

PANAMERICANA



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Desiree Gutierrez, Editor

SENIORS MAKE REGIONAL CHOIR FOR SECOND YEAR



Reynaldo Torres

Presbyterian Pan American School Seniors Paul Vilchez, 18, and Reynaldo Torres, 17, are both competing in regional Choir for the second year in a row.

“Last year, I felt honored and humbled to place for my first time in the regional choir,” said Paul of Lima, Peru. “All the hard work done gave its result and I felt really proud. This year, it is even more challenging to me to make it there and also not just staying there but making it to area.”

Reynaldo and Paul both had to audition for district and place in the top 20 to advance. Reynaldo placed third out of 56 tenors 2, which hits lower notes, in area B. The auditions are divided into two areas. Paul placed fifth out of 62 tenors 2 in area A. “Regional choir was something new for me last year,” Paul said. “The process was hard and it requires a lot of effort and persistence.”

Two other students,

Senior Karla Gonzalez and Sophomore Regina Hernandez were also successful at the audition and are part of regional choir, but are both participating for the first time.

Out of the 800 singers for the first audition at district, only 160 advanced to regional. Twenty will be chosen by each section such as tenor 1, which sings higher notes, then five will advance to area, and finally 8 will move onto state.

Both Reynaldo and Paul said that fine arts such as choir and drama club at Pan American School are beneficial to students for many reasons such as the opportunity to be part of an advanced choir such as regional choir, and stress relief and relaxation.

“Drama club and choir help me to get relaxed every single time I don’t want to do anything,” Reynaldo said. “At the same time, I develop my skills even further every day.”

In addition to choir, both find time to participate in other organizations. Reynaldo is also in praise band, cheerleading, worship committee and is senior class treasurer. He also takes college English, algebra and government as part of the dual credit



Paul Vilchez

program.

Paul is in cross country, track and field, is student council president and takes college English and government. He is this year’s design editor for the school’s student newspaper.

Both of these singers share a love for music so it is no surprise that they both want to pursue a college degree in fine arts after graduation.

Reynaldo would like to obtain a music performance and chemical engineering degree at the University of Texas at Austin or Rice University in Houston.

Paul would like to study communication arts and advertising at the University of Houston, Schreiner University or the University of North Texas.

For Paul, fine arts is just like playing sports, he added.

“It requires you to be constant, practice and also if you have the ability, you can go wherever you want with it,” he said.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

~DR. JAMES MATTHEWS

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us..." That's the opening of *A Tale of Two Cities*, Charles Dickens' novel about the time of the French Revolution. Those were indeed momentous times but no less momentous than right now.

When I look around me here at Pan Am I see incredible things: new SmartBoards in the classrooms, which allow teachers to move images and information around a large white monitor with their fingers... I see an entering class of students with higher test scores than ever before ready and eager to handle a curriculum more finely tuned and advanced than ever before. The school has probably never been in better shape academically. From this perspective things are pretty good.



However, when I look again I realize the impact of the most serious global financial mess since the Great Depression. Revenue has fallen drastically as faithful American donors have been forced to limit giving and parents of prospective students have found even our modest fees prohibitive. On top of that we have had to endure a wave of wind and rain over the past three months exposing the frailties of our aging facilities. From this perspective things are pretty bad.

Our Lord Jesus Christ came into the world at such a time as this; the Ro-

man Empire was expanding and yet the world was in chaos. In one of his most curious statements he said that the poor we will always have with us. My take on this is that in spite of all human efforts to improve, things remain pretty good for some and pretty dismal for others. In other words, every age is the best of times and worst of times.

How each of us deals with our situation, it seems to me, is a matter of faith which is the foundation of hope and courage and determination. Faith is how we look success and failure, joy and sadness, in the face with the assurance that both are illusory and temporary. Ecclesiastes tells us that the sun rises and the sun also sets. What goes up usually comes down...and vice versa. Whatever we do, things are going to get better or get worse or stay about the same. So, in these best/worst of times, the Pan Am strategy, which is to say the way of faith, is to look up to the God who creates us, the Son of God who redeems us, and the Spirit of God who accompanies us.

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NEW SMARTBOARDS IN THE CLASSROOM

Presbyterian Pan American School installed six Smartboard Interactive Whiteboard Systems and Smart Document Cameras to classrooms this summer.

The 20,862 dollar funding came from the generosity of the Ed Rachel Foundation.

“This technology has proven itself to be a powerful tool for engaging today’s student in her or his own learning process, while drawing on resources and teaching techniques that inhere in the Internet as well as in classroom computer software,” said Ed Seeger, Pan American Vice President and Grant Writer.

The mathematics, language arts and science departments received the new educational technology and Science Teacher Sylvia Gonzalez said she uses the Smartboard for quizzes and



drawings.

“It’s utilization in the classroom has enhanced students’ participation during class,” she said. “The students enjoy the activities that are available on the Smartboard because they get involved.”

Ana Jimena Gonzalez,

15-year-old from Matamoros, Tamaulipas, Mexico said that having the Smartboards in class is better because students pay more attention.

“They are fun and keep us engaged. There are many activities for us to do and it is faster instead of waiting for the teacher to write it, it’s already there,” she said.

English 1, Reading and Language Lab Teacher Rebecca Perkins uses her Smartboard for building skills, such as introducing new concepts and games and it gives her larger web accessibility, she said.

Nathan Zelaya, 15-year-old from Premont, Texas also enjoys the new Smartboards.

“It is easier to understand the teacher’s handwriting like in geometry and they are more interactive,” he said.

EACH STUDENT GIVEN BIBLES

Each student at Presbyterian Pan American School received a gift from the school at the start of this school year—a personal New International Version (NIV) Bible in her or his own language, with English-language parallel text.

The total cost of the 164 Bibles was \$2,252 with most the funding coming from Presbyterian Congregations.

“A predominate mission for Pan Am is to continue to develop and nurture the Christian faith of its students,” said Marla Hill, Christian Educator. “The school wanted to gift each student with his/her own Bible to encourage them to study Scripture on their own, and to be able to read in their own lan-

guage of origin.

Each Bible includes a glossary and a concordance for topical reference.

Students use their Bibles for study and reflection, chapel and worship, group Bible study and academic classes.

“It is so helpful for student to be able to read Scripture in the language they are most accustomed to speaking and reading,” Marla said. “While we want all of our students to be fluent in English, we do not want language to be a barrier to studying God’s word. The multi-language Bibles make it easier for Spanish, Chinese, and Korean students to understand Scripture, while developing critical English language skills.”

17-year-old Senior Jasiel Hernandez leads a Bible study in the boy’s dorm every Thursday evening.

“The Bibles are helpful because when we say a verse, Korean students can read it in their language and the American students can read it in English,” Jasiel said. “When we pray, we don’t have to have anyone translate it all for us.”

Senior Hector Villegas, who is part of the school’s worship committee, said he can refer to the Bible now in Spanish, his native language, and read it every day.

“The school giving each student a Bible has motivated students to read it and take it to weekly chapel. It has been very helpful,” Hector said.

STUDENT OF THE YEAR

~KEYLA CADENA

Although Senior Keyla Cadena is 2 1/2 hours from her home in Gustavo Diaz Ordaz, Tamaulipas, Mexico, attending Presbyterian Pan American School is important to her.

“Everything has a purpose and reason,” she said. “It is really worth it to come here because being here has made me grow as a person, friend, and daughter and as a Christian.”

Daughter of Delia Treviño Navarro and Mauricio Cadena Zuñiga, the 17-year-old singer and Student Council Vice President was named “Student of the Year” for demonstrating stability in academic endeavors and leadership in worship.

This award is presented to a student who best represents the mission of Pan American, is a responsible citizen in the school’s community, and is a leader in activities that enhance the lives of all the members of the Pan American family.

“I was surprised and really happy being awarded,” she said. “I did not expect it, but I think I deserved it because I am not only a good student, I also like to participate in extracurricular activities. I hope people can see me as a good role model.”

Keyla, who describes herself



as positive, happy and helpful, came to Pan American School three years ago to learn English, to be independent and study in a different country.

Keyla’s mother, a junior high principal, and father, an agricultural worker, both agreed that attending Pan American School was a good opportunity and a chance for a better education.

Although Keyla misses her parents and sister, she stays busy with her position on the volleyball, basketball and track team, National Honor Society and worship committee.

She enjoys government class the most because it is interesting and important and being part of Student Council because she can help make a change, she said.

“I like trying to help students and I stay involved at school

because I like that I am learning leadership and teamwork,” she said. “I like to be productive and active.”

Keyla’s leadership ability extends beyond Student Council.

This year, she is also Co-Captain for the volleyball team.

In previous years, she was named All-Tournament for her performance in a volleyball tournament and Female Athlete of the Year at Pan American School.

As part of the worship committee on campus, Keyla is also in the praise band.

She helps decide music and is one of many who sings and perform at weekly Sunday chapel.

After she graduates in May of 2011, Keyla plans to study law in the United States.

Keyla Cadena, along with 85% of her fellow Pan Am students, depends on scholarship assistance to study here. Those who require such assistance are extremely grateful to the individuals and churches listed on the “Honor Roll of Donors” printed in this edition of PanAmericana. Thank you, donors, for bringing outstanding students such as Keyla to our campus!

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FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

~REILI CANTU

Reili Cantu, Athletic Director at Presbyterian Pan American School, was inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame at St. Lawrence University in Canton, New York on Oct. 2, 2010

“You have to be out [of school] for 10 years. I was the youngest inductee in that class,” she said. “We all hope to be recognized for our work, but by no means did I ever expect to be receiving such honor so early.”

From Tallinn, Estonia, Reili is also the assistant counselor, and volleyball, girls’ basketball, cross country and track coach at Pan American School. She is in her third year and teaches a career class as well as P.E. and Health.

Reili graduated from St. Lawrence in 1998 with a Bachelors of



Science degree in psychology and Master of Education in human development and counseling.

At St. Lawrence, she was a two-time All American in the heptathlon and an NCAA championship qualifier in the 100 and 400 hurdles.

She was twice field event Most Valuable Player in the state meet and holds the record at St. Lawrence in the 100 hurdles, and

heptathlon and a member of the record-setting sprint medley relay team. She finished sixth in the NCAA heptathlon as a junior and was third as a senior and holds the New York State Collegiate Track Conference record in that event.

“It meant a world to me,” she said. “I was hoping that at some point in my life I would be recognized. The University has a very successful athletic program.”

Girls’ athletics has more and more enthusiastic participants than ever in the school’s history. Presbyterian Pan American School is proud to have attracted a Christian coach with Reili’s many abilities and achievements.