



TEXAS CLASSROOM TEACHERS ASSOCIATION
NEWS RELEASE

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South Texas veteran named TCTA Friend of Education

AUSTIN – Francisco Barrientes of Edinburg has been selected as the Texas Classroom Teachers Association 2007-08 Friend of Education in the private citizen category. TCTA presents the award annually to honor an individual who has shown extraordinary commitment to public education in Texas. Founded in 1927, TCTA is an independent, nonunion association for Texas teaching professionals and serves 50,000 members across the state.

Barrientes was selected for the Friend of Education award based on a nomination submitted by the Edinburg Classroom Teachers Association, a local affiliate of the statewide TCTA. Nominees are evaluated according to their leadership roles, actions and support that have benefited public education.

“I am so honored to be named with this award,” said Barrientes. “I made copies of the letter I received and gave them to family members and friends. Everyone has been so happy for me and I just didn’t expect to win.”

In nominating Barrientes for the award, the Edinburg CTA noted his outstanding commitment to the Edinburg ISD for more than 25 years of volunteer service, including the Lyndon B. Johnson Elementary School and more recently the Barrientes Middle School, which was named in his honor. “Mr. Barrientes has left his fingerprints on the hearts of so many children in the Edinburg school district,” they wrote.

(more)

(TCTA news release, continued)

Barrientes, born and raised in Edinburg, served in the United States Army beginning in 1968. During his military service, Barrientes suffered a severe injury leaving him without an esophagus and with damaged vocal cords. He received two Purple Hearts and a Bronze Star.

“After I came home from the service, I had so much time on my hands. When my children started school, I saw where the schools and teachers needed help,” said Barrientes. “It’s the little things I can do; like making copies for a teacher, which allows them to have more time to teach. This is how I give back.”

Friend of Education awards have been presented since 1976. This is one of several statewide awards presented by TCTA, which also names a Friend of Education award in the public official category. That award will be presented to Texas State Sen. Leticia Van de Putte (D-San Antonio).

TCTA will honor Barrientes and Sen. Van de Putte on February 29, 2008, during the opening session of the association's annual convention in Houston. Educators from across the state will attend the TCTA convention, where they also will participate in professional enrichment seminars and elect TCTA leaders for statewide and district positions.