



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Whittier Union Names Attorney-turned-Cal High Educator 2017-18 Teacher of the Year

WHITTIER – Before becoming an English teacher at California High School, Lori Davies spent 12 years as a successful corporate lawyer, analyzing writs, combing over legal briefs and winning cases for her clients. But it was her passion for transforming the lives of students through teaching that led her to transition from the courtroom to the classroom.

Now after 15 years as an educator, Davies is equally successful at administering exams, reviewing common assessments and teaching the works of Steinbeck while helping to guide students on their path to college and growing the school’s acclaimed Puente academic support program.

For her dedication, Davies has been named the Whittier Union High School District’s 2017-18 Teacher of the Year.

“Students often describe Lori Davies as their Puente Mom and, in fact, she treats every single one of her students like family,” Superintendent Martin Plourde said. “Lori is the epitome of teachers in Whittier Union and consistently upholds the District’s values of rigor, relevance and relationships. We can’t thank her enough for her passion and commitment to our students and their success.”

Davies – who earned her bachelor’s degree in English and political science from Stanford University and juris doctorate from UCLA Law School – long contemplated leaving the law profession for a career in education.

Encouraged by her family and husband, Loring, the District’s deputy superintendent, Davies shifted careers and received her teaching credential in 2002. She hit the ground running at Cal High and has since been recognized for being open to incorporating new ideas in the classroom and dedicating her free time to supporting program activities, parent meetings and workshops.

She has become a valuable asset to the Puente Program since joining in 2003, establishing strong bonds with the students who were taking their first steps on the path to higher education, assisting them with a rigorous academic plan focused on college readiness, and staying on as their English teacher all four years of high school.

“I want to thank the Cal High administration, the Board of Trustees and the District for creating an environment at my school and across the District where students, teachers and classified staff are nurtured and supported,” Davies said. “The District is looked on as an example of what can be

accomplished when the community at large puts a premium on the education of its children. It's an honor to be in a position of influence and I am so humbled to be in that position every day."

Students who had Davies as a teacher during their early years frequently ask for her help with their senior projects and college applications. She also routinely writes 20 to 30 letters of recommendations for students every year.

The Cal High Class of 2017 represents the 11th class Davies has known from their first day of high school.

"When students first walk into Lori's classes, they immediately feel safe, nurtured and encouraged, and that's the environment that our students have thrived in," Cal High Principal Bill Schloss. "Lori has proven to be a great asset to our campus, building relationships with students, parents and staff and always being there when she's needed. We are proud that she has received this well-deserved honor."

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

061917_WUHSD_TOY1: California High School English teacher and Puente Program adviser Lori Davies prepares her students for a reading of "Romeo and Juliet." Davies' passion for transforming the lives of her students through teaching was recently recognized by Whittier Union High School District, which named Davies its 2017-18 Teacher of the Year.

061917_WUHSD_TOY2: Whittier Union High School District Superintendent Martin J. Plourde introduces Cal High English teacher and Puente Program adviser Lori Davies as the WUHSD 2017-18 Teacher of the Year. Davies left a successful law career in 2002 to join the Cal High faculty, quickly establishing strong bonds with her students, who refer to Davies as their "Puente Mom" for treating each student as family.

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*The Whittier Union High School District provides all students with an engaging, quality standards-based instructional program delivered by a well-trained staff resulting in improved student achievement.
Whittier Union High School District works to achieve and maintain excellence in providing a comprehensive education for all students.*

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