhouse, Panda Express, Payless Shoes, Pipeline Grill, Premiere Cinema, ReMax Eastside, Remington Park, Ricardos Mexican Grill, Rue 21, Sally’s Beauty Supply, San Jacinto Chiropractic, Sears, ShowBiz Cinema, Someburger, Sonic, Stream of Life, Subway, Supermercado La Vaquita #3, Taco Bell, Texas Roadhouse, The Coffee Shop, Universal Thermal Covers, Walden Oak, Walgreens, Walmart, Whataburger, WingStop and numerous GCCISD schools and facilities.

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