

Belton ISD seniors earn academic honors from College Board

Special to the Journal

Belton ISD has three seniors named College Board National Recognition Program Scholars for top performances on the Preliminary SAT (PSAT) during their junior year.

The students were among the top 2.5 percent of test takers who identify as one or more of the following: African American, Hispanic American or Latinx, Indigenous or attend school in a rural area or are from a small town.

Belton High School senior Ryan Carpio-Brown and Belton New Tech High @ Waskow senior Kylan Menapace were named African American Scholars. New Tech senior Ethan Rodriguez was named a Hispanic American Scholar. To qualify for the recog-

nition, the students' had to achieve a minimum PSAT score and a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher.

"It's always great to see our Belton ISD students honored for their hard work and dedication to learning," said Superintendent Matt Smith. "We applaud this achievement and all that this award represents."

In its first year of honoring students, the College Board recognition program

aims to create pathways to college for students from underrepresented communities by awarding them

academic honors and connecting them with universities across the county. Belton ISD's African

American Scholars include:

Ryan Carpio-Brown is the son of Benjamin Solis and Dr. Marisol Carpio-So-

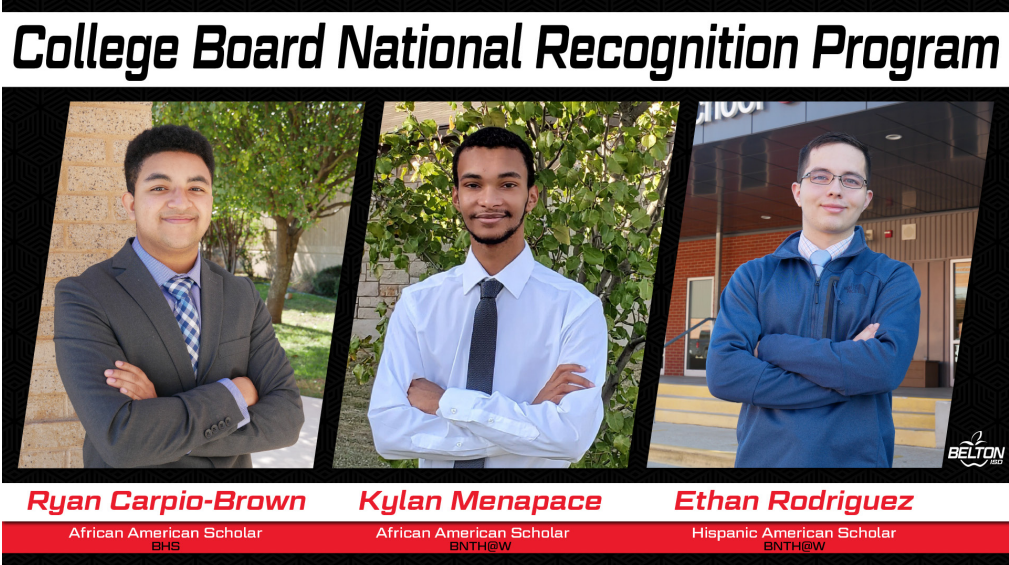
lis. At BHS, he participates in the National Honor Society and Quiz Bowl and is a co-leader on the Ro-

botics Team. As a junior, Carpio-Brown led a history fair group that placed at the regional competition. Carpio-Brown plays the piano in his free time. He plans to attend the University of Texas and major in engineering.

Kylan Menapace is the son of Kurt and Kelly Menapace. At New Tech, Menapace is a member of the Leadership Council, National Honor Society and Key Club and serves

as the head programmer for the Robotics Team. He volunteers as a porter of parking for his church's worship services and food drives. Menapace plans on majoring in civil engineering at either the University of Texas, Texas A&M University, Rice University or the University of Michigan. Belton ISD's Hispanic American Scholar is:

Ethan Rodriguez is the son of John and Leslie Christopher. He is a board member for the Youth Advisory Commission with the City of Belton and is active with the National Honor Society at New Tech. Rodriguez also swims for the varsity team and a club team. He plans on majoring in aerospace engineering at either the University of Texas or the United States Naval Academy.



Band - From Page A1

dan Dolotina said. "These were then judged anonymously, and each student was ranked alongside the other band students from all of the middle schools in Belton, Bryan and College Station."

The following students were awarded a place in the All-Region Band.

Lake Belton Middle School

Flute: Madison Weaver

– 4th chair; Oboe: Emilio Gonzazles – 3rd chair; Clarinet: Cahaya Lane – 1st chair, Lizzie McCready – 5th chair, Maggie Johnson – 10th chair and Nevaeh Rodriguez – 14th chair; Bass Clarinet: Ryan Suduth – 2nd chair; Alto Saxophone: Pate Palomino – 3rd chair and Evan Eckert – 4th chair; Tenor Saxophone: Mia Garza – 2nd chair; Trumpet: Colin Andermann – 6th chair, Rennison Ling

– 10th chair, Gabe Vacula – 11th chair and Jacob Walters – 16th chair; French Horn: Lauren Stefek – 4th chair, Isabel Matthews – 5th chair, Brayden Mellon – 8th chair and Natalie Van Cleave – 11th chair; Trombone: Julian Walker – 5th chair; Euphonium: Joseph Doney – 1st chair, Michael Cook – 4th chair and Dominic Valdez – 6th chair; Tuba: Noah Santos – 1st chair and Brock Winkler – 3rd chair; Percus-

sion: Abigail Hajovsky – 5th chair, Jayden Bautista – 7th chair, Olivia Cromwell – 12th chair and Patrick Hart – 15th chair.

Belton Middle School

Abigail Idoux – flute; Avery Rivera placed – clarinet; Olivia Brillhart, John Perry and Noelle Dietter – alto saxophone; Chris Vazquez – trumpet; Jane Gauntt – French horn; Pablo

Ureste, Alyssa Vahrenkamp, David Shelburne and Kylan Pulley – trombone; Mallory Larson – euphonium; Alyssa Nickerson, Grant Cushman, Brennan Lanham, Diego Santiago-Cruz and Grace Landen (alternate) – percussion.

North Belton Middle School

Jonathan Crow – oboe; Lilyan Graves and Lilly

Allman – clarinet; Cooper McGowan (alternate) – tenor saxophone; Nathaniel Herrera (alternate) – baritone saxophone; Dave Apte, Alexis Wittman and Danica Garza – trumpet; Alec Halford and Abigail Levant (alternate) – French horn; Zayne Groetecke and Kevin Muchunu – trombone; Andrew Kessler and Jeremiah Rutherford – tuba; Katherine Moore and Caitlyn Thi-beault – percussion.

Board - From Page A1

work begins in kindergarten to get students prepared for their educational experiences to come.

The third goal refers to high schoolers with the aspiration to raise the percent of graduates that meet criteria for CCMR from 72 to 100 percent.

"This is a significant stretch goal for our system, but it's important," Lovesmith said. "CCMR is not one measure on one day with one group of students."

The board unanimously approved of these goals.

Lovesmith then discussed a proposed Targeted Improvement Plan for Southwest Elementary. Because 2020 STAAR testing was canceled due to COVID-19, Southwest Elementary retained its

academic performance rating of "D" in one or more domains - Student Achievement, School Progress and Closing the Gap - based on 2019 STAAR testing.

The goal of this plan is to establish a vision, mission and goals focused on a safe environment and high expectations, outline clear roles and responsibilities to be outlined for campus instructional leaders and establish objective driven daily lessons with formative assessments, Lovesmith said.

"I want to say that the work from Southwest is very intentional with our learners," Lovesmith said.

Following Lovesmith's presentation, the board thanked Dawn Schiller, principal of Southwest Elementary, and

campus administration for their efforts in creating a positive learning culture, as well as the Belton ISD leadership team for their assistance.

With that, the board approved the Targeted Improvement Plan.

Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Todd Schiller recommended the employment of Courtney Brewer as assistant principal of Belton Early Childhood School, and the board unanimously approved of her hiring.

Mike Morgan, assistant superintendent of operations, stepped to the podium to address the close out of the BHS Orchestra Construction project.

"One of our strongest and fastest growing programs

in the Belton Independent School District is our orchestra program," Morgan said.

He thanked everyone who had a hand in making this project - fit with a rehearsal hall, sectional hall and practice rooms - happen.

"The kids are some of the hardest working kids that I've been around, and it's always a joy to walk in that orchestra room and see them play and the smiles on their face," BHS Principal Ben Smith said.

Two of those students are seniors Gwyneth Sachsenmaier, a violinist of 10 years who has been involved in the Belton ISD orchestra program for seven years, and Julie Johnson, who has also been playing since sixth

grade.

"This new addition has truly benefitted us so much," Sachsenmaier said. "We have more soundproof walls in our practice rooms, and we can actually practice multiple things at once now."

Johnson echoed these sentiments and spoke about how the orchestra has provided her with various opportunities and looks forward to passing them along to future orchestra students someday.

With that, the board voted to close out construction.

Superintendent Dr. Matthew Smith provided the superintendent's report, wherein he gave an enrollment update.

As of Thursday, Nov. 12, Belton ISD had 12,651 students enrolled in the district with 9,945 (78.6 percent) being at-school learners and 2,706 (21.4 percent) participating in at-home learning.

Because of the unprecedented nature of the present school year, Smith said he is eager to provide ample administrative support to ensure the Big Red community - be that the students, parents, employees and administrators - are well taken care of. Likewise, although the district remains in Scenario 3 of its System Response Guide, Smith said it is prepared to transition should the situation warrant it.

Fire - From Page A4

vigilant state. This system is designed in a way to increase the down time away from work," Belton Fire Chief Jon Fontenot said.

It takes time to adjust from the office or construction time to home life. Getting off the job is not just going home. Any job of high stress requires down time. The idea is to give around 50 hours of good solid rest or downtime. In a job that at times there is high stress, 96 hours off might not be one hour off. There are no change of duties or less work required.

"Every morning there are still the daily duties that need to be performed. They are expected to perform the same amount of work each day. Mentally, this gives our firefighters a break. This gives around 50 hours off of good downtime for each fire fighter," Fontenot said.

There is the issue of 48 hours of high call volume at one of the stations. If this happens, the plan is to move some of them to the other station to balance things out. The new schedule was well received by around 90 percent of the firefighters.

In its Strategic Plan, the Belton Fire Department is looking to add a training facility or a partnership

with the City of Temple for one. The Belton firefighters have five different options of pants and footwear. The shirts they wear are all the same. People favor different types of pants. Firefighters are no different. A website has been created for them to purchase what they need.

Each Firefighter is given a stipend for the purchase of equipment. Rain coats are included on the list for purchase.

They are currently instituting an in-house certification program, which allows them to teach in-house. Fontenot spent two years

in Iraq helping institute a compliance program for the fire departments at 28 military bases. He came to Belton from Tomball. During his time in Tomball the fire department went from a volunteer fire department to full-time with three stations.

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