

*8<sup>th</sup> Annual* Panthers of Prestige



Academic Awards Ceremony

It is our privilege to honor the top twenty graduates of the Lufkin Independent School District. We recognize these young men and women for their high scholastic achievement, earning the highest grade point averages among the 2021 LHS graduating class. They also distinguish themselves by participating in extracurricular school activities and in providing service to others in our community. Setting high standards and goals for themselves and through hard work, they have successfully achieved beyond the norm. For their superior achievements, we proudly name these young scholars as our 2021 Panthers of Prestige.

We are also proud to recognize twenty outstanding educators. Each graduate chose the teacher he or she wished to honor as a Teacher of Influence in their personal success. These educators excel in sharing their knowledge, wisdom and guidance to further the quest for learning and the desire for excellence. They represent the teachers of LISD who have gone above and beyond to educate our students.

The Lufkin ISD Education Foundation Board thanks Linebarger Goggan Blair and Sampson, LLP for their generous underwriting of this event. We are grateful that they share our vision of providing teachers the resources to enrich the academic experience for our students and to produce academically outstanding students such as the ones we honor tonight.

Thank you, Linebarger Goggan Blair and Sampson, LLP, for your support!





Lufkin ISD Education Foundation's mission is to provide opportunities for excellence in education, promote innovation in teaching, and partner with the community to enhance the quality of education for all students of the Lufkin Independent School District.



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### *8<sup>th</sup> Annual* Panthers of Prestige



Academic Awards Ceremony

Welcome Tyane Dietz, LISD Education Foundation President

LISD Education Foundation's Mission and Accomplishments Vercie McMullen, Executive Director, LISD Education Foundation

#### Procession of Graduates and their Educator of Influence

Invocation Demetress Harrell, Past President, LISD Education Foundation

> **Vocal Performance** "Corner of the Sky" – Emma Carlile, LHS Senior

Valedictorian & Salutatorian Recognition Demetress Harrell, Past President, LISD Education Foundation

"Surprise! You're My Educator of Influence!" Video

Graduates' Presentations to their Educator of Influence

2021 Top 20 LISD Graduates Awarded Medals by LISD Education Foundation

Superintendent Remarks Lynn Torres, Superintendent, Lufkin ISD

Thanks & Closing Remarks Tyane Dietz, LISD Education Foundation President





### Christopher Acker

#### Awards and Activities:

- STEM Academy
- STEM Outstanding Volunteer
- Eagle Scout
- Eagle Palms
- LHS Band
- Quartermaster
- Interact Club
- American Sign Language Club
- National Honor Society

#### • Usher at Church

• Boy Scouts of America

#### The Future:

Northwestern State University Major: Applied Micro-Biology

#### Mrs. Tatum:

Mrs. Tatum's kindness and optimism helped me through my senior year. She is one of the nicest teachers I ever had.

### EDUCATOR OF INFLUENCE



Shelly Tatum

AP English IV and English II

- LHS graduate (class of 1983)
- Bachelor of Arts Stephen F. Austin State University
- 15 years in Lufkin ISD

#### Philosophy:

The study of art, literature, history and philosophy opens and trains the mind to think critically, to create freely, and to learn persistently. Education is a lifelong project with no ending and no limits. As a teacher, my goal is to inspire a lifetime of learning, growing, adapting and inventing.





# Kade Carr

#### Awards and Activities:

- LHS Band
- Drumline
- STEM Academy
- National Honor Society

The Future: Texas A&M University Major: Computer Engineering

#### Mr. Hungerford:

Not only did you further my interested in Computer Science, but you broadened the horizon for me as to what a computer is capable of doing.

## EDUCATOR OF INFLUENCE



### Thomas Hungerford

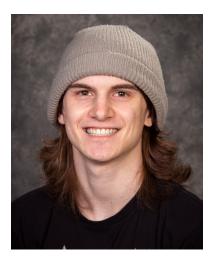
Computer Science and Math

- LHS graduate (class of 2002)
- University of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio Texas
- 12 years in Lufkin ISD

#### Philosophy:

Each student comes to us with their own academic gifts and weaknesses, with their own personal history and familial/cultural viewpoint, facing their own challenges and pursuing their own goals. I see my job to be that of a guide, advocate, and facilitator. I want my students to leave with the courage and skills to change the world according to their vision.





### David Cassity

#### Awards and Activities:

- National Honor Society
- Rotary Youth Leadership Award
- Interact Club Treasurer (10th and 11th grades)
- Band (10th grade)
- Chess Club Member
  Computer Science UIL (12th grade)

#### The Future:

University of Texas at Austin Major: Double major in Computer Science and Statistics

#### Mrs. Kerr:

You are not only brilliant and charismatic, you are caring, treating us like we are your own children.

## EDUCATOR OF INFLUENCE



Dayna Kerr

Calculus and Computer Science

- Bachelor of Science in Physics Stephen F Austin State University
- Master of Science in Mathematics Stephen F Austin State University
- 10 years in Lufkin ISD

#### Philosophy:

My philosophy is that the classroom should be a safe place to make mistakes and learn from them. Every student should have equal access to the opportunity to learn. I believe it is my job to foster imagination, creativity, and exploration to pique the curiosity of the students and hopefully make them lifelong learners.





## Chance Day

#### Awards and Activities:

- National Honor Society
- Band
- All-Region Qualifier
- Area Qualifier

**The Future:** Brigham Young University Major: Mathematics

Mr. Aviles: I always enjoy our conversations no matter if they are about football or just life experiences in general.

### EDUCATOR OF INFLUENCE



Jonathan Aviles

LHS Assistant Band Director

- Bachelor of Music Education from Stephen F. Austin State University
- 4 years in Lufkin ISD

#### Philosophy:

Everyone in the classroom contributes as a student, teacher and thinker. I learn from my students as much as they learn from me. It is okay to push them as much as you can and in return you hope they are inspired by your passion to teach. Music is its own language and when you communicate fluently, you can have fun and make beautiful art.





### America Diaz

#### Awards and Activities:

- Drill team officer
- Student Council Senior Class Vice-President
- Ignite Mentor
- National Honor Society
- Pan-American Student Forum
- AP Scholar with Distinction
- Senior Homecoming Court
- Dual Language

#### • Gifted and Talented Program

• Superintendent Honor Roll

#### The Future:

University of Texas at Tyler Major: Communication Sciences and Disorders

#### Mrs. Lila:

Thank you for constantly pushing and encouraging us every day in class. Your expectations helped me strive to become not only a better student, but person as well.

### EDUCATOR OF INFLUENCE



Guadalupe Lila

Spanish II, Spanish III, IV and VAP

- Bachelor of Arts in International Business and Bachelor of Arts in Spanish
- 5 years in Lufkin ISD

#### Philosophy:

As a Hispanic educator, my goal is to create interest and appreciation of the Hispanic culture. My personal goal is to create a positive, challenging, fun and energetic classroom. My hope is to motivate and help everyone express their opinion. I create an environment of mutual respect where comfortability is not an issue. To mold the student, mentally, emotionally, physically, and socially is one of my achievements as an educator. I care for each student as if they were my own and teach them to meet their full potential no matter what the world throws at them. My educating career is not bound to the four walls of my classroom it goes beyond that.





### Nathaniel Eubanks

#### Awards and Activities:

- FIRST Robotics
- Ignite Mentor
- Interact Club
- STEM Academy
- LISD Technology Internship
- Cyberstart Graduate
- Microsoft Information Technology Securities Certification
- Rockwell Innovation in Control Systems

#### • FIRST Judges Award

• Excellent in Engineering

#### The Future:

University of Texas at Austin Major: Mechanical Engineering and Computer Science

#### Mrs. Powell:

Mrs. Powell helped me appreciate a subject that I never liked and positively influence my daily life.

### EDUCATOR OF INFLUENCE



Jennifer Powell

Language Arts Teacher

- Bachelor of Science in Psychology and minor in Writing Stephen F. Austin State University
- 16 years in Lufkin ISD

#### Philosophy:

"True teachers use themselves as bridges over which they invite their students to cross; then, having facilitated their crossing, joyfully collapse, encouraging them to create bridges of their own." ~ Nikos Kazantzakis Education does not come in a "one size fits all" category. All students deserve to achieve their greatness provided that their education is guided and maneuvered in a manner that meets every child's specific learning style and need. The hope in doing this is that education then becomes a catalyst connecting the gap, making students' dreams their realities. As teachers, we have the awesome opportunity to direct the course of this journey and witness their growth!





### William Hansard

#### Awards and Activities:

- Lufkin Wind Ensemble
- Outstanding Musician Solo & Ensemble
- Symphonic Band member for TMEA All-Region and Area Qualifier
- Rising Star Awards
- 1st chair and section leader (two years)
- STEM Academy
- Region Qualifier for State Science Fair
- National Honor Society

- Superintendent's Honor Roll
- AP Distinguished Scholar
- College Board National Recognition

#### The Future:

University of Houston Major: Bio Medical Honors Program Degree

#### Mrs. Friesen:

Mrs. Friesen has been a role model I have looked up to since I was in her class back in 2013. I nominated her for her compassionate nature and unwavering love for her students even when they struggle.

### EDUCATOR OF INFLUENCE



Cathey Friesen

**Retired Elementary Teacher** 

- Texas Christian University and Stephen F. Austin State University
- 30 years in Lufkin ISD

#### Philosophy:

I believe it is my job as a teacher to be a guide and provide an environment where students can grow mentally, physically and socially; and for students to develop tools that will help them be successful in life.





### Michael Hill III

#### Awards and Activities:

- Skills USA Game Design 1st place district 11th & 12th grade 1st place state 12th grade
- Drug-Free All Stars member
- UIL Computer Science and Spelling

#### **The Future:** Stephen F. Austin State University Major: Computer Science

#### Mrs. Miller:

The animation classes I had with you allowed me to express my creativity in ways that no other class I've had could, and your demeanor and care for all of us students is apparent in everything you do.

### EDUCATOR OF INFLUENCE



Tracie Miller

CTE LAB

- Texas Woman's University in Denton, TX
- 22 years in Lufkin ISD (25 years teaching experience)

#### Philosophy:

Learning can be fun when you have an overactive imagination, a zeal for knowledge, and technology at your fingertips.





# Noah Hillis

#### Awards and Activities:

- Robotics
- 1st place state Skills USA Interactive Game Design
- Superintendent's Honor Roll
- Innovation in Central Systems Award
- Interact Club
- 1st division Band

#### The Future: Texas A&M University Major: Mechanical Engineering

#### Mr. Eubanks:

You taught me how to be a good student, to open my mind to new ideas, pushed me to do my absolute best, and taught some of the most obscure knowledge that I still hold on to this day.

### EDUCATOR OF INFLUENCE



Danny Eubanks

Language Arts

- Bachelor of Arts, Stephen F. Austin State University
- Master of Arts, Stephen F. Austin State University
- 17 years in Lufkin

#### Philosophy:

I believe in pushing my students out of their educational comfort zones and challenging them to rise to the occasion. I also believe in encouraging them to take the knowledge that they are learning and apply it to the real world in which we live – to see how the art we study, the history that we analyze, the reading skills that we acquire help us to become more aware or our surroundings, to find areas where we can improve our lives, and to have a positive impact on the lives of others.





# Hunter Jones

#### Awards and Activities:

- Varsity Basketball/Baseball
- Ignite Executive
- FCA
- National Honor Society
- Superintendent's Honor Roll
- Academic All-District for Varsity Basketball

#### The Future: University of Texas at Austin Major: Business Management

#### Mrs. Free:

You have become a second mother to me, and I appreciate everything you have done and continue to do for me.

### EDUCATOR OF INFLUENCE



Jennifer Free

**CTE Health Education** 

- Bachelor of Science in Nursing University of Toledo in Toledo, Ohio
- 3 years in Lufkin ISD

#### Philosophy:

I believe that learning is a life-long process. I strive to learn something new daily, and I encourage my students to do that too. I provide a safe environment where my students can ask any question and it is fun to learn. I am passionate about nursing and medicine. I want to share my passion and experiences in hopes that my students can apply what they learn to become successful in life. I also believe that education is not only about teaching my students. My students have taught me to keep an open mind and strive to be better every day. I want my students to know that they are important and valuable. Many people think teachers don't get enough credit for what they do. I believe the students don't get their due credit. I am but a reflection of my students. My students make me the best teacher I can be. In turn, I help make them the best that they can be.





### Minhal Khan

#### Awards and Activities:

- STEM Outstanding Volunteer
- Drug-Free All Star
- National Honor Society
- STEM Academy
- Anchor Club
- Ignite Mentor
- Interact Club

#### The Future: Stephen F. Austin State University Major: Nutrition

#### Mrs. Rogers:

You taught me to persevere through tough times, but also to never overburden myself. I am sad to leave this chapter of my life, but I will always keep the things you taught me close to my heart.

### EDUCATOR OF INFLUENCE



LaTessa Rogers

6th Grade Mathematics

- Bachelor of Science Interdisciplinary Studies with a Specialization in 4-8 Mathematics, Stephen F. Austin State University
- 18 years in Lufkin ISD

#### Philosophy:

I believe that my eagerness to learn about my students' cultures, beliefs, and lives away from school builds bonds with them that can never be broken. I always want my kids to know that I am an advocate for them and their needs. Teaching is learning – learning from my students, my colleagues, and parents. It's a lifelong process where I've learned new strategies and new ideas.





### Abigail Lantis

#### Awards and Activities:

- Band
- Drum Major 12th
- Majorette 9th-12th
- Uniform Crew 10th-12th
- STEM Academy
- Drug-Free All Star
- KYSSED Club
- AP Scholar with Honor

#### National Honor Society

• Questbridge Finalist

#### The Future:

University of Texas at Austin Major: Psychology

#### Mr. Beavers:

You have taught me organizational skills and developed my confidence as a leader, but most importantly you showed me how to be myself and embrace the strengths I already have.

### EDUCATOR OF INFLUENCE



Brandon Beavers

LHS Assistant Band Director at Lufkin High

- Bachelor in Music Education Degree and a Masters in Music Degree in Instrumental Conducting Stephen F. Austin State University
- 3 years in Lufkin ISD

#### Philosophy:

I believe that all students are capable of achieving musical and educational success at a high level when they feel a sense of encouragement from their teacher.





# Yousuf Mir

#### Awards and Activities:

- Tennis Captain
- National Honor Society President
- Scouts of America
- Interact Club
- Academic Decathlon Captain

#### The Future: Texas A&M University Major: Biomedical Engineering

#### Mrs. Fox:

Not only were you a great AP Biology teacher who incorporated interesting activities into the course, but you have been a mentor and a friend to me as well.

### EDUCATOR OF INFLUENCE



Christy Fox Biology and AP Biology

- Bachelor of Science in Biology, Northwestern State University
- Master of Art in Secondary Education, Stephen F. Austin State University
- Master of Science Biological Sciences Texas A&M University, Commerce
- 8 years in Lufkin ISD

#### Philosophy:

My philosophy of education is grounded on the idea that each student is unique and can learn. As the teacher, it is my responsibility to continue to grow and self-reflect. My teaching style is based on holistic and metacognitive principles that is nurturing, supportive, collaborative, and engaged. It is the teacher's role to create a safe, creative, and judgement free environment to aid in student growth both academically and socially through the development of a well-rounded human beings who are grounded in integrity, innovation, service, and social justice. In my classroom, I hope that fuels inquisitiveness, critical thinking, experimentation that challenges their thinking and the status quo.





Mrs. McManus:

### Taha Nazeer

#### Awards and Activities:

- Drug-Free All Star Ambassador
- Texans for Safe & Drug Free Youth Member
- Student Council Class Representative 11th grade
- Student Council Class Secretary/Treasurer, 9th grade •
- Anchor Club Secretary
- KYSSED Club
- Interact Club
- Ignite Program
- Pan American Student Forum Club (Spanish)
- Robotics

My high school experience would not have been fruitful without your care and support.

• Academic Decathlon

- UIL Number Sense and Science
- To-be Eagle Scout
- DUKE TIP Biomedical Ethics and Genetic Counseling Course at Rice University
- AP Scholar with Distinction
- PSAT Nation Merit Commended Scholar
- PSAT National Rural and Small Town Recognition Award
- Rotary Youth Leadership Awards
- CADCA (Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America) Scholarship

## EDUCATOR OF INFLUENCE



Julie McManus

LHS Associate Principal for Curriculum and Instruction

- Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies with a focus in Special education Stephen F. Austin Statue University
- 16 years in Lufkin ISD

#### Philosophy:

"Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you react to it." - Charles R. Swindoll My goal as an educator is to guide and motivate students to be the best they can be. As a result, I dedicate time each day to building relationships with students and helping them to create positive outcomes when faced with adversity. My hope as a principal is to serve as a resource, coach, and advocate for students academically and socially to ensure all students are successful.





## Sarah Riley

#### Awards and Activities:

- STEM Academy
- Dual Language
- Interact Club
- RYLA
- Varsity Tennis (Soph-Junior Year)

- Piano
- National Honor Society

#### The Future:

Texas A&M University Major: Marine Biology

#### Mrs. Stover:

Your passion for teaching and wildlife is truly inspiring. If I didn't have you as a teacher, I probably wouldn't be on the path that I am.

### EDUCATOR OF INFLUENCE



Jennifer Stover

- Lufkin High School graduate
- · Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology, University of Texas at San Antonio
- Texas Teaching Certificate, Stephen F. Austin University
- Masters Degree in Biological Sciences, Miami University
- 12 years in Lufkin ISD

#### Philosophy:

I want my students to feel the excitement of discovery, creativity and beauty of our world. I try to teach in a way where my students feel safe enough to try new things to solve problems in original and innovative ways. It is very important that my students feel loved and confident so that they might find joy in coming to my class every day.





### Paulina Rios

#### Awards and Activities:

- Spanish Club
- Superintendent's Honor Roll
- National Honor Society

**The Future:** University of Houston Major: Psychology

#### Mrs. Tarbutton:

I was lucky enough to have you twice and both times I loved your class because of your passion and enthusiasm when you teach, which made history fun and interesting.

### EDUCATOR OF INFLUENCE



### Christine Tarbutton

Social Studies

- University of Texas at Austin
- 10 years in Lufkin ISD

#### Philosophy:

The teacher's role is to act as a guide towards the education of the individual. Education is more than just the memorization of facts; it is the conveyance of knowledge, values, and skills that comes following high expectations and active engagement established by the educator. The educator should guide students to willfully take an education that will enable them to become informed, responsible, professional, critical thinking adults.





### Joel Sarmiento

#### Awards and Activities:

- Band
- Interact Club
- National Honor Society
- STEM Academy
- UIL Math
- Number Sense
- Hispanic Scholarship Fund Scholar
- AP Scholar
- National Hispanic Recognition Program
- National Rural and Small Town Recognition Program

- TMEA All-Region Symphonic Band Member (4 yrs), First Chair (2 yrs), Area Qualifier (3 yrs)
- Texas State Solo & Ensemble Qualifier

#### The Future:

University of Oklahoma Major: Music Education

#### Mr. Little:

The moment I will always remember as kickstarting my music education journey is when you told me, "You need to be a band director." It meant more to me coming from you than anyone else who had told me that before.

### EDUCATOR OF INFLUENCE



George Little

LHS Band Director

- Stephen F. Austin State University
- 5 years in Lufkin ISD, 19 years overall

#### Philosophy:

My educational philosophy is that students can achieve at their highest levels if they received honest feedback, are given practical tools for improving, and know that you believe in them. It's all about the kids!





### Hiba Siddiqui

#### Awards and Activities:

- STEM Academy
- Tennis (2 yrs)
- Breaking the Stereotype Club
- Spanish Club
- Interact/Rotary Club (2 yrs)
- Ignite (2 yrs)

The Future: Texas A&M University Major: Biology

Mrs. Tutt: I will never forget all those times you went an extra mile for all of your students.

### EDUCATOR OF INFLUENCE



Savanna Tutt

8th grade GT English at Lufkin Middle School

- Stephen F. Austin State University
- 6 years in Lufkin ISD

#### Philosophy:

"Images of broken light which dance before me like a million eyes, They call me on and on across the universe" significantly describes the atmosphere of teaching. In education, I believe that it is imperative to acknowledge that your knowledge and passion exceed beyond the basis of a curriculum. Through the beautiful symphonies of literature, we can teach life lessons, allow students to share their own experiences through connections, and show them their voice is valued and should be heard.





### Morgan Wagnone

#### Awards and Activities:

- Band (3 yrs)
- 1st and 2nd place title at NAMMB
- UIL competitions
- Majorette (2 yrs)
- Two 1st division ratings on UIL Solo & two 1st division ratings on UIL Ensemble
- Superintendent's Honor Roll
- STEM Academy

#### The Future:

Colorado State University Major: Sustainability Studies

#### Mr. Willis:

You've shown me nothing but compassion and respect, always been patient with me, joked around with me, and most importantly, been an extraordinary teacher. You are a teacher I will never forget.

### EDUCATOR OF INFLUENCE



David Willis

Science

- Graduate of Lufkin High School, 1991
- Bachelor of Arts in Biology, Baylor University
- Education Certification, Stephen F. Austin State University
- 23 years in Lufkin ISD

#### Philosophy:

My goal for education is always to prepare our students for what is next in their lives. No matter where a student is in their educational process, and no matter what their education has been up until that point, my hope and ambition is to create in them the idea that they can achieve more. I want to open their eyes to the possibility of what, "more," could be and prepare them to be ready to accomplish it.







#### Awards and Activities:

- STEM Academy
- Ignite Mentor
- Interact Club
- National Honor Society

The Future: University of Texas at Austin Major: Biology

#### Ms. Jungmann:

You have helped me achieve my goals and have encouraged me more than you may realize. I appreciate you.

### EDUCATOR OF INFLUENCE



Suzy Jungmann

- Bachelor of Science from Texas A&M University in Biology
- Master of Education from UT Tyler in Curriculum and Instruction with a focus in STEM Education
- 16 years in Lufkin ISD (36 years total in education)

#### Philosophy:

My teaching philosophy is grounded in two ideas. The first is driven by a quote from Ignacio Estrada, "If a child can't learn the way we teach, maybe we should teach the way they learn." Teaching and education is not one size fits all. Students enter our classroom from different educational backgrounds with a variety of learning styles and interests. We cannot expect all students to learn in the same manner. Secondly, I want students to have the opportunity to give back to the community. Ben Carson says this perfectly, "Happiness doesn't result from what we get, but from what we give."



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