**San Antonio Lighthouse Luncheon Reflection**

By Yahterie-Anne Sykes

On Monday, July 10th, I attended the San Antonio Lighthouse Luncheon. These monthly meetings are open to anyone in the community. Community and business leaders from all sections of San Antonio gather together to share information about community events, issues that affect San Antonio, and other news with one another. This is was not my first time attending; however, it was the first time that I really engaged in the purpose of the luncheon.

The speaker of the day was Mrs. Barbara Gervin-Hawkins, District 120 State Representative. She impress me with her approach to the problems that affect the community specifically the East Side. Mrs. Gervin-Hawkins spoke about how to effect a change on the bigger picture. She explained an initiative, Project Alert, that targets alcohol and substance abuse among our youth. This initiative is multi-sectional as it attempts to tackle the problem through education, employment, and other aspects.

Another luncheon attendee brought up the fact that information is not always passed around on the East Side. Many families on this side of town do not have a computer or constant access to an internet connection. As a result, they miss out on information that could be beneficial to them. It was suggested that community billboards be placed in commonly visited public places, like food stores and churches, so that useful information can reach those that cannot access it online.

This discussion made me realize that a lack of communication is an East Side wide problem. While I was at Sam Houston, I noticed the lack of communication between staff and students; staff and parents; students and parents; staff and administration; staff and the community. Vital resources that could benefit students, like test prep, tutoring, enrichment programs, and community programs are not actively promoted within the school or to the students and parents. These resources are under-utilized and sometimes are thought to be ineffective which leads community leaders to discontinue them. The lack of effective communication is hurting the students at Sam Houston and in the long run it hurts the overall community.