

# ● NEWSLETTER ●

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## 2023 HAABE BANQUET

HAABE celebrated teachers and students alike at its 41st Annual HAABE Banquet on April 29th. Campus and District Teachers of the Year were honored for their excellence in teaching Emergent Bilingual students in bilingual, dual language, and ESL classrooms. These teachers represented nine school districts in the Houston Area. Of these teachers, three were selected as the HAABE Teachers of the Year. The HAABE Elementary Bilingual Teacher of the Year and the HAABE Secondary ESL Teacher of the Year will go on to represent the organization at the Texas Association of Bilingual Education (TABE) competition. Additionally, HAABE awarded scholarships to five deserving Houston Area students. In attendance were representatives from the Region IV ESC, TABE, and Latinos for Education. To view more highlights of the banquet, go to this [link](#).



2023 HAABE TEACHERS OF THE YEAR



2023 POPULARITY CONTEST WINNER, PRATIBHA PARASHER



PERFORMANCE PROVIDED BY SEGUNDO BARRIO CHILDREN'S CHOIR



MASTER OF CEREMONY, CARLENE THOMAS, WITH OUR PRESIDENT, DR. MORENO-RECIO

# 2023 HAABE TEACHERS OF THE YEAR

## BEATRIZ ADRIANA KUSHNER

*HAABE Bilingual Teacher of the Year  
Texas City ISD*

Beatriz Adriana Kushner believes in respect, acceptance, and validation of the bilingual learning community since all human beings are different and unique. She believes that as educators we need to respect every student, putting behind labels and establishing good relationships. As a bilingual teacher, she knows that bicultural identity is crucial, which is why she promotes it through cultural and linguistic activities, always looking for ways to unite the cultures of home and school.



## CRYSTAL GARCIA

*HAABE Elementary ESL Teacher of the Year  
Goose Creek CISD*

Crystal Castillo Garcia chose to become a certified ESL educator in order to make a personal connection with her students. As their ESL teacher, she believes that she has the power to change not only how students view themselves, but to teach their peers to respect and learn from their differences. Finally, this teacher believes her role as an ESL educator requires her to not only teach Emergent Bilingual students, but to also teach English Proficient students the importance of accepting and respecting cultural differences.



## KAREN SPOONER

*HAABE Secondary ESL Teacher of the Year  
Pearland ISD*

Karen Spooner believes that without education, our dreams become harder to manifest as reality. According to her, each one of us are called to greatness, to dream a new reality, to do the impossible, to believe in ourselves and others, to think of new ideas, to change our world for the better. Additionally, she thinks all of us learn a little differently based on our strengths and weaknesses, but that is what makes each of us valuable.





# TANYA THOMPSON SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

## LAURA SERRANO

*Alief Taylor High School, Alief ISD*

Laura's parents are immigrants from El Salvador. In her essay she shared her journey to learn English as follows: "Little by little, with the help of a very patient and loving teacher, I was able to quickly pick up the English basics. I was able to make small conversations with my new friends, and I loved every part of it. Every day, I'd ecstatically run home to show my parents what I'd learned in class, unknowingly teaching them the same English concepts I'd learned in class." The scholarship provided by HAABE will help her pursue her dreams of becoming a veterinarian at Texas A&M University.



## TIFFANY TRAN

*Kerr High School, Alief ISD*

Tiffany will start her journey in business at the University of Texas-Dallas in the fall. She shares that she "wants to make her parents proud. It's been my main goal for my whole life, ever since I could think I believe. Their wishes are simple: a college graduate with a well-paying job. I know they struggled achieving their American Dream, so I want to not only achieve my American Dream, but help them with theirs too."

## JENNIFER ROSAS

*North Shore Senior High School, Galena Park ISD*

Jennifer Rosas shared of her journey, "As an individual fluent in two of the most widely spoken languages in America, I empathize with those who experience language impediments and are afraid to seek support. Failure should not be frowned upon but embraced. However, it should not be expected on a regular basis. Learning my second language was challenging; however, my two languages will open doors for opportunities to reach the impossible without limits." She will begin the pursuit of her dream to be a physician assistant in the fall at the University of Texas at Austin where she will study biology.



## ASHLEY PRADO

*North Shore Senior High School, Galena Park ISD*

Ashley Prado is an immigrant from Mexico. As she looked back on her initial experiences in the United States, she confided that "[my] first year in that school scared me a lot, for the first time I felt anxiety, sadness, and the desire to return to my native country since the English that I knew and how they spoke was too different. For the first time, I wanted to give up, but I couldn't because I had goals, dreams, and a family that would depend on me to be their bridge to this country. I stopped and learned to use my difficulties as my stairs. Perseverance is a must!" Ashley will continue to persevere when she studies biological science at the University of Houston Clear Lake.

## AMY CHEN

*Goose Creek Memorial High School, Goose Creek CISD*

In relating her experience as an emergent bilingual student, she shares, "As time passed, I adapted to the new environment and advanced in maturity. I think of my journey as an opportunity to shape who I was, who I am today, and most importantly, who I become tomorrow. It is the biggest obstacle I confront, but because of that, I appreciate the diversity and the uniqueness of each culture." Chen aspires to be an anesthesiologist and will begin her biology degree at The University of Texas in the fall.



# OUR DEEPEST APPRECIATION TO OUR...

## BESO VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers from the Bilingual Education Student Organization, or BESO, were on hand to assist with the banquet. These future educators were instrumental in assisting attendees prior to the banquet. We want to thank them from the bottom of our hearts for all of their hard work!



## SPONSORS

### **Platinum:**

**HEB, Amplify, Carlene Thomas Consulting LLC, Yacovodonato Educational Consulting, Latinos for Education, Lexia, Okapi**

### **Gold Level:**

**HMH, Saddleback**

### **Silver Level:**

**Arte Público, Ellevation, Patterns of Power**

A big thank you goes out to our sponsors for this year's banquet! Without your support, we would not be able to support teachers and students in the many ways that we do. Your generosity helps us make the banquet a special event for all who attend. We hope to continue our partnerships for many years to come!







HAABE BANQUET 2018



HAABE BANQUET 2023

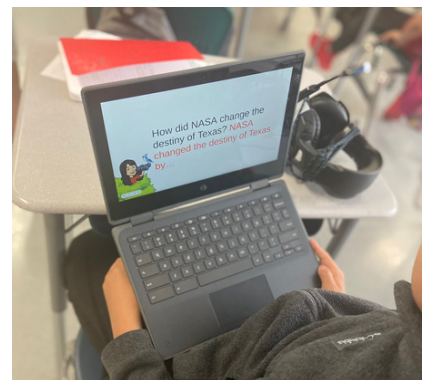
## COMING FULL CIRCLE

As educators, we do not always know what, if any, impact, we have made on our students, so imagine our delight when we recently ran into one of HAABE's former scholarship winners and learned first-hand! Maria Fonseca was awarded the HAABE Scholarship in 2018 after graduating from Robert Turner College and Career High School in Pearland ISD. She shared with us that as a DACA student it was discouraging to be unable to apply for the same scholarships and other financial aid packages that were made available to her classmates. The HAABE scholarship not only assisted her in paying tuition for her first semester, but it provided her with, "a massive boost of confidence and inspiration that [she'll] never forget."

Though she started at San Jacinto College as a business major, a personal experience changed her mind. She shared, "One day I went to my little sister's first grade holiday party. Her teacher prepared a play for the families, and I was just so amazed by how much this dual language class had learned and how far bilingual education had come from when I was in school. At that moment, I knew I needed to be part of this change to help further emergent bilingual students succeed."

After graduating with an Associate of Arts in Teaching in December 2020, making her the first college graduate in her family, Fonseca is now attending the University of Houston Clear-Lake. She is pursuing a bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary studies with a bilingual concentration. Because of her interest in bilingual education, she has joined and become the president of the Bilingual Education Student Organization, or BESO. BESO, like HAABE, is affiliated with the Texas Association of Bilingual Education. It is an organization at the university level that promotes bilingual education and has a profound impact on future educators. As Fonseca described it, "BESO is preparing me as a future educator by showing me ways to advocate for language minority students to maintain their native language and master the English language while succeeding academically. As a BESO leader, I am learning leadership skills that I can take into my classroom. Collaborating with the members of my organization and people from the community is also preparing me to communicate with future colleagues and students' families." It was her membership in BESO that serendipitously led to our run in with her at our HAABE Banquet. There she was volunteering at the very same event where she had received a scholarship five years earlier. It was great to catch up with her and see how far she has come!

Fonseca is set to graduate in December 2023. She looks forward to helping students face the same challenges she did as an immigrant. She wants to see them grow and succeed in two languages and set them on a path to the bright future she has already found. Fonseca also sees it all coming full circle as she plans to join HAABE as a teacher, and, hopefully, be honored at the same banquet as a teacher of the year in the future. She ended our interview with these last words, "Thank you, HAABE, for making an impact on graduating seniors! I am proof of that significant impact." So, if you ever wonder if being a HAABE member makes a difference. You better believe it does!



## BEST PRACTICES CORNER

Ms. Donat at Paige Elementary in Houston ISD engages students in a strategy called Listen For from Nancy Motley's *Small Moves Big Gains*. She chunks a video in smaller, more digestible pieces and provides students with a focus question prior to viewing that chunk. Once the chunk is viewed, she provides students with processing time through a structured conversation, complete with a sentence stem, of course! This is a great example of incorporating Content Based Language Instruction into a lesson in a very simple way.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- HAABE Summer Social, Title III Symposium, July
- HAABE Back to School Mixer, August
- HAABE Bimonthly Webinars, September, November, January, and March
- HAABE Soirée, TABE Conference, October
- HAABE Holidays Around the World Brunch, December