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Local Business to Help Pay Off Unpaid Lunch Balances as Need Expands

Article provided by Denton ISD



DENTON ISD, TX- When the COVID-19 pandemic struck in March 2020, the U.S. Department of Agriculture granted waivers that allowed all students to receive free school lunches – regardless if they had submitted the free and reduced lunch application.

That all changed this past summer. student population receives free and reduced lunch.”

On June 30, 2022, those waivers expired and were not renewed by the federal government, meaning the universal free lunch program was over. Because of this, parents are now required once again to complete the free and reduced lunch application in order for their child to receive meal benefits.

“If families feel they would qualify for meal benefits, they can apply online at www.schoolcafe.com or they can stop by the Denton ISD child nutrition office,” said Denton ISD Director of Child Nutrition Liz Raftery. “It is a requirement to complete this application annually. Forty-eight percent of our current

As the return to pre-pandemic school lunches continues, Denton ISD – along with many other districts – has seen a sharp increase in unpaid lunch balances.

Halfway through the 2022-2023 school year, Denton ISD has incurred over \$100,000 in unpaid lunch balances. Of that \$100,000 in unpaid lunch balances, \$60,000 comes from the elementary level, while \$40,000 comes from the secondary level. USDA policy prohibits using child nutrition funds to write off this balance, and at the end of the year, the district’s general fund would be re-

Continued on A4

Melissa Bates Named Principal of Providence Elementary School

Article provided by Denton ISD



DENTON ISD, TX- Melissa Bates, assistant principal at Braswell High School, has been named the principal of Providence Elementary School and will begin in her new role after the Thanksgiving holiday on November 28. Mrs. Bates replaces

Jairia Diggs, who was recently named the Director of Federal Programs and School Improvement for Denton ISD.

“As an assistant principal at Braswell High School, Mrs. Bates is already a fixture in the Braswell community,” said Dr. Jeff Russell, area superintendent of academic programs. “Now that she will serve as the principal of Providence Elementary School, we know she will continue to have an even more significant and favorable influence on our growing community.”

A veteran educator with experience at both the el-

Continued on A3

New Principal at Rivera Elementary Comes Full Circle, Returns to Campus

Article provided by Denton ISD



DENTON ISD, TX- For Rachel Hix, being named principal at Rivera Elementary by Denton ISD Trustees on Tuesday night was several years in the making. She was

named the leader of the campus when Marvyn White left the district recently to assume a similar position with a neighboring district.

While in college studying to be a teacher at the University of North Texas (UNT), Mrs. Hix was a staff member in Denton ISD’s extended care after-school program, which was then housed at Rivera Elementary. After Mrs. Hix joined Denton ISD later in her career. The veteran educator quickly became a member of the LEAD Denton leadership

program – where she was mentored by former Rivera Elementary principal Marvyn White.

So, for Mrs. Hix, she couldn’t help but see her new leadership role as a full-circle moment.

“I am really excited and honored to have the opportunity to continue to serve students in the same feeder pattern that I have become so accustomed to since joining Denton ISD four years ago,” Mrs. Hix said. “My familiar-

Continued on A2

Meet Dr. Beth Kelly, Named Principal of Cheek Middle School

Article provided by Denton ISD



DENTON ISD, TX- Dr. Beth Kelly, principal at Navo Middle School, has been named the inaugural principal of Cheek Middle School. Cheek Middle School, located off FM 1385 near Noles and Fishtrap Roads in Prosper,

is the district’s ninth middle school and will open its doors to students for the first time in the fall of 2023.

The school is named in honor of retired Denton ISD educator and community advocate, Pat Hagan Cheek. Dr. Kelly will begin serving in her role as the new campus’ leader on Jan. 3, as the second semester gets underway. Her replacement will be announced and in place prior to the end of the first semester.

“It has been both an honor and a privilege to serve as the principal of Navo Middle School for almost seven years. During that time I have worked

Continued on A3

Texas Taxpayers Save \$8 Billion on Property Taxes This Year!

A combination of legislative bills, public votes on propositions, and tax rate votes by taxing jurisdictions are responsible for a surprise gift of lower Property Tax Homesteads in mailboxes this year.

HOUSTON, TX - On Tuesday, December 20th, Senator Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) hosted a press conference at the Texas Senate District 7 Office in Houston, Texas to explain the astonishing news that many Texas homeowners are finding lower homestead property tax bills this year, despite record rising appraisal values. During the press conference Senator Bettencourt called the news that homestead taxpayers in Austin, Houston,

and San Antonio have lower property tax bills on average, “astounding!”

“As appraisal values continue to climb steeply across the state there’s surprising, good news! Property Tax Bills for homeowners in Austin, Houston, and San Antonio are down and I’m not just talking about their ISD school taxes, it’s the entire tax bill,” said Senator Bettencourt. “It takes more than the legislature, it takes the public voting for propositions 1 and 2, which

increased the Homestead exemption and will cut tax bills for Texans over 65, and most importantly it takes local elected officials to cast courageous votes for property tax relief for taxpayers.”

Senate Bill 2, which lowered the voter-approval rate and provided taxpayers a greater say in their city and county tax rates and House Bill 3, which addressed school finance reform and tax relief are working to compress tax rates as ap-

Continued on A3

Meet Toni Goodman New Navo Middle School Principal

Article provided by Denton ISD



Continued on A5

DENTON ISD, TX- Toni Goodman, interim principal at Navo Middle School, has been named the school’s newest principal. Last month, Dr. Beth Kelly was named principal at Cheek Middle School, the district’s ninth middle school which will open next fall.

Continued on A5

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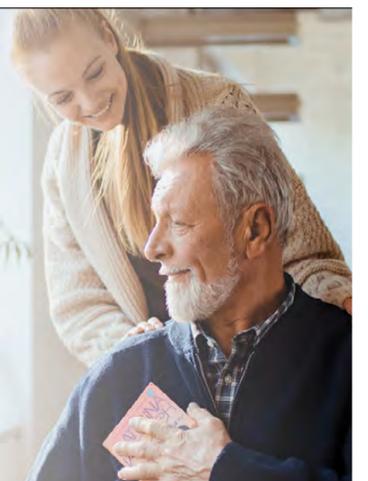
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Lone Star Wind Orchestra's Rhapsodies in Blue Concert



DALLAS, TX – Shades of blue representing Earth and one of Gershwin's most iconic works are celebrated as the Lone Star Wind Orchestra (LSWO) rings in the new year with Rhapsodies in Blue on Sunday, Jan. 29, at 3 p.m. at the Eisemann Center (2351 Performance Dr, Richardson, TX 75082). Under the direction of LSWO Music Director Eugene Migliaro Corporon, the three-part concert will feature a new multimedia experience of Julie Giroux's Symphony No. 6 The Blue Marble, George Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue featuring North Texas native and internationally renowned pianist Aaron Kurz, plus a performance of American composer Frank Ticheli's work, Blue Shades.

"As we start the new year, we hope this highly stimulating show is a treat for the eyes and ears," said Corporon. "Our Rhapsodies in Blue concert merges the past and present – from an Earth-inspired new work, to a beloved century-old composition and an American orchestral classic. Through these works and continued outreach, our hope is that the Lone Star Wind Orchestra inspires change through music, and we

look forward to impacting the next generation of musicians."

GERSHWIN'S RHAPSODY IN BLUE. Nearly 100 years after Gershwin composed Rhapsody in Blue in 1924, the LSWO and Dallas' own lauded pianist Aaron Kurz will perform the classic masterpiece. Known for his charismatic and moving performances, Kurz, who graduated in 2013 from Greenhill School in Addison, has captivated audiences around the world, from Carnegie Hall in New York to the Palace of Peace and Harmony in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan. Kurz's playing has also garnered acclaim in competitions, winning top prizes in the New York International Piano Competition and Los Angeles International Piano Competition, to name a few. With a belief that artists have an obligation to use their craft to improve the world, he has worked significantly in this capacity, including two years with the Van Cliburn Foundation's "Cliburn in the Classroom," a program that teaches classical music principles to children in underprivileged school districts. (See Kurz's full bio at end of release.)

THE BLUE MARBLE.

Already cementing itself as a groundbreaking composition, Giroux's Symphony No. 6 The Blue Marble – in collaboration with ION Concert Media – is a brand-new and innovative work which will be performed alongside awe-inspiring video and pictorials of Earth taken by Apollo 17 in 1972. Considered among the most reproduced images in history, "Blue Marble" is said to be the first full picture of the planet Earth. Inspired by the image, Giroux's movement depicts how painstakingly small and vulnerable humanity is, yet celebrates the spirit of Earth in a variety of ways through music.

BLUE SHADES. Frank Ticheli, who graduated from Berkner High School in Richardson and attended SMU, is one of America's biggest names in composing orchestral, choral, chamber and concert band works. An award-winning composer, he lives in Los Angeles, where he is a Professor of Composition at the University of Southern California. Many of his works – including Blue Shades – are particularly notable and have become standards in concert band repertoire.

General admission tickets to Rhapsodies in Blue are \$22 for adults and \$12 for seniors/students. Loge box seating is also available for \$42 per ticket. To purchase, call 972-744-4650 or go to eisemanncenter.com.

The Lone Star Wind Orchestra is supported by the City of Richardson, Moody Fund for the Arts, Texas Commission on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts and TACA.

For more information, go to lswo.com.

ABOUT THE LONE STAR WIND ORCHESTRA

The Lone Star Wind Orchestra is a non-profit arts organization founded in 2006 as a creative collaboration to further

the wind orchestra as an artistic medium. The group's mission is "music changing lives in North Texas and beyond through inspired collaborations, exceptional mentoring of musicians, unforgettable performances, and inclusive community engagement."

The nonprofit also operates the Lone Star Youth Winds, made up of 60 of the most outstanding woodwind, brass and percussion players in grades 9-12, selected from across North Texas.

The Lone Star Wind Orchestra's education and outreach programs include the St. Philip's Percussion Ensemble, an after-school program where children in southern Dallas explore music and technique through the lens of the African Diaspora, and Lone Star Kids, which bring students face to face and behind the scenes with top musicians, composers and conductors. In response to COVID-19, Lone Star Conversations was created to give young people virtual access to leading composers and conductors. Learn more at lswo.com.

ABOUT AARON KURZ

Engaging audiences with his charismatic and moving performances, Aaron Kurz enjoys a burgeoning career. He has captivated audiences across three continents, in venues ranging from Carnegie Hall in New York to the Palace of Peace and Harmony in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan. Kurz's performances have been lauded, with Belgium's *Le Soir* stating, "We'll remember...the musical journeys of a nuanced Aaron Kurz."

Kurz's playing has also garnered acclaim in competitions, winning top prizes in the New York International Piano Competition, Los Angeles International Piano Competition, Virginia Waring International Piano Competition, and World Piano Teachers Association International Piano Competition, among others. An avid performer, he has played extensively in North America, Europe and Asia. In recent years, his playing took him to China, where he had performing and speaking engagements at the Xi'an Conservatory along with an orchestral performance.

After watching classical music videos at the age of 2, Kurz became interested in playing the piano. Soon after, he began

his studies with Eibel Fang at the Suzuki Institute, and at age 9, he became a student of Dr. Carol Leone. A year later, Kurz attended the Mozart Festival in Vienna and attended the Bösendorfer International Piano Academy, held at the University of Music. Since then, he has participated in countless festivals, such as the Aspen Music Festival, the Bowdoin International Music Festival, PianoTexas, and the Gijón International Piano Festival. He is grateful for receiving additional instruction and guidance from many renowned pianists and pedagogues, including Stephen Hough, Paul Lewis, Yoheved Kaplinsky, Julian Martin, John O'Connor, and Earl Wild.

Kurz believes artists have an obligation to use their craft to improve the world, and he has worked significantly in this capacity. Alongside concertizing, Kurz spent two years working for the Van Cliburn Foundation's "Cliburn in the Classroom," a program which teaches classical music principles to children in underprivileged school districts. The goal of the program's interactive seminars – to inspire a love of music in children and help educate the next generation of classical musicians – spoke to him. Through his playing, he hoped to connect with them and provide an experience they could enjoy and benefit from. He has also worked with the Lift Music Foundation, which provide mini grants to help underserved musicians afford the costs of a musical education.

Kurz also wishes to expand the reach of classical music, something he has worked towards in a greater role since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. To that end, he has performed in various live-streamed series to connect with greater audiences around the world. He also believes in the importance of understanding the music to better appreciate and enjoy it, and whenever possible, he speaks alongside his programs to help audiences with this goal.

Kurz is currently studying at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music under the tutelage of Jon Nakamatsu and Jeremy Denk, and recently graduated from the Yale School of Music, where he studied with Boris Berman. Other previous teachers include Eibel Fang, Carol Leone, Logan Skelton, Alexander Kobrin, Ian Jones and Norma Fisher. Kurz's own experience encompasses both private and university-sponsored teaching, having taught through Yale and Eastman. In his spare time, he enjoys socializing and watching sports, never missing a Michigan Wolverines football game.

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'New Principal at...' continued from front page

ity with students and families in the Ryan zone will afford me a unique opportunity to hit the ground running and continue the spirit of excellence those in the Rivera Elementary family have come to expect."

Mrs. Hix has served as the assistant principal at Hodge Elementary School since 2019. She will begin her new role as principal of Rivera Elementary School effective immediately.

Mrs. Hix has 16 years of experience in education and has been an elementary campus administrator at Title I

schools in two different districts for a total of seven years. She enjoys working with students and families at diverse campuses and considers it one of her greatest strengths as a campus leader.

Mrs. Hix began her career in public education at Irving ISD as a fifth-grade English, Language Arts teacher in 2007. She remained in that district for six years before accepting a teaching position at Duncanville ISD in 2013. Mrs. Hix quickly became an assistant principal just two years later and remained in a

leadership position until joining the district in 2019.

"We could not be more excited to have Rachel Hix taking over this campus leadership position," said Dr. Gwen Perkins, area superintendent of academic programs. "She is highly respected and has a proven track record of working with diverse campuses throughout her career. Mrs. Hix has been a vital member of the Ryan Zone campus leadership staff for four years, and we are very excited to have her now serving as the principal at Rivera Elementary."

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EDUCATION

Five Reasons to Display Photos of Your Kids

Amber McMahan



and hanging pictures of your kids is a great way to personalize your space. Seeing the smiling faces of your children every day will bring warmth and joy to your home and will create a sense of belonging and comfort for everyone who lives there.

As a professional photographer for over 15 years, I have had the privilege of capturing countless precious moments for families throughout the years. One thing I see time and time again as I visit people's homes are walls that lack memories for one reason or another; perhaps they lack time or just do not know where to start. I truly believe that hanging pictures of your children in your home can bring a wealth of benefits.

Here's five reasons why parents should consider displaying photographs of their kids and family in their home:

Personalizes your home - Your home is a reflection of your personality and style,

Preserves memories that may have been forgotten - As your kids grow, their interests, personalities, and appearances will change. Photographs capture these moments in time and having them on display in your home will allow you to relive those memories every day. Whether it's a candid snapshot of your child laughing with their friends or a formal portrait of them at a milestone age, these images will be treasured for a lifetime.

Gives kids a self-esteem boost - As a parent, you are undoubtedly proud of your children and the unique individuals they are becoming. Hanging pictures of them in your home is a way to show off your pride to family, friends, and visitors. It's also a

great way to remind your kids of how proud you are of them and their accomplishments.

Builds emotional connections - Displaying pictures of your kids in your home creates a sense of connection between family members. It allows for conversations about the memories and moments captured in the photographs and helps to build stronger bonds between family members.

Preserves your family's legacy - A photograph is a tangible reminder of a moment in time and will be cherished for generations to come. As a parent, you have the opportunity to create a legacy of family photographs that will be passed down through generations. These photographs will be a source of joy and comfort for your children and their children for years to come.

I strongly believe in the power of photographs to bring joy, warmth, and connection to our homes. Hanging pictures of your children in your home is a simple yet meaningful way to create a personalized, memorable, and proud space for your family. It also helps to create a legacy that will be passed down for generations to come. So, take the time to print and display those precious memories of your kids for everyone to see! If you need any help, let me know!

'Texas Taxpayers...' continued from front page

praises values rise. According to Texas Taxpayers and Research Association (TTARA) estimates, the combined effects of SB 2 and HB 3 are saving taxpayers more than \$8.2 billion this year and have saved Texas taxpayers more than more than \$20 Billion since their passing. "For years we said help was on the way and today we can say help is here to stay!" said incoming State Representative

Charles Cunningham. "This is a high point for me to be able to return people's money to their pocket," said Houston Council Member Mike Knox. This year in Harris County, taxpayers are expected to save \$256 million on their county tax bills alone, and more than \$750 million across all taxing units' tax bills. These savings are directly attributable to the effects of property tax legislation passed in recent sessions, and local officials stand-

ing up for property taxpayers. Houston ISD Trustee Bridget Wade said, "We look forward to what the State's doing to continue bringing relief to Texas Taxpayers."

"Being able to lower the tax bill to homeowners with record appraisal value increases, that's astonishing... it's just what the doctor ordered, Merry Christmas, Harris County," remarked Commissioner Tom Ramsey (R- Harris County, PCT 3).

'Meet Dr. Beth...' continued from front page

with incredible staff, students and families," said Dr. Kelly. "The continued blessing for me is the opportunity to serve as the principal of Cheek Middle School where I can continue to serve families in the Braswell Zone. It is difficult to capture the excitement I have in opening the newest middle school as we build capacity for our students to become Braswell Bengals."

Dr. Kelly joined the district in 2005 serving as the English and Language Arts department chair at Guyer High School. She became the school's assistant principal a year later and would spend four years on campus before moving to a nearby district to become an associate principal in 2009. She returned to Denton ISD in 2012 to become the

principal at Fred Moore High School. She spent four years in that role before moving to lead for Navo Middle School as the principal in 2016.

During her time as a principal in the district, Dr. Kelly has been a mentor to future district leaders through the LEAD Denton program. She has also implemented professional learning communities on her campuses that are focused on instructional assessment practices to increase the frequency of common assessments in each grade level and core content area resulting in increased student achievement on state assessment tests.

"The Braswell Zone is constantly growing and changing. Dr. Kelly possesses valuable experience at the middle school

level and that allows for continuity and a seamless transition to our families on the eastern edge of the district," said Dr. Jeff Russell, Area Superintendent of Academic Programs. "Her established positive relationships and experiences will significantly benefit our community and Cheek Middle."

Dr. Kelly has a bachelor's degree in English from Northeast Louisiana University, a master's degree in administration from Texas Woman's University and a doctorate in educational leadership from the University of North Texas.

Dr. Kelly and her family reside in Flower Mound. Her two children, Greg and Natalie, are graduates of Guyer High School.

National Merit Semifinalists, Commended Named for Class of 2023

Article provided by Denton ISD

DENTON ISD, TX - Fourteen Denton ISD students have been chosen out of 1.6 million total entrants to be semi-finalists or commended scholars in the National Merit Scholarship Program for this year's graduating class.

The College Board named Declan Ayre of Denton High, Audrey Lee, Matthew Spivey, and Sydney Wall of Guyer High to the distinguished list of National Merit Semi-Finalists.

The four join a pool of just 16,000 National Merit Semifinalists in the entire country. High school students are selected into the program based

on their top scores on the 2023 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT).

The Class of 2023 commended scholars include Sabella Smith of Denton High, Asher Colley, Samantha Donnet, Wesley Geldersma, Mandalyn Greene, Sam Kreutzer, Carson McManus, Brandon Rosengren and Cooper Tarvin of Guyer High, Carlos Febres Costa and Naomi Bonham of Ryan High, and finally Andrew Larsen and Isaac Meza of LaGrone Academy.

Students recognized as "commended" will not continue in the competition for

further National Merit awards, however they place among the top five percent of the students who entered the competition by taking the exam. Merit scholar designees are selected based on their skills, accomplishments, and potential for success in rigorous college studies, without regard to gender, race, ethnic origin or religious preference.

The National Merit Scholarship program was founded in 1955 to identify and honor scholastically talented American youth and to encourage them to develop their abilities to the fullest.

'Melissa Bates Named...' continued from front page

elementary and secondary levels, Mrs. Bates possesses a strong background in the classroom and as a campus administrator. Her proven talent in cultivating positive campus culture and climate, coordinating interventions, building master schedules, and assessing campus needs, as well as her capacity to develop and sustain school-community partnerships throughout her time in Denton ISD is impressive.

Mrs. Bates began her career in public education in the state of Mississippi serving the students of the Canton Public Schools in 2003. She moved to the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex and joined

Denton ISD in 2008, serving at Stephens Elementary.

In 2010, Mrs. Bates helped open Cross Oaks Elementary, serving in the classroom for four years before moving to Rivera Elementary as a math interventionist in 2014. In 2015, she became the curriculum and assessment coordinator at Rivera before being named assistant principal at the school in 2016. She would move to Ryan High School for one year as assistant principal in 2021 before being named assistant principal at Braswell High School for the current school year.

"I am honored to have the

opportunity to continue to serve my community, the students, and the staff of our zone," said Mrs. Bates. "The Providence community is rich in traditions and values, and I look forward to carrying on with the amazing work that Mrs. Diggs and the staff of Providence Elementary have established."

Mrs. Bates earned her bachelor's degree in elementary education from Alcorn State University and her master's degree in education from Mississippi College. She and her husband are raising three young kids, two of whom are students in Denton ISD and the youngest is not yet school-aged.

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HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

HHSC Increases Starting Pay for Jobs at State Hospitals and State Supported Living Centers



AUSTIN, TX – The Texas Health and Human Services Commission today announced it is increasing salaries and starting pay at state hospitals and state supported living centers to help with crucial staffing needs, maintain competitive wages, and bring hospital beds back online.

“Maintaining a highly skilled, well-trained healthcare workforce is critical to providing quality healthcare and increasing access for Texans across our state,” said Gov. Greg Abbott. “By increasing salaries and wages to be more competitive, HHSC is addressing critical staffing needs and bringing more hospital beds back online. Together, we are bolstering recruitment and retention of the best and brightest health professionals to serve Texans in our state hospitals and state supported living centers.”

“We are incredibly grateful for the hard work and dedication of our current staff, and we look forward to continuing to grow our teams with qualified and compassionate healthcare professionals who

share our commitment to support the patients at our state hospitals and the residents at our state supported living centers,” said Scott Schalchlin, deputy executive commissioner for HHSC’s Health and Specialty Care System. “Increasing starting salaries will bolster HHSC’s recruitment and hiring of prospective employees, help us get fully staffed, and serve more people in need.”

More than 700 state hospital beds are offline due to workforce challenges. Increasing starting salaries at state hospitals will help recruit and attract healthcare workers, reduce vacancies and bring more beds back online.

HHSC is looking to fill approximately 1,805 vacancies in state hospitals and 2,137 in state supported living centers by offering higher starting salaries. For example, a registered nurse with three years’ experience would start as high as \$90,000 per year. Psychiatric nursing assistants and direct support professionals would start between \$17.50-\$21 an hour, depending on experience. Food service workers start as high as \$13.94 an hour.

Effective March 1, approximately 7,855 full-time positions at state hospitals and 11,794 at state supported living centers will also receive salary increases. The \$148 million in salary increases are in addition to other financial incentives HHSC has offered staff to increase recruitment and retention last year. HHSC also offers paid health and dental insurance, vacation and sick leave, a retirement plan, paid training, and advancement opportunities.

State supported living centers provide residential services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, while state hospitals provide inpatient psychiatric care for adults, children and adolescents.

Positions are available at the following locations across Texas: Abilene, Austin, Big Spring, Brenham, Corpus Christi, Denton, El Paso, Kerrville, Lubbock, Lufkin, Mexia, Richmond, Harlingen, Rusk, San Angelo, San Antonio, Terrell, Vernon, Waco and Wichita Falls.

To view all open positions and apply, candidates can visit the Health and Specialty Care System jobs page on the HHSC website. Job seekers who have questions and want more information can e-mail healthcareers@hhsc.state.tx.us.

To view open positions by location, view the Health and Specialty Care System jobs map.

United Way of Denton County Honors District as “Pacesetter”

Information Provided by Denton ISD

DENTON ISD, TX- At the recent kick-off of the 2022-23 campaign of United Way of Denton County, Denton ISD was honored as a “Pacesetter” for the previous year’s employee giving campaign. Pacesetters set the pace and build momentum for the annual United Way campaign that benefits people in Denton County who are in need. When Pacesetters lead, others will follow.

“We value the partnership with the United Way and all that they do to support Denton County, the City of Denton, and of course, what they do for the staff and students of Denton ISD,” said Dr. Buddy Dunworth, principal of McM

Middle School. “The leadership in Denton ISD truly leads by example. Our Denton ISD leaders kicked off the Denton ISD 2022 United Way campaign in record fashion, raising over \$20,000 in just one day.”

Meeting the goal of connecting Denton ISD with other leading businesses, building a strong and healthy community through support, and winning this award signifies the commitment of Denton ISD employees to its students and families.

“Pacesetter Campaign Partners lead the way by planning and conducting workplace campaigns to kick off the Annual United Way of Denton County Campaign Sea-

son,” said Kristin Jones, director of resource development for United Way of Denton County. “Pacesetters, as their title would suggest, lead by example, utilizing United Way best practices for a successful campaign. Designated as a 2022 Platinum Pacesetter, DISD is honored to help set the pace, and build momentum for other businesses across Denton County to follow.”

Recognized as a Platinum Level Pacesetter for the 2021-2022 school year, Denton ISD is preparing to improve upon those contributions this fall as they kick off the upcoming district-wide campaign in October.

RRC Commissioners Assess More Than \$630,000 in Penalties

AUSTIN, TX – The Railroad Commission of Texas assessed \$630,917 in fines involving 161 enforcement dockets against operators and businesses at the Commissioners’ Conference on Wednesday. The Commission has primary oversight and enforcement of the state’s oil and gas industry and intrastate pipeline safety.

Nine dockets involved \$73,667 in penalties after operators failed to appear at Commission enforcement proceedings. Master Default Orders can be found on the RRC Hearings Division webpage.

Operators were ordered to come into compliance with Commission rules and assessed \$44,600 for oil and gas, LP-Gas or pipeline safety

rule violations. Pipeline operators and excavators were assessed \$512,650 for violations of the Commission’s Pipeline Damage Prevention rules. Master Agreed Orders can be found on the RRC General Counsel webpage.

In the absence of timely motions for rehearing, decisions are final as stated in these final orders.

Local Business to...’ continued from front page

sponsible for balancing any unpaid amount.

And, while unpaid lunch balances may be on the rise, there is at least one local Denton business lending a helping hand.

As part of the “Share the Love” campaign many downtown businesses participate in throughout the month of February, Amber Briggie has decided her business will be donating to help pay off the unpaid balances at Newton Rayzor Elementary. Mrs. Briggie’s company, Soma Massage Therapy, will match every dollar up to \$1,500 that her customers donate.

“I’ve always been a big proponent and supporter of our public schools,” Mrs. Briggie said. “Growing up, I was one of those kids who was on free and reduced lunch. There were some times in my life when that was the biggest, healthiest meal of my day. You can’t think on an empty stomach. I just want to make sure these kids are supported.”

Denton ISD Executive Director of Child Nutrition, Risk Management and Benefits Chris Bomberger said Mrs. Briggie’s donation is incredibly helpful as the district continues to try and

curb the growing amount of unpaid balances. For those interested in contributing to this cause like Mrs. Briggie, they can contact the Denton ISD child nutrition office at 940-369-0270.

“We value the community participation in assisting families in need,” Mr. Bomberger said. “This gesture is greatly appreciated knowing it impacts one of many campuses in need.”

Denton ISD parents can use the School Cafe app to pay their child’s lunch balances. They can also pay with cash or check.



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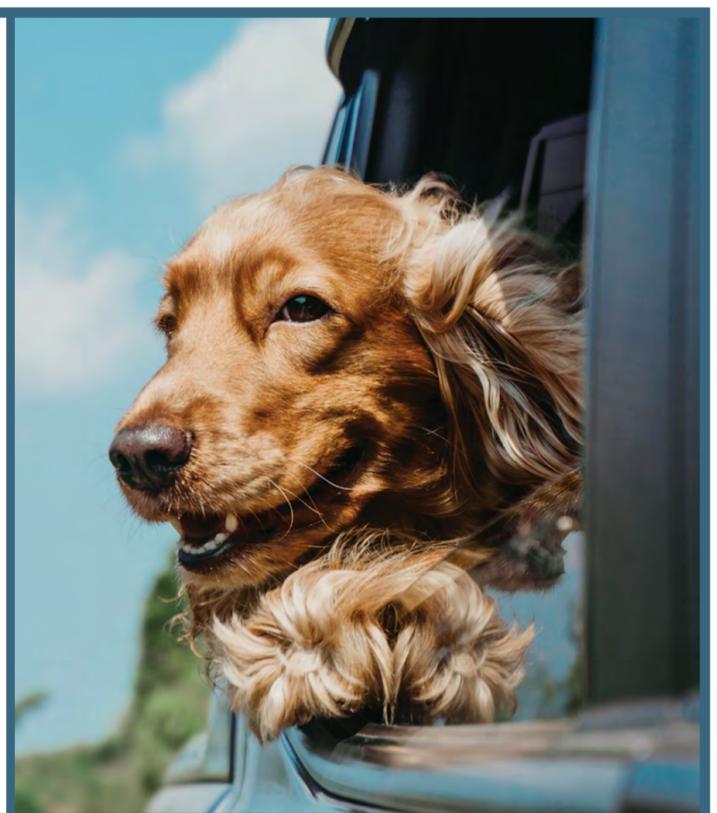
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600 Liberty Blvd, Cross Roads, TX 76227
469.708.7654
www.trilogychurch.com
Cowboy Country Chapel
603 Morrison
Pilot Point, TX, 76258
Baha' Faith
Baha' Faith in Aubrey
800-22-UNITE or 972-632-6904
www.bahai.org and www.bahai.us
Baptist
Antioch Baptist Church
Hwy 428 & Hwy 2931
Aubrey, Texas 76227
Bethel Baptist Church
210 E. Main Street
Pilot Point, Texas 76258
903-429-3661
Calvary Baptist Church
Corner of 125 N. Jefferson & Walcott St., Pilot Point
www.calvarypilotpoint.com
Cowboy Church of Cooper Creek
3000 Rock Hill Rd.
Aubrey, TX 76227
972-841-3331
http://www.cowboychurchofcoopercreek.org/
Cross Fellowship Church
Meets at Savannah Elementary
1101 Cotton Exchange Dr
Aubrey, TX 76227
www.crossfellowship380.com
CrossRidge Church
1701 Walker Lane
(Across From Little Elm High School)
www.crossridgeonline.org
972-292-1953
First Rock Fellowship
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www.firstrockfellowship.org

First Baptist of Krugerville
Hwy. 377 South, Krugerville
www.Fbckrugerville.com
Green Valley Baptist Church
9901 FM 428 in Aubrey
Living Word Baptist Church
2315 FM 720 West
Little Elm, TX 75068
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www.livingwordbaptist.net
Midway Baptist Church
Hwy. 377 North of Aubrey
940-365-9312
www.midwaychurch.org
Mustang Baptist Church
Corner of I-385 & Mustang Rd. in Aubrey
New Hope Baptist Church
Highway 377, South, Aubrey
www.newhopeaubrey.com
Prestonwood Baptist Church
1001 West Prosper Trail, Prosper, TX
972-798-6700
Providence Village Church
Providence Elementary
1000 FM 2931
Aubrey TX 76227
www.providencevillagechurch.com
Rhea's Mill Baptist Church
5733 North Custer Rd., McKinney
972-562-2947
www.rheasmill.org
Catholic
St. Martin de Porres Catholic Church
4000 West University Dr.
Prosper, TX 75078
469-287-7624
www.saintmartindp.org
St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church
925 N. Charcut St., Pilot Point, TX 76258
940-686-2088
www.stthomaspilotpoint.org
St. Sophia Ukrainian Catholic Church
5600 North Colony Boulevard
The Colony, Texas 75056
(972) 370-4700
www.stsophiakrainian.cc

Christian
First Christian Church in Aubrey
410 N. Main St.
ntaccsw.org/pages/minisite_fccaubrey_home
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
First Christian Church
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First Christian Church of Denton
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Denton, Texas 76210
www.fcddenton.org
Grace Christian Church
Baker Elementary School
Prosper ISD (Heatherwood Subdivision)
www.graceprosper.org
Church of Christ
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Aubrey First United Methodist
113 West Plum, Aubrey
www.aubreyfumc.com
Bethel Methodist Church of Denton County
3126 FM 2931, Aubrey Texas
409-543-8444
www.betheldenton.com

Button Memorial United Methodist Church
101 W. Eldorado Pkwy., Little Elm, TX. 75068
www.bumc.org, 972-292-1465
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Grace Point Nazarene Church
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Pilot Point, Texas
760-518-6732
Circle of Love Fellowship Church
16611 FM 428 W., Celina, TX 75009
972-816-6445

City of Transformation Church
Lakeside Manor Theater
902 W. Eldorado Pkwy, Little Elm, TX 75068
469-247-1863
www.cityoftransformation.org
Covenant Church
Cross Roads Campus
8690 Liberty Road
Cross Roads, TX 76227
940-365-1395
www.covenantcrossroads.org
Covenant Word Ministries Church
1501 Bluebird Dr.
(Paloma Creek South Clubhouse)
Little Elm, TX 75068
www.covenantwordministrieschurch.org
Frisco Bible Church
8000 Sanctuary Dr., Frisco, TX 75033
972-335-8150
https://www.friscobible.com/
Faith Assembly Church
700 N. Harmon Road, Aubrey, TX 76227
(940) 365-9360
aubreyfaithassembly.weebly.com
Gateway Church
7125 Legacy Drive
Frisco, Texas 75034
Frs.GatewayPeople.com
469.238.1000
Grace Village Community Church
5325-B Highway 377
Krugerville, TX 76227
gracevillagechurch.org
Lighthouse Christian Fellowship
4331 E. Prosper Tr.
Prosper, TX 75078
972-562-2500
www.lighthouse.tx.com
New Leaf Church
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972 325-8939
North Texas Trinity Cowboy Church
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Sanger, TX, 76266
www.northtexascowboy.org
The Summit Church
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Relate Church
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'Meet Toni Goodman...' continued from front page

"I am humbled and honored by the opportunity to continue to serve in the Braswell Zone as the next principal of Navo Middle School. It is truly a privilege to build on the rich traditions established by the principals that have come before me. I look forward to continuing to work alongside incredible staff, students, families and community as we forge a pathway to Braswell High School and beyond."

Mrs. Goodman joined the district in 2006 serving as an eighth grade ELAR teacher at McMath Middle School. She spent six years on that campus before moving to Navo Middle School as a seventh grade ELAR teacher in 2013. She would have a brief stint as an administrator in another school district in 2014 before returning to Navo in 2015 to become the school's assistant principal, a role she has held until today.

Mrs. Goodman has been in education since 2003, starting her career in Austin ISD before joining Denton ISD. She also has eight years of administrative experience in the district.

"For many years, Mrs. Goodman has dedicated herself to the students of Navo Middle School. Her positive and established relationships, combined with her instructional background, will be a great asset to our community's students, staff, and parents. This is especially true in a fast-growing community like Denton ISD," said Dr. Jeff Russell, Area Superintendent of Academic Programs.

Mrs. Goodman earned a bachelor's degree from Shaw University in North Carolina and a master's degree in teaching from Grand Canyon University. Mrs. Goodman and her husband reside in Denton and are a blended family with four adult children and their youngest attends Pecan Creek Elementary.

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