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Family and friends attend graduation ceremony for kindergarten and pre-school students of Gateway Child Care Center held at Patsaouras Plaza June 4.

Little Graduates Get Diplomas from Gateway Child Care Center

- Reminder: Are you or yours graduating in 2009? [Get on the List](#)

By LAURA KLOTH
Staff Writer

(June 4, 2009) Twenty pre-kindergarten and 16 kindergarten students were honored today at a joyful outdoor graduation ceremony for graduates of the Gateway Child Care Center.

Complete with Pomp and Circumstance playing in the background, the children converged at Patsaouras Plaza wearing tiny blue caps and gowns draped with golden sashes to take their seats at the event.

"It has been a tremendous year for you guys. You guys have gotten a new director, weathered the flood, and we seem to have had a year that has flown by," said Center Director Kimberly Tang.



Starting young: Above, the kindergarten class of 2009. Below, the pre-schoolers.



Tang, who assumed her post this year, recalled the flood caused by a burst water pipe that closed the center for repairs in March, and prompted teachers to relocate classrooms to other areas of the building.

"Getting to know all of your children has truly been a gift," Tang told parents and friends. "As I sat in our makeshift classrooms during the flood and watched your children and my own making new friends, laughing during circle time with Teacher Maggie, making up songs with Teacher Ja'Neice, reading each other's stories, traveling to the bathroom for the umpteenth time with Teacher Jennifer, and sharing covers with their neighbors... I realized this is a complete testament to the development of our children," she said, thanking the children for dealing with so much change.

"We've all become a family especially those of you who have been here for years," Tang said.

Graduate Madison Flores, who will attend first grade at a new school, first attended the center when she was three months old. Her mother, Metro Audit Support Manager Anne Flores, was visibly elated to see Madison taking her big step, and was all smiles as she watched her recite a "Vote of Thanks" speech during the ceremony.



Graduate Madison with proud mother, Anne Flores, an audit support manager at Metro.

"It's the commute that we're going to miss because we take the train together in the morning," said Flores. "I'm going to have a harder time adjusting than she is, I think."

Graduates Alex Varela and Hayden Asiano led the Pledge of Allegiance. Afterward the brief program, all of the children sang and recited a poem.

Teachers Mariano Blanco, Ja'Neice Spann, Maggie Enriquez and Jennifer Silva guided the children as they each received their diploma and a class ring, and lunch was served.



Pre-schoolers brace for a torrent of flashing cameras as paparazzi and video-toting parents angle for the money shot.

- Photos by
Gayle Anderson

Reminder: Are you or yours graduating in 2009? [Get on the List](#). myMetro is still collecting names for the Class of 2009 list of graduates.

If you have a high school or college graduate you would like to honor, please send [forms](#) to Laura Kloth at mail stop 99-19-8 or fax to 213-922-2704 no later than June 12.

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