

HISD PRESS RELEASE

HISD educator rises from troubled adolescence to become TABSE's Assistant Principal of the Year

Feb. 19, 2019 – One of the Houston Independent School District's most inspiring educators has been named the 2019 Texas Alliance of Black School Educators (TABSE) Assistant Principal of the Year.

Furr High School Assistant Principal Demeka Simmons said she is not used to being in the spotlight but humbly accepts the statewide honor.

She has been an educator for 15 years and will earn her Ph.D. from Texas Southern University in December of this year.

"She works tirelessly to close achievement gaps on her campus and to motivate her colleagues on proven methods for turning our young scholars into future leaders," HISD Interim Superintendent Dr. Grenita Lathan said. "We are very proud of Ms. Simmons. She is extremely deserving of this honor."

Simmons said what motivates her daily to give her all to students and colleagues at Furr is the memory of her troubled youth and the help she desperately sought. Her mother abandoned the family when Simmons was a young teenager. Her father was killed in a car accident a short time later. Simmons recalled being an at-risk adolescent when she and her brother were left to fend for themselves in her east Texas hometown of Livingston.

"When I come to campus and I see our children, I am committed every day to being the educator I wish I had when I was young," Simmons said.

The TABSE recognizes distinguished individuals who have shared and exemplified the organization's vision of achievement for African-American educators and students.

Simmons will receive her award at the TABSE Educators Awards Gala at **6 p.m. on Friday, February 22** at Moody Gardens, 1 Hope Blvd., Galveston, 77554.

Media interested in feature reports on Ms. Simmons may contact PressOffice@houstonisd.org or call 713-556-6393.

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The Houston Independent School District is the largest school district in Texas and the seventh-largest in the United States, with 284 schools and more than 214,000 students. The 333-square-mile district is one of the largest employers in the Houston metropolitan area, with more than 27,000 employees.

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