

## **Prosper Teen Honored by President Obama for Service** *14-Year-Old Volunteers to Teach English to Chinese Immigrants*

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Grapevine – A North Texas teenager has earned recognition from President Barack Obama, and others, for volunteering to teach English to Chinese immigrants. Since 2014, Hannah Faulkner has spent about two or three hours a week volunteering with a group at Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano, and was a recipient of the bronze level President’s Volunteer Service Award, and the Prudential Spirit of Community Award. Faulkner is an eighth grader at Grapevine-Colleyville’s iUniversity Prep, a tuition-free, state accredited virtual learning school. She enrolled in the district, in part, because Mandarin was offered, unlike the traditional bricks and mortar school she attended previously.

“My other school only offered Spanish and French, but I really wanted to learn Chinese,” Faulkner explained. Her teacher is based in New York, and she watches live and recorded lessons online. Volunteering gives her the opportunity to practice in-person with native speakers. Her interest in Chinese is spurred by the possibility of a future career in global affairs.

Administrators say personalized learning solutions are one of the many benefits of virtual education. “iUniversity Prep is a customized learning opportunity for students who need an alternative to traditional bricks-and-mortar schools, but want a college prep education from a recognized school district,” said Kaye Rogers, Ph.D., Grapevine-Colleyville ISD Director of Virtual Education. iUniversity Prep began its second school year in August 2014, and the public school has already received acclaim from the Texas Education Agency. “We’re thrilled the Texas Education Agency rated iUniversity Prep as one of the highest performing public virtual schools in the state,” Rogers said.

Initially, Faulkner’s parents were uncertain iUniversity Prep would be a good fit, but after she complained course work at her previous school wasn’t challenging, they decided to make the switch. “We attended a meeting and we went from being highly skeptical to being all in,” Hannah’s father Ed Faulkner said.

All students living in Texas who are in fifth through 12<sup>th</sup> grades are eligible to enroll in iUniversity Prep. Students can attend class, take tests and complete course work from any location as long as they have access to a mobile device and an internet connection. Those interested in enrolling a student for spring 2015 can call 855-779-7357 or visit [www.iuniversityprep.org](http://www.iuniversityprep.org).

### *About iUniversity Prep*

*iUniversity Prep opened in August 2013 as GCISD’s newest school. The academy is a tuition-free, state-accredited online public school operated by Grapevine-Colleyville ISD and is one of only a handful of public virtual education solutions in the state offering elementary, middle and high school programs. It provides rigorous academics under the guidance of engaging instructors all within a collaborative school community. iUniversity Prep offers an inspiring, flexible learning environment that encourages and prepares students to be college and career ready by supporting learning through technology, fostering citizenship, and teaching the importance of mutual respect in a virtual environment. Visit [iuniversityprep.org](http://iuniversityprep.org) for more details.*