

EAGLE'S EYE SPOTLIGHT

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Vanguard Alum Arrests Vanguard 8TH Graders' Attention

A product of the Vanguard program (Class of '93) and current special agent for the U.S. government, Andres Gomez visited the 8th grade Vanguard classes on Monday, October 6th to share his life story and how his Vanguard education prepared him for success.

"I know actually what you're going through because fifteen years ago I sat in some of those same desks you're sitting in right now," mentioned Gomez. "I know what it's like to be picked on and called a nerd because you're in Vanguard or to have to do tons of homework when your other friends seem to have it easy. But let me tell ya. It's all worth it in the end."

Born Columbian and raised in a single-parent home, Gomez shared with students his experiences at Burbank and growing up poor. He talked about how he was so self-centered that, oftentimes, he took for granted the opportunities the program presented. In fact, he mentioned that he did not want to even be in Vanguard because he wanted to go to

the other middle school his elementary school friends were planning to attend. Nevertheless, his mom applied and "forced" him to go.

"I'll admit. I wasn't no saint either. I got into trouble from time to time, but I had to decide that I was going to do something with my life," said Gomez.



And that "something" is exactly what he did. After leaving Burbank, Gomez attended several Magnet high schools and eventually graduated in the top 5% of his class from Sam Houston High School. He then enlisted in the U.S. Army in the 82nd Airborne Infantry while enrolled at Columbia Southern University. Four years later, after having fought twice in Iraq post 9-11, he got married and de-

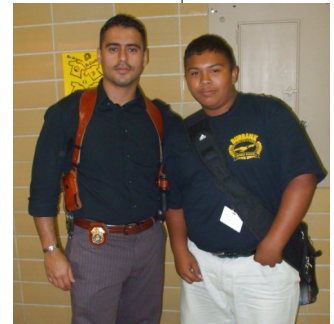
ecided to join the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Division, where he has been working as a special agent for the past three years.

In this capacity, Gomez protects several high-profile legislators and investigates various military-related criminal cases. As a result of his work experience, he

has traveled the world, working in foreign countries such as Singapore, Russia, China and Afghanistan. In fact, Gomez told students that he would be heading to India the next day for an upcoming assignment.

Of the many things Gomez shared with our 8th graders, he wanted all of them to realize how much being in the Vanguard program prepares them for the future and that they can pursue any profession they desire.

"If you do not remember anything else I've said, just know that you can do whatever you want to do in life, and the only person who can stop you is you," he stated. "Your future begins now, and the education you are receiving in Vanguard will take you many places."



Eighth grader Jose Ramirez aspires to be equally successful as Gomez.

UPCOMING DATES:

- 2nd Six Weeks Begins 10.13
- PSAT testing (8th Graders only) 10.14 - 10.15
- Magnet High School Day (8th graders only) 10.17
- Dingo Fieldtrip—Holes 10.17
- Cherrydale Fundraiser money due 10.17
- 1st Six Weeks Report Cards 10.22
- Project Grad Walk for Success 10.25
- Dolphin Fieldtrip—Renaissance Festival 10.28