

Shadow Creek High School



Class of 2025

Justin Mathew

Valedictorian

University of Texas - Actuarial Science



Most Influential Educator

Madeline Lacamu - Shadow Creek High School

I have had the pleasure of having Ms. Lacamu as my teacher for the past three years. Her teaching style has always been exceptionally coherent, but more importantly I am grateful for her inspiring my long-term goals. Her experience in Mathematics at UT Austin and illumination of statistical concepts has been influential in my decision to pursue a career as an Actuary. I will always be grateful for the mathematical foundation that she established "4" me.

Kavya Nandagiri

Salutatorian

Duke University - Pre-Law



Most Influential Educator

Robert Lechleiter - Shadow Creek High School

Mr. Lechleiter supported me throughout my high school career, from freshman year until today. Whether it was my UIL journey or my research project, Mr. Lechleiter has been incredibly encouraging. He made me feel confident in myself and my abilities, even in times of uncertainty. He saw potential in me and is a major source of guidance as I pursue my love of writing.

Kacem Ettahali

Rice University - Computer Science



Most Influential Educator

Amber Stevener - Shadow Creek High School

Mrs. Stevener's class was hard, but she never gave up on me. She answered every question I had, explained things ten different ways if she had to, and always believed in me. Over time, I realized she wasn't just a tough teacher—she was the best. Her support pushed me further than I thought possible, and I became the best student (and person) I had ever been.

Praneel Bhagavatula

University of Texas - Computer Science and Business



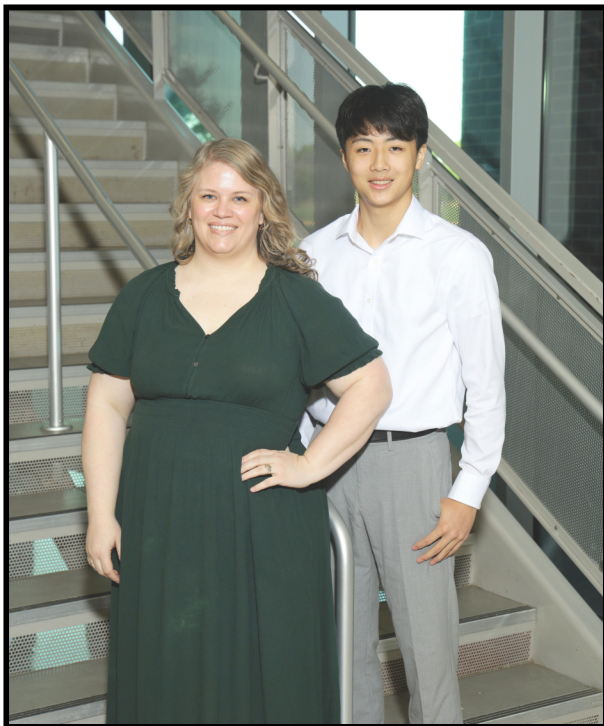
Most Influential Educator

Dale Kastens - Laura Ingalls Wilder Elementary

Mr. Kastens was the teacher that helped me grow out of my shell and created the foundation for who I am today. He saw a spark inside me and chose to fuel it. Through his activities and support, I became an outgoing and motivated student. I owe much of my success to his efforts. I wouldn't be in the top 20 without him. Thank you, Mr. Kastens!

Joshua Wu

University of Texas - Computer Science



Most Influential Educator

Emilee Cavazos - Shadow Creek High School

From chaotic lab days to the strenuous review sessions to the chemistry E-car challenge, Mrs. Cavazos' class has truly left a profound impact on me. Every day, she constantly exuded love for both chemistry and teaching. I could see the passion in her eyes as she gave lectures and helped us with assignments. She has inspired me not only to study hard but also to explore and enjoy subjects I am passionate about.

Ashwin Vijayakumar

Georgia Institute of Technology - Computer Science



Most Influential Educator
Purnima Saride - Shadow Creek High School

Mrs. Saride was not only my sophomore year precalculus teacher, but was also my mentor, my guide, and my friend. Oftentimes, my friends and I would just sit in her classroom for lunch and we would just chat about school life, make jokes, and plan out career goals. Mrs. Saride provided invaluable advice throughout the college admissions process, ultimately leading me to pick Georgia Tech as my home for the next 4 years!

Arnav Gadde

University of Texas- Accounting



Most Influential Educator

Jessica Lynn Matula - Mary Burks Marek Elementary

Mrs. Matula's teaching established itself as a cornerstone of my educational foundation. Her active approach of teaching history through anecdotes and orchestrating a play and mock trial showcased what a good teacher truly was.

Anna Singh

Rice University - Cell Biology and Genetics



Most Influential Educator

Powana Hopson - Mary Burks Marek Elementary

I chose Mrs. Hopson as my most influential teacher because she is the reason I fell in love with science. Her class made everything exciting and engaging, and I always felt encouraged to ask questions and stay curious. That interest has stayed with me ever since, and it's helped shape my dreams and goals. I'm truly thankful for the impact she's had on my life.

Nathan Crews

University of Texas - Computer Science



Most Influential Educator
Jennifer Hoefler - Manvel Junior High

Ms. Hoefler's passion for government and politics is genuine and powerful. Combined with her insightful and captivating lectures which explained both "how" and "why," this passion became contagious. Ms. Hoefler's critical and impartiality ensured that I have the skills and motivation to continue to be well-informed and comprehensive in understanding the world around me.

Sahana Karkare

University of Texas at Austin - Business



Most Influential Educator

Ashley Kaji - Shadow Creek High School

I was in Ms. Kaji's AP Human Geography class and her lessons extended farther than geography. She taught me how to lead with kindness and always see the good in others. Her guidance helped me realize that growth matters more than perfection and her encouragement as both a teacher and counselor has shaped who I am today. Even after I was no longer her student, she continued to welcome me into her classroom and was always ready to listen and support me. She reminds me every day that setbacks are not failures but opportunities. Mrs. Kaji's influence extended far beyond the classroom. She was always there for me, and for that, I'll be forever grateful.

Srija Sureddi

University of Texas - Biochemistry



Most Influential Educator

Hannah Davis-Vance - Shadow Creek High School

Mrs. Vance's unwavering honesty pushed me to look beyond surface level understanding and truly engage with literature. Her hard-hitting, thoughtful feedback made me realize that novels hold more than stories - they reveal universal truths. I have never been much of a reader, but her approach made me see that digging deeper brings not only insight but also helps me tap into my fullest potential intellectually and as a writer.

Isabella Carter

Tulane University - Psychology



Most Influential Educator

Shannaedi El Fadili - Glenn York Elementary

Beyond encouraging my love for learning and even giving me my first chapter book, Mrs. El Fadili shaped the way I viewed myself from a young age. Mrs. El called me "determined." She taught me how to work with my peers instead of always relying on myself. She defined me in a positive light which laid the foundation for my self confidence.

Shaivi Peddada

University of Texas - Electrical and Computer Engineering



Most Influential Educator

Erik Sultzer - Shadow Creek High School

Whenever I needed help, Mr. Sultzer offered ideas I had never considered. He was always patient, going the extra mile gathering materials, hosting workshops, and even introducing me to digital art. He changed how I view all subjects by teaching me the value of exploration, experimentation, and by imparting the reminder that "It's okay to not know what you're doing." He truly pushed me out of my comfort zone.

Dersh Bhakta

University of Texas at Dallas – Mechanical Engineering



Most Influential Educator

Kristen Vollman - Shadow Creek High School

In every moment, good or bad, I know I can rely on Mrs. Vollman. Her constant support, encouragement, and advice have meant the world to me. From asking me to lift my hair so she could check for AirPods, to our chats during seventh period, she has been more than just a teacher - she's been a mentor and a friend. I'm incredibly grateful that Mrs. Vollman has been such a meaningful part of my journey.

Vi Huynh

Undecided - Economics and Linguistics



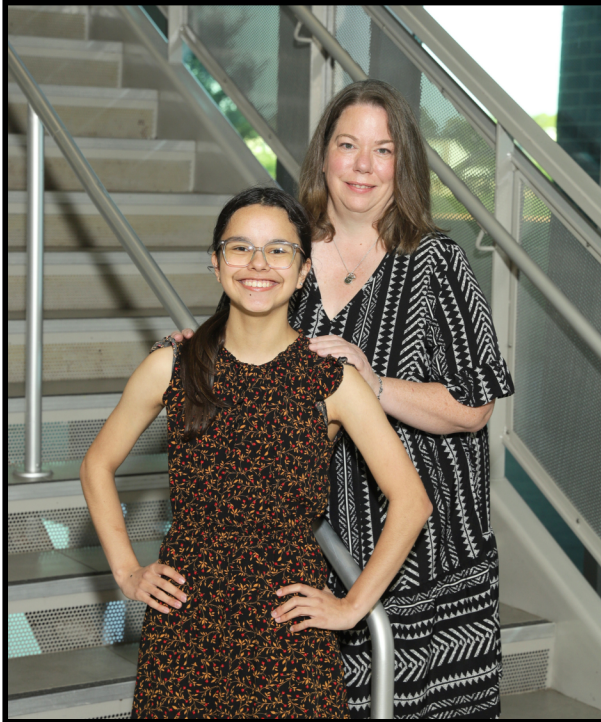
Most Influential Educator

Yesica Meza - Shadow Creek High School

"Ladies, if he's willing to share the responsibilities of raising a family with you, put a check on your list," Sra. Meza said during a class discussion regarding traits we're looking for in a significant other. Those discussions taught me that the most valuable lessons lie at the heart of communication, for there's no task more challenging than to connect with others despite our differences. Thank you, Sra. Meza. You will be invited to my wedding to see who got a check from me.

Ashley Emery

University of Houston - Chemical Engineering



Most Influential Educator

Yvette Skeen - Rodeo Palms Jr. High

Ms. Skeen created a wonderful environment for our group of silly, rambunctious students to make jokes and have fun. (Getting an entire class interested in Animal Farm is pretty impressive!) I remember DEAR days very fondly because we got free reading time, and her shelves were always open to borrow a book or two. Thank you for emphasizing the importance of Humanities and broadening my very technically focused mind.

Aarav Godavarthi

University of California-Berkeley - Neuroscience



Most Influential Educator

David Gonzalez - Glenn York Elementary

Mr. Gonzalez made learning truly fun. I still remember playing Prodigy in his class and how we would go outside to play baseball. It made school something I looked forward to. He created a classroom where every student was excited, supported, and free to be ourselves. I remember his energy and encouragement which is a big reason why I love learning today.

Rishabh Makker

Texas A&M University - Computer Science



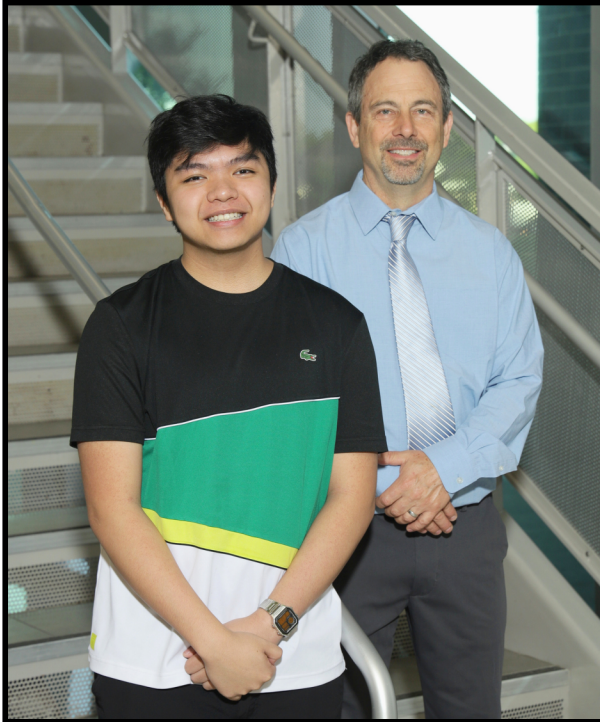
Most Influential Educator

Jordan Amara - Shadow Creek High School

Over the past four years, Mr. Amara has been one of the most impactful people in my academic career. With band taking up so much of my time, I've spent hours upon hours with him. He was always approachable about hesitations or conflicts I had. I've learned a lot from talking to him—not just about band, but about broader life lessons that continue to guide me today.

David Aruj

University of Houston - Mechanical Engineering



Most Influential Educator

Charles Sauter - Shadow Creek High School

Mr. Sauter's teaching prowess and his ability to be understanding and encouraging are the qualities that make him my most influential educator. I remember when he showed us videos just before our mock exam about the importance of confidence. Although it seems simple, his encouragement played a significant role in propelling me to do my best. To sum this all up in just word, Mr.Sauter is the GOAT.

Ananya Chandak

University of Texas - Neuroscience



Most Influential Educator

Joanna Wang - Mary Burks Marek Elementary

Ms. Wang has been in my life since first grade, guiding me and pushing me to analyze and dream bigger. I fondly remember the activities she would have us do, and how involved she was. She encouraged me to participate in extracurriculars like UIL and robotics. She motivated me to aim high in middle school, which built the foundation for my high school success. Thank you for 12 years of support and motivation, Ms. Wang.