

# 2024 TSTA Education Support Professionals Conference

**We are ESP**  **TSTA/NEA**

A blue wavy line graphic is positioned below the text.

**April 21, 2024**  
**Frisco, Texas**



EDUCATION SUPPORT  
**ESP**  
PROFESSIONALS  
One Education Workforce  
Serving the Whole Student

# Acknowledgements

## *ESP Committee Members*

**Karen Barnes-Ullrich**

Education Austin

**Maritza Barrera**

San Antonio Alliance

**Norma Guevara**

Donna TSTA/NEA

**Maria Hernandez**

Ysleta Teachers Association

**Raul Hernandez**

Ysleta Teachers Association

**Sylvia Ortega**

PSJA/TSTA/NEA

**Norman Quigley**

TSTA-Retired

**Lonnie Richardson**

NEA-Dallas

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Donna TSTA/NEA

**Leonor Terrazas**

TSTA-Retired

**Martha Alicia Villatoro**

Lamar Educators Association



TEXAS STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION / NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION  
OVIDIA MOLINA, PRESIDENT   LINDA ESTRADA, VICE PRESIDENT   RICHARD KOURI, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear #TeamTSTA,

Welcome to the 2024 Texas State Teachers Association Education Support Professionals Conference! This year's conference theme, ***We Are ESP***, celebrates the important role ESPs have in our union, our districts, and our communities.

At this conference, we come together to share our successes and to unite in our local organizing campaigns. The power of the collective organizing and action to make things better for all is the foundation of our union. It is how we accomplish better working conditions for staff and better learning environments for students. We must aggressively seize every organizing opportunity to continue to create a brighter future, realizing the tomorrow we want for ourselves and ALL our students.

Our mission to “provide a quality public school for every child” depends on our ability to build power despite elected leaders at every level prioritizing their political interests over the wellbeing of our students and educators. We must VOTE EDUCATION FIRST this November and in every election. We must engage our colleagues, families, and friends to get out the vote, and elect leaders that will do the right thing for all of our educators and our students. You are the experts in your field, your voice and stories are impactful and need to be heard in order to ensure the future of Texas, starting with casting your ballot at the next election and beyond!

Thank you for being here for this conference and being leaders in your union. We are honored to call you our union siblings. Thank you for all you are doing, everything you have done, and everything you will continue to do.

In solidarity,

Ovidia Molina, TSTA President



# Raul Hernandez

## 2023-24 TSTA ESP of the Year

My name is Raul Hernandez and I'm a Paraprofessional Educator at Riverside Elementary in Ysleta ISD. I have been a member of the Ysleta Teachers Association (YTA) for seven years. When someone enters the profession, I try to recruit and advise them to join the Association. The association gives them support and peace of mind knowing that they are protected at all times. I let them know that the association has a support group for beginning teachers that will guide them through their first year, and I give them words of encouragement and invite them to meetings where they can voice their concerns.

During my time with YTA, I have also represented members with issues that they have encountered. My association is a great organization that has helped me become a better leader and advocate for the members at my campus and throughout the district. I am a proud member and will continue to help build a stronger relationship between the Ysleta ISD and the YTA.

My involvement in YTA has made me aware of the laws that protect me as a teacher as well as important upcoming events and changes that affect me and my profession. I take this information to my fellow members/teachers who are having issues or are in need of advice.

As an ESP, I help and support my students on a daily basis in and out of the classroom. I keep them safe and help ensure they have a good day of learning. I greet students with a smile in the drop off area, helping or directing them in the hallways to make sure they get to class on time. In the cafeteria, I make sure they eat their meals and have a full stomach. During P.E., we enjoy dancing and can be silly, and then I help after school when it's time to say goodbye until tomorrow.

I am also involved in my church, where I donate my time and monetary help in any way I can to assist parishioners. On Sundays, I help with the cafeteria breakfast, and I am a part of the VIRTUS programs that supports the Church in being a safe haven for children and a messenger for preventing child sexual abuse within the Church and society in general. I also help with the annual bazaar.

Whether giving encouragement and support to my students and colleagues at school, or serving others through my church, I am grateful for what I have and what I do. I believe that I make a difference every day at my campus and in my community, and believe that every one of us can make a difference, too, if we join together for the good of our students, our schools, and our communities.

# ESP CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

## *Session Descriptions*

### **Where Do ESPs Fit?**

*Presenters: Karen Barnes-Ullrich and Sheila Walker*

This session will focus on educating ESPs on the structure of TSTA/NEA and how they can take advantage of the many opportunities that the organization offers through membership, i.e. running for local, state, and national offices, and appointments to local/state/national committees.

### **NEA Bill of Rights**

*Presenter: Maritza Barrera*

Is your local or state affiliate ready to engage ESP members to organize for the issues most important to them? Whether you live in a bargaining or non-bargaining state, an ESP Bill of Rights is a strategic tool to engage members, create a sense of belonging, and build power for the union. In this session, you will learn how NEA affiliate members, staff, and leaders from Massachusetts, Maryland, and Illinois have built a strategic Bill of Rights/RESPECT campaign to increase ESP visibility, rights, and respect across their states, and the successes and challenges they have faced in the process. You will also learn how to build your own campaign from the ground up, organize through one-on-one conversations, and tap into resources and strategies to support your work.

### **Awakening Your Inner Peace**

*Presenter: Earley Barnes-Ullrich*

Life can be a constant rush with multiple responsibilities running simultaneously. As Educators, often our time is spent focusing on the daily routines of work, family, union, and personal commitments with a limited amount of time for self-care and self-love. In order to live a meaningful and successful life it is important to find balance. It is about setting the right, worthwhile goals that will help you find that balance between self-care and everyday commitments. By setting goals and balancing the many "hats" you wear, it's important for you to find your inner peace and maximize your service towards others.

# ESP CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

## *Our Presenters*



### **KAREN BARNES-ULLRICH**

Karen Barnes-Ullrich has been working in transportation for Austin ISD for 33 years: 11 years as a Bus driver, 16 years as coordinator / trainer, and six years as a Dispatcher. She served on her Local board for 16 years, the TSTA Board for a total of 11 years, and on a variety of TSTA standing committees including the ESP committee, which she currently chairs. Karen served on the NEA Board of Directors from 2014 to 2020 as an ESP-At-Large, and is currently serving on two NEA committees: the SOGI Committee and the Resolutions Committee.



### **SHEILA WALKER**

Sheila Walker is the Community Liaison at The Legendary Lincoln High School in Dallas ISD and has been employed for the last 29 years in various ESP positions. President of NEA-Dallas from 2020 to present and President-elect of Region 19, Sheila is passionate about educating all students to direct and equip them to choose a college/career path that is beneficial for a rewarding future, and assisting parents to understand the importance of choosing public schools over charter schools. Sheila and the

ESP Committee worked with district leadership to add due process for all ESPs into district regulation, which will soon be added to district policy.



# ESP CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

## *Our Presenters*



### **MARITZA BARRERA**

Maritza Barrera is the Family & Community Engagement Specialist in San Antonio ISD and the Executive Vice President for the ESPs with San Antonio Alliance for Teachers and Support Personnel, as well as the NEA ESP Director at Large.



### **EARLEY BARNES-ULLRICH**

Earley Barnes-Ullrich (she/her) is a LCSW-S, RPT-S™, EMDR Certified Practitioner and CIT, TBRI® Practitioner, HeartMath® Certified Practitioner, Safe & Sound Protocol (SSP) Certified Practitioner, Certified Sound Facilitator. She received her BSSW in 2006 and MSSW in 2009 from the UT School of Social Work. She is the owner of her private practice, Hopeful Waters Counseling, PLLC, where she provides psychotherapy to children, adolescents, and adults.

# OUR KEYNOTE SPEAKER



## **Pamella Johnson** **NEA 2023 ESP of the Year**

Pamella Johnson, NEA's 2023 Education Support Professional (ESP) of the Year, has worked tirelessly since 2012 as an academic and behavioral interventionist at Rochester High School in Rochester, Washington, to ensure students' social and emotional needs are met. She provides advocacy and establishes effective and culturally responsive pathways for students to communicate with their teachers and other adults to support their learning and instill valuable life skills.

Pamella is equally active outside the classroom, serving as a track coach, a lead ESP trainer for Culturally Responsive Teaching and Classroom Management courses in Washington state, NEA ESP At-Large Board Member, and a member of a statewide board that establishes requirements and makes recommendations for paraeducator professional development and advancement.







# Acknowledgements

## ***TSTA Staff***

Malinda McKee  
Committee Liaison

Mary Kennedy  
Committee Liaison

Tara Trautman  
Administrative Support, OCALD

Rosie Castillo  
Administrative Support, OCALD

Kay Williams  
OCALD Administrative Manager

# Conference Schedule

**NOTE:** Match the color dot on your name badge – **purple**, **orange**, or **green** – to the schedule below for the order in which you'll attend the workshop sessions.

7:00 - 7:45 AM	<b>WELCOME / BREAKFAST</b>		
8:00 - 9:00 AM	Where do ESPs fit?	Awakening Your Inner Peace	NEA Bill of Rights
9:15 - 10:15 AM	NEA Bill of Rights	Where do ESPs fit?	Awakening Your Inner Peace
10:30 - 11:30 AM	Awakening Your Inner Peace	NEA Bill of Rights	Where do ESPs fit?
11:45 AM – 12:45 PM	<b>LUNCH / KEYNOTE</b>		