



GOOSE CREEK CISD
EDUCATION FOUNDATION

STUDENTS
Choice

A W A R D S B A N Q U E T

Tuesday, April 5, 2022

Houston Raceway Park

Thank You

A very special thank you to our sponsors:

Aramark

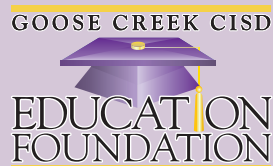
Awards & Engraving

Beehive Florist

Houston Raceway Park

Ryan O'Hara - Huntington

Texas Roadhouse



PROGRAM

AGENDA

Introduction Erika Foster

Welcome Jennifer Walsh

Pledge Jacob Powell

Invocation Charles Johnson

DINNER

Superintendent’s Remarks Dr. Randal O’Brien

Student and Teacher Video Community Engagement Team

Recognition of Students and Teachers Michelle Bitterly
Jennifer Walsh
Erika Foster
Dr. Randal O’Brien
Education Foundation Board

Closing Erika Foster

Goose Creek Memorial Show Choir
under the direction of Holly Lewallen and Anthony Rodriguez

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OVER
\$1.4 MILLION AWARDED
IN INNOVATIVE TEACHING
GRANTS AND
DESIGNATED DONATIONS
FOR SPECIAL PROJECTS

\$102,995
AWARDED FOR
INNOVATIVE
TEACHING
GRANTS IN 2021



2

731 GRANTS
TO MORE THAN
1,000 TEACHERS
GRANT SURPRISE
PATROL
AWARDED
SINCE INCEPTION

3



\$755,839
IN-KIND
DONATIONS
SINCE INCEPTION



4



\$122,970
RAISED FROM
GET ON THE BUS
CAMPAIGN
FOR 2020-2021
SCHOOL YEAR

1,413
GET ON
THE BUS
PARTICIPANTS
FOR THE 2020-2021
SCHOOL YEAR

6



5

\$183,256
RAISED FROM
ALL-STAR
GALA



8

180
TEACHERS
RECOGNIZED
AT THE STUDENTS
CHOICE AWARDS
BANQUET
FROM 2010-2021

7



GOOSE CREEK CISD
EDUCATION FOUNDATION

MEMBERS

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		Mike Wilson

MORE THAN \$1 MILLION

BENEFITING GOOSE CREEK CISD

The Goose Creek CISD Education Foundation is proud to honor our 13th Annual Students Choice Awards winners.

We are once again showcasing 15 Goose Creek CISD teachers who have made a difference in the lives of students during their school careers.

Seniors from each Goose Creek CISD high school were asked to write a letter nominating one teacher who has impacted their school experience in a positive way.

After more than 700 entries were carefully reviewed, 15 students from across the District were chosen for the 2022 Students Choice Awards.

Established in 2009, the Goose Creek CISD Education Foundation aims to enhance community support and expand resources that enrich teaching, inspire learning, and maximize opportunities for all students in the Goose Creek school system.

The Goose Creek CISD Education Foundation is a charitable organization under the Internal Revenue Service section 501(c)(3) and contributions to the organization are tax deductible.

Since its inception, the Education Foundation has awarded more than \$1,376,854 for innovative teaching grants to more than 1,000 teachers across the district to enrich the curriculum for their students. Along with designated funds for additional projects, the Goose Creek CISD Education Foundation has donated more than \$1.4 million to the benefit of Goose Creek CISD over the past 13 years.



If you would like to be a part of the Foundation, contact Erika Foster, Goose Creek CISD Foundation Director, at P.O. Box 8081, Baytown, Texas, 77522; by phone at 281-707-3610; or check out its website at <http://www.linktr.ee/gccisdedfo> or by scanning the QR code on the left.

MISSION

The Goose Creek CISD Education Foundation will partner with the community to provide resources to enrich teaching, inspire learning, and provide opportunities for excellence in education for all students in the Goose Creek Consolidated Independent School District.

PURPOSE

Goose Creek CISD Education Foundation will support educational excellence to enhance student achievement, to recognize exemplary staff involvement, and to foster community support.

In addition, this Foundation is organized independently and exclusively for charitable and educational purposes to benefit the Goose Creek Consolidated Independent School District.

To this end, the Foundation shall at all times be operated exclusively for charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

GOALS

The Goose Creek CISD Education Foundation will achieve its mission by directing resources toward the following initial goals:

- Involve the community in assuring a quality education for the leaders and workers of tomorrow
- Support staff for innovative efforts
- Recognize staff for exemplary teaching
- Encourage all students to work at their highest potential

AWARD WINNERS

TEACHER-STUDENT

Abel Adame (SCTHS) – Jorge Antonio Johnson (SCTHS)

Karin Billings (SCTHS) – Noel Brian Mendiola (SCTHS)

Stephanie Brock (SCTHS) – Leia Vinson (SCTHS)

Brad Comeaux (RSSHS) – Bryce Comeaux (RSSHS)

Reynaldo De Leon III (RSSHS) – Isaac De Leon (RSSHS)

Monique Everett (RSSHS) – Seleni Bernardez (RSSHS)

Claude Garrison (EFGJS) – Trinity Greene (RELHS)

Amy Gilbert (IMPACT ECHS) – Victoria Gonzalez (IMPACT ECHS)

Joshua Hartwell (GCMHS) – Dillan Hawkins (GCMHS)

Haley Johnston (San Jacinto Elem.) – Melanie Espinosa (RSSHS)

Jaime Miller (HMJS) – Aksiry Melissa Camarillo-Muñiz (RELHS)

Trojan Noble (RSSHS) – Angelina Gonzales Khamphouy (RSSHS)

Kenneth Rogers – Kaitlyn Davis (RSSHS)
(John D. George Agriscience Building)

Paula Schmidt (RSSHS) – Jacquelin Pineda (RSSHS)

Candace Southall (RSSHS) – Nataly Galvan (RSSHS)



ABEL ADAME
Stuart Career Tech HS



**JORGE ANTONIO
JOHNSON**
Stuart Career Tech HS

Jorge Antonio Johnson, a senior at Stuart Career Tech High School, nominated **Abel Adame** for the Students Choice Awards.

“It’s the first day of school, and I’m lost in the hallway looking for my welding class. I stumble my way into the classroom and find a seat. There’s a mildly skinny teacher and a mildly larger teacher with a big ole’ scowl. The smaller one introduces himself as Mr. Membreno and the other teacher doesn’t introduce himself; he just grunts. Membreno introduces him as Mr. Adame and he grunts again. I immediately knew not to play games with him because he looks really mean. But as time passed, I realized he’s just a big ole’ puppy dog who wouldn’t hurt a fly.

Mr. Adame has taught me so much more than any regular high school teacher would have taught me. He taught me how to be sociable with people, how to sweet talk my way into getting things I wanted, as well as very valuable lessons that my own parents wouldn’t speak to me about. He taught me the proper way to talk to females and the consequences of speaking to people in the wrong way. But don’t get me wrong; he also put me in my place a plethora of times.

Even though he has an intimidating stature, he is one of the most genuine people I have ever met. He has the strength of a silverback gorilla and even the stature of one. But every time you interact with him, he treats you as if you were a delicate butterfly. He is so gentle with the use of his words to make sure he doesn’t offend anyone.

Adame taught me how to talk to people and really understand what they are trying to tell me. Even if I don’t like what they are saying, he taught me that I need to relax, listen and internalize what they are trying to tell me.

Mr. Adame taught me what real consequences were. He encourages me and all of his students to be on our best behavior; both in and out of school. I’m still working on that. His influence on my life has prevented me from making major mistakes that could derail my future. I appreciate him more than we will ever know.”



**KARIN
BILLINGS**

Stuart Career Tech HS



**NOEL BRIAN
MENDIOLA**

Stuart Career Tech HS

Noel Brian Mendiola, a senior at Stuart Career Tech High School, nominated **Karin Billings** for the Students Choice Awards.

“I was amazed and inspired the minute I walked into her classroom. Her words touched me like no other teacher before her. She was a stern, yet powerful teacher who would teach us what we needed to be successful in life. I made sure to always be respectful towards her and never shied away from asking important questions. To this day, she has shown me how to be a better student and the power someone could hold if they simply believe in themselves.

Ms. Billings taught me how to be a better student and better man. She does not get paid for teaching me life lessons, but when I’m stuck in life and have nowhere to go, I can confidently come to my teacher. That is what it means to be a teacher. She inspires and teaches young minds today that will build tomorrow’s society. She doesn’t just teach and fill mindless facts into students’ minds. She reaches out to the heart to make sure we understand the topic and have the information we need to be successful in the real world. Before Ms. Billings’ class, a person like me never really paid attention to my teachers or gave much thought to my studies, but I have a new perspective on life. I look back at that sad child that didn’t have any hope in the world but to be another lifeless adult with a job he hates. That once wilted flower has now blossomed into the person I am today: a confident, happy young man who is looking forward to college and majoring in computer engineering (which has been a dream of mine for as long as I can remember). It took Ms. Billings to help me realize that.

Thanks to Ms. Billings, I know there’s no obstacle in life that I’m not ready for. I no longer have to be scared of being an adult or worry about not succeeding in life as a responsible adult. Without her knowledge, I would be behind in life and fall into a spiral of failure. She’s inspired me to help others who were in a similar predicament. She’s honestly the biggest inspiration in my life. She changed my life for the better.”



STEPHANIE BROCK

Stuart Career Tech HS



LEIA VINSON

Stuart Career Tech HS

Leia Vinson, a senior at Stuart Career Tech High School, nominated **Stephanie Brock** for the Students Choice Awards.

“Mrs. Brock is everything I want to be and more. I would call her my ultimate role model for multiple reasons. She has confidence, intelligence, she’s funny, yet serious; responsible, yet free spirited. She is caring and loving and would do anything for her students just as if they were her own. She has instilled many of these qualities in me and I strive even more to be like her. I can confidently say she crafted me into the woman I am today. I will be forever thankful for that.

Our initial interaction wasn’t the greatest, but Brock was always there for me. Depending on the situation, she would console me and let me cry or set me straight by telling me that I need to get up and stop crying. I am appreciative of both instances because at the time, I needed them both. I needed to be picked up, but also forced to walk on my own. Through all four years of high school, I felt as if Brock taught me a lesson each year. Due to a difficult home life, I tend to find mothers in the powerful woman figures in my life. Mrs. Brock was no exception. I hold her to such a high standard in my life. She isn’t just my role model, but a very close mother figure.

Mrs. Brock had created her own school business; It’s a dog grooming service called “StuartSpa4Paws.” Students and GCCISD district workers can bring their dogs in and we offer five different types of services. With our help and Mrs. Brock’s leadership, our business is booming. She didn’t have to put her time and money into a time-consuming business, but she did for our educational benefit and a way to give back to the community. – Take this part out if you need to.

It’s sad to say I’d be a little lost if she was never my teacher. Since freshman year, I have been learning and growing with her. She’s seen me change and struggle to form into the person I am today. She’s helped me along the way, but also pushes me to help myself. I may be extremely biased, but I will forever think of Mrs. Brock as my ultimate role model. I aspire day in and day out to mold myself into someone like her. It’s heart wrenching to graduate and leave her, but I know she’s ready for me to use every skill I’ve learned and succeed In the real world.”



BRAD COMEAUX

Ross S. Sterling HS



BRYCE COMEAUX

Ross S. Sterling HS

Bryce Comeaux, a senior at Ross S. Sterling High School, nominated **Brad Comeaux** for the Students Choice Awards.

“I’ve come to the realization that even though I’ve had many great teachers throughout my K-12 career, none can compare to the level of experience and the amount of hard work and dedication Mr. Comeaux puts into every aspect of his job. Yes, he is my father and my teacher and it may be hard to separate the two, but he has never once fallen short of being the best teacher I can think of. I see him as a father at home, but I truly see his “other side” when we step onto school grounds. He doesn’t treat me as his son at school, but like a regular student; and I respect that.

In terms, Mr. Comeaux is very professional and he loves to be that way, but he is also very fun, understandable, relatable, and as he loves to say, “I’m a realist!” He is so understanding when it comes to students having scheduling conflicts due to personal or professional obligations, but he tries his hardest to work with everyone to try and make great things happen within every student’s life; including my own. Even though he is very intimidating to look at when you first meet him, he is so easy to talk to and super fun to be around.

He makes band an everyday adventure and he never fails to make someone laugh. Mr. Comeaux has created such a positive environment for students to truly feel welcomed and I’ve witnessed that for many years. Students know if they have a problem or they need someone to talk to about something important, that they can come to Mr. Comeaux and he will do anything he can to fix and mend the problem single handedly; because that’s how much of a problem-solver he is. He deeply cares for the students he teaches and he doesn’t just show up to class just to help kids learn music, but he’s there to connect and create a meaningful relationship with each student that comes his way. He makes the “quiet” ones speak out, he lets the “underdog” grow and become a leader, and he strengthens the bold and leads them down the path to success. Mr. Comeaux is strict, but in a fair way and he cares about the rules, but he always holds each student to the same standard. At the end of the day, each kid knows that my father cares for them and they know no matter how hard he is on them, he will always love them.”



REYNALDO DE LEON III

Ross S. Sterling HS



ISAAC DE LEON

Ross S. Sterling HS

Isaac De Leon, a senior at Ross S. Sterling High School, nominated **Reynaldo De Leon III** for the Students Choice Awards.

“You really showed me what it meant to have great character and to care for the feelings of others. Shortly after this, I enlisted and went through the Army split program, meaning I’d go to basic training in the summer before my senior year. You gave me tips and pointers for my bootcamp experience. You told me something that will perhaps stick with me for the rest of my life. You told me that no matter what I do or what I go through, everything is just a matter of mental strength. When times would get tough in basic training, I would remember those words before I shipped off.

Upon my return from basic training, I earned the rank of Cadet Lieutenant Colonel and Commanding Officer of the Sterling JROTC program. You showed me how to lead, motivate, and influence others. With also being the unit commander for the armed drill team, you guided me on how to better myself in my tasks and always give 100% into everything I do. I recently placed in the top three for unit commanders during a competition, and I must give you most of the credit, as you have shown me so much in the drill field. It is because of you that I want to continue my career in the Army’s Special Operations field. You’ve given me so life lessons over the past few years, but the most important lesson you have given me have helped me prepare for manhood. One of your favorite quotes, “The man in the arena,” is from a speech from President Theodore Roosevelt. In summary, it talks about how nothing matters but the man and the task at hand. Not the viewers. Not the critics. Just you and what you have to accomplish.

I can sincerely say that you have really influenced me for the better by being a great mentor, leader, and most of all being a great friend. I attribute a lot of my success to you, and of my successes, that will hopefully happen in the future. Wherever life may take me, I hope that one day, after I graduate and finish my infantry and airborne training, we can sit back and influence other young adults together.

Thank you for not only influencing me, but also guiding me in both the military and civilian sectors of my life. You have impacted me in ways you could never imagine. You have not only been there for me as a JROTC instructor, but as a leader, and a friend.”



MONIQUE EVERETT

Ross S. Sterling HS



SELENI BERNARDEZ

Ross S. Sterling HS

Seleni Bernardez, a senior at Ross S. Sterling High School, nominated **Monique Everett** for the Students Choice Awards.

“I never had the pleasure of being one of Coach Everett’s students, however I did have the pleasure of being one of her athletes. Coach Everett transitioned from LaMarque High School to Baytown Sterling during my sophomore year and has had a huge impact on my high school experience since then. She has taught me lessons that go far beyond the 92-inch long hardwood floor that we call our home.

Our basketball team motto is: “Buy In! Believe! Battle!”

“Buy In,” meaning to buy into the system, to put the team above yourself, and to compartmentalize each part of your life so that when you show up, you show out! Being a teacher, a mother, and a coach, is quite a handful. Her unwavering compassion and support made it nearly impossible for anyone to not be willing to do the same for her. I am confident she’d go out of her way for me and would do the same for her as well.

“Believe,” meaning you have faith in yourself and your ability to contribute to a team. Throughout the four years of this basketball program, one of the hardest things for me was always my confidence. I’d often question my abilities on and off the court. There hasn’t been a time since then where Coach hasn’t pushed me out of my comfort zone. Whether it was handling the ball or applying to my top choice university, Coach has always believed in me and encouraged me to be better! She upheld high expectations for me and even when I doubted myself, she knew that I would exceed them.

The final piece in our motto is “battle,” which means that once the game begins, you must ignite the fire and dig deep so no matter what circumstances arise, we are able to overcome them. With hard work, grit, and perseverance, our basketball program made it to the playoffs in 2021 and we are on our way to do that again this year. Each and every obstacle that we’ve faced, we’ve been able to overcome because of the undying spirit that came from our leader. The endless amount of lessons that Coach Everett has taught us will be remembered far after the game is done! I appreciate Coach Everett for being my visionary. She saw my endless potential, sharpened my skills, built my character, my skill, and pushed me to exceed the expectations and challenge the standard.

One of my favorite quotes is, “A good coach can change a game, a great coach can change a life.” Coach Everett has never been short of excellent. She has been not only a leader, but a leader by example! She has been willing to stick by our team through some of our toughest endeavors. “



CLAUDE GARRISON

Edward Franklin E.F. Green JS



TRINITY GREENE

Robert E. Lee HS

Trinity Greene, a senior at Robert E. Lee High School, nominated **Claude Garrison** for the Students Choice Awards.

“I nominated Mr. Garrison for the positive impact he had on my life: both in and out of sports. The life lessons he instilled in me remain a key part of my life. He genuinely loves his students. He goes out of his way to ensure all of our needs are met; and that is just one of many examples that showcase not only his character, but how much he truly loves being a teacher.

I can think of many examples that describe what Mr. Garrison means to me, but the one that stands out the most is when he helped me with my mom. My mother had to have surgery and my brother and I had no way of getting to her. I called Mr. Garrison to ask for a ride and before I knew it, he was there to pick us up. He didn’t ask for gas money or complain that he had to drive from Baytown to Houston. That’s how much he loves his students. He took time out of his day, away from his family, to help his students. He has assisted me and other students financially as well. I can’t thank him enough for that.

He comes to work with a smile on his face and motivates us to do our best. He truly brings us a joy. I have had conversations with Mr. Garrison detailing the experiences I have had with males in my life; many that weren’t good. I can honestly say that Coach Garrison is the first man that I have ever truly respected in my life. He has impacted my life more than he will ever know.

I want to thank Coach Garrison for everything that he has done for me. I thank him for being the person he is and never changing. I hope he is proud of the young man I’ve become. He is truly the bright light in my life.”



AMY GILBERT
IMPACT Early College HS



VICTORIA GONZALEZ
IMPACT Early College HS

Victoria Gonzalez, a senior at IMPACT Early College High School, nominated **Amy Gilbert** for the Students Choice Awards.

“Throughout my education, there have been many teachers that I can say have single_ handedly impacted my life. However, none of them compare to Ms. Gilbert. She welcomed me into her room, even when I wasn’t her student. Little did I know that I would be lucky enough to call her my pre-calculus teacher the following year. Coming into her classroom every other day of my junior year is one of the greatest memories I have of my high school career.

The first day I walked into her classroom, I not only gained a teacher, but I gained my biggest supporter. She inspired me to strive for the best version of myself; whether in math or life in general. No words can describe the significant impact she had on my life, as she is one of the few teachers I have met that teaches with the utmost passion for her students. To this day, Ms. Gilbert continues to be an amazing influence on my life; even though I am no longer her student.

When I am asked, “What teacher has impacted you the most?” the answer is straightforward: Ms. Gilbert. She is one of the most devoted teachers who truly cares about her work and, most importantly, about ensuring each and every one of her students succeeds.

Ms. Gilbert defines what makes an amazing teacher and even better supporter. Whether I was in her class or not ,her kindness was like a virus that never stopped. The support and encouragement she gave me is what I feel has impacted me the most, as I am now motivated to be better and push myself harder every day; no matter the obstacle.”



JOSHUA HARTWELL

Goose Creek Memorial HS



DILLAN HAWKINS

Goose Creek Memorial HS

Dillan Hawkins, a senior at Goose Creek Memorial High School, nominated **Joshua Hartwell** for the Students Choice Awards.

“Despite having known me for only one semester, Mr. Hartwell has proven time and time again why he is one of the greatest influences anyone could have in their lives. With such little time to adjust and reset before being thrown into this new school year, I can say with absolute certainty that the mystery of a new band director, new mentor, and a new face for my success had me just a bit concerned. Mr. Hartwell met the challenge with the same cold determination with which he meets every obstacle. Before we knew it, he had broken us all down to our core and rebuilt our program from the ground up. Every technique was refined, every note was perfected, and our perception of the world of music was entirely and forever shifted. In less than a month, our entire percussion program had been refined. Mr. Hartwell has shown in his time with us that his talent and knowledge of his chosen craft is beyond any level that we had previously known. From our most talented players to our least talented; no one was without fault, and he called us out for it; no questions asked. As long as his students approach him with an open mind and a humble attitude, Mr. Hartwell is able to shape them into better players and better people.

In my personal life, Mr. Hartwell has also made a great impact. So much so, in fact, that I often have to stop and wonder whether or not I would be as confident in my emotions, my self-worth, or my future had he not entered my life at such a crucial point in time. Through conversations and mental check-ins, Mr. Hartwell has acted as a stable, guiding force for me; leading me to a place of serenity in my mind when I needed it the most. I am also extremely grateful to Mr. Hartwell for taking an interest in my career as a musician. Mr. Hartwell is a very effective teacher in this way too, as he has the ability to analyze his students and find out what they each need to be successful. My path in life has changed as a result of his involvement to take after his success and become a director myself and pass on his lessons and wisdom to a new generation of students, and to never let his name be forgotten in music education.

To Mr. Hartwell, I dedicate my sincerest display of gratitude and support in helping him be recognized for his achievements in all aspects of his career, displaying his empathy and professionalism far above his station. It takes a special kind of educator to make such an impact in such a short amount of time, and I would not trade in my time with him for anything.”



HALEY JOHNSTON

San Jacinto Elementary



MELANIE ESPINOSA

Ross S. Sterling HS

Melanie Espinosa, a senior at Ross S. Sterling High School, nominated **Haley Johnston** for the Students Choice Awards.

“When I met Ms. Johnston for the first time in fourth grade, I didn’t completely grasp at a young age how she could potentially shape my life. Ms. Johnston has bestowed an eminent distinction of being the most impactful teacher I’ve had throughout my school career.

When she walked into my life, all of those thoughts of not being good enough suddenly washed away. Before her, I never would’ve considered myself to have such a bright mind. She mentored me into the student that I am today. Every achievement was in her grace, as she was the light that guided me on the right course.

Ms. Johnston was one of the most enthusiastic teachers I have ever encountered. I struggled mentally and physically in my childhood. I never had the motivation to do any better. A guardian angel in disguise guided me through a dark time and led me to success. Although I don’t suppose she ever knew about my struggles, that simply reinforces how great of a teacher she is. It did not matter my background, as her goal was to make me better than I was. I recollect a bittersweet memory in which we competed in class against each other to beat the other in multiplications. Ms. Johnston started to challenge me by competing against me. Every day I looked forward to going against her; despite the countless times I lost. I was hungry for victory. Until one day, I finally obtained that desired goal. Those moments that I looked forward to every day were the origin of happiness slowly sprouting once again.

In life, we come across individuals, not knowing how they will profoundly impact our lives. Although I can write an endless novel praising her, a small letter is all I was given to discern her conspicuous qualities. Without her influence, I would have never found my passion for learning and the field of science. I owe a great deal of gratitude to her.”



JAIME MILLER
Horace Mann Jr.



**AKSIRY MELISSA
CAMARILLO-MUÑIZ**
Robert E. Lee HS

Aksiry Melissa Camarillo-Muñiz, a senior at Robert E. Lee High School, nominated **Jaime Miller** for the Students Choice Awards.

“Ms. Miller is not only an accomplished librarian, she is a warm-hearted, considerate person who I felt was the only teacher who genuinely listened to me. Looking back, I wish I had a person like Ms. Miller to help and guide me throughout my entire high school career. When I entered her library, it felt as if all the stresses in the world left my shoulders. There was never a dull moment with Ms. Miller in her library. Her library was my get-away spot where I could catch my breath after a bad day. I was really never the type of student to get close to a teacher, but Ms. Miller was more than my librarian; she was my best friend.

We need more teachers like Ms. Miller; someone who pushes you, motivates you, and is always there for you. Ms. Miller’s intentions with me were always pure and good. I could always feel the good energy bouncing off the walls of her library. She is such a soft, caring woman and I thank her for being herself. Ms. Miller helped me figure out what I love to do as a career. She helped me research colleges that best fit my future career and encouraged me to do what was best for myself. She is such an inspiration and the impact she made in my life still remains. I give big thanks to Ms. Miller for her hard work and dedication; both in the library, but with her students as well.”



TROJAN NOBLE
Ross S. Sterling HS



**ANGELINA GONZALES
KHAMPHOUY**
Ross S. Sterling HS

Angelina Gonzales-Khamphouy, a senior at Ross S. Sterling High School, nominated **Trojan Noble** for the Students Choice Awards.

“What makes a great teacher is one that genuinely wants to see you succeed. By “genuinely,” I mean they are persistent toward making sure you do your best because they know what you are capable of. Teachers often say that they want to see their students succeed, however, they don’t always convey this through their actions. I perceive a genuine teacher as a teacher that checks up on their students beyond the customary “hello.” A teacher doesn’t have to talk to you every day in order to make an impact on your life. It’s the genuineness that a teacher gives to their students and Mr. Noble has shown me that.

Mr. Noble is a genuine teacher and the best that I’ve ever had. Since the first day of school, he always offered help on any assignments and ask about how my day was going. Mr. Noble has given me a lot of advice; advice that I can always carry with me.

A vital thing that I learned from Mr. Noble is to take risks and to be confident in what I do. It’s very valuable advice, because I have struggled all my life with anxiety and have always been afraid of taking risks. I’m a small business owner and although I have a lot of support from my parents, they don’t have any experience running a business. I told Mr. Noble that I wanted to take my small business seriously and that wanted to become an entrepreneur, but I was scared because I didn’t have anyone to rely on or knew anyone with experience. He said to take those risks and that I was more than capable enough to do so. He told me that he actually had a business degree and was also a small business owner! Since then, I continue to consult him on business matters and I really appreciate that I can continue to have a relationship with him outside of my time in high school.

He has always told me that if I ever had questions or needed advice, I could always go to him. Hearing someone say that gave me immense confidence and I’m glad that it came from Mr. Noble.”



KENNETH ROGERS

John D. George Agriscience Building



KAITLYN DAVIS

Ross S. Sterling HS

Kaitlyn Davis, a senior at Ross S. Sterling High School, nominated **Kenneth Rogers** for the Students Choice Awards.

“I was placed into an agriculture class under my endorsement during my freshman year at Sterling High School. I had never experienced a class that was solely for agriculture before and had no clue what I was getting myself into, but once the anxiety wore off, I soon realized that I had an interest in the class. The teacher who is was an inspiration then and now and has impacted my life immensely is Mr. Rogers.

While he didn’t teach me literature or mathematics, Mr. Rogers taught me many life lessons that I will keep with me throughout my life. Most importantly, Mr. Rogers shared his personal experiences with students that stressed being self-reliant, caring for others, and realizing others’ perspectives.

Mr. Rogers introduced me to the competition side of the agriculture curriculum and the various opportunities to join teams and compete. He also taught me leadership qualities and the effort it takes to be one; and while I’m not there yet, his encouragement kept me from quitting and giving into my excuses. He made me stick with it; even when I was nervous and provided me with daily reminders of what I was capable of. With his encouragement and guidance, I became an officer and I’ve been one since that first class.

In conclusion, Mr. Rogers has been one of the greatest teachers I have ever had. I appreciate all the time and effort that he spent on me. With his support and encouragement, I was able to achieve my goals and build my confidence. These are the memories I will forever carry with me throughout my life.”



PAULA SCHMIDT
Ross S. Sterling HS



JACQUELIN PINEDA
Ross S. Sterling HS

Jacquelin Pineda a senior at Ross S. Sterling High School, nominated **Paula Schmidt** for the Students Choice Awards.

“Have you ever met a teacher that you knew instantly you would get along with? A teacher that you knew would hold a special place in your heart? That teacher for me was Mrs.

Schmidt. “Schmidtty,” as I like to call her, deserves this award because she is kind, encouraging, thoughtful, truthful, a fun energy to be around, and, like a mama bear, sticks up for her kiddos.

I will forever remember the joy I felt walking into Mrs. Schmidt’s classroom. Every day I would never fail to greet her with a shout, “Mrs. Schmidt!” And she would respond with, “Jackie Pis in the house!” It. Never. Failed. It was our daily routine. Once Schmidtty started class, everyone’s attention was on her. She didn’t have to ask for it or demand it. Our class held so much respect for her, because we knew she was one heck of a great teacher. The first day of class, Mrs. Schmidt said, “I love my kiddos and I would do anything for y’all.” She actually practiced what she preached. She was always there for me.

To show how appreciative our class was for Schmidtty, at the end of the year I told our class to pitch in money for us to buy her a gift. We all decided to get her a James Avery charm, red roses, and a four-pack of her favorite energy drink. On the last day of class, I told Mrs. Schmidt to go to the front of the classroom because we had a surprise for her. Again, it was like she knew. Even though Mrs. Schmidt is a tough soldier, she is a tiny bit emotional when it comes to gift giving. When she did turn around, her eyes were watery, but the smile on her face reassured me it was tears of joy. She came to hug us and thanked us for being great students. At that point, I was ready to start crying too. But knowing that our class was the reason why she smiled so hard that day kept me from shedding tears.

All the memories I have with Mrs. Schmidt and our sixth period class will never fade. It is now a core memory, and to one of the countless stories that I will tell my kids about my childhood. I will be 35 years old and telling my kids, “You want to know why I say “Oh Schmidt!” when I hit my toe?” (This was me and Schmidtty’s little inside joke, so maybe you won’t understand it! LOL). There must have been an angel by my side leading me to cross paths with Mrs. Schmidt junior year. Because of Schmidtty, I had a teacher I could truly count on.”



CANDACE SOUTHALL

Ross S. Sterling HS



NATALY GALVAN

Ross S. Sterling HS

Nataly Galvan, a senior at Ross S. Sterling High School, nominated **Candace Southall** for the Students Choice Awards.

“She is like no other teacher/coach at Sterling. She exceeds all expectations from regular teachers, truly cares about her athletes, and does whatever is in her power to help in any way she can.

She has been my volleyball coach for my entire high school career. My freshman year was not the brightest. I had various obstacles that I had to overcome. During those challenging times, I didn't make it any easier on myself, as I just kept making bad decisions and hanging with the wrong crowd. I began to get into trouble at school and lost focus of what was actually important. This caused my grades to drop. I dug myself into a hole I felt was impossible to get out of. I lost all hope and was on the verge of dropping out and giving up because I thought school wasn't for me. I stopped trying at practice and slowly I went from a starting player to sitting on the bench every game. When I tried to push Coach Southall away, she pushed back. It was difficult; as I had no motivation to try anymore, but she had faith in me. Although it wasn't easy, she helped get me back on the right track with my grades. At the time, I hated her for putting me through all that, because I thought she was just trying to give me a hard time. Even when I gave her multiple reasons to give up on me, she saw my potential. That summer, I realized I had no one there for me anymore, and I needed to change. Once the school year began, I really began to try in both school and volleyball. It was very easy to manage and slowly I began to see progress from the year before. This is what began to give me hope to better myself. Coach Southall began to trust me again and she continued to mentor me anytime she could. Not only did she help me better myself, she also helped me prepare for life.

Her words, “I am so proud of you,” will live with me forever.”



**ABEL
ADAME**

STUART CAREER TECH HS



**JORGE ANTONIO
JOHNSON**

STUART CAREER TECH HS



**KARIN
BILLINGS**

STUART CAREER TECH HS



**NOEL BRIAN
MENDIOLA**

STUART CAREER TECH HS



**STEPHANIE
BROCK**

STUART CAREER TECH HS



**LEIA
VINSON**

STUART CAREER TECH HS



**BRAD
COMEAX**

ROSS S. STERLING HS



**BYRCE
COMEAX**

ROSS S. STERLING HS



**REYNALDO
DE LEON III**

ROSS S. STERLING HS



**ISAAC
DE LEON**

ROSS S. STERLING HS



**MONIQUE
EVERETT**

ROSS S. STERLING HS



**SELENI
BERNARDEZ**

ROSS S. STERLING HS



**CLAUDE
GARRISON**

EDWARD FRANKLIN
"E.F." GREEN JS



**TRINITY
GREENE**

ROBERT E. LEE HS



**AMY
GILBERT**

IMPACT EARLY COLLEGE HS



**VICTORIA
GONZALEZ**

IMPACT EARLY COLLEGE HS



**JOSHUA
HARTWELL**

GOOSE CREEK MEMORIAL HS



**DILLAN
HAWKINS**

GOOSE CREEK MEMORIAL HS



**HALEY
JOHNSTON**

SAN JACINTO ELEMENTARY



**MELANIE
ESPINOSA**

ROSS S. STERLING HS



**JAIME
MILLER**

HORACE MANN JR.



**ASKIRY MELISSA
CAMARILLO-MUNIZ**

ROBERT E. LEE HS



**TROJAN
NOBLE**

ROSS S. STERLING HS



**ANGELINA
GONZALES
KHAMPHOUY**

ROSS S. STERLING HS



**KENNETH
ROGERS**

JOHN D. GEORGE
AGRISCIENCE BUILDING



**KAITLYN
DAVIS**

ROSS S. STERLING HS



**PAULA
SCHMIDT**

ROSS S. STERLING HS



**JACQUELIN
PINEDA**

ROSS S. STERLING HS



**CANDACE
SOUTHALL**

ROSS S. STERLING HS



**NATALY
GALVAN**

ROSS S. STERLING HS