



Whittier Union HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

To Achieve and Maintain Excellence...

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 20, 2023 **CONTACT:** Andrea Garcia **PHONE:** 909-445-1001

Whittier Union Senior Named Boys & Girls Club of Whittier/Pico Rivera 2023 Youth of the Year

WHITTIER – Pioneer High School senior Jeremiah Parra was struggling to find his footing at school after suffering through the loss of both of his parents. Admittedly listless in class, Parra said he had no expectations moving forward after high school. Parra’s life began to change when his aunt, now looking after Parra and his three younger siblings, dropped him off at the Boys and Girls Club of Whittier/Pico Rivera.

There, Parra rediscovered his love of learning, putting him back on track to graduate. Parra began to indulge his creative side as a graphic designer, establishing his own line of clothing. After being shown guidance and compassion from his mentors, Parra wanted to give back, joining the Club’s Leader in Training program as a teen tutor.

For his ability to overcome adversity and commitment to bettering the lives of others, Parra was named the Boys & Girls Club of Whittier/Pico Rivera’s 2023 Youth of the Year. Parra, one of three finalists for the award, received a trophy and certificate of recognition at the Youth of the Year presentation in early 2023.

“If I had continued on my path of not caring how I did in school, if I had not come to the Boys and Girls Club and realized the impact of taking responsibility, then I would not be standing here as a candidate for Youth of the Year,” Parra said. “Now I’m proud to tell you that I am going to graduate high school, and will enroll at Río Hondo College to study digital design. I will be the first person in my family to go to college.”

Parra lost his father when he was 11 years old, and his mother died during the pandemic. Parra’s aunt stepped in to serve as guardian and help Parra regain his focus. When Parra and his siblings first entered the Boys & Girls Club, they were welcomed with open arms. Working with staff mentors, Parra found time to do his homework and was encouraged to participate in activities such as cooking and art.

Parra’s enthusiasm and work ethic made him a natural for the Club’s Leader in Training program, and he quickly gained recognition for his willingness to volunteer his time to help others. Showing responsibility and compassion, Parra became a role model for other children at the Club. In 2021, Parra was selected as Outstanding Boys & Girls Club Member.

“We are so very proud of Jeremiah, who has responded to the adversity in his life by continually trying to make the world around him a better place for everyone,” Pioneer High Principal Mary Chapman said. “We are grateful to have community partners such as the Boys & Girls Club who provide our families with an extra layer of support, and helping guide their path toward future success.”

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The Boys & Girls Club of Whittier/Pico Rivera has served the community since 1967, with a mission of enabling all young people to reach their full potential as productive, caring and responsible citizens.

PHOTO CAPTION

WUHSD_PARRA: Pioneer High School senior Jeremiah Parra was honored by the Boys & Girls Club of Whittier/Pico Rivera with its 2023 Youth of the Year award, recognizing his ability to overcome adversity and his commitment to bettering the lives of others. After graduating from Pioneer High, Parra plans to attend Río Hondo College and study digital design.

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OUR MISSION:

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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