



Front row sitting: Veronica Tijerina, Jolie Garcia, Abby Montalvo, Mark Garcia, Brianna Reyes, Jasmyn Erias & Danae Caro

Second Row: Dr. Maria Casas, Connie Herrera, Joey Lopez, Aaron Mireles, Andres Ramos, Alberto Gallegos, Stephen Mireles, Rena Garcia, Bianca Garcia, Mireya Puga, Crystal Ramirez-Garcia, Erica Woodruff, Susan Kibbe & Sylvia Chavez.

Back row: Raul M. Ramirez, Rudy Barrera III, Jacob Esquivel, Linda Hinojosa, Carlos Benavidez, Juan Barrera, John Vasquez, Raul Chapa, April Anzaldúa, & Oscar Galindo

Not pictured: Rolando Arredondo, Marcus Salinas, Jayden Arevalo & Marcus Lopez

## **Area High School Students Complete Los Mesteños Career Academy's 12th Annual Summer Program**

Los Mesteños Career Academy's (LMCA) executive director, Crystal Ramirez-Garcia has announced that area youth have completed LMCA's 12th annual summer program. The students completed training in core industrial arts competency and the construction of an array of valuable items for community projects throughout the South Texas region. The program, done in partnership with the Brooks County Independent School District (BCISD), the Premont Independent School District, the Freer Independent School District, and the Craft Training Center, involved 19 students from Falfurrias, Premont and Freer. During the four-week program, the students were instructed in basic safety and industrial principles besides actually constructing hands-on projects. The students earned an hourly wage in exchange for their efforts.

The participants created eight picnic tables that will be used for outdoor seating for students at Falfurrias High School, outdoor benches for the Community Action Corporation of South Texas (CACOST), and mini-libraries for the South Texas Literacy Coalition (STLC). The benches will be placed along the new walking trail that is being established in Falfurrias through CACOST's Behavioral Health, Outreach, and Leadership Development project (BHOLD). The mini-libraries (examples can be seen in the back left and right of the photo above) were donated to the STLC, which will place them in Falfurrias, Riviera, and three cities in the Rio Grande Valley. STLC will furnish each library with books for a year to help establish them in their respective communities. (The students are pictured above with books they personally received from STLC.)

"This year, we showed students the importance of not only showing up for a job, but also giving back to communities like the ones they live in", said Ms. Ramirez-Garcia. CACOST and STLC both had representatives on hand to personally thank the students for their hard work. The students will receive certificates of completion of three core training modules from the Craft Training Center and also

received Certificates of Commendation from U.S. Senator Ted Cruz. BCISD Superintendent Maria Casas, Ed. D, encouraged the parents of the students to help them preserve their certificates of achievement, saying, "Don't take for granted what your children have accomplished. These certificates will document what they have done and will be valuable additions to their applications for college and other training opportunities".