

Region One ESC
**2021 Teacher of the Year
Virtual Celebration**

Tuesday, August 18, 2020
6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Celebrating Excellence



Celebrating Excellence in Teaching

Dear Colleagues,

“A teacher affects eternity.” This is a simple quote, and one we have heard often; yet it speaks such a profound truth about the tremendous impact each one of our honorees has on the future of our students and of our world.

On behalf of the Region One Education Service Center, its Board of Directors, the school districts and charter schools, and most importantly the 439,000 students we serve, we thank you for the outstanding service each of you perform on a daily basis as you give unselfishly in teaching our students. Your dedication to the education profession and to your students is evident as you have been nominated by your peers and selected by your district as excellent educators.

As you prepare for the upcoming school year, now more than ever it is incumbent upon you to demonstrate leadership on your campuses as Teachers of the Year. Your colleagues will look to you to lead the way and to be a role model as we begin a school year filled with uncertainty. As leaders in the field, I encourage you to share your expertise and knowledge with your colleagues so they may follow your example. Individually and collectively, you will affect eternity.

We wish you the very best, and we encourage you to continue on the pathway of success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dr. Cornelio Gonzalez". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cornelio Gonzalez, Ph.D.
Executive Director





Celebrating Excellence in Teaching

Region One ESC
District Teachers of the Year Virtual Celebration
August 18, 2020

6:00 - 6:15 p.m.

Welcome Dr. Cornelio Gonzalez
Executive Director, Region One ESC

6:15 - 6:30 p.m.

Invocation Dr. Cornelio Gonzalez
Executive Director, Region One ESC

6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Guest Speakers Robert Valdez
2020 Regional Elementary Teacher of the Year

Nicole Ordaz
2020 Regional Secondary Teacher of the Year

7:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Recognition of 2021 Brenda J. Balderaz
District Teachers of the Year *HR Director, Region One ESC*

8:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Presentation of 2021 Brenda J. Balderaz
Regional Teachers of the Year *HR Director, Region One ESC*

8:30 - 8:45 p.m.

Presentation by Jostens Jim Ramirez
Jostens, The Class Ring Company

8:45 - 9:00 p.m.

Closing Remarks & Good Night Dr. Cornelio Gonzalez
Executive Director, Region One ESC

Special Appreciation to
Jostens, The Class Ring Company



Celebrating Excellence in Teaching



The daffodil symbolizes rebirth
and new beginnings.



District Teachers of the Year



Braulio Amaro

Solomon P. Ortiz Elementary, Brownsville ISD

“Regardless of how much you know or how experienced you become, never lose your curiosity and desire to learn because the best teachers are lifelong learners.”



Lizza Hernandez

Brownsville Early College High School, Brownsville ISD

“My enthusiastic day starts with, “Good morning, how are you today?” My goal is to engage students, not only to target their skills academically but set a welcoming environment that I get to learn about my student’s backgrounds by building a strong rapport, which allows me to get to know them.”



Yvonne Garza

Thomas Jefferson Elementary, Edinburg CISD

“Children are resilient and they have the ability to see the goodness in even the worst of situations. They emulate what they see. If we are kind and show respect, they will be kind and respectful. If we set our expectations for them high, they will rise to the challenge.”



Cassandra Sanchez

South Middle School, Edinburg CISD

“I ensure that education transcends the classroom by setting larger than life goals and striving to reach them. I strongly believe you have to dream big and work even harder to get there. Your students will rise to the occasion if you believe in them and create the trust that you will be there for them every step of the way.”





Christine Medrano

Zavala Elementary, Harlingen CISD

“Children should feel empowered and invested in improving the world around them and be excited to create positive change in their community. A teacher’s role is to make these goals a reality through engaging lessons and student-driven learning.”



Teresa Cuellar

Harlingen High School, Harlingen CISD

“My students ask me often why I always look so happy, and my answer is always the same ‘I love my work, and I am here with you.’ I am not a young teacher, but my energy level is super high. It must be, there is no time to waste in the classroom as every moment is precious time with our students.”



Debra Trevino

J.C. Kelly Elementary, Hidalgo ISD

“Successful teachers are compassionate, strong, hardworking, and dedicated individuals who take on the role of a teacher to protect all children, even those children who live on the streets or in their cars. They make a difference by inspiring a child and touching a heart with kindness, compassion, and a true dedication to the profession.”



Arnulfo Ninal

Hidalgo Early College High School, Hidalgo ISD

“I would like to send a message: it is the challenge to all to be more compassionate and to build and to nurture the relationships with students. At the end of the day, they may forget all the formulas in math and all the names in social studies but surely they will remember the relationship they have had with their teachers.”





Maria Izquierdo

Horizon Montessori II Elementary, Horizon Montessori Public Schools

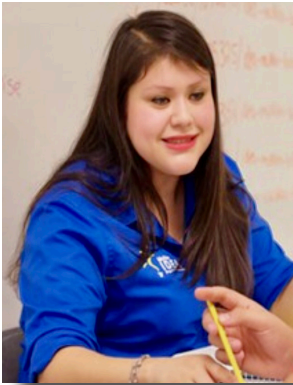
“I want to encourage all the teachers to remember the reason as to why they choose to become a teacher. We should all work for the same goal in creating students who will be able to give back to their community not because they find themselves owing something to their community, but because they want to see their community a better place for the ones to come. It comes straight from their heart.”



Norma Borrego

Horizon Montessori I Middle School, Horizon Montessori Public Schools

“I do not think a single content lesson or unit defines me as a teacher. I am defined by how I interact with my students in and out of the classroom: during dismissal, lunch time, in the halls. Students of all backgrounds and abilities can be engaged when they know their teacher truly cares about them and loves what they do.”



Melissa Vera-Leal

IDEA McAllen College Preparatory, IDEA Public Schools

“I teach to that student that can’t see why I bother teaching them. I teach to that student that doesn’t understand the English language, but can understand through visuals. I teach to that student that comes in every day after school to get tutoring because they believe they can’t do better. I teach to ALL students that I call my own kiddos and worry about them as my own.”



Priscilla Burton

Noemi Dominguez Elementary, La Feria ISD

“As educators, we need to take the time to build relationships with our community of learners and get to know what kind of learners we have in our classes. We can no longer be the “sage on the stage” and talk about our content for an hour and feel like we have done all we can. We must involve our students in their own education.”





Roumaldo Guerrero

La Feria High School, La Feria ISD

“In my classroom, you are not allowed to be pretty good, you must be great. I will not let students settle for less than they are capable of. At first students usually do not buy into this idea, but I believe that there is a potential greatness in every child. I encourage each one of them to work hard and discover how great they can be, not just pretty good.”



Carlina Capelo-Pichardo

Narciso G. Cavazos Elementary, La Joya ISD

“I believe that students should be curious, creative, tenacious, and productive citizens. Students should be confident to ask questions and understand that no matter how young they are, they have a voice to make a positive impact in their community.”



Ruth Colyer

La Joya Early College High School, La Joya ISD

“A teacher’s path is not always smooth and pretty. Along a teacher’s path lie many tears, fears, laughs, and creations because s/he teaches a subject that has the potential to trigger all emotions. Sometimes, teachers explain a subject not just to students along the path but to the human condition on that path, too.”



Herlinda Trevino

Alma A. Pierce Elementary, Laredo ISD

“I feel that when students first start school, they enjoy being there, they want to learn. As an educator, I have to continue instilling that love of learning in my students. This is done not only by teaching them the core subjects but also by teaching them the importance of being connected within our community.”





Nancy Pacheco

Nixon High School, Laredo ISD

“Being a teacher means more than standing in front of a classroom and delivering information. That would make teaching easy and in no way rewarding. Teaching means to work to the best of our ability to reach each and every student that sits in our traditional or virtual classroom.



Crystal Gabbert

Palmer Laakso Elementary, Los Fresnos CISD

“A physical classroom is not what defines education and learning but rather the support of the community and desire to learn from the students. Through constant communication and effort across all parties, a light has shone in a seemingly dark tunnel.”



Galyn Thomae

Los Fresnos High School, Los Fresnos CISD

“You need to rock your uniqueness. You have to embrace your environment, your students’ differences, and your colleagues’ differences and make it fun. Be Brilliant, Be unique, Be you.”



Juan Martinez

Lyford Elementary, Lyford CISD

“Teaching keeps you young. Teaching challenges you. And this is because, no matter if you have the perfect formula, you have to be like a submarine commander-making fast and right decisions.”





Maria Llanos

Victor Fields Elementary, McAllen ISD

“LOVE is powerful. We need to love our profession. But, most importantly, we must love our students. In the way we take our time to plan and execute an amazing lesson and activities, we need to take the time to get to know our students, build a strong relationship and provide a safe learning environment.”



Joseph Weaver

Dr. Rodney D. Cathey Middle School, McAllen ISD

“Students must find a teacher who inspires them and makes them look forward to class each day. A great teacher should keep you guessing, make you inquisitive and keep you attentive. Learning should not be approached as something that has to be done but as an opportunity. It should be viewed as a privilege.”



Desiderio Silva

Zachary Taylor Elementary, Mercedes ISD

“It’s not all about the standardized tests, it’s not all about the lesson plans or even sticking to a pacing guide, but it’s about each and every one of your kids you teach. Remember to teach the kids the subjects, not the subjects to the kids.”



Francisco Rodriguez

Mercedes Early College Academy, Mercedes ISD

“Being a teacher is going to be demanding and exhausting, but friends, remember why we chose to do this. We are the difference makers, and that is something to be proud of. We get to shape the future, we get to let the kid in us come out from time to time, we get to see brilliance and intelligence every day, and we get to learn from our students just as much as they learn from us.”



Celebrating Excellence in Teaching



Rebecca Munguia

Bryan Elementary, Mission CISD

“Teaching is a very rewarding profession. You get to see the excitement in the eyes of many children when they learn something new. But you will also see them when they feel that everything is going completely wrong. You will have to be strong enough to be their rock during these troubling times in our world. The good comes with the bad, but the good outweighs the bad.”



Joselito Guanzon

Mission High School, Mission CISD

“Teaching is a calling. A vocation that takes a lifetime commitment, to better ourselves as catalysts of knowledge. We take this vocation because we find purpose in educating our future leaders. We are the beacon that guide students and point them to go to the right direction.”



Robert Sandoval

Henry Ford Elementary, PSJA ISD

“The teaching profession is noble and rewarding. When you put your student’s best interest ahead combined with hard work and dedication you will prepare them up for a brighter future. Teachers like the ones that helped me are essential to a child’s future.”



Ludvina Hernandez

Jaime Escalante Middle School, PSJA ISD

“Every year is a new adventure in my classroom, but the biggest joy I get is that I make a difference in children’s lives. I teach them to “Persevere” using my life story as an example. Life is a moving train. You must enjoy the ride and look out the window focusing on the beauty. If you blink, great opportunities might pass you by.”





Dalia De La Fuente

Garriga Elementary, Point Isabel ISD

“Educators must foster strong student-teacher relationships and deliver instruction at each student’s learning pace. Stronger relationships are built on trust. Students need trusting relationships with teachers and peers to obtain skill acquisition. Since day one of instruction, we teachers should promote a respectful classroom environment free of shyness and embarrassment. Students shouldn’t be afraid to take risks and understand that making errors is “OK,” because it is all part of the learning process.”



Marissa Hernandez

Alto Bonito Elementary, Rio Grande City CISD

“Children spend most of their time in the school setting. They are not just any random student that we see daily. As educators, these students become, “our” students. We, as teachers, become their role models and our perseverance to teach them has to transcend in our classrooms.”



Cynthia Alaniz

Rio Grande City High School, Rio Grande City CISD

“As educators, it is our responsibility to instill in our students the passion for learning. It is through this learning that our students will be successful in their future endeavors. The real world is cruel. We must teach our students to be strong, fearless, and tenacious. The only way to teach them is for us to model this type of behavior. Teach them humility and respect.”



Norma Cordova

Delia Gonzalez Garcia Elementary, Roma ISD

“Allow us the freedom to soar by utilizing our talents, and we will show you the benefits that it will bring success not only in our classrooms but in our whole school environment.”





Daniela Rendon

Roma Middle School, Roma ISD

“As teachers, we first need to provide a safe environment for our students because unfortunately many times our classrooms and school are the only safe haven they have. We need to provide that sense of safety and trust for our students, and then the magic of learning will flow in our classrooms.”



Maki House

Dr. C.M. Cash Elementary, San Benito CISD

“As a teacher and a resource on earth, I continue to strive to inspire others. My strength, dedication, and kindness will never be judged by test scores.”



Clarissa Guerra

San Benito Veterans Memorial Academy, San Benito CISD

“I believe we can help every student master the learning process. Despite the many educational and societal challenges that our students bring into the classroom, we can bridge both the learning and the curriculum to the child by making passionate and innovative connections that impact or (influence) their individual learning style and abilities, providing opportunities for each to be successful.”



Alma Vasquez

Tony Gonzalez Elementary, Santa Maria ISD

“Each one of my students is unique therefore, it is my responsibility to find new ways every day to teach them. In most days, I find myself working with the student’s emotional side before we can even open a book or take a quiz. If there is one a thing a teacher must never do, is give up on their difficult students.”





Brenda Vela

Santa Maria Middle School, Santa Maria ISD

“As a sports coach, I always tell my athletes that practice makes perfect. This is the same in the classroom. I am providing these students with practice for high school, college, and job by creating a classroom where their roles are not just students but college students and employees. If they are never exposed to the workforce when they actually get there most of our younger generation feel lost, but with the way that I am trying to implement these lessons I feel my students will definitely be even more successful.”



Candice Cantu

Jo Nelson Middle School, Santa Rosa ISD

“I believe that the most important part of my job as a teacher is to offer the student what they need. Some students need academics, some need structure, some need supplies, some need food, and many of them need love. By getting to know the students, I can give them what they need and maybe, just maybe, they will be able and willing to improve academically, socially, and emotionally.”



Alma Yesenia Paredes

Harry Shimotsu Elementary, Sharyland ISD

“The reason I decided to become a teacher was because I was inspired by role-models in my life that set good examples for me. I understood the patience it took to guide others to understand something new, and I noticed which teachers really had a passion for what they did. A teacher has an impact on each and every student in her class plus who ever those students interact with daily. It is a ripple effect and teachers can create the first ripple whether positive or negative.”



Michele Galvan

B.L. Gray Junior High School, Sharyland ISD

“I wholeheartedly believe that it is my job to lay a firm foundation and then see where it takes my students. Some may need a little bit more support than others so I may need to provide a foothold, here or there, but I want the building to be theirs.”





Vanessa Cortez

San Isidro Elementary, United ISD

“As teachers, we are flexible, resilient and adapt to the dynamic world we live in. It is important that we “Check and Connect” with each other, and collaborate to be the best we can be for our students and ourselves. Building rapport, empowering students and families, and inspiring them to love school and reading is something I feel we need to keep spreading.”



Jorge L. Garcia

Trautmann Middle School, United ISD

“We are placed on this earth to try and make a difference in a positive way and also to leave a great legacy for many children to come. All we need is to nurture our profession by being the best human being we can be and give of one self unconditionally.”



Nelda Ziesmer

Vanguard Academy Beethoven, Vanguard Academy

“I believe educators have a great responsibility to help nurture students’ learning in the short time they have them in the classroom. I tell my students they are loved and valued and I encourage them to go out and make a difference in this world. I consider it an honor and privilege to be able to take part in shaping every student that comes through my classroom into the person God has planned for them to be.”



Adan Tijerina

Vanguard Rembrandt Secondary, Vanguard Academy

“We are innovators of new ideas that will help create future leaders. Every campus has a few silent leaders. As we head into the future, step up and don’t be afraid to share your ideas and thoughts. Your idea may be a revolutionary idea.”





Alma Peña

Sam Houston Elementary, Weslaco ISD

“I am a true believer in setting goals and having open communication with parents helps students succeed. I will continue to advocate for this because building a community that supports student achievement is only going to benefit students in their first-grade year, but for years to come.”



Rebecca Galvan

Weslaco East High School, Weslaco ISD

“Students learn when the lessons are real and relevant to them. As an educator, I believe it is my duty to not only meet their academic and linguistic needs but also their social-emotional needs. Helping students process real-life issues through purposeful, well-planned lessons build life-long learners, critical thinkers, and confident, expressive advocates which is my goal for each and every student who enters my class.”



*On behalf of the Region One Education Service Center, Administration, and Staff,
congratulations to all district teachers of the year!*

Thank you for all that you do!



Celebrating Excellence in Teaching

**Region One ESC Board of Directors
2020-2021**

Raul R. Chapa, Chairperson
Place 7 – Willacy County

Sonia A. Falcon, Vice-Chairperson
Place 4 – Hidalgo County

Dr. Manuel Gomez, Jr., Secretary
Place 6 – Cameron County

Alicia E. Requenez
Place 1 – Hidalgo County

Ricardo Gutierrez
Place 2 – Jim Hogg County, Starr County & Zapata County

Laura A. McCoy
Place 3 – Webb County

Ruben Cortez, Jr.
Place 5 – Cameron County

Roberto Moroles
Charter Schools Representative

Administration

Dr. Cornelio Gonzalez
Executive Director

Dr. Eduardo Cancino
Deputy Director, Instructional Leadership, School Improvement, & College Readiness Support

Mr. Heriberto Villarreal
Deputy Director, Administrative Leadership, School & Community Support

Connie Lopez, CPA
Deputy Director, Business, Operations & Finance Support

Ali Kolahdouz
Chief Technology Officer
Division of Technology for Learning

