

KINDER FOUNDATION

For Immediate Release

TWELVE HOUSTON EDUCATORS RECEIVE PRESTIGIOUS KINDER EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARD

Top educators granted gifts of recognition totaling \$300,000

HOUSTON – September 27, 2021 – Twelve (12) Houston-area school teachers were recently honored with the annual Kinder Excellence in Teaching Award and a gift of \$25,000 each, for a collective total of \$300,000 this year, from the [Kinder Foundation](#). Award recipients hail from KIPP Texas Public Schools – Houston, YES Prep Public Schools, Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Galveston – Houston, and Teach for America Houston. Each recipient was nominated by their school leader or school director, has taught at the same network or school for at least three years, is a positive motivator to students and faculty, and has led students to academic growth.

The Kinder Excellence in Teaching Awards have a transformational impact on the lives of the educators who earn them. In the past, teachers have used the award money in various ways to help improve the quality of life for themselves, their families, their students, and their communities.

2021 Kinder Excellence in Teaching Award Winners:

THE ARCHDIOCESE OF GALVESTON – HOUSTON

Dr. Steve Liparulo: English 3, Cristo Rey Jesuit College Preparatory

Gema Velazco: Pre-K 3 and 4, Holy Ghost Catholic School

KIPP TEXAS PUBLIC SCHOOLS – HOUSTON

Chelsea Flugence: 4th Grade Math, KIPP Peace Elementary School (TFA)

Ambur Duron: 7th Grade Social Studies/Writing, KIPP Voyage Academy for Girls

Paul Doherty: Upper School Technology (2nd – 4th Grade), KIPP Explore Academy

Kyla Chriss: English 1, KIPP East End High School

TEACH FOR AMERICA HOUSTON

Johanna Heegeman: 4th Grade Math and Science, Robinson Elementary (HISD)

Rodrigus Graham: 6th Grade Math, Lanier Middle School (HISD)

YES PREP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Kellen Hayes: US History and AP World History Teacher, YES Prep Brays Oaks Secondary

Kyle Stallard: Physical Education Teacher, YES Prep Brays Oaks Secondary

Evelyn Gutierrez: Kindergarten Teacher, YES Prep Southeast Elementary (TFA)

Rachael Morris: 7th Grade Math, YES Prep White Oak Secondary (TFA)

The Kinder Excellence in Teaching Awards has gifted more than \$4 million to over 275 teachers since the program was established in 2001. The program was created in honor of Kinder Foundation Chairman Rich Kinder's mother, Edna C. Kinder, who taught special education for many years in Cape Girardeau, Missouri.

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2021 recipient biographies and headshots: <https://bit.ly/39lWfir>

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About the Kinder Foundation

The Kinder Foundation, a family foundation established in 1997 by Rich and Nancy Kinder of Houston, Texas, provides transformational grants that impact urban green space, education, and quality of life. More at www.kinderfoundation.org.

About The Archdiocese of Galveston – Houston

The Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston Catholic Schools is the largest private school system in Texas and has served students since 1847. With 56 schools throughout the 10 counties of the Archdiocese, the schools serve more than 17,000 students in PreK-3 through 12th grades. Amongst the 56 schools, five grade schools and 11 high schools are owned and/or operated by religious orders or a Board of Directors. Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Galveston – Houston call young people to holiness and prepare them to live and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In collaboration with families, we teach the values of our faith and tradition, serve our community, and ensure academic excellence. Our schools are committed to the evangelizing mission of the Church to educate and form witnesses who transform the world. All schools offer need-based tuition assistance for students. The Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston serves 1.7 million Catholics and is the largest Roman Catholic diocese in Texas and the 5th largest in the United States. Check us out at www.choosecatholicschools.org or <https://www.facebook.com/CatholicSchoolsHouston!>

About KIPP Texas Public Schools – Houston

[KIPP Texas](http://www.kiptexas.org) is an open-enrollment, public, tuition-free charter school network of 59 schools with nearly 33,000 pre-K-12 students across Austin, Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston, and San Antonio. KIPP Texas is part of the national KIPP network of college-preparatory public charter schools in 20 states and the District of Columbia. Nationwide, KIPP students complete four-year college at a rate of 36 percent, comparable to the national average for all students and approximately three times higher than the average of students from low income families. www.kiptexas.org.

About Teach For America Houston

Teach For America works in partnership with 350 urban and rural communities across the country to expand educational opportunity for children. Founded in 1990, Teach For America recruits and develops a diverse corps of outstanding leaders who make an initial two-year commitment to teach in high-need schools and become lifelong leaders in the effort to end educational inequity. Currently, over 200 corps members teach in school districts across greater Houston. They join a Teach For America alumni community over 1,700 strong locally. Today Teach For America is a force of 64,000 alumni and corps members working in over 9,000 schools nationwide in pursuit of profound systemic change. From classrooms to districts to state houses across America, they are reimagining education to realize the day when every child has an equal opportunity to learn, lead, thrive, and co-create a future filled with possibility. Teach For America is a proud member of the AmeriCorps national service network. For more information, visit www.teachforamerica.org and follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

About YES Prep Public Schools

Since 1998, YES Prep has increased the number of students from underserved communities who graduate from college prepared to lead. With 23 schools serving over 17,000 students, YES Prep leads

Houston forward by redefining what is possible in public education when children have access to excellent schools from pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade. YES Prep received the inaugural Broad Prize for Public Charter Schools, is nationally ranked by *U.S. News & World Report*, *The Washington Post*, and has consistently been named one of Houston's "Best Places to Work" by the *Houston Business Journal*. To learn more, visit: www.yesprep.org.