

KEYS mentorship program kickoff set for Sept. 15



BY SUSAN ROVEGNO
PUBLISHER

All current and future mentors of Katy ISD's KEYS mentorship program (Keep Encouraging Youth toward Success) are invited to attend the annual kick-off at the Merrell Center on September 15th. The event will begin at 8 a.m. and will feature Dr. Elizabeth McIngvale as the keynote speaker.

Elizabeth McIngvale, Ph.D.,

has dedicated her life to making a difference in the lives of those living with a mental illness through her career, community service and advocacy. Dr. McIngvale is the Director of the OCD Institute of Texas. She and her family founded the Peace of Mind Foundation; a non-profit dedicated to OCD. The Peace of Mind Foundation runs the OCDChallenge.org (a self-help website for OCD), both now within the International Obsessive Compulsive

Disorder Foundation (IOCDF). Elizabeth was the first-ever national spokesperson for the IOCDF where she now serves as a board member and national advocate. She was diagnosed with OCD at the age of 12 and engaged in inpatient and outpatient therapy. Dr. McIngvale engages in clinical work, research, and advocacy with the goal of improving access to care and treatment for those living with OCD.

The KEYS Mentoring program, a Katy ISD Partners in Education initiative, matches a caring adult with a student one hour, once a week during the school year to build a relationship, trust, confidence and more. KEYS mentors come from varied backgrounds,

experiences and age groups. Each has a heart for students and a willingness to volunteer. Each KEYS mentor must make a one school year commitment to the program, apply and pass the same criminal background check used for Katy ISD employees and attend a campus orientation. Mentors are placed with a student by the KEYS campus liaison who will support and supervise the relationship. Mentors and their mentees meet each week on campus in an open, monitored environment such as the library.

To learn more, visit Partners in Education at Partners in Education / KEYS Mentoring (schoolwires.net) or contact Cydney Wright, 281-396-2468, CydneyJWright@katyisd.org.

At the August 22nd meeting of the Katy Business Connection networking group, Kevin Drury of Reflective Energy encouraged fellow members to join Katy ISD's KEYS mentoring program, citing the sometimes unseen need for adult male role models in the area. Drury has been a KEYS mentor for over 13 years and is a former "mentor of the year." The KEYS kick off event will be at the Merrell Center on September 15th.

SUSAN ROVEGNO

Tompkins students create "hackathon" to promote tech to tackle world issues

Girls Who Code hopes to empower females to pursue computer science

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Crystal Yang and Prisha Singh, the presidents of an all-girls organization from Katy's Girls Who Code club, Girls Who Code Katy, hope to bring computer science to minorities. In general, the two Tompkins High School students say that they love promoting technology to solve major problems in the world -- which was a major inspiration for the creation of a "hackathon," which is an event where people meet to engage in collaborative computer programming.

From August 11th - 13th, the two students hosted a hackathon called KatyYouthHacks, where students from all around the world created technological websites, apps, robots, and other projects to help the world be a more sustainable place. Overall, the event accrued more than 425 participants from 38 countries and received 68 submissions. The pair was also able to obtain over \$70,000 in corporate sponsorships, and had judges from Google, Amazon, and VISA.

"We decided to make this hackathon because we noticed that many individuals from our community wanted to start coding, but had no clue where to even begin," said Yang. "We realized that if this is an issue in a developed country, where many individuals



CRYSTAL YANG



PRISHA SINGH

are taught programming in their schools yet are still afraid to code, this is probably a larger issue in many other countries where there are less resources to teach the youth about programming. Thus, we hosted the Katy Youth Hackathon 2023."

When determining the theme of the hackathon, Crystal and Prisha decided to pick environmental sustainability -- inspired in part by the extremely hot weather that the Katy area has recently experienced. Some of the hackathon's winning projects included an ecological simulation game to teach elementary school children about biodiversity, a carbon emissions calculator website to live more sustainably, and an Artificial Intelligence ChatBot to help people deal with wildlife.

"Overall, we are proud to have hosted an event that was able to inspire so many people to create technological projects that promote sustainability," said Yang.

Sarah Bauguss, computer science teacher at Tompkins, is the club's faculty sponsor.

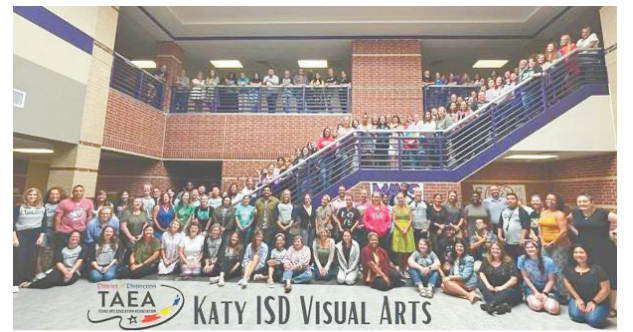
For more information, please go to theKatyYouthHacks website: <https://katy-hacks.org/>

Katy ISD earns 2023 TAEA District of Distinction Award

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

Katy ISD Fine Arts Department is leading the way in visual arts after being honored by the Texas Art Education Association (TAEA) with the 2023 District of Distinction Award for the third time. The recognition places Katy ISD among the top 5.5% of visual arts programs in the state. Out of 1,200 school districts and learning institutions in Texas that were eligible to apply for the prestigious award, 68 met the high standards.

"Katy ISD continually provides a well-rounded education that incorporates a visual arts curriculum that inspires student creativity and connects learners to their community and beyond," said Susan Chibor



roski, Assistant Director of Fine Arts. "The Visual Art Administrators of Texas, which is a division of TAEA, also recognized Katy ISD for its outstanding leadership in promoting the arts in its

district as well as within the community," added Chiboroski.

Katy ISD will be honored at the TAEA Administration & Supervision Division meeting as part of the TAEA Conference on November 17, 2023. The district currently has approximately 52,548 students enrolled in art courses served by 147 certified visual arts teachers.

WATER DISTRICT NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON TAX RATE

The WALLER COUNTY R.I.D. #1 will hold a public hearing on a proposed tax rate for the tax year 2023 on September 15, 2023, at 11:00 a.m. at 6363 Woodway, Suite #800, Houston, TX 77057. Your individual taxes may increase at a greater or lesser rate, or even decrease, depending on the tax rate that is adopted and on the change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in taxable value of all other property. The change in the taxable value of your property in relation to the change in the taxable value of all other property determines the distribution of the tax burden among all property owners.

Visit Texas.gov/PropertyTaxes to find a link to your local property tax database on which you can easily access information regarding your property taxes, including information about proposed tax rates and scheduled public hearings of each entity that taxes your property.

FOR the proposal: Kevin Staloch, Kristen Woods and Robert Spears
AGAINST the proposal: None
PRESENT and not voting: None
ABSENT: Lilly Fredona and Robert Cortez

The following table compares taxes on an average residence homestead in this taxing unit last year to taxes proposed on the average residence homestead this year.

	Last Year \$1.17000/\$100 Adopted	This Year \$1.05000/\$100 Proposed
Total tax rate (per \$100 of value)	\$1.17000/\$100 Adopted	\$1.05000/\$100 Proposed
Difference in rates per \$100 of value		\$.12000/\$100
Percentage increase/decrease in rates (+/-)		-10.25%
Average appraised residence homestead value	\$ 217,872	\$ 281,515
General homestead exemptions available (excluding 65 years of age or older or disabled persons exemptions)	\$ 0	\$ 0
Average residence homestead taxable value	\$ 217,872	\$ 281,515
Tax on average residence homestead	\$ 2,549.10	\$ 2,955.90
Annual increase/decrease in taxes if proposed tax rate is adopted (+/-) and percentage of increase (+/-)		\$ 406.80 15.95%

NOTICE OF TAXPAYERS' RIGHT TO ELECTION TO REDUCE TAX RATE

If the district adopts a combined debt service, operation and maintenance, and contract tax rate that would result in the taxes on the average residence homestead increasing by more than eight percent, the qualified voters of the district by petition may require that an election be held to determine whether to reduce the operation and maintenance tax rate to the voter-approval tax rate under Section 49.23603, Water Code.

The board of directors proposes to use the tax increase to pay for the District's debt service and operating needs while maintaining reserves in its Debt Service Fund and General Fund.

The 86th Texas Legislature modified the manner in which the voter-approval tax rate is calculated to limit the rate of growth of property taxes in the state.

Bob Leared Interests 713-932-9011

HEART OF KATY Market
KATY-HIGH SCHOOL
SEPTEMBER 16TH 10:00AM-5:00PM
SEPTEMBER 17TH 12:00PM-5:00PM
FREE ADMISSION
Over 100 vendors with clothing, food, arts, crafts, treats, and MORE
Have lunch with us to support KBBC!
INTERESTED IN BECOMING A VENDOR?
PLEASE EMAIL HEARTOFKATYCRAFTSHOW@GMAIL.COM

The Katy Times will be closed on
Labor Day
Sept. 6, 2021
to celebrate the holiday with family and friends.
The deadline for all advertising and editorial copy in the **September 9 edition** is **5 p.m. on Thursday, September 2.**
Have a safe and happy holiday from
The Katy Times staff
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