

# HISD PRESS RELEASE

## HISD Interim Superintendent awards \$5,000 scholarships to students during surprise home visits

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May 29, 2019 – Houston Independent School District Interim Superintendent Grenita Lathan presented 10 high school seniors with 2019-2020 HISD Superintendent Scholars Awards of \$5,000 each during surprise visits to their homes over the past two weeks.

This is the third year the scholarships were awarded to graduating seniors who have displayed great character and resilience in the face of adversity. This year's group of scholars have experienced the traumatic loss of a parent, severe poverty, health issues, immigration-related challenges and homelessness.

Lathan personally selected the 10 students for \$5,000 awards from among 45 HISD seniors who were nominated by their principals or leadership teams. The remaining 35 seniors will each receive \$1,500 scholarships.

"These students are inspiring examples of what can be achieved in the face of adversity," Lathan said. "I was moved by their accomplishments and I know each of them will find tremendous success and ultimately give back to our community in amazing ways."

HISD Superintendent Scholars Awards selections are not based solely on academics but also on adversity that may make higher education or career/vocational training difficult for students to attain.

The scholarships are underwritten by The Coca-Cola Foundation.

The 10 seniors who received surprise visits were:

- **Scotland Carter**, DeBakey High School for Health Professions
- **América Piedra**, Energized for STEM Academy Central High School
- **Valeria Arce**, Sharpstown High School
- **Juan Gallegos**, Furr High School
- **Tatiana Johnson**, Wheatley High School
- **Mason Doige**, Mickey Leland College Preparatory Academy

- **Alexis Villarreal**, Heights High School
- **Erika Panjoj**, Liberty High School
- **Dan'Yale Owens**, Worthing High School
- **Frida Espinosa**, Chávez High School

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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 280 schools and more than 209,772 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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