

RURAL AREA MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL
ENHANCEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

RAMPED

February 22, 2024 - Vol. 7



UPCOMING EVENTS:

- 2/26: Stress Less w/Mindfulness Session 4
- 2/27: Karnes City Resource Meeting
- 2/27: Health, Nutrition & Wellness Session 3
- 3/2: National Read Across America Day
- 3/4: Stress Less w/Mindfulness Session 5
- 3/4-3/8: National School Social Worker Week
- 3/5: Health, Nutrition & Wellness Session 4
- 3/6: RAMPED Advisory Council Meeting
- 3/10: Daylight Saving Time Begins
- 3/11-3/15: Spring Break!
- 3/17: St. Patrick's Day
- 3/19: First Day of Spring

**RAMPED funding is made available through the U.S. Department of Education's Mental Health Service Professional Demonstration Grant.*

RAMPED Stakeholders,

What an exciting start to 2024! The introduction of new residents to our consortium of schools, new "Grow Your Own" participants from multiple districts, more access to services for students and new University partnerships being negotiated as we speak!

Valentine student affirmation cards were distributed to 2500 students followed by the mounting of new bulletin boards on each participating campus. These bulletin boards display engaging interactive posters and positive clip messages, that will allow students another opportunity to ask for help when in crisis, as well as the opportunity to spread kindness.

Year two of the RAMPED grant has seen more superintendents and principals recognizing the value of the resources and services available through our grant resulting in more prescriptive requests for training, counseling and group sessions. Building on the momentum of year one, year two is projected to be a banner year towards growing mental health professionals within our ranks, as well as an increased number of University Residents servicing our students' mental health needs!

Thank you for everything you do for kids and their communities!

Dr. Yvette Buehring

Program Director

RAMPED I.S.D. PARTNERS

Karnes City

Superintendent:
Katherine Kuentler
KCHS Principal:
Daniel Hutchins
KCJH Principal:
Kelly Ruiz
RES Principal:
Jennifer Foster
KC Primary Principal:
Kevin Hans

Kenedy

Superintendent: Dr.
Calvin Bowers

KS Principal:
William Bailey
KES Principal: John
Smith
KES Asst.
Principal: Melissa
Leza

Pawnee

Superintendent:
Anthony Annis

EL-HS Principal:
Raymond Robinson

Pettus

Superintendent:
Dr. Katie Atkins

PS Principal:
Rickey DeLeon
PE Principal:
Laura Holder

Runge

Superintendent:
Hector Dominguez

EL-HS Principal:
Angelina Torres

EL-HS Asst. Principal:
Allison Wells



MEET OUR NEW RAMPED RESIDENTS:



I am America Wilson a dedicated first year Master of Social Work student, at the University of Texas at San Antonio. I am driven by a profound passion for making a positive impact in the lives of others. Embarking on my practicum journey in Karnes City ISD presents an invaluable opportunity to merge my academic knowledge with real-world experience, all while fostering the well-being and development of young minds and their families. I also hold a bachelor's degree in psychology from UTSA. Throughout my academic endeavors, I have been fortunate to cultivate a diverse skill set tailored to meet the unique needs of children facing various socio-emotional challenges. My practicum experience is not merely a requirement; it is a calling—an opportunity to immerse myself in the daily lives of children and their families, to understand their struggles, and to empower them to overcome obstacles. I am committed to providing a safe and supportive space where every child feels heard, valued, and understood.

In collaboration with the Rural Area Mental Health Professional Enhancement and Development Grant (RAMPED), I hope to promote social and emotional well-being, enhance academic success, and foster a sense of belonging within the school community for all the students and their families we will serve this semester.



Hello! I'm Jihad Allen-Bey (A-Bey), a RAMPED resident social worker with Karnes City ISD. I am currently a Master of Social Work student at the University of Texas at San Antonio. With a deep commitment to supporting the holistic well-being of students, I am excited to be a part of the RAMPED team on the different campuses. Drawing from my educational background of a BA in Psychology with a minor in sociology, and currently training for a master's degree in social work, along with being a family man of 6 children, I am dedicated to collaborating with students, families, and school staff to address social, emotional, and academic needs. As a RAMPED resident social worker, my goal is to empower students to thrive personally and academically. Lastly, as a veteran, I value integrity and service to the community.



WHAT'S HAPPENING:

REACHING STUDENTS



One of the exciting strategies agreed upon by Superintendents and Principals towards engaging more students in taking ownership in the state of their mental health and wellbeing was unveiled on our campuses recently! Beautiful new bulletin boards and their contents on each of our ten campuses provide the opportunity to invite more students in need of services to reach out using a different platform. With engaging posters, including QR codes to initiate a conversation with a mental health professional, positive clip messages to spread kindness and words of affirmation, students can reach out without having to go to the front office when in crisis. The QR alert when received will then be sent to the campus counselor for direction. In addition, RAMPED retractable signs at the front entrances of each campus announce to all students, staff, and community members the goal of RAMPED, to BUILD HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES, THROUGH MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES.

Thank you goes out to RAMPED Superintendents and Principals for recognizing the need and then accommodating these efforts towards offering another layer of support to student populations! - Dr. B.



GROW YOUR OWN COHORT MEETINGS

One of the major goals of our grant is to build mental health professionals within our Districts. This initiative is known as Grow Your Own. Over the past few months, we have been sharing our Grow Your Own initiative across the campuses and encouraging teachers to return to school to earn a degree in School Counseling, School Psychology, or School Social Work. Many people expressed interest! We know that life-changing events need a little extra support, so we have scheduled 2 meetings so far to bring everyone together for encouragement on this journey. Together they will be each other's "Cha-Cha-Cha's" (Challenger, Check-In, Cheerleader). This is a person who keeps you motivated to keep pushing through the long days and the extra work. People were excited to see they were not alone on this journey. We will meet regularly to truly help cheer each other on. - F.E.



SCHOOL COUNSELOR CONFERENCE

Recently, I was blessed with the opportunity to attend the 19th Annual Professional School Counselor Conference in San Antonio. There were over 2,700 school counselors from across Texas in attendance. The sessions were amazing and complete with the latest research and relevant information. I acquired much knowledge in topics such as strategies for self-regulation, mentoring and supervising school counselor interns, working with students who exhibit traits of perfectionism, the benefits of sand tray therapy, and building resilience through generational gaps to name a few. I also enjoyed a powerful keynote speech by Olympic bobsledder, Johnny Quinn who delivered a strong message about positively adjusting your life plans with resilience when obstacles present themselves. His message was inspiring, humbling, and captivating. Lastly, I was able to collaborate with many school counselors who are experiencing similar trends in their students and schools regarding behavior, social media, character development, etc. We exchanged ideas, shared plans, and provided one another with support and encouragement. I look forward to applying what I learned soon! - P.H.

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Heart and Mind Connection

Happy February! As we all know, this time of year is filled with much anticipation for the numerous exciting events and activities that will happen this spring. It is a busy time for everyone. This month the RAMPED team has been working diligently to continue recruiting efforts towards our “Grow Your Own” goals in hopes that our consortium will continue to benefit from services by future mental health professionals. With new university partnerships and the potential for a healthy tuition reimbursement in 2024 only, it is the perfect time to think about getting your master’s degree in school counseling, school psychology, or school social work. Please reach out to me if you are interested! I hope you have a wonderful February! Put yourself first, so you can last! I hold much appreciation and admiration for all you do! - Patricia Huber, MSC

Social Work: Stories from the Field from the Field

We are excited to have Emma Bennett and Keyerah Barnes continue their field practicum with us this Spring. They are both from Our Lady of the Lake and plan to graduate this May. With the addition of 2 UTSA Social Work students, they were able to adjust their schedule a little bit to concentrate their time on established groups and individual counseling needs. Watching them grow their skills over the past few months has been exciting and they were able to take on a little bit of mentoring as the new residents shadowed for a couple of weeks. America Wilson and Jihad Allen-Bey (A-Bey) joined us in January from UTSA for their generalist social work practicum. We spend quite a few weeks onboarding our residents for the opportunity to explore each campus’ needs and to get an understanding of the scope of work available through RAMPED. They have recently been assigned a few campuses and look forward to being an additional resource. They will be with us through the summer. We continue to look forward to future semesters as new potential residents call from Texas State, OLLU, and UTSA for upcoming semesters. It is extremely exciting to continue to bring the world of Social Work to our schools. - Frances Ehrlich, LMSW

**Any questions regarding this newsletter may be emailed to:
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