

# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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*"Excellence Every Day...No Alibis, No Excuses"*

*Thursday, February 20, 2014*

## **Lancaster ISD Communications wins Gold, Silver, Bronze and Best Overall During Annual State Awards Banquet**

Austin, Texas/Lancaster ISD

This week, Texas School Public Relations Association (TSPRA) members from across the state received honors from the association for their outstanding work in education communications earning Gold Star, Silver Star, Bronze Star, Best of Category, Certificate of Merit, Crystal Commendation and/or Platinum awards. The awards were announced at TSPRA's annual Star Awards Celebration held February 19, 2014 at the Omni Southpark Hotel in Austin Texas during the association's 52<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference.



In addition to winning several Gold, Silver and Bronze Star Awards, Executive Director of Communications Sonya Cole-Hamilton won the Best Overall in two categories: The Booklet Category for the "2012 State of Schools Report" and the Published News Release Category for "Two LHS Students Selected to Compete in Congressional Art Contest."

"This was our first year even entering the competition, so not only am I proud that we won several awards, but to take home not one, but two Best Overall Awards is amazing," she said.

She said that the awards serve as confirmation for her team and provide a boost to morale.

"The Communications Department works extremely hard to support all other departments and much of what we do is really behind the scenes," Cole-Hamilton said. "So to be recognized at the state level for what we do day to day is rewarding."

Cole-Hamilton acknowledged that although her team is small, they produce big results.

"Some of the awards hold a special place for me, like the Silver Award for our Spring 2013 Convocation, because that is such a massive undertaking," she said. "Our team puts in a lot of effort for special events of that magnitude."

In addition to Cole-Hamilton, other members of the Communications Team took home awards. District Visual Media Coordinator and Lancaster High School Media Teacher Kimberly Simpson received honors in three categories (Video Documentary, Video Special Interest/Feature and Video Promo/Marketing) and Communications Specialist Jacquinette Murphy received an honor for the Internal E-newsletter "Today in Lancaster."

There were more than 50 categories this year and, Lancaster ISD Communications received the following awards:

### **Gold Star**

Booklet – *2012 State of Schools Report*  
Image/Identity Package – *A New, Innovative, Creative and Collaborative Lancaster ISD*  
Published News Release – *Two LHS Students Selected to Compete in Congressional Art Contest*  
Published Print Ad – *Highest Graduation Rate Ad*  
Video Documentary – *4<sup>th</sup> and Goal – The Story of the 2012-2013 Lancaster Varsity Football Team*  
Video Special Interest/Feature – *Lancaster ISD 20/25 Year Service Award Honorees*

### **Silver Star**

Poster – *Lancaster ISD 21<sup>st</sup> Century STEM Learning Expo*  
Annual Report – *2012 State of Schools Report*  
Logo, Trademark, Symbol – *Lancaster ISD: In Pursuit of Excellence*  
Advertisement – *New Early Childhood Bright Beginnings Program*  
Video Promo/Marketing – *Lancaster ISD: Employer of Choice*  
E-newsletter Internal – *Today in Lancaster*  
Special Event – *Spring 2013 End of Year Convocation: You're Invited to the Party*

### **Bronze Star**

Flyer – *Come Explore With Us! 2012-2013 New Student Registration Information Flyer*  
Holiday Card – *Season's Greetings from Lancaster ISD*  
Writing – *Lancaster ISD Superintendent's Chamber of Commerce Article*

TSPRA's annual Star Awards provide recognition for the outstanding education communications and projects of our members. Independent, impartial judges evaluate each work and project based on set criteria and they award Gold, Silver and Bronze Star Awards, as well as Best of Category, Crystal Commendations and the Platinum Award.

Entries are received for one month in the fall and judging takes place November through January. The awards are then presented at the annual Star Awards Celebration held during TSPRA's Annual Conference in February. Below is an explanation of the award designations:

- ◆ **Silver Star** - for an entry that achieves its purpose with noticeable creativity, craft and skill.
- ◆ **Gold Star** - for an entry that not only achieves its purpose with noticeable creativity, craft and skill, but, in the opinion of the judges, does so in an exceptional way.
- ◆ **Best of Category** - for an entry that stands out from all the others for its exceptional creativity and quality.

*The Lancaster Public Schools serve more than 6,000 pre-kindergarten through grade 12 students in 11 schools. The mission of the Lancaster Independent School District, a leader in providing innovative, quality programs, is to educate every student with the knowledge; skills; and principles to succeed and contribute in a competitive and technologically advancing world by providing rigorous and engaging learning opportunities that promote diversity; create an environment of integrity and respect; and establish a commitment to continued improvement in partnership with families and community.*

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