

**HISD to recognize top volunteers at annual VIPS ceremony**

*District designating April 16-20 as Volunteers in Public Schools Recognition Week*

*April 13, 2018* - The Houston Independent School District on Thursday will recognize the efforts of thousands of volunteers and honor the top volunteers of the year during the annual Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS) Recognition and Awards Ceremony.

**The reception will take place on Thursday, April 19, 2018 at 4 p.m. at the Hattie Mae White Educational Support Center, 4400 W. 18th St.**

HISD’s VIPS program was started in 1970 by longtime HISD educator Jean Davis Myers, who passed away in 2015. Myers served as executive director of VIPS for 20 years and under her leadership, the program became an award-winning national model. Since 1991, the Jean Davis Myers Award for Community Service has been presented annually to an individual or group whose program or volunteer efforts have had a positive impact on student achievement.

“Our volunteers come from every background and provide invaluable service to our students, staff, and entire HISD community,” said Volunteers in Public Schools Program Administrator Monique Johnson-Garner. “Our district is made better because of their commitment, and this ceremony is an opportunity for us to thank a few of them who have gone above and beyond their call of duty.”

The theme of this year’s reception is “Seeds for Success.” Volunteers were nominated for awards in four different categories:

•             Jean Davis Myers Volunteer Service Award (the most prestigious award) - Presented to an individual or group whose program or volunteer efforts have had an impact on several schools (at the same time) in HISD and have enhanced the quality of education through volunteering for HISD students for two or more years.

•             Parent Partner of the Year -  Recognizes a parent or parent group/program that promotes the active involvement of parents for the improvement of the school or region in a manner that positively impacts student achievement.

•             Youth Volunteer of the Year (K-12) - Recognizes a young person or youth group for outstanding volunteer service in the school(s).

•             Charles Harding VIPS Senior of the Year - Recognizes a senior citizen (55 years or older) who assists schools, teachers and/or students in a manner that positively impacts student success.

HISD Board of Education President **Rhonda Skillern-Jones**, Interim Superintendent **Grenita Lathan**, and dozens of VIPS volunteers will be in attendance.

In addition to the ceremony, HISD is designating April 16-20 as Volunteers in Public Schools Recognition Week in HISD. To date, HISD has 36,000 active volunteers districtwide who have dedicated countless hours to schools, programs, and events across Houston.

For more information about VIPS or to volunteer, go to [www.houstonisd.org/VIPS](http://www.houstonisd.org/VIPS).