

# BUILDING futures

A Publication of the Fresno Unified School District

A C H I E V I N G   O U R   G R E A T E S T   P O T E N T I A L

## Fresno Scholarship Recipients Overcome Obstacles on Way to Success

Seventy inspiring seniors were awarded \$103,500 in Fresno Unified Scholarships this year to help them achieve their dream of higher education.

The scholarships are awarded to high-achieving students based on their school and community involvement, aspirations and financial need. The students were selected by a district committee from 276 applications.

This year's winners navigated the return to in-person learning for their senior year, not a smooth process for many students after a year of distance learning in 2020. However, this group of scholarship winners has shown resiliency throughout their years in school, with many overcoming the death of parents, extreme poverty, health issues of their own, turmoil at home and language barriers.

The district celebrated the scholarship winners at a banquet hosted by Parent University on May 26 at the Hoover Event Center. With family and friends in the audience, scholarship winners from all of the district's high schools were honored for their hard work.

Recipients are headed to universities and colleges throughout California and across the country, including UCLA, UC Berkeley, Stanford University, University of Oregon, CSU Long Beach, UC Davis, Azusa Pacific University, USC, Johns Hopkins University and New York University Tisch School of the Arts. Many will take advantage of their hometown colleges, enrolling in Fresno State and Fresno City College.

Recipients aspire to an impressive array of careers: scientist, graphic designer, sports psychologist, astrophysicist, screen writer, architect, actor, physical therapist, crime scene investigator, doctor, FBI agent, teacher, orthopedic surgeon, trauma surgeon, and many others.

The Fresno Unified Scholarship Fund was established in 2009, made possible by generous donations from the community and district employees, with the State of Education luncheon in the fall the largest single fundraiser for the scholarship fund. The awards this year ranged from \$1,000 to \$2,500.

"I am proud of this year's group of scholarship recipients, who not only have overcome various obstacles throughout their school years, but had to tackle distance learning, then navigate back into in-person learning," said Superintendent Bob Nelson. "These students amaze me with their resiliency. I am proud of each of them and honored on behalf of the district to help ease their financial burden a bit as they advance toward college."



Fresno Unified Scholarship winners are honored May 26 at the Hoover Event Center. Seventy students received scholarships ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,500 for a total of \$103,500.



Krista Faith Gonzalez from Sunnyside High School receives her Fresno Unified Scholarship award on May 26. She was among nine recipients from Sunnyside and 70 districtwide.

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Xai Her was among 70 Fresno Unified Scholarship recipients this year. He plans to attend Fresno State.

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## Scholarship Winners 2022



### **Tina Tran**

Bullard High School

**GPA:** 4.17

**College:** UC Irvine

**Career goal:** Biomedical scientist or nurse

**About Tina:** She was inspired at a young age to pursue a career in the medical field after seeing the expert care her mother received in the hospital. As the daughter of immigrants from Vietnam, Tina's family struggled financially and they moved homes and schools frequently. She began working at 16 to save money for college and help her family. She

is fluent in Vietnamese, French and English. Tina discovered her love of science in the seventh grade, and enjoys biology and chemistry labs and looking at organisms under a microscope. For fun, she watches college lab videos on YouTube. She loves reading and writing. Tina is a member of the California Scholastic Federation and swim team and interned with the American Chemical Society.

**Tina's words:** "I want to do what nurses do, to express my bravery and diligence to improve the quality of life of patients."

**Teacher librarian Will Haskins:** "Tina is goal-oriented, but not at the expense of caring for other people. She wants to work as a nurse or in biomedicine because she wants to help others. This heart of servitude is clear in how she interacts with students and staff."



## Danique Bryant

Cambridge High School

**GPA:** 3.21

**College:** Fresno City College

**Career goal:** Nurse

**About Danique:** When she was 8, Danique's mother died in a house fire and at age 13, she also lost her father. She lived with a foster family for a while and was separated from her sisters. Danique says these losses brought about despair, fighting with others and trouble at school. Her only uncle, who had encouraged her and guided her, was murdered, but instead of giving up Danique resolved to honor his memory and her parents by working hard at her job and school. At Cambridge she has also taken Fresno City College courses, was involved in the Black Student Union, Women's Alliance and basketball.

**Danique's words:** "My past is the reason why I am so strong and keep going in life. My past does not define who I am."

**Math teacher Joe Trevino:** "Danique is a great leader who can command the attention of any room with little to no effort."



## Omar Ali

Design Science Middle College High School

**GPA:** 4.32

**College:** Stanford University

**Career goal:** Software engineer

**About Omar:** Omar and his family immigrated from Egypt to the United States and English was not his first language. The family has faced economic challenges. Omar embraced education in Fresno Unified, especially technology learning. His goal is to make technology accessible to all and to be a leader in software development. During the pandemic, he became expert at video editing. He is No. 1 in his class and will graduate with a math associate degree from Fresno City College. He is a member of the Chess Club and Link Crew.

**Omar's words:** "I am fascinated by innovation in technology, and that it is the future for us to make our lives easier, learn more about the world, and solve current issues we face collectively as a society. My career goal is to create new technologies that will benefit the world."

**Math teacher Sandra Atkins:** "Omar's best qualities might be his striving for understanding and his integrity. He is tenacious."



## Joselyn Mejia

DeWolf High School

**GPA:** 2.50

**College:** Fresno City College

**Career goal:** Nurse

**About Joselyn:** When she was a freshman, her mother was diagnosed with cancer, the beginning of more than two years of surgeries and doctor and clinic visits, with Joselyn accompanying her most of the time. She was at the clinic so much that staff thought she worked there. Being her mother's caretaker ignited her interest in being a nurse. Joselyn and her brother will be the first in the family to graduate from high school and she will be the first to attend college.

**Joselyn's words:** "I am a quick learner and I enjoy hands-on learning."

**Clinical school social worker Francisco Arrevalo:** "Joselyn learned that life is unpredictable and unfair. Nevertheless, she developed an aspiration to overcome challenging situations, and to thrive in life. She embodies the definition of resiliency."



## Calvin Thao

Duncan Polytechnical High School

**GPA:** 3.56

**College:** California State University, Sacramento

**Career goal:** Programmer

**About Calvin:** Calvin and his brothers were raised by their mom, who works night shifts. Through working on microcontrollers in the Innovative Design and Applied Technology Academy at Duncan, Calvin was inspired to pursue computer science as a career. His hobby is working on and designing small items for software company SolidWorks, as well as for school projects and others at Duncan. He was approached by the welding shop at Duncan to design laser pointer stabilizers and holders. He will be the first in his family to attend college. He is a member of Duncan's Rock Climbing Club.

**Calvin's words:** "By experiencing how it is to program, I realized that there are countless possibilities to what I can create."

**English teacher Sky Sweet:** "Duncan's academy program promotes college and career ready skills such as effective communicators, critical thinkers, collaborative workers, and self-directed, lifelong learners. Calvin demonstrates all these skills and is ready for both college and the work force."



## Hovhannes Torikyan

Edison High School

**GPA:** 4.17

**College:** Fresno State

**Career goal:** Automotive Designer

**About Hovhannes:** Hovhannes immigrated to the United States from Armenia in 2008 and his family has faced financial challenges, partly because of the language barrier for his father. Hovhannes has thrived at Edison, taking numerous AP classes as he prepares for his mechanical engineering studies. When he was younger, he wanted to be a race car driver but later discovered he was more interested in the cars themselves. As a child he would take toys and electronics apart to try to figure out how they were made. Hovhannes has a green belt in judo.

**Hovhannes' words:** "Every single day, I write down my goals and objectives and tell

myself that I will accomplish them. These are not empty promises to myself – I work towards all of them.”

**Engineering and physics teacher Xiong Cha:** “In the classroom Hovhannes is very social, helpful and always enthusiastic about the possibilities of engineering. This trait for learning seems to be related to his family background and the challenges that they had to face and overcome.”



## Yamilex Cruz Ramirez

Fresno High School

**GPA:** 4.32

**College:** UC Berkeley

**Career goal:** Engineer

**About Yamilex:** Yamilex lives with nine other family members. She loves signing with her older brother, who is deaf. He taught her how to multiply and divide at age 5, launching her love of math and learning. Yamelix also loves to read and write stories and create art. Although she used to be afraid of public speaking, she joined the Fresno High Senate as a freshman, conquering her speaking anxiety. Yamilex earned the California Seal of Biliteracy and is a member of the California Scholastic Federation. She is also on the Mock Trial team.

**Guidance counselor Gina Sandoval:** “I have watched Yamilex develop both academically and personally from a quiet, reserved student into an outgoing, engaged and highly motivated student ready for the challenges of postsecondary education.”



## Jinnson Lim

Hoover High School

**GPA:** 4.32

**College:** UC Berkeley

**Career goal:** Data Scientist

**About Jinnson:** Jinnson immigrated to the United States from Cambodia and struggled when he was younger, embarrassed that he lacked the toys and clothes of his classmates. As he grew older, Jinnson said he has learned to embrace being Cambodian American. He remembers the exact assignment – creating the box with the most volume – that ignited his passion for calculus, which led to his interest in computer science. He graduates No. 1 in his class and is a first-generation college student. He is a member of the volleyball and cross country teams, Key Club and Anime Club.

**School counselor Russell Goolsby (now a manager in the Communications Office):** “Students like Jinnson are few and far between. He is curious, driven, upbeat, intellectual, and involved. His level of grit is very promising, and he is destined to accomplish everything he sets his mind to.”



## Trinity Iniguez

eLearn Academy/ J.E. Young Academic Center

**GPA:** 4.00

**College:** UCLA

**Career goal:** Own a non-profit organization

**About Trinity:** Trinity was taught from an early age about the importance of education, her mother setting the example by earning her master’s degree while working fulltime. Trinity said at 16 she decided she would become an advocate for education through writing articles and public speaking. Trinity, who is 40% Native American, said she realized her ability to

influence others when she disagreed with a teacher about Columbus Day, and went home and wrote a report that changed her teacher's point of view. Trinity graduated in three years, was the associated student body vice president and plays the piano.

**Trinity's words:** "In my family, education has grown to be a huge priority for my brother and me."

**Counselor Jessica Silva Cota:** "I am consistently impressed with her hard work and dedication."



## Xai Her

McLane High School

**GPA:** 4.16

**College:** Fresno State

**Career goal:** Teacher or wildlife officer

**About Xai:** Xai's family has struggled financially because his dad died when he was young, leaving his mom to raise nine children. Xai's mom could not speak or write English and had to rely on her children to help her communicate with others. Every morning, however, Xai said his mom would send him off to school, telling him to listen to his teachers and do his work. As a freshman, Xai transferred to McLane at a tumultuous time in his life. Because he did not know anyone, he would hang out at the tennis courts, doing his homework, reading and playing tennis by himself. He discovered, however, that he was mentally tough. He developed communication and computer skills. He loves fishing, hunting and playing tennis. He is a member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and International Hmong Dance.

**Xai's words:** "Don't ever give up on your dream."

**Kings Canyon Middle School teacher Anthony Sombat:** "Xai consistently rises above any challenges he encounters."



## Aishaa Jynes

Patiño School of Entrepreneurship

**GPA:** 2.37

**College:** Fresno State

**Career goal:** Psychologist

**About Aishaa:** Her family has struggled financially – their situation exacerbated by COVID-19 – but her parents always urged Aishaa to focus on her studies. She endured many challenges, even a period when the electricity was shut off in their home. Aishaa came to realize that many people are hiding their struggles, just as she has. She enjoys reading and writing. She is a member of Future Business Leaders of America, developed the Mexi-Candy as a school business and is a School Ambassador.

**Aishaa's words:** "I desire to speak to children and adults about issues that are hard to see on the outside. I believe if you dig deep enough, one can learn to see what things are hidden that need to be properly addressed."

**Oscar Barragan, counselor:** "Although Aishaa has encountered numerous struggles in life, she always finds a way to be optimistic. Through this optimistic attitude, Ms. Jynes finds a way to spread kindness to those around her."



## Yliah Stuart-Serrano

Roosevelt High School

**GPA:** 4.32

**College:** UCLA or USC

**Career goal:** Linguistics professor

**About Yliah:** Yliah is a first-generation American, her family immigrating from the Philippines. Although her father discouraged it, she committed at age 9 to learning Tagalog, her family’s native language, sparking her interest in languages. She works to pay her own bills. She is involved in Roosevelt School of the Arts, including a four-year acting and directing program and numerous other performing groups. She is a member of the Ecology Club.

**Yliah’s words:** “I plan to make language acquisition my life mission.”

**Dance teacher Serena Rimorin:** “Yliah brought joy to our class meetings, and even with the difficulties of learning dance through a screen, it only challenged her to become a better dancer, student, and artist.”



## Christian Lee

Sunnyside High School

**GPA:** 4.32

**College:** UC San Diego

**Career goal:** FBI, CHP or a history teacher

**About Christian:** Rather than sleep in the living room with no privacy, Christian sleeps in an RV in his backyard. Although it was cold in the winter, it’s important to him to have a quiet space away from the noise and loud music of his neighborhood, where he can focus on his homework. Christian wants to go into law enforcement because he witnessed troubling interactions between the police and a family member. He said police never tried to talk to the family member or provide resources that would have helped. He plays lead guitar, keyboard and sings in a band. He is the senior class president, is involved in a variety of clubs and activities, is in the Fresno Sheriff’s Explore Program and speaks French.

**Christian’s words:** “That’s why I work to earn money and work to earn good grades – I desire to leave home for college despite my financial circumstances.”

**French teacher Blandine Vu:** “Christian is not afraid of challenges and is risk-taker. He is constantly looking for opportunities to learn and experience new things, which is what I admire the most about him.”

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## 2022 Fresno Unified Scholarship Recipients

### Bullard High School

Stephanie Cota Rubio

Ace Vo

Emmah Haro

Marcus Spencer

Tina Tran

Grace Isaac

### Cambridge High School

Danique Bryant

Shaylei Dickson

## **Design Science Middle College High School**

Kharron Williams  
Kandyce Xiong  
Natalie Zendejas  
Amara Romero  
Omar Ali  
Mirna Llano

## **DeWolf High School**

Joselyn Mejia  
Tyreese Granger

## **Duncan Polytechnical High School**

Alondra Meza  
Xavier Romero  
Madilyne Yang  
Frida Duran  
Calvin Thao

## **Edison High School**

Amirah Winn  
Yudy Vue  
Alexsandra Martinez Tinoco  
Kimberly Gonzalez  
Kennedy Haynes  
Michael Fung  
Hovhannes Torikyan

## **Fresno High School**

Destiny Do  
Yamilex Cruz Ramirez  
Kaelyn Barrios  
Amirah Myles  
Angel Garibay  
Ryan Moua  
Chanel Charles

## **Hoover High School**

Jinnson Lim  
Ulysses Lopez Cadena  
Maiceella Vang  
Dayane Gomez  
Aniya Valverde  
Roxxana Boyajian  
Charlize Xiong

## **J.E. Young Academic Center**

Trinity Iniguez  
Jaskirat Saini  
Annalise Avina Martinez  
Leilani Lopez  
Cheyenne Her

## **McLane High School**

Xai Her  
Isaiah Martinez  
Allison Yang  
Faith Sanchez  
Rubi Escalera  
Rogelio Huerta Flores

## **Patiño School of Entrepreneurship**

Aishaa Jynes

## **Roosevelt High School**

Yliah Stuart-Serrano  
Yasmin Avila  
Sharon Irocio Moreno  
Esmeralda Nava Vargas  
Michelle Medina Castaneda  
Vanessa Vang  
Leah Acosta

## **Sunnyside High School**

Christian Lee  
Kaylee Gudino  
Gwendolyne Aguilar  
Houa Her  
Krista Faith Gonzalez  
Kimberly Munoz  
Angie Yang  
April Vang  
Kayleen Gonzalez

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## **Graduation Ceremonies Return to Traditional Venues**

For the first time in two years, Fresno Unified graduations have returned to traditional indoor venues, with the first ceremony of the season held May 23 for Design Science Middle College High School.

Design Science celebrated its graduates at the Old Administration Building at Fresno City College. Design Science is a specialty high school that offers dual enrollment in college classes and is housed at Fresno City College.

This year, 50 of 59 students earned associate degrees, along with their high school diplomas.

The rest of the district's [graduations](#) will be held June 2-8, with most at the Save Mart Center. Smaller campuses will use the Saroyan Theatre, with McLane and Duncan Polytechnical high schools using the McLane Stadium.

Last year, due to COVID-19 health concerns, all graduation were held outdoors.



Ayanna Perales and her mother, Dominica Perales, celebrate at her graduation from Design Science Middle College High School on May 23, the first of 16 Fresno Unified graduations. Ayanna will attend Fresno State.

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## After School Program Offers Academics, Enrichment and Recreation

In the coming school year, Fresno Unified will continue to implement a randomized computer lottery system for enrollment in the district's after school programs. This process will provide every student an equal opportunity for enrollment.

Fresno Unified, in partnership with the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools, operates daily comprehensive after school programs at 70 elementary and middle schools across the district through grants from the After School Education and Safety (ASES program) and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Community Center.

ASES programs will continue the randomized computer lottery for all the elementary sites listed. This lottery will be held during the first week in August.

Families do not need to apply into the ASES program. All students from each of the 70 school sites, from transitional kindergarten through eighth grade, will automatically be entered into the lottery.

Parents of students who are accepted into the program will be notified via automated phone calls in August. Parents will be required to attend a mandatory orientation the first week of school.

Students who are not selected during the lottery process will be placed on a waiting list and be notified when space becomes available.

Programs operate on school days only from dismissal until 6 p.m. Programs are an extension of the regular school day, offering academic enrichment aligned with the regular school day core programs.

Students have the opportunity to receive academic and literacy support through assistance with homework in language arts and mathematics. The enrichment component includes a variety of activities to engage students in new opportunities, such as social emotional learning, community service learning, recreation and physical activities, science and technology, career awareness, and other activities based on student interests.

The Fresno Unified Nutrition Center provides two healthy snacks each day for students participating in the after school program.

### After School Program Sites

The following sites will offer the ASES program in 2022-23:

#### Elementary Schools:

Addams, Anthony, Ayer, Aynesworth, Bakman, Balderas, Birney, Burroughs, Calwa, Centennial, Columbia, Del Mar, Easterby, Ericson, Ewing, Fremont, Greenberg, Hamilton K-8, Heaton, Hidalgo, Holland, Homan, Jackson, Jefferson, King, Kirk, Kratt, Lane, Lawless, Leavenworth, Lincoln, Lowell, Mayfair, McCardle, Muir, Norseman, Olmos, Powers-Ginsburg, Pyle, Robinson, Roeding, Rowell, Slater, Storey, Sunset, Thomas, Turner, Vang Pao, Viking, Vinland, Wawona

(K-8), Webster, Williams, Wilson, Winchell, Wishon, Wolters and Yokomi

### **Middle Schools:**

Ahwahnee, Cooper, Edison Computech, Fort Miller, Kings Canyon, Scandinavian, Sequoia, Tehipite, Terronez, Tioga, Wawona (K-8), and Yosemite

## **Los Programas de Después de Clases para 2022-23 Continuarán Usando un Sistema de Lotería Automático**

En el próximo año escolar, el Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno continuará implementando un sistema de lotería automático al azar para la inscripción en los programas de después de clases del distrito. Este proceso proporcionará a cada estudiante una oportunidad por igual para la inscripción.

El Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno, en asociación con el Superintendente de Escuelas del Condado de Fresno, dirige a diario programas comprensivos después de la escuela en 70 escuelas primarias y secundarias en todo el distrito a través de subvenciones del Centro Comunitario de Educación y Seguridad Después de la Escuela (ASES) y de Aprendizaje del Siglo 21.

Los programas ASES continuarán con la lotería automática al azar para todas las escuelas primarias que se mencionan a continuación. Este sorteo se realizará durante la primera semana de agosto.

Las Familias no necesitan aplicar al programa ASES. Todos los estudiantes de cada uno de los 70 centros escolares, desde el kínder transicional hasta el octavo grado, entrarán automáticamente en la lotería.

Los padres de los estudiantes que sean aceptados en el programa serán notificados mediante llamadas telefónicas automáticas en agosto. Los padres deberán asistir a una orientación obligatoria la primera semana de clases.

Los estudiantes que no sean seleccionados durante el proceso de lotería serán colocados en una lista de espera y serán notificados cuando haya espacio disponible.

Los programas funcionan solo en los días escolares desde la salida a hasta las 6 p.m. Los programas son una extensión de la rutina escolar, ofreciendo enriquecimiento académico alineado con los programas básicos de la rutina escolar.

El estudiante tiene la oportunidad de recibir apoyo académico y de literatura a través de la ayuda con las tareas en artes del lenguaje y matemáticas. El componente de enriquecimiento incluye una variedad de actividades para involucrar a los estudiantes en nuevas oportunidades, tales como, el aprendizaje social emocional, el aprendizaje de servicios a la comunidad, la recreación y las actividades físicas, la ciencia y la tecnología, El conocimiento de la profesión, y otras actividades basadas en los intereses de los estudiantes.

El Centro de Nutrición del Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno proporciona dos meriendas saludables cada día a los estudiantes que participan en el programa de después de clases.

## **Lub Xyoo 2022-23 Yuav Siv Ib Lub Twj Rho Hmoov Los Rho Npe Rau Cov Xav Tau Kev Pab Kev Kawm Tom Qab Lawb Ntawv**

Nyob rau xyoo kawm ntawv tom ntej no, Fresno Unified yuav siv ib qho kev rho npe hauv *computer* dua ntxiv rau kev tso npe kawm hauv peb koog tsev kawm ntawv cov kev kawm tom qab lawb ntawv. Qho kev rho npe no yuav ua rau txhua tus tub ntxhais kawm ntawv muaj kev vaj huam sib luag rau kev tso npe kawm.

Fresno Unified, koom tes nrog Fresno County Superintendent of Schools, ua hauj lwm txhua hnuv rau tom cov kev pab cuam tom qab lawb tsev kawm ntawv, ntawm 70 lub tsev kawm theem qis thiab nruab nrab thoob plaws hauv cheeb tsam los ntawm cov nyiaj pab los ntawm After School Education and Safety (ASES) thiab 21st Century Learning Community Center. ASES cov kev pab yuav muaj qhov kev rho npe rau tag nrho cov tsev kawm ntawv theem qis hauv qab no. Qhov kev rho npe no yuav muaj nyob rau thawj lub lim tiam thaum lub Yim Hli.

Cov tsev neeg tsis tas yuav ua ntaub ntawv thov rau ASES txoj kev pab. Tag nrho cov tub ntxhais kawm los ntawm 70 lub tsev kawm ntawv, txij li qib kindergarten mus txog qib yim, tag nrho cov npe yuav muab tso rau hauv qhov kev rho hmoov.

Cov niam txiv ntawm uas muaj cov tub ntxhais kawm uas rho tau npe mus kawm qhov kev kawm no yuav tau txais xov tooj hu tuaj qhia lawv thaum lub Yim Hli. Cov niam txiv yuav tsum tau mus koom ib qho kev sib tham rau thawj lub lim tiam thaum tsev kawm ntawv rov qhib.

Cov menyuam kawm ntawv uas tsis raug xaiv thaum lub sij hawm rho npe yuav raug muab tso rau hauv daim ntawv tos thiab yuav hu xov tooj tuaj qhia thaum muaj chaw seem.

Cov kev pab no yog muaj qhib rau hnuv kawm ntawv xwb thiab lawb thaum 6 p.m. Cov kev pab no yog muaj tom qab tsev kawm ntawv lawb, muaj pab txhawb ntxiv rau cov kev kawm uas nyuam qhuav kawm tas hnuv ntawv.

Cov tub ntxhais kawm muaj lub cib fim tau txais kev txhawb nqa kev kawm thiab kev paub nyeem ntawv los ntawm kev pab ua *homework* rau lus Askiv thiab lej. Qhov kev txhawb nqa kom muaj ntau lub hwm tsam tshiab rau cov tub ntxhais tau ua, xws li kawm txog kev sib raug zoo siab ntsws, kev kawm txog zej zog, kev ua si thiab kev siv lub cev kom tawm hw, kev tshawb fawb thiab tej txuj ci tshiab (*technology*), kev paub txog kev ua hauj lwm, thiab lwm yam dej num raws li cov tub ntxhais nyiam.

Fresno Unified Nutrition Center uas yog qhov chaw saib xyuas kev noj qab haus huv yuav muab ob qho khoom noj txom ncauj uas muaj txiaj ntsim txhua hnuv rau cov tub ntxhais kawm uas koom nrog kev kawm tom qab lawb ntawv.



Paraprofessional Ilyanne Vang helps students in the Jefferson Elementary School after school program. Students from back to front are third graders Adolfo Torres, Angel Molina, Iris Barragan and Kevin Segura.

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## Fresno Unified School District Important Dates

**June 10** Last Day of School

**June 14-July 1** Summer Academies

**July 5-29** Summer Camps

**August 15** First Day of 2022-23 School Year

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### *Superintendent's Message*

## **A Time to Celebrate the End of the School Year, a Time to Reflect on what we can do Better**

Hello, summer!

The calendar says we haven't officially arrived there, but as I write this, temperatures have soared to the triple digits and with school out in nine days, it's feeling like summertime. It's been a crazy busy spring as we have resumed all of the in-person celebrations that we missed out on for most of two years. We celebrated our graduating seniors from Project ACCESS on May 24 at the Fresno Chaffee Zoo. These are our students who are in homeless situations or foster care who we support with social workers and other resources to make sure they have every opportunity to succeed, despite their circumstances. May 25 we celebrated our [50 Excellence in Education finalists](#) and our five top winners at the Hoover Event Center. Our Bullard TALENT jazz band opened and closed the event – what a fantastic evening. Then the very next night we honored our 70 Fresno Unified Scholarship winners also at the event center, hosted by Parent University. We awarded these students \$103,500 in scholarships ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,500. They each have their own journey story, more often than not with many bumps along the road. To a student they have demonstrated resiliency, grit and dedication to their learning. They have been accepted to colleges throughout California and beyond, including UC Berkeley, Stanford, USC, Fresno State, New York University Tisch School of the Arts and Johns Hopkins University.

We kicked off graduation season on May 23 with Design Science Middle College High School, with students honored at the Old Administration Building at Fresno City College. This signaled not only the start of graduations, but the return to our beloved, traditional graduation venues after a two-year absence. Starting June 2, we'll celebrate 15 graduations in six days. [Check out the graduation schedule here](#). On June 5, our African American seniors will be honored at the 29<sup>th</sup> annual African American High School Recognition at the Save Mart Center. We also returned to in-person Innovation Day on May 26 at Fresno State, a chance for our students to show their creativity and teamwork in STEM projects.

I wish I could focus only on highlighting our students' success and all the activities that truly make learning memorable. But in the midst of this time of celebration, we had to pause and address a racist social media post created by students and circulated online. I know I don't have to tell anyone why this is deeply disturbing, but for all who want to shrug this off as a joke or as "kids being kids," I'm going to be clear. Cultural destructiveness, racism, and hate are NEVER a joke. The photo caused an incredible amount of pain, fear, anger and hurt across our district and into our community. That is not a "joke," and our students deserve so much better.

This one incident, while absolutely unacceptable, is sadly not a single point in time. It is reflective of a long, long history and culture of racial injustice in our community. I spent time last month with students at Bullard and Edison, and saw that the pain, hurt, and hopelessness go so much deeper than this one incident. They shared their frustrations. They are TIRED and are ready to actively see us move from listening to acting. I admire the advocacy of our students and their thoughtful, collective call to action. So that is our focus – on the ACTION. As a district we are committed to change.

- First, we are thoroughly investigating the incident and will discipline the students to the fullest extent possible, including cultural sensitivity training for the multiple students involved in inflicting this trauma upon our students across the district. We commit to doing the same for any act of cultural destructiveness at our schools, whether from students or staff members moving forward.
- We also are expanding our Race and Social Justice Advisory Board to include a student governing board at each of our comprehensive high schools, as requested by our Bullard BSU students. This student governing board will assess the enforcement of anti-racist policies and behaviors across our system.

I can assure that this continues to be a critical topic among district leaders, the board of education and our school leaders and their staffs. It's been a full, challenging, yet rewarding school year. Thank you to everyone for persevering. Savor the summer ahead. Please take time to relax with family and friends.

As always, take a look at one of my [Friday Messages](#) from last month. Along with Deputy Superintendent Misty Her, this message expresses our sorrow at the shootings in Uvalde, Texas, our assurances that we are doing everything possible to keep our campuses safe, and urges everyone to report any behavior that seems potentially violent or dangerous. Don't forget to follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#) to see daily highlights of amazing work happening across the district as we highlight every school campus and every department throughout the school year. Thank you #FUSDFamily!

## **Tiempo de Celebrar el Fin del Ciclo Escolar y Momento Para Reflexionar Sobre qué Podemos Hacer Mejor**

¡Hola al verano! El calendario muestra que todavía no ha llegado oficialmente, pero mientras escribo esto, las temperaturas se han disparado a los tres dígitos y con las clases terminando en nueve días, se siente que es verano. Ha sido una primavera alocadamente ocupada ya que hemos reanudado todas las celebraciones en persona las cuales la mayoría nos perdimos por dos años. El 24 de mayo, festejamos a nuestros estudiantes seniors (12vo grado) de Project ACCESS en el Zoológico Chaffee de Fresno. Ellos son nuestros estudiantes que se encuentran en situaciones de personas sin hogar o bajo el cuidado de hogar de crianza, quienes reciben apoyo a través de trabajadores sociales y otros recursos para asegurarnos que se les proveen todas las oportunidades para tener éxito, a pesar de sus circunstancias. El 25 de mayo festejamos a nuestros [50 finalistas de Excelencia en Educación](#) y a nuestros cinco mejores ganadores en el Hoover Event Center. Nuestra banda de jazz de Bullard TALENT abrió y cerró el evento – ¡qué noche tan fantástica! Luego, la siguiente noche honramos a nuestros 70 ganadores de la Beca de Fresno Unificado, también en el centro de eventos, organizado por la Universidad de Padres. Premiamos a los estudiantes con \$103,500 en becas que promediaron entre \$1,500 a \$2,500. Cada uno tiene su propia historia, la mayoría de las veces con muchos tropiezos en el camino. Los estudiantes han mostrado resiliencia, determinación y dedicación a su aprendizaje. Han sido aceptados en las universidades a través de todo California y más allá, incluyendo UC Berkeley, Stanford, USC, Fresno State, New York University Tisch Escuela de Artes y Johns Hopkins.

El 23 de mayo, iniciamos la temporada de graduación con la Preparatoria Design Science Middle College, cuyos estudiantes se les hizo honor en el Edificio Administrativo de la Ciudad de Fresno. Esto, marco no solo el comienzo de las graduaciones, sino también el regreso a nuestro adorados y tradicionales lugares de graduación después de una ausencia de dos años. Iniciando el 2 de junio, celebraremos 15 graduaciones en seis días. [Ver el horario de graduaciones aquí](#). El 5 de junio, se les hará honor a

nuestros estudiantes seniors Afroamericanos en el Reconocimiento Anual 29 Afroamericano de Preparatoria en el Save Mart Center. También, el 26 de mayo regresamos al Innovation Day en Fresno State, una oportunidad para que nuestros estudiantes muestren su creatividad y trabajo en equipo en los proyectos STEM.

Me gustaría poderme enfocar solamente en destacar el éxito de nuestros estudiantes y todas las actividades las cuales realmente hacen que el aprendizaje sea memorable. Pero en medio de este tiempo de celebración, tenemos que hacer una pausa y atender la publicación racista en las redes sociales, creada por un estudiante cuya publicación circulaba en línea. Yo sé, que no se lo tengo que decir a nadie, por qué esto es profundamente perturbador, pero voy a ser claro para todos los que quieren expresar indiferencia como broma o como “niños siendo niños”. La destructividad cultural, el racismo y el odio NUNCA son una broma. La foto causó una cantidad increíble de daño, miedo, ira y dolor en todo nuestro distrito y en nuestra comunidad. Eso no es una “broma” y nuestros estudiantes se merecen algo mucho mejor.

Este incidente, aunque es absolutamente inaceptable, lamentablemente por el momento no solo es ese punto. Es el reflejo de injusticia racial en nuestra comunidad de una historia y cultura a largo tiempo. El mes pasado, pasé un tiempo con los estudiantes de Bullard y Edison y vi que el dolor, el daño y la desesperación son mucho más profundos que este incidente. Ellos compartieron sus frustraciones. Están CANSADOS y listos para vernos activamente tomar acción en el asunto en lugar de solamente ser escuchados. Admiro la defensa de nuestros estudiantes y su llamado a la acción reflexiva y colectiva. Así que, ACCIÓN es nuestro enfoque. Como distrito nos comprometemos al cambio.

- Primero, continuaremos investigando a fondo el incidente con la intención de disciplinar a los estudiantes a la mayor medida posible, incluyendo capacitación de sensibilidad cultural para varios estudiantes que fueron involucrados en infligir este trauma en nuestros estudiantes de todo el distrito. Nos comprometemos a hacer lo mismo para cualquier acto de destructividad cultural en nuestras escuelas, ya sea de estudiantes o miembros del personal en el futuro.
- También, continuamos ampliando nuestra Junta Asesora de Raza y Justicia Social para incluir una junta gobernante estudiantil en cada una de nuestras preparatorias, conforme a lo solicitado por nuestros estudiantes de Bullard BSU. Estas juntas gobernantes estudiantiles evaluarán el cumplimiento de las políticas y comportamientos antirracistas en todo nuestro sistema.

Les puedo asegurar que este sigue siendo un tema crítico entre los líderes del distrito, la junta educativa y nuestros líderes escolares y su personal. Este ha sido un año escolar lleno de desafíos, pero beneficioso. Gracias a todos por su perseverancia. Disfruten del verano que se avecina. Por favor, tomen tiempo para descansar/relajarse con familiares y amistades.

Como siempre, miren uno de mis [Mensajes los Viernes](#) del mes pasado, cuyos mensajes destacan aún más las inversiones importantes de este año para ayudar a nuestros estudiantes a alcanzar sus metas y tener éxito. No se les olvide seguirnos en [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) y [LinkedIn](#) para ver a diario los acontecimientos más importantes del increíble trabajo que se realiza en todo el distrito, de la misma manera como destacamos todos los planteles escolares y departamentos durante el año escolar. ¡Gracias #FUSDFamily!

## **Lub Sij Hawm Muaj Kev Zoo Siab Los Xaus Lub Xyoo Kawm Ntawv, Ib Lub Sij Hawm Los Xav Seb Tshuav Dab Tsi Peb Yuav Ua Tau Zoo Zog**

Nyob zoo, caij ntuj sov twb los txog lawm! Nyob rau ntawm daim *calendar* mas peb tseem tsis tau txog, tab sis raws li tam sim no kuv tab tom sau qhov no, muaj peev xwm kub txog ib puas lawm thiab cov tub ntxhais kawm ntawv twb yuav tawm tsev kawm ntawv lawm. Tshuav cuaj hnuv lawm xwb, nws twb zoo li lub caij sov *summertime*. Lub caij paj tawg tshiab no yog ib lub caij peb kuj tau rov ua tag nrho cov koob tsheej tuaj sib ntsib tim ntsej tim muag uas peb tau tso tseg rau ob xyoos los no. Peb ua kev zoo siab rau cov tub ntxhais kawm tiav xyoo no rau cov kawm Project Access nyob rau lub Tsib Hlis tim 24 ntawm Fresno Chaffee Zoo lub vaj tsiaj. Cov no yog peb cov tub ntxhais kawm ntawv uas muaj cov teeb meem tsis muaj tsev nyob los yog nyob tsev tu nrog niam qhuav txiv qhuav uas peb muaj cov neeg ua hauj lwm txhawb thiab yeej muaj lwm cov chaw muab kev pab kom paub tseeb tias lawv muaj lub cib fim los kawm tau ntawv zoo li luag, txawm lawv muaj teeb meem tshwm sim los yeej tseem kawm tiav. Lub Tsib Hlis tim 25 peb muaj [50 Tus Neeg raug xaiv rau Excellence in Education](#) thiab tsib tug uas yeej muab koj los ua kev zoo siab ntawm lub Hoover Event Center. Peb cov tub ntxhais txawj ntaus suab paj nruag *jazz* ntawm Bullard TALENT, qhib thiab xaus lub koob tsheej – hmo no yog ib hmos zoo heev. Hmo tom qab ntawd peb kuj yuav ua kev zoo siab ntawm tib qhov chaw ntawd rau 70 tus tub ntxhais kawm uas tau cov Fresno Unified Scholarship, los ntawm Parent University. Peb muab \$103,500 nyiaj *scholarships* uas muab li \$1,500 rau \$2,500 rau cov tub ntxhais kawm ntawv. Lawv txhua tus yeej muaj ib zaj dab neeg, feem ntau muaj kev cuam tshuam raws lawv txoj kev kawm. Cov tub ntxhais kawm ntawv no muaj peev xwm heev, siab tawv, thiab mob siab rau lawv txoj kev kawm. Lawv raug xaiv mus kawm ntawv qib siab thoob plaws hauv California thiab lwm qhov, xws li UC Berkeley, Stanford, USC, Fresno State, New York University Tisch School of the Arts thiab Johns Hopkins University.

Peb pib cov koob tsheej lav ntawv rau lub Tsib Hlis tim 23 nrog rau Design Science Middle College High School, rau cov tub

ntxhais kawm ntawv ntawm lub *Old Administration Building* hauv tsev kawm ntawv qib siab Fresno City College. Qhov no tsis yog ib qho kev zoo siab uas peb pib rau cov koob tsheej kawm tiav ntawv xwb, tab sis ntxiv rau peb cov kev peb tshua thiab nco tsoos txog, thiab rov mus rau cov tsev ua koob tsheej txais tos cov kawm tiav uas peb tau tso tseg tau ob xyoo dhau los no. Pib lub Rau Hli Ntuj Hnub tim 2, peb yuav npaj rau (6) hnub qhuas 15 lub tsev kawm tiav. [Xyuas cov sij hawm koob tsheej lav ntawv ntawm no](#). Nyob rau lub Rau Hli Hnub tim 5, yog xyoo 29 peb cov neeg *African American* yuav ua koob tsheej rau cov kawm tiav xyoo no uas txhua xyoo peb cov *African American High School Recognition* muaj nyob rau ntawm lub Save Mart Center. Peb kuj rov qab tuaj mus ua Innovation Day tim ntsej tim muag lub Tsib Hlis tim 26 ntawm Fresno State, los muab sij hawm rau peb cov tub ntxhais kawm ntawv nthuav qhia lawv tej txuj ci thiab kev txawj ntse hauv cov kev kawm STEM.

Kuv vam tias kuv yuav tau hais txog kev qhuas peb cov tub ntxhais txoj kev kawm ntawv zoo thiab tham txog tag nrho cov kev kawm kev ua si mus rau qhov zoo uas peb yuav nco mus tas ib sim. Tab sis nws tsis zoo li ntawd, nyob rau lub sij hawm no txawm muaj kev zoo siab los peb kuj yuav tsum tau nres los muab sib hawm los tham txog ib qhov kev tsis zoo, kev ntsub ntxaug ib haiv neeg uas ib cov tub ntxhais kawm ntawv tau ua thiab tso tawm saum huab cua. Kuv paub tias kuv tsis tas yuav qhia rau leej twg tias qhov no yog ib qho kev txoj siab, ntxhov siab heev, thiab hais rau tag nrho cov neeg uas xav tias “me nyuam yaus ces yog me nyuam yaus xwb,” kuv yuav tau hais kom tseeb. Kev ua puas tsuaj, kev ntsub ib haiv neeg, thiab kev ntsub txog peb tej kab ke li no tsis zoo thiab tso dag TSIS tau. Daim duab uas tau muab tso tawm kuj ua rau peb koog tsev kawm ntawv thiab peb lub zej zog mob siab, poob siab, thiab npau taws kawg nkaus. Nws tsis yog ib qho “tso dag” tau, qho tseeb peb cov tub ntxhais kawm ntawv tsis tsim nyog txais tej kev zoo li no.

Qhov no yog ib qho xwb, txawm tias tus cwj pwm yeej yuav yuav tsi tau, los tu siab tsis yog tshwm sim ib zaug xwb. Nws yog ib yam uas yeej muaj los lawm ntev, muaj keeb kwm thiab kev tsis ncaj ncees los lawm ntev rau ib haiv neeg nyob rau hauv peb lub zos. Kuv siv sij hawm lub hli tas los nrog cov tub ntxhais kawm ntawv nyob Bullard thiab Edison ua ke, thiab pom txoj kev mob, tu siab, thiab tas kev cia siab nws mus ntxaum dua qhov xwm no. Lawv qhia tej kev chim siab. Lawv kuj laj laj tos thiab xav pom peb nrhiav kev kho es tsis txhob nyob mloog lawm xwb. Kuv pom zoo rau lawv cov kev qhia kev sawv cev ntawm peb cov tub ntxhais kawm ntawv thiab lawv txoj kev xav, kev sib koom hu raus tes ua hauj lwm. Li ntawd, peb yuav kub siab – raus tes ua hauj lwm. Nyob ntawm ib lub cheeb tsam, peb yuav tau npaj hloov.

- Ua ntej tshaj, peb tseem yuav tshawb nrhiav txhij txhua qhov xwm txheej no kom tau cov tub ntxhais ua tsis yog no los muab kev qhuab qhia kom tsim nyog, xws li muab kev cob qhia thiab kev kawm txog txhua haiv neeg rau cov tub ntxhais kawm uas tsim teeb meem. Peb yuav npaj ua tib yam rau cov kev ua puas tsuaj hauv peb lub tsev kawm ntawv, txawm los ntawm cov tub ntxhais kawm ntawv los yog cov neeg ua hauj lwm txij no mus.
- Peb kuj tseem nthuav ntxiv peb ib pab tswv cuab rau kev ncaj ncees rau haiv neeg hu *Race and Social Justice Advisory Board* kom muaj ib tug tub ntxhais kawm ntawv nyob rau txhua lub tsev kawm ntawv theem siab, raws li tau thov los ntawm peb cov tub ntxhais kawm ntawv hauv *Bullard BSU*. Cov tub ntxhais kawm uas sawv cev no yuav ntsuam xyuas cov cai thiab cwj pwm ntsub ntxaug thoob plaws peb cov tsev kawm.

Kuv qhia rau koj paub tseeb tias qhov no tseem ceeb heev ntawm cov thawj coj hauv koog tsev kawm ntawv, pawg nom tswj kev kawm thiab peb cov thawj coj hauv tsev kawm thiab lawv cov neeg ua hauj lwm. Nws yog ib xyoo puv npo, nyuaj kawg tab sis kuj txaus siab heev. Ua tsaug rau sawv daws txog kev ua siab ntev ntxheem dhau. Kav tsij nrhiav kev ua kom txaus siab nrho rau lub caij ntuj sov yuav tuaj no. Thov siv lub sij hawm no los so ua si nrog koj tsev neeg thiab cov phooj ywg.

Raws li yeej tau hais, mus saib kuv ib [los lus Friday](#) hais lub hli tas los, uas nthuav qhia txog cov kev txhawb ntxiv rau kev kawm uas tseem ceeb tshaj rau xyoo no los npaj pab peb cov tub ntxhais kawm ntawv kom mus caum cuag lawv lub hom phiaj thiab kawm tau ntawv zoo. Tsis txhob hnob qab los raws peb hauv [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) thiab [LinkedIn](#) saib txhua hnub tej lus tseem ceeb thiab zoo kawg nkaus hauv peb lub cheeb tsam uas peb yuav qhuas txhua lub tsev kawm ntawv thiab txhua lub tuam tsev ua hauj lwm ntawm lub xyoo kawm ntawv ntawd. Ua tsaug #FUSDFamily!



Robert G. Nelson, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

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## *Message from Fresno State President Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval*

# Fresno State Welcomes the Class of 2022, Values Partnership with Fresno Unified

Fresno State's mission of educating and empowering students for success serves as an economic driver in our diverse Central Valley. About 65% of undergraduate students at Fresno State are the first in their families to graduate from college, and many come from the vibrant Fresno Unified School District.

With majors in 71 bachelor's, 48 master's, and three doctoral subject areas, Fresno State is nationally recognized for the quality of education provided to our students.

At Fresno State, we strive to graduate leaders who represent the diverse and dynamic communities they serve. Of our 235,000 alumni, 80% stay in the region, making an impact on the community. This pipeline of talent that serves to transform our region would not be possible without the strong cooperation of our K-12 educational partners.

Not only do Fresno Unified students go on to learn, grow and excel at Fresno State, but many go on to become leaders in the educational field through the programs we offer at the Kremen School of Education and Human Development. We have Central California's largest teacher preparation program, and we are proud of the strong, collaborative partnership we have established with Fresno Unified and the solid educational foundation it creates on behalf of all residents of Fresno.

Fresno Unified's responsibility of serving and educating 74,000 students is an immense undertaking – and one that sparked a new level of creativity and technological advances to support students in a variety of environments in recent years. I applaud the tireless efforts of the educators and staff, who supported Fresno Unified's students and families during a challenging season. Your hard work and commitment does not go unnoticed, and I am so proud of our Fresno State alumni at the forefront of many of those innovations.

To the class of 2022, congratulations on a job well done! I hope you take this opportunity to reflect on the journey that brought you to this moment. As you consider the next steps, remember Fresno State is proud to support you and help you achieve your next transformative milestone.

As a university, we continue to prioritize equity and access to high-quality education. Today, Fresno State serves about 25,000 students, and many former, current and future Bulldogs are working, learning and excelling within the Fresno Unified School District. Your mission to 'nurture and cultivate the interest, intellect, and leadership' of your students is critical to the success of our shared vision of building the future leaders of tomorrow.



Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval  
Fresno State President

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# Class of 2022

## Design Science Middle College High School

May 23, 2022 / Old Administration Building at Fresno City College

### Valedictorians

Omar Ali  
Lauren Barcus  
Zurrie Addo Boateng  
Audrey Chang  
Bryan Garcia  
Tony Her  
Angela Hernandez Diaz  
Evan Herr  
Dennis Kulik  
Tessa Ann Leal  
Ashley Carmona Lemus  
Kimmiko Louie  
Alexis Meneses  
Sana Minhas  
Ayanna Perales  
Ruben Ramirez  
Isaac Ramirez  
Enrique Renteria  
Amara Romero  
Daniel Scharton  
Parjinder Singh  
Caitlyn Soria  
Ella Thomas  
Brianna Tyler  
Sarah Vang  
Emely Vasquez  
Jorge Velazquez Cruz  
Lukas Xiong  
Samantha Zack  
Edgar Zuniga





Amara Romero is part of Signing Day at Design Science Middle College High School on April 29, announcing her commitment to attend UC Davis.

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Roosevelt High School seniors Alexis Armijo, left, and Asia Garza Burts show off their signatures at Academic Signing Day on April 29, honoring students' commitment to college.

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Sean Yang from Sunnyside High School (with his family) is honored May 10 at the Steve's Scholars dinner at Tehipite Middle School. Sean is among 43 seniors who met the Steve's Scholars requirements and will receive \$1,000 for his first two years of college. Working toward the scholarship starts in the seventh grade for Tehipite students.

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Future Bulldogs gather on April 26 at Hoover High School at the annual Fresno State send-off, honoring seniors who have committed to the university.

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## AmazonSmile Supports Students

The Foundation for Fresno Unified Schools is offering a great new opportunity to directly support student scholarships through AmazonSmile.

With AmazonSmile, Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases to the charitable organization of the buyer's choice. Registering an account is simple: Go to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com), select the Foundation for Fresno Unified Schools as the charity. For every eligible purchase, the buyer will be donating 0.5% to the foundation, at no extra cost.

Every little bit makes a difference, and the district hopes employees and the community will consider using AmazonSmile to help give back to students and staff.

The Foundation for Fresno Unified Schools will officially launch at the State of Education event on Oct. 6. The foundation's mission statement is: "We foster community between our schools and partners to accelerate student progress, highlight the amazing happenings at Fresno Unified, and fund high-impact mission-driven investments."

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## IdeaFest Featured Student Projects on the Family Farm



From left, Ryder Franklin, Madison Baker and Lucy Smith show off their art panels project depicting the history of water use in the Valley, sparked by reading, "Dreamt." They exhibited at IdeaFest on May 7 at Chukchansi Park. The idea behind IdeaFest was to take the theme of "The Family Farm" and invite teachers from all grades to lead their students in exploring this topic, learning about agriculture and specifically about small family farms. Projects included produce stands; painted portraits of members of real families who operate small farms; student-created propaganda posters about conserving water after reading the novel "Dry;" a farming themed 16-foot mural; and silk screen prints of fruits and vegetables.

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## *Employee Spotlight*

# Sequoia Paraprofessional Supports Students' Social Emotional Health

Yesenia Lopez is a paraprofessional at Yosemite Middle School who helps students with their social emotional learning. She is adept at connecting with others of all ages and backgrounds, providing students and their families with support during difficult times. For her efforts, she was recognized as a district Excellence in Education finalist on May 25. Lopez has been with the district for 28 years, the last 12 at Yosemite. Yosemite teacher Laura Walsh said about Lopez: “Her meaningful work has a direct impact on improving students’ GPA, attendance and overall engagement.”

**What path led you to this career?** I love supporting kids. I don’t have any of my own, so helping others, especially young ones, has been my calling.

**What do you enjoy the most about your job?** The students. They’re a crack up.

**What is the most challenging part of your job?** The students. Teens can be moody, but still crack me up.

**Describe the Bear Cave and what it provides students:** The Bear Cave is our social emotional support center. Our psychologist, said, “It’s our triage.” It’s an amazing place where students can feel safe and calm. And if they just need to be heard, we just listen to them. I think we all need that sometimes.

**How is social emotional support essential to learning?** Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs: We have to make sure all their essential needs are met before they reach their full potential.

**What is key to establishing a good rapport with a struggling student?** They just need to know you care.

**Name one thing most people don’t know about you.** My dad left us when I was 16, and it was one of the toughest experiences ever and I believe it made me into who I am.

**What do you like to do when you are not working?** Traveling the world and teaching Bible classes.

**If you could pursue any other career, what would it be?** Nursing.

**What is your dream vacation?** I guess the French Polynesian Islands.

**Tell us about your dogs, Murphy, Bailey and Texas:** I love them. They are the most amazing little creatures I’ve ever met.



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## District Excellence in Education Finalists and Winners Celebrated

The district honored its 50 Excellence in Education finalists and five winners May 25 at a dinner at the Hoover Event Center.

Nominees were cheered on by their friends and families as they accepted Excellence in Education medals from Superintendent Bob Nelson. Guests enjoyed music by the Bullard TALENT K-8 School jazz band and a photo booth.

- Educational Resource Center office manager Dawn Gardner was honored as the Classified Employee of the Year. From her acceptance speech:

“I have felt so incredibly honored just to be nominated but winning, winning has been overwhelming. Serving students from Fresno Unified has become my heart, my love. Fresno Unified students come from all walks of life, as we all know. Some of

our students are credit deficient, come from broken homes, have troubled histories, and some come from the worst possible situations you can't even imagine. What I've learned is we can be their light, their sanctuary, their school and their home away from home and most importantly, their encouragement and the push they need to succeed every day."

- Wilson Elementary School teacher on special assignment Isabel Mayoral was honored as the Elementary School Educator of the Year. From her acceptance speech:

"I feel I had to grab what I had been doing in the classroom and take it on a different level. I am very humbled. I don't know how this happened because I still feel extremely unworthy of such a recognition. I still go home on a daily basis feeling like I have done not enough to impact the lives of our kids."

- Sequoia Middle School teacher Kristin Cosentino was honored as the Middle School Educator of the Year. From her acceptance speech:

"Teaching is the best job. I can't think of a better way to impact people. My students are my life. I love them. They come to me in sorrow, they come to me in joy. We cry together, we commiserate together. The annoy me sometimes, just like my own kids do. But that's all part of it."

- Scandinavian Middle School vice principal Eugene Reinor was honored as the Administrator of the Year. From his acceptance speech:

"My family's here. If you would have told them in middle school that I'd be here being honored with such an award they probably would have said – pardon my language – 'Hell no.' They had to live with me through my middle school years. Like all middle school kids, we're just trying to figure ourselves out. But God has a funny sense of humor because here I am finishing up my 12<sup>th</sup> year working with middle school students only."

Liz Torres was honored as the High School Educator of the Year but was unable to attend the dinner. Torres was a nurse at Rata High School when nominated but is now the Health Services manager.



Excellence in Education winners were honored on May 25 at the Hoover Event Center. From left are classified winner Dawn Gardner, board members Valerie Davis and Terry Slatik, board clerk Veva Islas, administrator winner Scandinavian Middle School vice principal Eugene Reinor, board president Elizabeth Jonasson-Rosas, board member Andy Levine, middle school certificated winner Kristin Cosentino, elementary certificated winner Isabel Mayor, board member Claudia Cazares and Superintendent Bob Nelson.

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## *Linked Learning Spotlight*

# **Business Pathway Senior's Investment into Scholarships Pays Dividends**

Since her freshman year, Bullard High School's Stephanie Cota Rubio immersed herself in the [Business Marketing and Technology Pathway](#), including working at the student store and tackling all aspects of business and finance through pathway classes.

Her hard work has paid off.

She will attend Fresno State this fall as a recipient of the [Craig School of Business Scholars program](#), worth \$20,000 over four years of college.

Stephanie also earned a Fresno Unified Scholarship, the Burger King Foundation Scholarship and the Kiwanis Memorial Scholarship.

Stephanie credits her success to being in the business pathway.

“Being in the business pathway helped me develop leadership skills, along with building new relationships and friendships with people in the pathway,” she said.

Stephanie plans to major in Business Administration with a management emphasis. That management training started at Bullard, where Stephanie has worked in the Blue Nation Student Store for four years. She is now one of the student managers, making sure money counts are accurate and taking stock of inventory.

Stephanie is a magna cum laude valedictorian and has been in the marching band for four years.

## **About Bullard High School’s Business Marketing and Technology Pathway**

[The Business Marketing and Technology Pathway](#) is designed to link students’ core class learning with business and technology. Students learn about business administration, marketing and entrepreneurship as well as technology and multimedia software used in the industry to build a strong online presence.

The Business Marketing and Technology Pathway is a four-year program. Teachers infuse business and technology concepts into core classes, while connecting those core academic skills in students’ career technical education classes. Throughout their pathway experience, students engage in project-based learning and have several opportunities for work-based learning and experiences in the field, like job shadowing and internships. Project advisers from the industry make sure their work is relevant and meets industry standards.

The pathway prepares students for a full range of post-secondary opportunities. Students learn about the programs and majors universities and colleges offer. Students choosing to enter the workforce immediately after high school will graduate with industry-approved certifications, important job-seeking and workplace skills and an understanding of growth opportunities on the job.



Stephanie Cota Rubio, a senior at Bullard High School, has worked in the student store for four years, part of her Bullard business pathway preparation for a career in business.

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## **Students Compete in Hands-On Challenges at Innovation Day**

After months of preparation, four-person teams of fifth- and sixth-graders from Fresno Unified schools squared off in hands-on science- and engineering-based challenges at Innovation Day on May 26 at the Save Mart Center.

Competing in front of family and friends, Innovation Day was the culmination of students’ involvement in special instruction provided to all fifth and sixth grade classes throughout the school year. At the event, teams were provided materials to complete a challenge based on skills they have learned during the school year. The fifth-grade and sixth-grade challenges were to create a catapult style launcher to shoot a ping pong ball as far as possible, and a balloon powered

vehicle to travel a minimum distance. This year, 232 students competed.

**Judging and Awards:** For fifth and sixth grade, each region received awards for:

- **Completion and Character Award:** Based on exceptional display of Graduate Profile characteristics:
  - Reasonable and ethical decision makers
  - Creative and adaptable learners
  - Skilled communicators and collaborators
  - Adaptable and productive problem solvers.
- **Design Award:** Creativity/innovation, aesthetics and craftsmanship of the team's build.
- **Performance Award:** This was assessed by how far teams could launch a ping pong ball from their catapult or how far their balloon powered vehicle could travel.

## Winners

### *Fifth grade*

**Bullard region:** Gibson Knights, Character Award, Team Power, Design Award; Slater, Performance Award

**Fresno region:** Williams 2, Character Award; the Fifth Element, Performance Award

**Hoover region:** Team Bazinga, Character Award; Roadrunners, Performance Award

**McLane region:** Rowell Rockets, Character Award; Nerd Herd, Design Award; Geeky Igniters, Performance Award

**Roosevelt region:** Power Puff Girls, Character Award; Lancers, Design Award; Giants, Performance Award

**Sunnyside region:** Bakman Burritos, Character Award; Spartans, Performance Award

### *Sixth grade*

**Bullard region:** Forkner Cowboys, Character Award; Slater, Design Award; It's Knight Time, Performance Award

**Edison region:** Inteligaters, Character Award; Finest Pharaohs, Design Award; Innovators, Performance Award

**Hoover region:** Gold Miners, Performance Award

**McLane region:** Ericson, Character Award; Birney Bears, Design Award; Seeking Scientists, Performance Award

**Roosevelt region:** Lane Lancers, Performance Award

**Sunnyside region:** Storey, Character Award; Awesome Ayer, Design Award; Bakman Bruins, Performance Award

Fifth grade students prepared throughout the year for Innovation Day through the STEM 5 lessons, hands-on science, technology, engineering and math activities aligned to the state science curriculum.

Sixth graders prepared for Innovation Day through the Kids Invent! curriculum, lessons aligned with the state science curriculum with an emphasis on engineering, making claims and supporting these claims with reasoning and evidence.

Innovation Day was held in partnership with the Lyles Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship at Fresno State.



Sariyah Ware, left, and Emilio Mireles from Wilson Elementary School work on their Innovation Day project at the May 26 competition.

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## Adult Transition Program and Tioga Students Work Together

Students and staff at Tioga Middle School and Fresno Unified's Adult Transition Program (ATP) have formed a fun and beneficial partnership over the years.

The two schools are adjacent, making it easy to collaborate, said Derrick Flake, principal at ATP. ATP provides training, support and an educational program for adults 18-22 with developmental disabilities, with the goal of helping them become as independent and self-sufficient as possible.

"We both wanted to provide opportunities for our students to help and work with others," Flake said. "The partnership has benefited us tremendously."

The most recent collaboration was on May 13, when Tioga leadership students helped put on a talent show featuring ATP students, using the outdoor stage area at Tioga.

Students created a fun environment for ATP students by decorating the stage, making signs to wave as they performed and doing all set-up and clean-up. During the event, Tioga leadership students encouraged ATP students as they waited for their turn to perform, then walked them to the stage.

Tioga has also provided facilities for ATP's Special Olympics events and vocational opportunities for ATP students. Tioga leadership students also judge or keep score for some of ATP's fun competitions.

For ATP Special Olympics and Soccer Field Day, Tioga students pair up with ATP and work with them on drills to prepare them for the competitions and help warm them up the day of the event.

Flake and Tioga principal Kevin Evangelinos said their students have enjoyed the interaction.

"Our Tomahawks love getting to work with ATP students because they get to see how talented they are in different areas and build relationships and friendships with students who they may never of had the opportunity to meet or work with before," said Evangelinos. "This helps our students break down the barriers and realize that working together, teamwork, helping others, etc. is a life skill to carry on throughout their life."

The families of ATP students have also enjoyed the events that Tioga has collaborated on, Flake said.

The schools have been partnering for more than three years and plan to expand their collaborations.

For video, go to [vimeo.com/fresnounified/atptalentshow](https://vimeo.com/fresnounified/atptalentshow)



Icelia Rivera performs at the Adult Transition Program (ATP) talent show on May 13. The talent show is one of several ATP events that Tioga Middle School students help with.

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## District Roundup

### High School Students Earn Seal of Biliteracy

Edison High School honored 160 graduating seniors who have earned a [Seal of Biliteracy in Spanish, Hmong or French](#) May 19. While Edison had the most students in the district earning the Seal of Biliteracy, more than 60 students earned the

seal at Sunnyside High School and more than 40 students earned the seal at Bullard High School. Collectively throughout district high schools, more than 470 students will earn the Seal of Biliteracy this year. The Seal of Biliteracy program recognizes high school graduates who have attained a high level of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more languages in addition to English. The seal is affixed to diplomas. Earning a Seal of Biliteracy can benefit students immediately on a college or job application, and in the years to come if they decide to pursue a minor or major in their second language, or a career that requires skills in more than one language.

## **Bullard High Athletes Sign Letters of Intent**

Bullard High School honored student athletes on April 20 for signing national letters of intent for colleges:

- Natalie Noble: Fresno Pacific University, swim
- Hannah Christensen: Simpson University, volleyball
- LeJuan Watts: Eastern Washington University, basketball
- Hannah Dobbs: La Sierra University, softball
- Roman Torres: Vanguard University, wrestling
- Andrew Vaccaro: Westmont College, track and field

## **Fresno High Librarian Wins Social Media Award**

Sue Navarro, teacher librarian at Fresno High School, snagged a Best in Social Media award from [Sora](#), the district's digital library. Navarro was recognized for her creative approach to encouraging students to read over the Thanksgiving break. She tweeted out that the first five students to send her a photo of them reading under the covers would get a Fresno High blanket.

## **Bullard High Hosts Celebration for African American Students**

The Black Student Union (BSU) at Bullard High School hosted its first African American Village Celebration on May 6 to recognize its graduating seniors and welcome incoming freshmen. The event, co-sponsored by the non-profit Reading Heart organization, featured music, food, and networking opportunities with community organizations. BSU is a student-run organization whose mission is to inspire, educate, organize and activate Black youth on campuses, and seeks to make structural changes to improve the quality of life for all students.

## **Edison High Student Signs Letter of Intent**

Edison High School student athlete Charles Bailey III signed a national letter of intent in a signing ceremony at Edison on May 11. Charles will play football at Arizona Christian University.

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