

Midland Association of Retired School Personnel 2023 – 2024 Scholarship Recipients
Patricia A. Maurer, Chairperson, Scholarship Committee

For Release: May 2, 2024

Midland Association of Retired School Personnel (MARSP) annually awards two scholarships to students pursuing degrees and/or certifications contributing to the profession. The organization is committed to supporting excellence in teaching. The 2023 – 2024 recipients are both deserving of recognition for their accomplishments thus far and for the goals they have for the future.

Christina Brents is a graduate of Sam Houston State University and has 17 years of teaching experience. She currently serves as Resource Teacher at Yarbrough Elementary School, where she is responsible for monitoring the progress of special education students, planning collaboratively with staff to meet each child's individual educational plan. According to her principal, Jill Arthur, "she is one of those people you would love to clone." She was awarded Yarbrough Elementary's "Innovative Teacher of the Year" in 2022 and selected to be part of MISD's first Leadership Academy.

Ms. Arthur also commented that Ms. Brents "works well with at-risk students and does not give up on them." She celebrated Ms. Brents's ability to form relationships with students and colleagues, her determination to find solutions to support student success, and her work ethic. She commended Ms. Brents' decision to work toward certification in School Leadership and Administration because "we need more people like her who are dedicated to the students of MISD to pursue becoming a principal."

Prior to coming to MISD, Ms. Brents worked in Lewisville I.S.D. where she served as a theatre teacher, classroom teacher, and special education teacher. Andy Plunkett, Chief of Schools for Lewisville I.S.D., shared that during her time in Lewisville, "she was trusted to pilot three new programs which are still thriving" and complimented what he described as her clear, effective, articulate, and impressive communication skills. He described her classroom as a place where students felt safe and at ease and commented that she created "an atmosphere of love and inclusiveness which allowed her students to thrive."

In describing her desire to become a principal, Ms. Brents expressed appreciation for the leadership skills of Ms. Arthur and indicates that it is her aspiration "to continue her legacy to inspire, lead, love, and empower everyone that I meet." After an impressive career thus far, Ms. Brents indicates that she still has the enthusiasm of a first-year teacher, and her recommendations and record of achievement support her aspirations to create the kind of school where students love to be.

Guadalupe Ramirez is a graduate of the University of Texas Permian Basin and has dedicated her entire 11-year teaching career to the students of MISD. She began her teaching experience at the school she attended as a child. After spending eight years teaching in kindergarten and first grade classrooms, she became a dyslexia therapist at Bunche Elementary School. In March of 2016, she

was awarded a Hero for Kids Award by the Midland ISD School Board and in April 2022, she was named Teacher of the Year for Bunche Elementary School.

Shelly Haney, Chief of Schools for the REACH Network, described Ms. Ramirez as having high expectations for her students and willing mentor to new teachers as well. She describes her as a worthy scholarship recipient and an amazing educator. Billy Osborne, the counselor at Bunche Elementary School, describes Ms. Ramirez as knowledgeable in her field, respected and beloved by her peers. She said, "She has a relationship with parents where together they partner to promote student success."

In describing her goal of earning her master's degree in special education, Ms. Ramirez says, "I love that I get to grow with my students, as they learn, I am learning too." She indicates that she chose the field of education because she had teachers who made a positive impact in her life and, consequently, she wants to do the same for students. Because she has family members who have dyslexia, the challenge is both real and personal to her. She says her goal of higher education "comes from the heart."

The Midland Association of Retired School Personnel stands proud to celebrate two committed school professionals, and especially their commitment to gain new skills to use in serving the public-school students of this community. Congratulations to Christina Brents and Guadalupe Ramirez.