State of Education Luncheon Raises $31,000 for Scholarships

Thanks to the community’s support, the 2018 State of Education luncheon on Oct. 8 raised $31,550 for student scholarships. In addition, the district’s Goal 2 team presented a check for $6,000 at the luncheon for money raised for the Fresno Unified Scholarship Fund from the Goal 2 golf tournament in August.

More than 400 attended to hear Superintendent Bob Nelson speak on a united Fresno Unified. The luncheon was held at the DoubleTree Hotel downtown.

“Our students’ educational outcomes remain steady and continue improving. Our board continues to invest in new and improved educational programs that are carrying our kids forward to the careers of tomorrow,” Nelson told the audience.

While Nelson was the keynote speaker, students were the highlight of the event. Greeters from the Men’s and Women’s Alliance helped guests find their seats. The Junior ROTC from Fresno High School provided the color guard for the Pledge of Allegiance. Roosevelt High School’s Asainique Roberts and Sunnyside High School’s Keivon Powell led the flag salute, followed by Fresno Unified music teachers Allison Preece, Grace Wamhoff, Chris Hubble and Matthew Moorehead singing the national anthem.

Students from Kratt, Leavenworth and... (Page 5) (Pages 6 and 7)

District will Build Urban Academy on Site of Old Juvenile Hall

The district is moving forward on plans to purchase the former Fresno County juvenile hall campus on Ventura Avenue and Tenth Street and transform it into a center for alternative education programs.

For video, go to vimeo.com/fresnounified/urbanacademy

The $1.2 million purchase will allow the district to consolidate programs currently housed on different campuses and create a centralized “innovative urban academy.”

Plans call for a significant overhaul of the old juvenile hall campus, including tearing down the jail visible from Ventura as well as other buildings, but renovating some existing buildings.

See JUVENILE HALL
Continued on page 14

See STATE OF EDUCATION
Continued on page 5
More than 1,400 students in the district are considered homeless – living in shelters, with relatives or friends, or in motels. Of those, the district has identified 35 students living in women’s shelters because of abuse or violence in their homes.

Fresno Unified is in its second school year of providing a social worker specifically to assist students and their families living in shelters. The Fresno Unified Board of Education requested the social worker position to help students in shelters enroll in school and connect with school services.

That social worker is Mayra Neri. Most of her cases are students living in safe houses operated by the Marjaree Mason Center. She also works with students in Rescue the Children, HomeFront, Evangel Home and Spirit of Women shelters.

Neri is among 10 social workers on the staff of the district’s Project ACCESS, which provides services to Fresno Unified’s homeless students and those in foster care.

The district recently helped Julia and her three children – Emily, 18, Kaily, 13, and Caleb, 7 – while they were living at a Marjaree Mason Center shelter.

Emily graduated from Roosevelt High School in June and attends college, taking six classes. She wants to be a social worker because of the help she received from Fresno Unified and other social workers.

“I want to pay it back,” Emily said.

Kaily is an eighth-grader and wants to be an FBI agent. Caleb is a second-grader.

Julia was married for 17 years but was physically and emotionally abused by her now ex-husband. After leaving her husband, she and her children lived in the Marjaree Mason Center shelter for 1½ years. They moved into their own apartment in January, and Julia is taking English classes.

Julia, through an interpreter, said that Fresno Unified helped with bus passes for the children to get to school, backpacks and school supplies, counseling and vouchers to get new shoes. Emily was able to purchase a yearbook because of the funds Project ACCESS provides for high school seniors.

Julia, who had moved to Fresno from another town, said the Fresno Unified social worker was especially helpful in enrolling her children in school.

“I’m hopeful about the future,” she said.

In the past, students moving to shelters often did not get enrolled in school right away.

“Shelters now can reach out to me and I can help families connect with the appropriate school resources,” Neri said.

Neri is able to visit students and their families at the shelters, which would have been difficult in the past because of shelters’ confidentiality policies. She is also able to assist other Fresno Unified departments in making connections with students who are in shelters.

“I also think that it’s a great thing for families to see that the district and shelters are working together. They are able to see that we want them to be successful and we are both interested in their wellbeing,” Neri said.

**Trabajadora Social del Distrito Ayuda a Estudiantes que Viven en Refugios**

Más de 1,400 estudiantes en el distrito son considerados sin hogar – viven en refugios, con parientes, amigos, o en motels. El distrito ha identificado a 35 de estos estudiantes que viven en los refugios de mujeres debido al abuso o violencia en sus hogares.

Este es el segundo año que el Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno provee un trabajador/a social especificamente para asistir a los estudiantes y a sus familias que viven en refugios. La Mesa Educativa del Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno solicitó que trabajadores sociales ayuden a inscribir a los estudiantes de los refugios y a conectarse con los servicios escolares.

Esa trabajadora social es Mayra Neri. La mayoría de sus casos son estudiantes que viven en hogares seguros operados por el Centro Marjaree Mason. También, trabaja con estudiantes en los refugios Rescue the Children, HomeFront, Evangel Home y Spirit of Women.

Neri está entre 10 trabajadores sociales del personal de Project ACCESS del distrito, los cuales proveen servicios a los estudiantes sin hogar y aquellos que están en hogar de crianza (foster) del Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno.

Recientemente, el distrito ayudó a Julia y a sus tres niños – Emily, 18, Kaily, 13 y Caleb, 7 – mientras vivían en el refugio Marjaree Mason Center.

Emily se graduó de la Preparatoria Roosevelt en junio y está tomando seis clases en el colegio. Ella desea ser trabajadora social debido a la ayuda que recibió del Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno.

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Julia estuvo casada por 17 años, pero fue abusada física y emocionalmente por su ex esposo. Después de dejar a su esposo, ella y sus hijos vivieron en el refugio Marjaree Mason Center 1 año y ½. Ellos se mudaron a su propio apartamento en enero y Julia está tomando clases de inglés.

Por medio de un intérprete, Julia dijo que el Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno le ayudó a obtener boletos para el autobús para que sus hijos llegaran a la escuela, mochilas y materiales escolares, consejería y vales/cupones para comprar zapatos nuevos. Emily pudo comprar el libro del año debido a los fondos que Project ACCESS provee a los estudiantes del grado 12 (seniors) de la preparatoria.

Julia, quien se mudó de otra ciudad a Fresno, dijo que la trabajadora social del Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno fue especialmente útil inscribiendo a sus niños en la escuela.

“Tengo esperanzas acerca del futuro,” dijo ella.

En el pasado, los estudiantes se mudaban a refugios con frecuencia no eran inscritos en la escuela inmediatamente.

“Los refugios ahora se pueden comunicar conmigo y yo puedo ayudar a las...”
SUPERINTENDENT’S Message

State of Education Provides Opportunity to Connect with Community

A few short weeks ago, I had the opportunity to speak at our district’s annual State of Education luncheon -- the single largest fundraising event we host in support of the Fresno Unified Scholarship Fund. Four hundred community partners and district leaders filled the room as they listened to musical performances, participated in interactive CTE student demonstrations and heard success stories from previous scholarship recipients.

In this month of Thanksgiving, please know how thankful we are for the love and support that so many in this community provide to the youth of our district. Fresno is an incredibly warm and generous place.

As I mentioned on that day, the State of Education in Fresno Unified School District is healthy and is getting healthier. Fiscally, our district is one of the most stable systems in the state of California, particularly among all of the large urban school districts. Our students’ educational outcomes remain steady and continue to improve. Our board continues to invest in new and improved educational programs that will carry our students into the jobs and careers of tomorrow -- jobs that do not currently exist and ones that we cannot, as yet, even imagine. Our facilities team also continues to build and modernize facilities so that our staff and students can perform at their very best. There is a definite sense of pride for students and employees working and learning in a welcoming space.

Over the last year we’ve seen notable growth and success. Recently released data around our state assessments shows students scoring proficient in nearly all areas. Additionally, students in every grade tested, with the exception of 11th, showed growth over this past year. Every elementary school and middle school per centage of proficiency increased. Double-digit growth numbers in these areas are nothing to be scoffed at and over a three-year span, this represents a significant healthy trend for our system.

There are other global indicators of health for our system as well: The redesignation rate for English learner students to English proficiency is as strong as it has been in recent memory. We have initiated new solar projects at high schools across the city, and have improved facilities for our students receiving special education services. Addict K-8 School and Rata High School, which house our most medically fragile students, have undergone major renovations and modernization over the past 18 months. At the Adult Transition Program, classrooms have been reconfigured and modernized as well. And how on earth in Fresno we ever managed without air conditioning in our gyms, cafeterias, and elementary multipurpose rooms is beyond me, but thanks to the generosity of our community in passing Measures Q and X, and the vision of our board, we are getting that important work done as well.

Soon the new career technical education facility for a heavy-truck and expanded construction program at Duncan Polytechnic High School will be completed. This program will give our students knowledge and skills that can be immediately applied to the workplace if they choose to do so.

Add to that, Oct. 17 our board gave its approval to buy what used to be the old Juvenile Hall on Ventura Avenue and Tenth Street. Once referred to in the media as the “Hall of Shame,” this depressing facility was quite literally a place where struggling students’ dreams went to die. I am thrilled to report that in its place, we are planning to build a state of the art center for alternative education that will set our standards.

See SUPT. MESSAGE SPANISH AND Hmong

Continued on page 15

Message from Shauna Day, Regional Vice President/Center Valley and Central Coast Hospital Council of Northern and Central California

Hospital Council Partners with District to Promote Health Careers

This was the scene -- eager high school students looking like young interns in their blue hospital scrubs, listening intently as doctors and nurses, even handling a pig heart as they learned an organ transplant protocol. Later, the 24 students posed on the helipad at Community Regional Medical Center after “rushing” the heart to the waiting helicopter.

This was the first ever “Day at the Hospital,” organized by the Hospital Council of Northern and Central California, the leadership team at Community Regional Medical Center and Fresno Unified’s College and Career Readiness Department. The event was possible thanks to a Health Care Pathways Initiative Grant from the California Endowment. The Hospital Council has funded many programs through the grant, including Health Care Exposure Day, medical terminology models and charts, medical terminology certification for students, teacher training for OSHA 10 Trainer, OSHA 10 simulators for AED & BLS classes, OSHA 10 certification for students, a health careers map, and Advocacy Day.

The goal for “Day at the Hospital” in August was to expose students to a variety of health careers in a real-world setting. The students were able to ask questions of professionals on the job, and learn firsthand the wide range of options in the healthcare field. It was a rewarding day for the students and all of us who had a part in it.

“Day at the Hospital.” We look forward to many more opportunities to partner with Fresno Unified and other organizations to support and encourage the young people of Fresno. The healthy future of our region depends on these very students and the choices they make. We are thrilled to be helping to guide their interests and support their goals.
Food for Thought: Schools Donate Unopened Meals to Those in Need

Students at 25 Fresno Unified schools help recover unopened excess food and donate it to those in need through Fresno Metro Ministry’s Food to Share program.

The effort started last year with two schools, expanded to 13 by the end of the school year and is now up to 25 campuses. Schools recover and donate an average of 5,000 pounds of nutritious food a week.

The Food to Share program has worked closely with the district’s Food Services Department to coordinate and increase the schools involved. (See the information box on page 8 on how to help expand the program.)

“The school principals, food service managers, facilities staff and student leadership groups make this program a success,” said Chanel Ruiz-Mendez, deputy director at Fresno Metro Ministry.

Schools involved are Anthony, Ayresworth, Balderas, Birney, Figarden, Forkner, Hidalgo, Holland, King, Kirk, Lawless, Lincoln, Lowell, Malloch, Manchester GATE, Powders-Ginsburg, Slater, Starr, Thomas and Williams elementary schools; Baird, Cooper and Tenaya middle schools; Hamilton K-8 School; and Wawona School.

“It just makes me feel better because I know the food’s going where people need it and not into the dump,” said sixth-grader Amris Her.

Amris, Valentina Arellano, Adriana Avila and Dynasty Williams helped collect and sort leftover food recently at Anthony. They are part of the campus’ Aspire girls club.

“Schools were a natural fit as there are significant opportunities for stewardship and saving nutritious food for families in need in the surrounding neighborhoods,” Ruiz-Mendez said.

Food to Share vans deliver to 42 organizations -- church pantries, senior centers, foster children agencies and wellness centers in Fresno, feeding hundreds of residents every day. Food donated from the schools includes packaged fresh fruits and vegetables, crackers, raisins and hot meals.

Some schools already had a “share table,” where students could put unopened food they were not going to eat for students who were still hungry. For schools without a “share table,” students place their unopened food in the middle of the table, where hungry students can grab another serving.

After lunch, noontime assistants and student leaders work together to collect the unopened food and sort it into perishable and non-perishable trays. The same procedure is used at breakfast and with after-school healthy snacks. Schools follow safety guidelines for

See FOOD RECOVERY
Continued on page 8

How to be Part of Take-Home Tablet Education Program

Over the next three years, the district will roll out an exciting program that provides all interested students with 8-inch tablets to use at home.

In October, the program became available to pre-kindergarten, transitional kindergarten and kindergarten students. In November, the program will be available for grades 9-11. Remaining grades will be assigned tablets over the next two years.

For students to be eligible for the eLearning Companion Device (LCD) program, parents need to take the following steps:

- Log into the ATLAS parent portal (parents.fresnou.org)
- Create an LCD account
- Watch a short video
- Sign the parent agreement form
- Students in grades 9-11 will also need to agree to the student pledge, accessed from the ATLAS student portal, and watch a short video
- Once signed up, parents will receive a response with more information

For information on how to access the parent portal, families should contact their student’s school.

The video and parent agreement explain device replacement and technical support. The video and agreement also explain parent responsibilities.

Parent responsibilities:

- I will monitor my student’s use of the tablet at home.
- I will discuss the district’s Acceptable Technology Use Policy with my student and encourage them to be a good digital citizen.
- I will discuss our expectations regarding the use of the internet, digital communication and tablet apps.
- I will make sure the tablet is returned to the school when requested or upon my student’s withdrawal from Fresno Unified School District.
- If the tablet is broken or lost, I agree to pay the required amount for repair or replacement of the tablet if we want to continue participation in the LCD initiative. (details at go.fresnou.org/LCD)
- If the tablet’s content filter app becomes disabled or is deleted, I will enable it after I am notified.

Parents are asked to sign up for the program through their ATLAS parent portal, which can be accessed through a smart phone and other devices. For those WITHOUT access to the internet, Parent University is continuing to conduct orientations on the tablet program in November. Call (559) 457-3390.

Transfer Application Deadline is December 3

Fresno Unified offers a wide variety of school choice options, including popular magnet schools and specialized programs. For the 2019-20 school year, applications received on or before Dec. 3, 2018 will have priority in the selection process.

Families may apply for a transfer to any district school by completing an application. Learn more and print an application at https://tinyurl.com/fusdtransfers, or call (559) 248-7538, or drop in at the Transfers Office, 4120 N. First St., for more information.
Students Love it when Computech Teachers Battle for Best Socks

Three Computech Middle School teachers have a fun way to get students involved: Battle of the Socks.

Every Friday, theater and forensics teacher Rachel Hibler, eighth grade core teacher Sean Bryan, and music and choir teacher Charles “Chuck” Salianitro wear crazy socks. They take a picture of their socks, side by side, and post it to social media.

Students and those in the community can vote for the best socks among the three teachers. The teachers announce that Friday’s winner at the end of the day. They keep a tally of the weekly winners in the three classrooms.

The teachers have found that through Battle of the Socks they are connecting with students all across campus, and it’s been a fun topic for students.

“When students noticed, they would ask what we are wearing and during passing time, break or lunch, they would talk to each of the teachers. It is really a good way to get to know students, particularly those not in our classroom,” Bryan said.

Teens Can Pre-Register to Vote

Fresno Unified strives to do its part to promote good citizenship and educate its students about the importance of voting.

The district helps encourage its 16- and 17-year-old students to pre-register to vote as part of an initiative led by California Secretary of State Alex Padilla to promote online pre-registration.

By encouraging 16- and 17-year-olds to pre-register online, they will be set to vote when they turn 18. To pre-register to vote go to http://registertovote.ca.gov/. The same website can be used for anyone wishing to register to vote.

The district also supports voting by partnering with the Fresno County Clerk’s Office during elections to provide polling places at school sites. The sites that will be used for the Nov. 6 election are Anthony, Forkner, Hidalgo, Jefferson, Leavenworth, Malloch, Mayfair, Norsemen, Storey, Turner, Williams, Wilson, and Winchell elementary schools and Cooper Academy.

Sunnyside and Fresno high schools will serve as ballot drop-off sites. For more information, call (559) 600-2575 or visit the County Clerk’s Office on the first floor of 2220 Tulare St., Fresno, CA (93721)
Throughout the school year, field trips and other special experiences are planned for students in grades 3 through 6 to highlight the district’s Goal 3: “All students will demonstrate the character and competencies for workplace success.” The trips support the district’s mission of preparing college and career ready graduates. The College and Career Readiness Department works with numerous business, community and educational partners so that the students can learn about careers and college while still in elementary school and get them thinking about their futures. Goal 3 field trips so far this year included a trip by Burroughs Elementary School Oct. 10 to the San Joaquin Hatchery, where students learned about fish hatchery operations, top left and below middle. Below left, students from Ewing Elementary School are amazed at wood cutting machinery at the district’s Maintenance Department Oct. 9. Bottom, Ewing students tour the district’s Nutrition Center on Oct. 9.
EXPLORING CAREERS

At right and bottom left, students from Thomas Elementary School tour and try their hand at cooking at the Young Chefs Academy Oct. 5. On Sept. 28, students from Vang Pao Elementary School, bottom right, visited the Fresno Police Department, where they got a behind-the-scenes look at surveillance footage. Students from Aynesworth Elementary School visited the Chaffee Zoo on Sept. 25, below, and got to try out instruments used by zoologists.
Students in Roosevelt High School’s new Public Service Career Pathway arrived at school on a recent Monday with a “death” to investigate.

It was all part of the hands-on learning that the Introduction to Public Safety course offers freshman. As part of the Linked Learning approach, the students’ English and biology classes are aligned and part of the public service pathway.

For the recent assignment, students returned to school following the weekend to learn that a student’s body was found on campus. As part of the fabricated death, the body was initially found by other Roosevelt students, who took money from his wallet and left the body. A custodian called 911 after discovering the body during his morning rounds.

Students in the Introduction to Public Safety course used their knowledge to establish logistics for the crime scene and collected evidence. Students in the English class wrote a short story about the “crime” and students in the biology class assessed the evidence to determine if it was a homicide or death by natural causes.

Roosevelt’s new Public Service Career Pathway is among the robust career technical education courses and pathways the district offers at high schools. This year, a 10th grade P.E. for Public Service is also offered at Roosevelt.

Next year, the school will add Criminal Justice for 11th graders, if approved. The school also offers emergency medical technician courses for 12th graders.

During the introductory class, students learn about a variety of careers in public service, including military, law enforcement, fire services, dispatch, and emergency medical services. Students also learn about the various pre-requisites, certifications, and required training for different aspects of public service.

“My goal is for the students to acquire as many certifications as they can throughout the course within the scope of public safety,” said teacher Krishna Reyes.

The students have the opportunity to earn certifications in CPR, and various certifications for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) the National Fire Academy, and National Wildfire Coordinating Group.

Career Technical Education

- Career technical education (CTE) provides students with the academic and technical skills, knowledge and training for successful careers
- The district offers 130 CTE courses from 15 career industry sectors
- In addition to technical training, CTE courses develop critical thinking, technical literacy, public speaking skills, leadership and planning skills
- Qualifying courses offer college credits, industry certification and internships for students

The students have taken a field trip to the Fresno Police Department’s 911 dispatch office, with other trips being planned.

The students have multiple opportunities to speak with public service industry leaders and become familiar with the various gear and equipment used in public service careers.

Fresno Unified Receives $4.6 Million Teacher Grant

Fresno Unified has been awarded an additional $4.6 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education’s Teacher Quality Partnership.

The grant will go towards supporting the Fresno Teacher Residency program in partnership with Fresno Pacific University. The residency program began in 2014 to recruit, select, and train highly effective teachers to address the specific needs of Fresno Unified.

The program emphasizes science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education. The new grant is for five years. Fresno Unified is one of 17 recipients nationwide and scored the fifth highest with its application.

The Fresno Teacher Residency program serves 150 teachers, with 65% coming from underrepresented groups. The program assigns mentors to residents and provides a variety of supports.

Fresno Unified’s original Teacher Quality Partnership grant in 2014 was for $7.8 million in partnership with California State University, Fresno.

“This grant allows us to continue the groundbreaking work we are doing in recruiting and training the very best teachers for our students,” said Superintendent Bob Nelson.

The grant will go towards supporting the Fresno Teacher Residency program in partnership with Fresno Pacific University and various other organizations to enhance the teacher recruitment, selection, and training process.

How to Help Expand the Program

Fresno Metro Ministry’s Food to Share program wants to expand to recover food from all Fresno Unified schools. Metro Ministry’s goal is to raise $650,000 to fund additional vehicles, drivers and other expenses. To donate, contact Fresno Metro Ministry Executive Director Keith Bergthold or Deputy Director Chanel Ruiz-Mendez at (559) 485-1416.

Food to Share also recovers food from farmers markets, warehouses, retail outlets, fruit packers and farmers.
Skilled Fresno Unified Carpenter Helps Keep District in One Piece

Robert Renovato works in the district’s shop as a carpenter in Maintenance and Operations. He learned his trade from his father, a custom homebuilder.

Robert Renovato is among the dedicated trades employees who work behind the scenes to repair furniture, doors, cabinets and other classroom essentials. Renovato began working at the district in March 2017 after 27 years in the Carpenters Union. He learned his skills from his father, a custom homebuilder.

Skilled Fresno Unified Carpenter Helps Keep District in One Piece

What does your job with the district include? Building and repairing cabinets, doors and laminating tabletops and counters in Mill Shop No. 1.

What unusual pieces have you constructed for the district? I consider all pieces of furniture that come into my shop unique because of the different shapes and sizes.

What is the most rewarding part of your job? Coming to work every day, working for a great supervisor (Jim Lay) and working around the rest of the carpenters here at the Mill Shop.

What is the most challenging part of your job? Leaving the Mill Shop at the end of the day.

How is your job connected to student success? Giving what was a piece of broken furniture back to the classroom from where it came from, so the kids or the teacher can use it once again.

How is your job connected to supporting staff? Working in the Mill Shop, I have a lot of specialty pieces of equipment that I use to help our mobile maintenance crews fabricate different pieces of cabinetry. This helps to avoid any delays to the classrooms at any of our schools.

Name one thing most people do not know about you. Working here at Mill Shop No. 1, the only thing most people do not know about me is my friendly personality. My shop doors are always open to whoever needs help with anything.

What is your dream vacation? My dream vacation would be to take my beautiful wife and kids to Hawaii or to Italy.
American Student Leadership

Both students said that the African-American Student Leadership Academy (AASLA) helped them realize that to achieve their goals, they have to focus on their studies. The AASLA began in May 2016. Each year, a new cohort forms identified by the students’ graduation year.

Students in AASLA meet with a mentor every 4-5 weeks to go over grades and the extracurricular activities they are involved in on campus.

Students are selected for AASLA based on multiple measures, including having at least a 2.75 GPA, at least a 95% attendance rate, no more than one suspension and leadership participation. Geronimo and Josiah are leaders for the AASLA programs at their schools.

Another component of AASLA is its partnership with UC Merced. AASLA members visit the campus during the summer prior to their eighth grade year, staying in the dorms and talking with counselors, college students and other UC Merced staff members.

Geronimo was inspired by his visit to UC Merced.

“It was a very good experience for me. It gave me the opportunity to see really successful people. They told us it won’t be easy; we will have to work to get there,” Geronimo said. “I am determined to be in college in four years.”

Josiah Bohanon, a student at Gaston Middle School, in the leader African-American Student Leadership Academy.

During his visit to UC Merced, Josiah said he learned the importance of time management, preparing for college transitions and how to handle issues such as not liking a professor.

Josiah even has advice for fellow students who aren’t thinking about college yet: “Stay in school and stay on top of your grades because you need to be ready.”

Geronimo Carter, a student at Wawona School, works with counselor Tonia Cormier. Geronimo is a leader in the African-American Student Leadership Academy.

container:

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Gaston, Wawona Eighth-Graders are part of Leadership Academy

“A dream without a plan is just a wish.” -- Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

Students Josiah Bohanon and Geronimo Carter know that’s true. Both are members of the African-American Student Leadership Academy: Cohort 2023, an initiative that identifies college-bound eighth-grade students and provides support through high school.

Like many middle school students, both Josiah and Geronimo dream of being professional basketball players. But they also aspire to college and getting scholarships. Being part of the leadership academy will help them get there.

“School comes first,” said Geronimo, who attends Wawona School. “I have to demand a lot of myself to achieve my goal.”

Josiah’s views are similar. He is devoted to his classes and activities at Gaston Middle School. He is also running for student body president. If he doesn’t make it to the NBA, he wants to pursue a career in the medical field.

“I want to work at something that not only benefits me, I want to do something for other people,” Josiah said.

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Geronimo Carter, a student at Wawona School, works with counselor Tonia Cormier. Geronimo is a leader in the African-American Student Leadership Academy.

Micheal Guerra

Continued from page 9

thing about middle school students is how they are so creative and trendy. From BTS to internet memes, middle school students are fascinating in how they make sense, explore, and identify with our world, especially in this digital age. They make me feel young at heart.

What has one of your students said lately that made you laugh? I will joke with my students by telling “dad jokes” -- that’s what they call it. For example, “Why did the banana go to the doctor? Because he wasn’t peeling well.” So, some of my students will come up and tell a joke as well. But, speaking of the memes, recently a student used Phil Swift – the Flex Seal spokesman – as a profile photo. When I asked about it, the student gave me the background, explained why Phil Swift was his hero and ended with “Phil Swift is unstoppable.” Middle school students are hilarious.

What book(s) do you recommend to middle school students? When I think about middle school, I think “Outsiders,” by S.E. Hinton. Every middle schooler loves that story. There are so many great stories out there. For students into dystopias – I love dystopias – I recommend “Among the Hidden – the Shadow Children Series” by Margaret Peterson Haddix. It’s set in the future with the world facing food shortages and overpopulation. Families are limited to two children and the Population Police are ever present. Another recommendation for middle schoolers is any of the Rick Riordan series. I loved mythology as a kid, and one day on a visit with my kids to the library, I discovered “Magnus Chase and Gods of Asgard” by Rick Riordan – Boston, demigods, wolves, Norse Gods, enough said.

Name one thing most people do not know about you. I mostly read expository texts, but I love the mythos of the comic hero genre. I grew up reading comics and to this day I’ll pick up a comic series to read. I love the parallels, commentary, and perspectives toward modern struggles. I love the artistic expression, so I am a comic book fan.

What is your dream vacation? My dream vacation is being with my wife and kids at an all-inclusive beach resort. There is no cooking and no cleaning; just unplugging, relaxing, having fun, and making memories.
familias a conectarse con los recursos escolares apropiados,” dijo Neri.

Neri puede visitar a los estudiantes y a las familias en los refugios, los cuales ha sido difícil en el pasado debido a las pólizas de confidencialidad de los refugios. También, puede asistir a otros departamentos del Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno haciendo conexiones con estudiantes que están en refugios.

“También, creo que es algo grandioso que las familias vean que el distrito y los refugios trabajan en conjunto. Ellos pueden ver que nosotros deseamos que tengan éxito y a ambos nos interesa su bienestar,” dijo Neri.

**Hauv Paus Tsev Kawm Ntawv Xaus Saus Vawv Kawj (Social Worker) Pab Tej Tub Kawm Ntawv Nyob Cov Tsev “Shelters”**

Coob tshaj li ntawm 1,400 tub kawnh ntwav hauv pauv tsev kawnh ntwav tau rau pom zom tsis muaj vaj muaj nyob – nyob rau tej tsev “shelters”, nyob nrog tej txheeb ze, los yoj tej phooh tej ywg, los yoq nyob rau hauv tej “motels”. Ntawm cov nov, hauv pauv tsev kawn nhawv tau txheeb tau 35 tug tub kawn nhawv nyob rau poj niam cov tsev “shelters” yeeb vim tias rauv txom los yoj muaj kev ua phem nyob rau hauv lawv vaj lawv tsev.

Fresno Unified yog lub xyoo kawnh ntwaw thij ob ntawm kev tau npaj muaj ib tug xaus saus vawv kawj (social worker) tshwj xeeb los pab cov tub kawn nhawv thiab lawv cov tsev yim neeg uas nyob rau tej tsev “shelters”. Fresno Unified Cov Thawj Coj Kawj Txuj Ci tau thow kom muaj tes dej num xaus saus vawv kawj (social worker) los pab cov tub kawn nhawv nybo rau tej tsev “shelters” tau cuv npe kawnh ntwaw hauv tsev kawn nhawv thiab txuas nrog tsev kawn nhawv tej kev pab cuam.

Uas xaus saus vawv kawj (social worker) yog Mayra Neri. Feem ntawm nws cov dej num yog tej tub kawn nhawv nyob rau cov tsev muaj kev nyob nyab xeeb khiai dej num los ntawm Marjaree Mason Center. Nws kuj teem ua hauj lwom nrog tej tub kawn nhawv nyob rau hauv Kev Cawm Cov Me Nyuam Yaus (Rescue the Children), HomeFront, Evangel Home thiab Spirit of Women shelters.

Neri yog ib tug ntawm 10 xaus saus vawv kawj (social workers) rau cov neeg khiai dej num ntawm hauv pauv tsev kawn nhawv qhov Project ACCESS, uas yog los npaj muaj kev kev pab cuam rau Fresno Unified cov tub kawn nhawv tis muaj vaj muaj nyob thiab cov uas nyob rau tsev kev me nyuam yaus.

Tam sim no hauv pauv tsev kawn nhawv tau pab Julia thiab nws ntau tsev neeg peb tug me nyuam yaus – Emily, 18, Kaily, 13, thiab Caleb, 7 – lub sjaw hauv lawv tau hauv marjaree Mason Center shelter.

Emily tau kawnh tiaw hauv Roosevelt High School thaum lub Rau Hli thiab mus kawnh college, kawnh rau chav kawn. Nws xav los ua ib tug xaus saus vawv kawj (social worker) yeeb vim tias tej kev pab nws tau txais los ntawm Fresno Unified Cov thiaw Iwm tus xaus saus vawv kawj.

“Kuv xav them rov qab,” Emily hais li. Kaily yog ib tug kawnh rau qib yim thiab xav los ua ib tug FBI. Caleb yog ib tug kawnh qib ob.

Julia tau biu yuav tau 17 xyoo tiam sis tau rauv tsim txom los ntawm sab nqaj taww thiab sab lub siab lub ntsws los ntawm nws tus txiv dhuav los. Tom qab uas tau khiai tawn nhawv nws tus txiv, nws thiab nws cov me nyuam tau los nyob rau hauv lawv tsev Marjaree Mason Center tau li ntawm 1½ xyooos. Lawv tau taww mus nyob rau lawv lub “apartment” thauam lub Ib Hlis, thiab Julia tab tom kawnh lus Askiv.

Julia, los ntawm ib tug neeg txhaislus, tau hais tias Fresno Unified tau pab cov pib caij npav rau cov me nyuam mus kawn nhawv thiab los, cov hhab ev ntaww thiab tej khoumx siv kawnh ntawv, kev pab tswv yim thiab ntawv puav pheej (vouchers) los mus yuav tej khau tshiab rau. Emily tau muaj peev xwm yuav tau ib phaav taww xyooy (yearbook) yeeb vim cov nyiaj txaig ntawm Project ACCESS npaj muaj rau cov kawn nhawv qib kawn ob hauv “high school.”

Julia, nws tau tsvi los nyob rau hauv Fresno los ntawm Iwm lub zos, tau hais tias Fresno Unified xaus saus vawv kawj (social worker) tshwj xeeb tshaj liuav tau pab cuv nws cov me nyuam npe kawn nhawv.

“Kuv vam txog lub neej tom ntjem,” nws hais li. Yav dhau los, tej tub kawn nhawv mus nyob tsev “shelter” feem ntai tsiis raug cuv npe kawn nhawv kuav tam sim.

“Cov tsev “Shelters” tam sim no hu kuv thiaw kuv muaj peev xwm pab tau cov tsev yim neeg txais nrog tej kev pab tsim nyob rau tsev kawn nhawv;” Neri hais li.

Neri muaj peev xwm mus niig saib tau tej tub kawn nhawv thiaw lawv tsev yim neeg ntawm cov tsev “shelters”, uas yav dhau los tau muaj kev nyuaj yeeb vim cov tsev “shelters” tej cai zais ntshis. Nws muaj kuv tseem muaj peev xwm pab tau Fresno Unified Iwm lub chaw ua hauj Iwm ua kom muaj kev txuas tau nrog tej tub kawn nhawv nws nyob rau hauv tej tsev “shelters”.

“Kuv kuj xav tias nws yog qhov zoo tshaj plaws uas tsev yim neeg tau pom tias hauv pauv tsev kawn nhawv thiaw cov cov tsev “shelters” los ua hauj lwom ua ke. Lawv muaj peev xwm pom tau tias peev xwm lawv pom muaj kev vam mej thiab pab tag nhro muaj kev ntxim siab rau lawv kev noj qab nyob huv,” Neri hais li.
Middle Schools Get their Shot at Water Polo with New Programs

Fresno Unified offered middle school water polo districtwide for the first time, with students competing by regions throughout the fall. With the launch of the program, the district not only expands opportunities for middle school students, it provides a talent pipeline for high school teams. Regions fielded boys and girls teams. The regional teams this year were Bullard (Baird, Tenaya, Wawona middle schools and Bullard TALENT K-8 School); Edison (Computech and Gaston middle schools); Fresno (Cooper Academy, Fort Miller Middle School and Hamilton K-8 School); Hoover (Ahwahnee and Tioga middle schools); and Sunnyside (Kings Canyon and Terronez middle schools).

McLane and Roosevelt regions will have teams next year following the completion of their new pools.

Computech has had a water polo program for six years, but other schools have not consistently had teams.

“Middle school water polo teams will have a positive effect on high school programs because students will have some experience with the sport prior to high school,” said Brett Mar, the district’s co-athletic manager.

“Students have been excited to have the opportunity to compete in water polo at the middle school level. High school coaches are ecstatic at the chance to build their programs through the feeder schools.”

The teams competed in the Central Valley Athletic League against teams from Madera, Central, Reedley, and Sanger.

Fresno Unified
PREPARING CAREER READY GRADUATES | www.FresnoUnified.org
November is National Runaway Prevention Month

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**Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission**
Sanctuary and Youth Services

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24-Hour Emergency Housing, Counseling & Support
Youth ages 12-18
1-800-820-4968 (4YOU)

**Sanctuary Transitional Shelter**
Overnight Shelter & Support Services
Young Adults ages 18-24
(559) 931-1444 call/text

**Sanctuary Drop-In Center**
Youth and Young Adults up to age 24
(559) 475-8157 call/text

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**Valley Children’s Medical Group**

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**Dakota Pediatrics**
3636 N. First Street, Suite 120
Fresno, CA 93726
559-224-4365
Monday-Friday, 7:45 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Se habla español

**Sky Park Pediatrics**
4770 W. Herndon Avenue, Suite 108
Fresno, CA 93722
559-256-7990
Monday-Friday, 7:45 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Se habla español

**Fresno Children’s Medical Group**
7720 N. Fresno Street, Suite 104
Fresno, CA 93720
559-438-2300
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Saturday appointments available

**Magnolia Pediatrics**
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**SAFE PLACE**
All Fresno Unified schools, Fresno and Clovis city buses and select local businesses are Safe Place sites.

Find us on Facebook: facebook.com/EOCsanctuary
Find us Online at: FresnoEOC.org/Sanctuary
The design of the new main building features abundant natural light and high tech features. A completion date has not been determined.

The district takes over a property owned by the county since the 1800s, with a jail on the site for 62 years. The most recent county facility, juvenile hall, closed in 2006. The media referred to the building as the “hall of shame.” “In the same location that students’ dreams were locked up and thrown away, we are planning to build a state of the art center for alternative education that will set our students’ dreams free,” said Superintendent Bob Nelson. “The vision for this new location is to bring our students together in a space that allows them the freedom to explore opportunities for learning that may not be considered traditional in nature.”

The anti-fraud waste or abuse reporting hotline is available to report alleged fraud in the district. The responsibility for monitoring the hotline rests with the internal auditor, Price, Page & Company. A report may be made anonymously.

Students at Balderas Elementary School held a rally on Sept. 14 to promote kindness and learn how to prevent bullying.

Dishonest or fraudulent acts can be confidentially reported by calling the Anti-Fraud Hotline, (559) 325-3200, or by completing the fraud, waste or abuse reporting form online at: http://www.ppcpas.com/fresno-unified-fraud-alert

Every year, Americans throw away 35 billion plastic bottles.

Recycling just 1 soda can saves enough electricity to operate a TV for up to 3 hours.

Glass bottles take over 1 million years to decompose in landfills.

Want to learn more about recycling? Call (559) 621-1111 to book a recycling presentation for your class!
Hace unas pocas semanas, tuve la oportunidad de conectarme a nuestro alumnado anual del Estado de la Educación de nuestro distrito, el evento de recaudación de fondos más grande que organizamos para apoyar el Fon- do de Becas del Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno. Cuatrocientos socios de la comunidad y líderes del distrito llenaron la sala mientras escucharon actuaciones musicales, participaron en demostraciones interactivas de estudiantes de CTE y escucharon histo- rias de éxito de los ganadores de becas an- teriores. En este mes de Acción de Gracias, por favor sepá que tan agradecidos estamos por el amor y el apoyo que tantos en esta comunidad brindan a los jóvenes de nuestro distrito. Fresno es un lugar increíblemente cálido y generoso.

Como mencioné ese día, el estado de edu- cación en el Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno es saludable y se está haciendo más saludable. Fiscamente, nuestro distrito es uno de los sistemas más estables en el es- tado de California, particularmente entre to- dos los distritos escolares urbanos grandes. Los resultados educativos de nuestros estu- diantes permanecen estables y continúan mejorando. Nuestra mesa directiva continúa invitando en programas educativos nuevos y mejorados que llevarán a nuestros estu- diantes a los trabajos y las carreras del mañana – trabajos que actualmente no existen y que aún no podemos imaginar. Nuestro equipo de instalaciones también continúa construyendo y modernizando las instalaciones para que nuestro personal y nuestros estudiantes puedan rendir al máximo. Hay un sentido de orgullo definido para los estudiantes y em- pleados que trabajan y aprenden en un am- biente agradable.

En el último año hemos visto un notable crecimiento y éxito. Los datos publicados recientemente sobre nuestras evaluaciones estatales muestran a los estudiantes con puntaje competente en casi todos los gru- pos. Además, los estudiantes en todos los grados evaluados, con la excepción del 11º, presentan una importante tendencia salu- dable para nuestro sistema.

También hay otros indicadores globales de salud para nuestro sistema: el promedio de re-designación para los estudiantes aprendi- dedes de inglés a estudiantes que dominan el inglés es tan fuerte como lo ha sido en la memoria reciente. Hemos iniciado nuevos proyectos solares en las preparatorias por toda la ciudad y hemos mejorado las instalaciones para nuestros estudiantes que reciben servicios de educación especial. Durante los últimos 18 meses, la Escuela Addicott K-8 y la Preparatoria Rata, que albergan a nuestros estudiantes más frágiles, desde el punto de vista médico, se han sometido a renova- ciones y modernizaciones importantes. En el Programa de Transición de Adultos, las aulas también se han reconfigurado y modernizado. No logro entender de qué manera en Fresno nos las hemos arreglado sin aire acondicionado en nuestros gimna- sios, cafeterías y salones primarios de usos múltiples, pero gracias a la generosidad de nuestra comunidad al aprobar las Medidas Q y X, y la visión de nuestra mesa directiva, estamos haciendo ese trabajo importante también. Pronto se completará la nueva in- stalación de educación técnica profesional para un camión pesado y un programa de construcción ampliado en la Escuela Prepa- ratoria Politécnica Duncan. Este programa brindará a nuestros alumnos conocimientos y habilidades que se pueden aplicar de inme- diato al lugar de trabajo si así lo desean.

Además, el 17 de octubre nuestra mesa di- rectiva dio su aprobación para comprar lo que solía ser la antigua detención juvenil por la ciudadana la beneficencia y el fin de la casa de reclusión que solía ser la antigua detención juvenil.

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