

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 185

WHEREAS, The Senate of the State of Texas is pleased to recognize the students, faculty, and administration of Weslaco High School for winning the Youth category of the Texas Environmental Excellence Award; and

WHEREAS, The school earned the award due to the success of its newest classroom--the outdoor botanical gardens; since 2004, 150 students at Weslaco High School have worked together under the guidance of science teacher Deborah Villalon to create and nurture the school's botanical gardens; one-quarter acre of the school's grounds has been converted into an educational ecosystem; more than 30 species of plants, trees, herbs, and flowering shrubs are grown, and at harvest time, students gather 100 pounds of fresh produce and donate it to the Rio Grande Valley Food Bank; and

WHEREAS, Students have created butterfly gardens, a pond habitat, and a cactus garden; they also helped install a drip line and sprinkler irrigation system under the direction of the Texas A&M Agricultural Experiment Station; and

WHEREAS, In the fall, students plant trees in the gardens and throughout the Valley as part of the Rio Reforestation Project; every Earth Day, a community celebration of nature is held, and students receive Texas Junior Master Gardener certifications from the Texas Cooperative Extension; and

WHEREAS, Weslaco High School botanical gardens serves as an outdoor learning laboratory, where students gain knowledge of conservation, nutrition, and community service and develop healthy habits for life; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 79th Legislature, 3rd Called Session, hereby commend Weslaco High School for its exceptional botanical gardens and its successful environmental education program and extend congratulations to all on earning a Texas Environmental Excellence Award; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared as an expression of high regard from the Texas Senate.

Lucio

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on May 10, 2006.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate