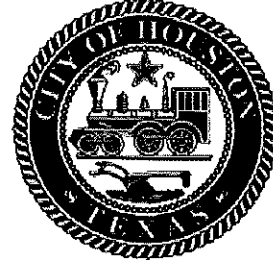


2021 NOMINATION

Please print clearly or type in the spaces below.



Category (choose only one)

- Arts in the Community
- Community Activist
- Education In the Community
- Youth Activist
- Lifetime Achievement

INDIVIDUAL NOMINEE

Name: Sandra Reyna-Urbina

Cell Phone: 832-465-2047 Other Phone: 713-213-8074

Home Address: 5305 Elysian Street

City: Houston State: Texas Zip: 77009

E-mail: sssreyna@gmail.com

NOMINATOR

Name: Emily Cole

Cell Phone: 713-805-4401 Other Phone: _____

Address: 1222 Cortlandt Street

City: Houston State: Texas Zip: 77008

E-mail: emilycole@sbcglobal.net

Submit via U.S. Mail or email the completed

- Nomination form (mandatory)
- Narrative statement or Letter of Recommendation (mandatory)
- Resume/Bio (mandatory)
- Other Supporting materials

All mandatory materials must be submitted, to be considered.

E-mail questions to:
Jackie.Schuessler-Kimsey@houstontx.gov

Mail to:
 City of Houston
 Attn: Jackie Schuessler-Kimsey (MHHA)
 901 Bagby, 3rd floor
 Houston, Texas 77002

Deadline: Postmarked by **August 6, 2021**

Or complete online at:
<http://www.houstontx.gov/specialevents/hispanicheritage.html>

SANDRA REYNA-URBINA

High School Teacher

✉ sssreyna@gmail.com

☎ (832) 465-2047

📍 Houston, TX

WORK EXPERIENCE

Fine Arts Department Chair

Northside High School

📅 August 2016 - current

- Provide instructional leadership, support, and assistance to teachers in my department
- Plan, organize, and oversee fine arts department programs
- Arrange and document weekly team meetings to ensure progress towards departmental goals
- Promote staff morale

Dance/Drill Team Director

Northside High School

📅 2000 - current

- Provide leadership & mentorship to over 20+ team members annually
- Organize and plan all special events, performances, rehearsals, activities, and fundraisers
- Worked collaboratively with other teaching staff to ensure that student athletes are excelling in their studies
- Work closely with parents of students to ensure a unified approach to helping students excel in and out of the classroom
- Establish and maintain a yearly, monthly budget

High Dance School Teacher

Northside High School

📅 2000 - current

📍 Houston, TX

- Taught over 180 students concurrently while providing a high degree of education customization when required
- Methodically planned and executed on lesson plans including collecting necessary resources to complete a given lesson
- Implemented successful classroom management strategies
- Developed and conducted formative and summative assessments and applied findings to subsequent lesson planning
- Modified lessons plans to accommodate the needs of special needs students
- Enforced a strong learning environment to further foster students' education
- Collaborate with teachers to provide cross-curriculum lessons and activities for our students

12th Grade English, Credit Recovery Boot Camp

Northside High School

📅 2021 - 2021

Speech & Communication

Northside High School

📅 2000 - 2011

AVID, Advancement Via Individual Determination

Northside High School

📅 2009 - 2011

9th Grade English

Northside High School

📅 2006 - 2007

EDUCATION

Masters of Education

Curriculum and Instruction with Technology Strand

University of Houston-Downtown

📅 2012

📍 Houston, TX

Bachelor of Science

Interdisciplinary Studies

University of Houston-Downtown

📅 2000

📍 Houston, TX

SKILLS

Bilingual in Spanish and English

CPR, AED, First Aid Certified

Computer Skills: G Suite, iWork, Microsoft Office 365, MacOS, Microsoft Windows

Web Tools: Google Classroom, MS Teams, Zoom Classroom, Dropbox

Accomplishments

KPRC Channel 2's Sunshine Award 2007

Teacher of the Year 2007, Jefferson Davis High School

CERTIFICATIONS-TEXAS

Dance 8-12

English 6-12

Physical Education EC-12

Speech 8-12

COMMITTEES

SDMC Vice President, 2021-Present

SDMC Member, 2012-Present

Safety & Security Committee, 2010-Present

School Spirit Committee, 2006-Present

Multicultural Committee, 2012-2016

School Uniform Committee, 2016

Tardy Committee, 2016

CORE COMPETENCIES

Leadership & Collaboration

Lesson & Curriculum Planning

Strategic Planning

Effective Communication

Classroom Management

Multitasking

Budgeting

Creativity

Conflict Resolution

Emily Cole
1222 Cortlandt Street
Houston, Tx 77008
Email: emilycole@sbcglobal.net

This is a letter of nomination of **Sandra E. Reyna-Urbina** for the Education in the Community Award of the 2021 Mayor's Hispanic Heritage Awards.

I first met Sandra E. Reyna-Urbina when I was principal of Davis HS in Houston ISD, and she was a student. Among the 1700 students in the school, she stood out in her positive attitude, her kindness and compassion with other students and her dedication to working towards academic success. With the strong family support, Sandra, who is the first-born daughter of immigrant parents from Mexico, managed to be the first in her family to graduate from high school and the first one in her family to graduate from college, become a teacher and later also earn a master's degree.

Mrs. Reyna-Urbina had a very successful college career at the University of Houston-Downtown. As a student there, she became very involved in community service projects. Among her involvements, she was Vice President of LASSO, a Latin American Organization that focused on public service. This organization allowed her to participate in the historic Latino March to Washington DC in 1996 to fight for immigration rights. As a member of the UHD's Orientation Planning Team, she helped plan and organize orientation for incoming freshmen and transfer students. Additionally, she was the Public Relations Chair for the C.A.B., Campus Activities Board. This led to numerous workshops and training throughout the country to bring new talent, acts, programs, and activities to UHD. Then, through her social engagement in the community she was 2nd Runner-up for Houston's Miss Fiestas Patrias and has received numerous awards for Dedication, Creativity, and Leadership for her work and contributions in L.A.S.S.O. and C.A.B.

After she graduated from college, she returned to Jefferson Davis High School (renamed Northside HS), her alma mater, as an English and Communications teacher and drill team director in 2000. She has remained at this school since then and has dedicated her work and her service to improving the student's academic success and ultimately their lives.

Her professional career was recognized several times. In 2007, she received two awards, one as Teacher of the Year and another one as the Channel 2 Sunshine Award. Besides becoming a master teacher, she also made time to mentor beginning teachers and to serve in several school committees that helped improve the curriculum to reach the various learning abilities of her students. By helping to make the Northside High School stronger, she has assisted in making the school community stronger too. In reviewing the description for this award, Sandra Reyna-Urbina has indeed demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to increasing educational

opportunities in academic work, healthy living and the true meaning of sportsmanship for her students and her school community.

Here are some examples of her commitment in these three areas:

Academics

Over the years, a majority of Mrs. Reyna-Urbina's students graduated and continued on to college. Several of these students became teachers because they admired their teacher and want to be like her. This community has gained many strong teachers due to the influence she had on her students. She is the kind of teacher that students always return to visit and share their life with her. Her pride is shared when she talks about her students enjoying various professional careers. Her classroom is decorated in bright colors and music is always in the air. Students feel comfortable, safe and loved. They enjoy sharing their college success stories with her. Of special recognition is that one of her former dance students became a teacher and is now a co-director with her at Northside High School. She loves to tell the story that now their relationship is as colleagues for their same alma mater. She also continues to grow academically. Currently, she plans to complete the principal certification program by summer 2022 and become a principal. Later she also plans to pursue an Ed. D in Professional Leadership. Mrs. Reyna-Urbina continues to be a role model for her students and community.

Healthy Living

Mrs. Reyna-Urbina has been known to have a gentle personality and is a great listener. Her healthy attitude and confidence in herself provide students with the support they need as they struggle with teenage anxieties, and in some cases tragic circumstances. She is very concerned with their mental health as they struggle with the loss of a parent, or a murder of a sibling or being the sole financial support of their family. Then, there are cases of students who struggle with their sexuality or other personal issues. She is always ready to help them with their personal crisis. In this community, one of the fears of the students is losing their parents or other family members to deportation. Even boys who often have trouble sharing their fears, concerns or feelings find it possible to share with her and listen to her advice. Besides these mental health issues, Mrs. Reyna-Urbina also built on the student's healthy personal /social issues. Being the director of the Dance/Drill Team, she can encourage the students to stand with honor, compete in dance competitions and believe in their strengths. It has been an honor to see several of her students continue to earn positions in their college drill and dance teams, and one even made the dance team of the professional Houston Soccer Team, The Dynamo. These students have confidence, poise, be happy, and know to welcome everyone with a smile. To know Mrs. Reyna-Urbina is to know that she understands students, knows how to listen and knows the importance of mental health and physical attributes.

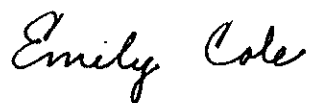
Sportsmanship

Concerning sportsmanship, Mrs. Reyna-Urbina has been able to provide her students with the love of music, the love of dance, and the love of teamwork. This love, with a positive attitude, has allowed her students to compete with other high schools; sometimes for a win and

sometimes with a *gracias* defeat. Over the last 20 years, she served as a drill team director the team attended at least 2 competitions per year. The dance drill team has won numerous trophies and awards, but regardless of the "bling" they bring back to the school the students always know that the most important thing is that they dance their heart out at every performance. She tells them, "How we place in a competition is not as important to me, rather that you have left your heart on that floor for those 2 minutes". When I asked her about her philosophy this is what she said: "I have instilled the importance of teamwork and that we can only be successful if we work together, learn together, be there for each other, and lose together. They have learned not only to motivate each team member, but to also be happy and humble about other dance drill teams' successes. In addition, to recognize and be gracious to the other teams' talents."

Her expectation of academic excellence, her role to support the mental and physical healthy living of her students, and her philosophy of good sportsmanship are the reasons I nominate this wonderful and caring teacher for the 2021 Mayor's Hispanic Award under the category of Education in the Community.

With much pride,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emily Cole". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letters of "Emily" and "Cole" being capitalized and prominent.

Emily Cole

August 5, 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Francisco Rodriguez, and I am a high school teacher at Northside High School in the Houston Independent School District. I am writing with an enthusiastic recommendation for Mrs. Sandra Reyna Urbina to be recognized for her achievements as an educator. As the former student of Mrs. Reyna Urbina, and now her colleague, I can attest to her passion, expertise, and dedication to her craft as an educator.

I can recall my time as a high school student, from 2005-2009, when I was a student on Mrs. Reyna Urbina's dance team at Jefferson Davis High School (now Northside HS). Mrs. Reyna Urbina instantly cultivated a safe space where I felt at home and comfortable expressing myself. This would not have been possible without her warm, caring energy and her deep understanding of how to reach through to the high school age student. My teammates and I looked up to Mrs. Reyna Urbina for her pride in her community, as she was a graduate of Jefferson Davis High School as well. She taught us from the beginning the importance of follow through, dedication, and passion into anything we apply ourselves. This helped me propel me in my academics and social life as a high school student, and in the world beyond high school.

Mrs. Reyna Urbina continues to have this impact on her students throughout the years. As a Dance Teacher, she inspires beginner dancers to take a step and try something new. The space and trust she creates in her Dance classroom are vital to students developing their confidence. While this is conducive to building a dancer on a stage, it also carries over into her students' personal lives outside of school. I have seen Mrs. Reyna Urbina's former students return, eager to say *hello* to her and catch up on their lives after graduation.

As a Dance Director, Mrs. Reyna Urbina continues to foster a creative, safe, and vibrant space for students to trust each other and trust themselves as artists. She approaches her craft with a high regard for reaching students where they are, while pushing them to reach their potential. Not only does she provide the dance feedback necessary for her students to shine on the stage, but she also offers them guidance and moral support in their academics and responsibilities. She continues to have a strong impression on them, as evident in the way that her graduates savor the memories that they share with her.

After completing twenty years as a proud educator, Mrs. Reyna Urbina's legacy lives on in the, the growth of the dance program and Northside High School and in lives that she's impacted as a teacher. I have the honor of working closely with Mrs. Reyna Urbina in coordinating our dance program, creatively building campus spirit, and simply enjoying what it means to be a *Proud Purple Panther* of Northside High School. She continues to inspire me all these years later, as she has continued to do so as an excellent teacher.

Regards,

Francisco Rodriguez

English and Dance Teacher

Northside High School

Houston Independent School District

To whom it may concern,


My name is Kandace Cortez. I was a student of Ms. Sandra Reyna for two years, but the impact that she has made on my life and the lives of so many others cannot be measured in time. I had the pleasure to dance for Ms. Reyna and represent our school with pride.

Through her work, Ms. Reyna has taught hundreds of young students and touched the lives of many. While being a part of the Pantherettes under the direction of Ms. Reyna, young boys and girls not only grow as dancers but as active citizens in their community. In my time with Ms. Reyna she has helped me grow confidence as well as learn how to set and meet all of my goals in life.

It has been 7 years since I have set foot into her dance room, yet many of her words have helped mold me into the woman I am today. Since graduation, I have pursued a career in education and currently am a first grade teacher, this decision was greatly influenced by having such a strong educator like Ms. Reyna in my life. I try to mirror many things that I learned from Ms. Reyna in my own classroom. By creating an atmosphere of trust and community within my class I feel like I am making life long connections, just like Ms. Reyna has within her own classes. Ms. Reyna creates and fosters a sense of community, trust, and responsibility in her classroom. With these things, it becomes easier for any student to feel at home in her class, to feel safe in a world where so many of us have nowhere else to go.

At Northside HS, many of us as students were products of broken homes as well as low income families. In this community it would have been very easy to "slip through the cracks." Ms. Reyna serves as an advocate for EVERY student and always does what is in the best interest for her students. She makes the impossible- possible for every student. Ms. Reyna pushes us all to be the best we can, to break the cycle of generational curses and better the lives of ourselves as well as everyone around us. Ms. Reyna empowers all students to think beyond the neighborhood and lives we grew up in. The world is big and the sky is the limit, and Ms. Reyna makes sure that every student that walks through her door knows that.

Kandace Cortez



August 5, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

I first met Ms. Reyna-Urbina during my freshman year of high school when I joined the drill and dance team and Northside High School (formally known as Jefferson Davis high school). She welcomed me with open arms and has been a mentor to me ever since.

If I ever need anything i know I can reach out to her. Ms. Reyna-Urbina gives the best advice and is so great at it - whether it was life advice, questions about colleges or whatever we needed guidance on. An example of this was when I was applying for colleges and scholarships with other senior Pantherettes and Ms. Reyna-Urbina would sit with us and hold meetings to make sure we were applying and preparing for our next chapter. She was there to answer any questions we had and supported each and every one of our endeavors as we applied nervously, yet excited.

I admire Ms. Reyna-Urbina's nurturing personality and also how frank she is at the same time. All her advice comes from a place of love and wanting her students to become better people. Ms. Reyna-Urbina is a strong mentor that I look up to and is the perfect candidate for the this award.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Godina
UHD Student

August 5, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is a letter to my former teacher.

Dear Mrs. Reyna-Urbina,

Words can't describe how much you have made an impact in my life. You were not only my dance coach, but as also as a second mom. You've watched me grow from a shy girl barely entering high school to a bright young woman that I became four years later.

I remember the first day I walked into your dance room terrified and nervous because of tryouts. Till this day I still find it crazy how I left that day as an alternate, where there was a chance, I would have not made the team. However, with your help and support I worked my way up to be your 2019-2020 Colonel. I cannot tell you how many times there were moments that I nearly felt like giving up because I second doubted myself and thought I was not capable. It was because of the times I needed someone to talk to, you were always there. Whether it was just small talk, personal or even school, you always offered an ear and always giving advice. Expressing how "anything is possible, that whatever you set your mind to go for it, but to always remember you have a home right here in the dance room."

I think then that it was not only your moral support, time and energy you put into your students, but it was also the love, faith and care you showed that has helped in the long run. An inspiration, motivator, supporter and someone who gave me a chance is who you were to me, and I am so thankful that I was able to be your dance student.

Sincerely,

Carla V. Alexander

Former Student

August 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

There will always be a person that has no idea how much they've contributed to your life. This special person has gone above and beyond their duties to make a difference in my life. Mrs. Reyna-Urbina is that individual. Mrs. Reyna-Urbina is a mentor, a teacher, a mom, a coach, and best of all someone you can trust.

One of the best memories I've ever had of Mrs. Reyna-Urbina is when I was a sophomore in high school. It was my first year in dance and didn't know I had potential to compete as a soloist since there were stronger dancers in my team. Mrs. Reyna-Urbina registered me to compete as a soloist in MA HISD Dance competition, and that's when I first realized, someone believed in me and saw with their own eyes that I could be on stage competing in front of an audience and judges.

Personally, dance is commonly known as a sport for females. You don't see young guys in a predominately all-female dance team go out and dance. She was that someone to support you and challenge you to do the unknown, which was eye-opening for me. If it wasn't for her, I would've probably never challenged myself to show the world my talent. Mrs. Reyna-Urbina is always supportive and continues to do so. When you come into her class it is not only a classroom, it's a space for everyone to feel comfortable and safe. If there were a thousand more Mrs. Reyna-Urbina's in the world, I am sure schools would be more enjoyable and students would feel more confident to perform at their best ability each day.

It is my pleasure to be informed that Mrs. Reyna-Urbina is being nominated for this prestigious award. I don't think anyone is more deserving and qualified for this award. Thank you, Mrs. Reyna-Urbina for your constant support to many students that have the same dreams as me. Thank you for making a difference in my life and for being a great role model.

Sincerely,

Jesus Juarez

Former Student and Dancer