Support Quality EDUCATION

QUARTERLY UPDATE FY2017

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ARLINGTON℠
THE AMERICAN DREAM CITY

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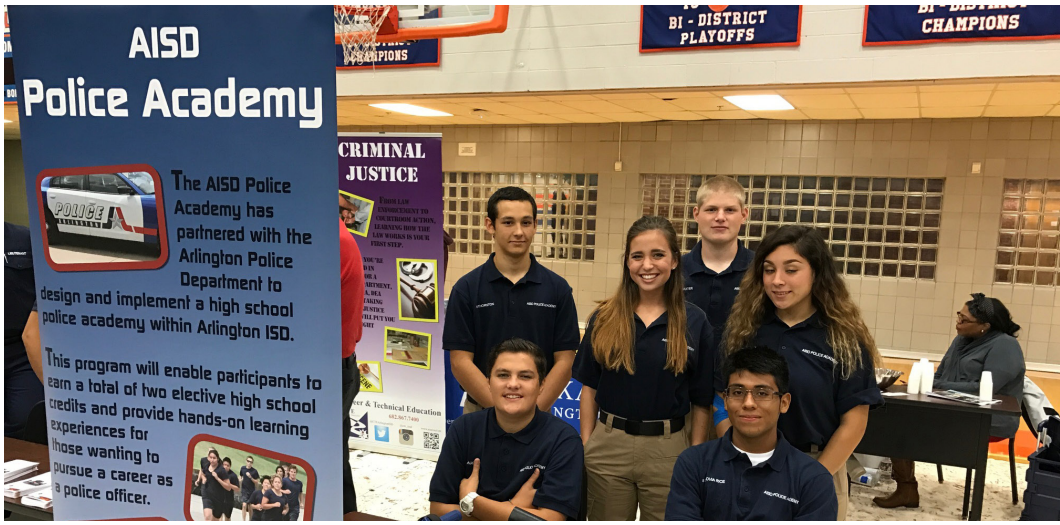
Hometown Recruiting Program/AISD Police Academy

In 2014, Class 1 of the AISD Police Academy began. Then, Arlington ISD, the Arlington Police Department and UT-Arlington created the Hometown Recruiting Program, which launched fall 2015.

The first two years had an average of 20 graduates, and Class 3 will graduate 14 students this spring. The next academy will be at the new AISD Career and Technical Center opening fall 2017.



Currently, 114 students have applied for Class 4 in the fall, a significant increase from 45 this year. So, AISD expanded the course to two sections of 25 students to facilitate the 250% increase in applicants for the program.

Over the summer, alumni and incoming Class 3 students worked together to build bonds and swap stories from recent semesters in college and high school. Students attended regularly scheduled workouts at the APD Training Center to prepare for the challenge of the academy. The program was fortunate enough to work with APD SWAT during its annual bus assault training held at Seguin High School. Volunteer "hostages" were on the bus while officers raided the vehicle due to escalations in the scenarios being run. Students were

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2017 Animal Essay Contest Winners

Grade 3 *(If you had wings, what animal or insect would you be and why?)*

1st place: **Amber Baines**, Janet Brockett Elementary

2nd place: **Madelyn Henry**, Duff Elementary

3rd place: **Braith Norton**, home school

Grade 4 *(Our pets need food, water and shelter, but what more do they need?)*

1st place: **Kyle Crissey**, St. Maria Goretti

2nd place: **Hanna Troung,** Janet Brockett Elementary

3rd place: **Hayden Bellah,** Little Elementary

Grade 5 *(What things should be done to improve the lives of animals?)*

1st place: **Payton Sheehan**, Children's University

2nd place: **Macario Valencia**, home school

3rd place: **Makai Saina,** Moore Elementary

Grade 6 *(In 2060, how will animal shelters be different than they are today?)*

1st place: **Ella Trammell,** Ditto Elementary

2nd place: **Fabio Torres**, Butler Elementary

3rd place: **Colleen Gladbach**, Butler Elementary

Animal Essay Contest

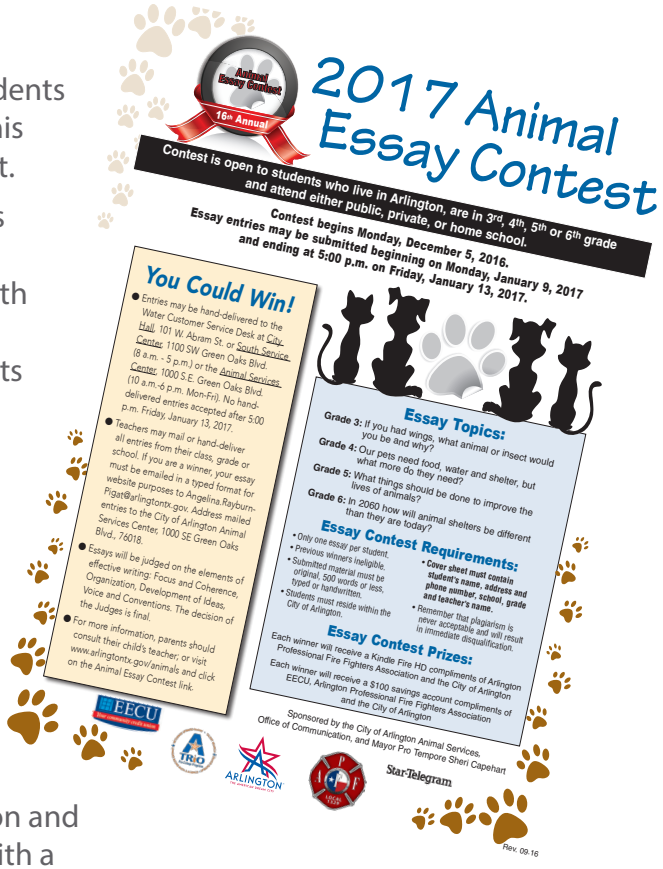
On February 3, Arlington city officials congratulated 12 students with the winning essays for this year's Animal Services Contest.

Approximately 1,320 students in public, charter and home schools participated in the 16th Annual Animal Essay contest. The contest is open to students in grades 3-6 who live within Arlington's city limits.

"The excitement from each school visit is a full day of joy and extreme delight," says Chris Huff, Animal Services Manager.

Each winner received a Kindle Fire, made possible by Arlington Professional Fire Fighters (APFF) Association and the City of Arlington, along with a $100 savings account, compliments of EECU, APFF and the City.

Arlington City Council recognized winners at its March 7 meeting.



On March 11, winners toured the state-of-the-art Animal Services Center and read their essays during a special event.

2017 Animal Essay Contest Winners

Winners listed at left and pictured above, starting with Grade 3 on the bottom row and (left to right) 1st place winners, 2nd place winners and 3rd place winners.

Stormwater Management

One of the major goals of the Stormwater Management program is to protect our local waterways from the effects of urban development. Maintaining the natural functions of our streams, creeks and lakes along with our stormwater drainage system improves our local water quality, prevents an increased risk of flooding, decreases streambank erosion and provides safer recreational areas for people to use. If you have questions concerning Stormwater Management, please contact us at 817-459-6550.

The City has a variety of programs and public involvement initiatives that introduce stormwater pollution prevention and flood safety as well as preparedness topics to Arlington students, citizens, businesses, property owners and renters. To schedule any of the following presentations, contact the Stormwater Education Specialist at 817-459-6572 or **stormwatereducation@arlingtontx.gov**.

Apartments

Apartment Complex Outreach Program - Information about flood safety, flood preparedness and stormwater pollution prevention from sanitary sewer overflows, pet waste disposal, vehicle maintenance and blowing trash are addressed in presentations and written materials.

Fred the Fish

Homeowners

Homeowners Association Outreach Program - Presentations cover pet waste disposal, vehicle maintenance, vehicle washing, yard waste and landscape maintenance as well as pesticide and fertilizer usage.

Schools

School Outreach Program - Introduces our students to stormwater topics such as stormwater pollution prevention, water quality and flood safety through different age-appropriate presentations. For specific topics, visit **www.arlingtontx.gov/stormwater/stormtalkers-education-program.**

"Our greatest natural resource is the minds of our children."

Walt Disney

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Hometown Recruiting *(continued from pg. 1)*

able to see the effectiveness close team training utilized in a high-stress environment with each member taking on a role all others must rely on.

Last fall, emphasis was placed on the UTA programs, instructors and students. In October, students had the opportunity to attend the annual Criminal Justice Guest Speaker Week providing local law enforcement specialists' perspectives on current policing trends. A regional domestic violence education advocate and UTA instructor shared her own brave story on overcoming domestic violence and its effect on her and her family. Students were also educated on community volunteer opportunities that can have a big impact on families needing assistance.

In the spring, work continued with the Criminal Justice Department at UTA. Students audited courses they are likely to take there in the future, which expanded their understanding of success at the college level.

Throughout the year, students ran scenarios with officers dressed as suspects for real-world experience on the difficulty of an unknown situation utilizing classroom knowledge to problem-solve and take enforcement action. Hands-on training lets students discover the parts of police work they most enjoy and what is expected of them when they pursue a career in law enforcement. This, as well as volunteering for training scenarios as suspects/victims, contributes to students' overall understanding of how community policing is affecting Arlington and the nation.

Arlington Public Library

Family Place Library

In December 2016, the Southeast Branch of the Arlington Public Library (APL) formally received this esteemed designation, and it now features a family-friendly play area full of toys for children ages 0-5 that includes blocks, costumes, puppets and a toy kitchen.

The APL was one of 36 Texas libraries to receive funding to become a Family Place Library. The Texas State Library and Archives Commission provided official staff training as well as funding for new toys, furniture, shelving and parenting books available at the Southeast Branch.

Parents are a child's first and most important teacher, but expert guidance is also valuable.

In the fall of 2016, the library offered a five-week class for children ages 0-4 and their parents. They chatted with a different expert each week. Speech Language Pathologist Melody Shepherd said, "I'm excited to work with the parents and interact with their children at the same time."

The APL has plans to extend its participation in Family Place Libraries to other branches throughout the city.

What is a Family Place Library?

- It has a welcoming space for children at its core.
- It introduces parents to specialists on childhood development.
- It establishes the library as a hub for parent and community involvement.

Learn more at **http://www.familyplacelibraries.org/**.

Born to Stand Out

Of all the programs offered at the APL, perhaps none are as prevalent as storytime. Sometimes, however, the traditional storytime setting is not the right fit for families with special needs. The sounds may be too loud, the lights may be bright, or it may be difficult to sit still for a series of stories and songs. Because the Arlington Public Library strives to make all families feel welcome, librarians Ashley Wyche and Lisa Smant created Born to Stand Out, a storytime designed specifically for children with special needs.

Born to Stand Out is different from traditional storytimes because there is no expectation for children to sit still or participate during the stories and songs if they are not comfortable doing so. Instead, children are encouraged to explore stations of sensory-friendly activities at their leisure. They can listen to stories and songs from anywhere in the room where they feel most at ease.

Wyche had the idea for the program during her first week presenting storytimes for the library. A little girl was running around and talking during storytime, and while it didn't bother Wyche, there was obvious pressure on the mother from the parents in the room.

"I told [the mom] that it was my first week and I was happy to have them at storytime," Wyche said. "She asked me if there was a storytime for children with special needs, and then told me that her little girl was autistic. I encouraged her to come back, but never saw her again. It was heartbreaking."

Following this experience, Wyche began thinking about a storytime where parents of children with special needs would now know their children would be free to be themselves. "I hope that by starting a special needs storytime, it gives everyone a chance to feel comfortable and enjoy storyime in their own way."

The APL views the arrangement as a reciprocal one, and hopes that as library staff work to provide a fun and comfortable environment for parents of children with special needs, participants will share their experiences and provide feedback to help improve the program to make it even more accessible.

Born to Stand Out is offered on the first Monday of the month at 10:30 a.m. at Southwest Branch Library, 3311 S.W. Green Oaks Blvd.