

LATINO
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT
AWARDS

¡Excelencia!



2023



Austin Independent School District

IN OUR FIFTEENTH YEAR,
THE LATINO ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS RECOGNIZES
LATINO STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS
WHO HAVE SUPPORTED
AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT'S
STUDENTS, SCHOOLS OR DISTRICT PROGRAMS
AND PROMOTED THE LATINO CULTURE.

FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 2023 | 6:30-8:30 P.M. |
AUSTIN ISD PERFORMING ARTS CENTER



PROGRAM

Prelude.....	Hart Ballet Folkórico Mónica Sánchez, Ballet Coordinator, Hart ES
Welcome.....	Víctor Rodríguez & Joy Díaz Masters of Ceremony
Presentation of Colors.....	Bedichek Junior Marine Corps Color Guard Christopher Gonzales, Junior Marine Cadet Leadership Program, Bedichek MS
Special Remarks.....	Arati Singh Board of Trustees, President
Musical Performance.....	Aída Odette Ortiz Lopez Student, LBJ ECHS
Keynote Address.....	Matías Segura Interim Superintendent, Austin Independent School District
Presentation of Community Awards.....	AISD Board of Trustees
Presentation of Student Awards.....	Austin ISD Leadership
Performance.....	Akins Mariachi Susana Díaz-López, Akins HS
Closing	

SPONSOR OR DONATE TO AUSTIN ISD'S
HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH AND OUR
LATINO ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AWARD CEREMONY

www.tinyurl.com/AISDLAAALT 



Welcome to the quinceañera celebration of the Austin ISD Latino Academic Achievement Award ceremony!

In 1992, Austin ISD launched the Celebration of Hispanic Heritage event which evolved into the Latino Academic Achievement Awards in 2009. This award ceremony was created to honor students who were historically under-recognized for their academic achievement. Every year we highlight Latino student leadership, progress, and academic achievement, as well as community members who have not only supported students, faculty, and campuses, but have also promoted the Latino culture.

Tonight, we will honor almost 200 middle and high school Latino students and community members for their academic achievements and contributions to the Latino community.

Students, your achievements reflect your persistence, hard work, and dedication. Take pride in your rich culture and heritage, and embrace your strengths as a Latino leader!

Congratulations to all our students and community leaders who are being honored tonight.

Thank you for joining us today to recognize our future leaders.



Matias Segura, PE, MBA
Interim Superintendent

AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES & LEADERSHIP

Arati Singh, At-Large Position 9, President

Kevin Foster, District 3, Vice President

Lynn Boswell, District 5, Secretary

Candace Hunter, District 1

Ofelia Zapata, District 2

Kathryn Whitley Chu, District 4

Andrew Gonzales, District 6

Dr. David Kauffman, District 7

Noelita Lugo, At-Large Position 8

Matías Segura

Interim Superintendent

Eduardo Ramos

Chief Financial Officer

Gilbert Hicks

Interim Chief of School Leadership

Dr. Suzanne Villalpando

Assistant Superintendent of Multilingual Education
& Student Programs

Dr. Cody Fernández

Director of Secondary Multilingual Education

Yvette Cárdenas

Director of Elementary Multilingual Education

COMMUNITY AWARD



LATINO COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

Presented to an individual who has provided public and civil service to benefit Latino students and/or families in AISD.

KATYA GUZMAN

Katya Guzman has consistently demonstrated exceptional work ethic and deep commitment to our community. Whether it be through her experience as an educator at Aztech Kidz Code, a nonprofit organization committed to teaching students of color how to code in Austin, Texas; or as a founding member of Rooted, an organization fighting for equitable resources for immigrant students at UT Austin. She is a dedicated passionate individual who will go above and beyond to make sure all programs and initiatives are executed to the highest standard in order to create a positive impact in any community.



LATINO PARENT VOLUNTEER AWARD

Presented to a parent or family member of a current AISD student, who has volunteered a significant amount of service in a school-specific or district-wide capacity.

ESTHER GUTIERREZ

Esther Gutierrez has been a Nicolas S. Perez Elementary dedicated parent volunteer for 20 years. She is a mother of five. She is passionate about giving back to her community and making a positive impact. In her free time, she enjoys volunteering and finding ways to give back to her community. You can find her at Perez Elementary helping everyday. She helps students in the community succeed. She loves working with children and seeing them learn and grow. She is serving as the PTA President and has taken numerous PTA board roles. Esther is dedicated to education and believes that it is the key to a better future for all.

STUDENT AWARDS / PREMIOS A LOS ESTUDIANTES

YOUNG LATINO LEADER LIDERAZGO JUVENIL

HIGH SCHOOLS

Carlos Rebollar
Benjamín Soliz
Gloria Dayanara Lerma-Torres
Neyna Singh
Samantha Maldonado
Daniel Rivas Aguayo
Isabella Annette (Bella) Robledo
Isaiah Hernández
Lizbeth Jaimes-Jiménez
Paola Lizeth Sabillón Martínez
Nicolás Gallego
Eleni Thompson
Ariana Méndez
José Jiménez
Celeste Pesina
Junior Mata

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Anthonella Valentina Paredes SantaMaría
Iara Alin López
Vanessa Mata-Martínez
Elvin Leyva Díaz
Jose Rico-González
Alejandra Nicolle Pérez Fúnez
Once Fessenden
César Ramírez-Arellano
Karli Hernández
Davianna Rondero
Ashly Mayella Hernández Alemán
Tirza Paola Rojas Nieto
Mauro Cann
Alan Escobar Ramírez
Yovani Reséndiz-Pérez
Annette Isaac
Evelyn Bahena Rodríguez
Hellen Vasconcelo Hernández

OUTSTANDING PROGRESS IN ESL
PROGRESO SOBRESALIENTE EN ESL

HIGH SCHOOLS
Luis Hernández Montana
Melany Borrell Lores
Dulce Barrera-Tirado
Maialen De Miguel Iglesias
Carlos Benito de Bustos
Sharon Sierra
Keyly Rachel León Castillo
Danis Granados Díaz
Erica Olvera
Lesmy Mayely Orellana Delgado
Alexandra Valencia-Serrano
George Rodríguez
Fidel Julián Sánchez-Rosas
Juan José Mancera Conejo
Roger Amador Vallecillo
Wasim Momand

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Derek García
Keilyn Janeth Ramos Oliveros
Dariela Rodríguez Rodríguez
Rebeca Saraí Romero Cabrera
Jesús Hernández Valencia
Yensi Clarisa Martínez Catin
Amarys Torres Ramos
Aaron Ybarra
Joseph Miranda
Natalia Rivas-Micoud Rodríguez
Wasil Sherzai
Allison Chairez Velázquez
Pedro Pérez De La Rosa
Lauren Luján Ruiz
Tiffany Nahmens
Alexa Salas-Ballesteros
Diana Patricia Usea Arias
Franco Ruiz

LATINO STUDENTS WITH
HIGHEST GPA IN GRADES 9-11
ESTUDIANTES LATINOS EN
LOS GRADOS 9-11 CON EL
MAYOR PROMEDIO ESCOLAR

AKINS ECHS
Adamaris Oliveres López
Vianey Segovia
Eva Valeriano

ANDERSON HS
Vincent Frank Margo
Priscilla Ava Hernández
Kean Olles

ANN RICHARDS SYWL
Skylar Kathleen Moren
Ellison Leticia Martin
Rena Isabella Dejuana
Eva W. Cragnolino

AUSTIN HS
Dylan Rochlen
Hannah Rojo
Kenneth Sabisch

BOWIE HS
Christopher Elwood
Gabriela Catalina McArthur
Kayla Buentello

CROCKETT ECHS
Diego Israel Williams
Celina McCormack
Gladys Garza Quintana

EASTSIDE ECHS
Phoenix Tovar
Rocio Villafuerte Gasca
Mary García

GARZA INDEPENDENCE HS
Maria Sellstrom

GRADUATION PREP. ACADEMY
José Ramírez

GPA AT NAVARRO ECHS
Adriana Elizabeth Hernández
Mirabelle Nadas

INTERNATIONAL HS
Melany Serrano Zerpa
Jesus Lahera Rodríguez

LASA
Ana Garfield

COMMUNITY AWARD

LATINO EXCELLENCE IN ADVOCACY AWARD

Presented to an organization which has provided outstanding support in advancing Latino academic achievement and promoting educational outcomes in AISD.

MARIA P. HERNANDEZ

Maria P. Hernandez is the Founder & Executive Director of VELA, a nonprofit organization based in Austin Texas. Maria started the organization in 2011 to provide Spanish and English-speaking families of children with disabilities with hands-on courses, support, and community so that parents could become their child's greatest advocates. Before creating VELA, Maria worked as a bilingual speech and language pathologist across the school and clinical settings providing services to children with disabilities ages 0-21. Her incredible papa has multiple sclerosis and her brilliant brother has dyslexia- different has been her normal. In 2006, Maria completed a MA in Communications Sciences in Disorders at UT Austin and has a BA in Hearing and Speech Sciences from the University of Maryland at College Park. She sits on multiple local and national advisory committees and is a Pahara Aspen NextGen Fellow. Maria is originally from Bogota, Colombia.



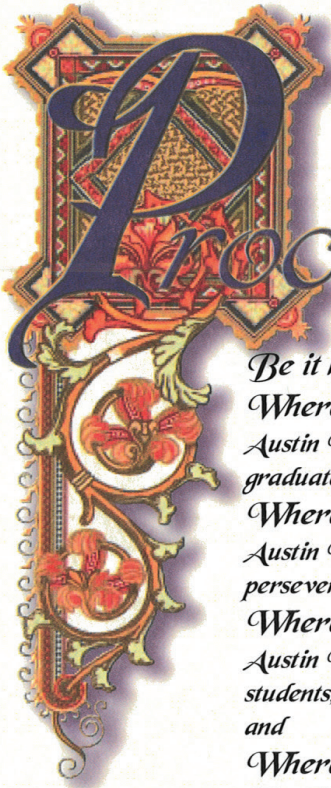
LAAA STAFF MEMBER AWARD

Presented to any current AISD employee in any role who is instrumental in promoting Latino culture and advancing Latino academic achievement.

MELISSA KENDER

Melissa Kender is a proud Salvadoreña Americana on a relentless mission to ensure limitless opportunities for every student. She is committed to student excellence, joy, and empowerment. She serves as the Assistant Principal at J. Frank Dobie Middle School and she proudly brings her Latino heritage and culture with her to school each day. Melissa centers the language, culture, and lived experiences of Dobie's Latino students. ¡Sí se puede!





Proclamation

Be it known that

Whereas,

Austin ISD schools celebrate all languages and cultures so that all students excel and graduate prepared for a global, multicultural society; and

Whereas,

Austin ISD Latino students often face challenges, yet through hard work and perseverance they excel in academics, fine arts and athletics; and

Whereas,

Austin ISD cultivates strong life-long learning practices and opportunities for all students, fostering access to the pursuit of their greatest aspirations via their education; and

Whereas,

The City of Austin and Austin ISD remain partners in, and champions for, nurturing avenues and opportunities for all its community; and

Whereas,

The City of Austin is pleased to join with Austin ISD in honoring Latino students and community leaders at the 2023 Latino Academic Achievement Awards with the theme "Excelencia"

Now, Therefore,

I, Kirk Watson, Mayor of the City of Austin, Texas, do hereby proclaim

April 21st, 2023

as

Latino Academic Achievement Awards Day

in Austin.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the City of Austin to be affixed this 21st Day of April in the Year Two Thousand Twenty Three

Kirk Watson

Kirk Watson, Mayor, City of Austin





“
*As we express our gratitude, we must never
 forget that the highest appreciation is not to
 utter words but to live by them.*”
 - John F. Kennedy

[/austinisd.org/laaa/](http://austinisd.org/laaa/)



LAAA PLANNING COMMITTEE

Multilingual Education Team (MET)
 Dept. of Communications and Community Engagement (DCCE)

Janeth Medrano - MET

Connie Soong - Student Enrollment & Attendance

Dr. Cody Fernández - MET

Crystal Prado - MET

Dr. Delia Cruz-Fernández - MET

Christina Burbank - DCCE

Ana Chacón - MET

Víctor Rodríguez - DCCE

Joy Díaz - DCCE

Dr. Clem Ozel - MET

Norma Garza Mittanck - DCCE

Paul Kretchmer - Visual Arts

Eric Piñon - Project Specialist

Stefanie Torres - Advanced Academics

SPECIAL THANKS

Brad Distelhorst &
 Cole Rickman,
 Performing Arts Center

Cynthia Dacarett,
 Melissa Gonzalez, &
 Magdalena Graybill
 Interpretation

DJ Ottis & Tiffany Saunders,
 AISD.TV

Jeff Rodriguez &
 Anthony Gomez,
 AISD Print Shop

Norma Saldaña,
 Isabel Muniz &
 Lisa Barrett
 MET

Kathy Swartz,
 Graphic Design Specialist

Ryan O'Donnell,
 Partnerships Coordinator

Latoya Edwards
 HUB Department

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