Corina Fuentes Garza - Valley View High School

TEEA 2020 Winner: Environmental Educator of the Year

Corina Fuentes Garza teaches science at Valley View High School in Hidalgo. Prior to starting at Valley View, she worked as an environmental educator at Bentsen State Park and at the Texas A&M University – Kingsville Citrus Center. She became a public school science teacher in 2016.

Ms. Fuentes Garza took the initiative to find resources and create Valley View's AP Environmental Science course. In it, she teaches lessons on land biomes, aquatic ecosystems, aquaculture, and more. She strongly believes in inspiring future environmental stewards to see the effect they can have on their community, and that every action is important.

Her Environmental Awareness Club works to instill in students the importance of reducing their ecological impact. Her students were inspired to restore a natural habitat at their school as well as in other areas of the community. Club members participated in numerous environmental events, including organizing fundraisers, to purchase materials that would go towards creating and maintaining gardens for migrating monarch butterflies, sea turtle habitat restoration, and beach clean-ups.

Ms. Fuentes Garza has been published in peer-reviewed journals on topics that include water productivity under furrow and drip irrigation systems, the volumetric water content of sandy loam soil, and comparisons of water use efficiency in South Texas. She has also presented at numerous workshops and symposiums across the country.