



Whittier Union HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

To Achieve and Maintain Excellence...

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 22, 2023 **CONTACT:** Andrea Garcia **PHONE:** 909-447-2403

La Serna High Senior Recognized with Award of Merit for Leadership, Ability to Connect with Classmates

WHITTIER – La Serna High School senior Ivonne Perez recognized the importance of being a leader and acquiring an education early in her life. Growing up in a single-parent household, Perez helped raise her two younger siblings and many cousins, tutoring them and serving as a role model, even as she took on the most challenging and rigorous courses in pursuit of her dream career as an aerospace engineer.

As a La Serna High freshman, Perez joined Puente, a four-year accelerated college prep program that has greatly enhanced Perez’s academic and leadership skills. As Perez established herself as a mentor who is willing to sacrifice personal time to help her classmates, she developed into one of La Serna’s top students, earning the distinction of summa cum laude.

For her leadership skills and academic achievements, Perez was recognized by the Whittier Union Board of Trustees with an Award of Merit during its March 14 Board meeting.

“Thank you so much. This is truly an honor,” Perez said. “I want to thank my mother, who has been my inspiration, as well as all my family. I would also like to thank my teachers and counselors and the Puente program for making my years at La Serna eventful and for providing me with a second family. As they say, ‘Once a Puentista, always a Puentista.’ I will always treasure my time here.”

Perez has a 4.34 GPA and is in the top 3% of her class at La Serna. Recognizing her maturity and ability to connect with her classmates, Perez was selected to be a bilingual academic mentor to La Serna’s English language development Earth & Space students as a sophomore, helping tutor students via Zoom during distance learning. Perez is also a member of Link Crew, often giving up half of her lunchtime to help freshmen acclimate to their new school.

Through Puente, Perez has helped to organize social gatherings, fundraisers and community service events. Perez has become the Puente historian in her senior year and is responsible for gathering and taking photos during Puente events, as well as creating a year-end video to share with classmates and families. Puente has also helped Perez successfully navigate the college application process and earn early admission to UC Berkeley.

The summer before her senior year, Perez received a scholarship to study abroad in Barcelona, Spain, where she immersed herself in Spanish culture and enjoyed an unparalleled international experience. Perez is also a distinguished scholar athlete and plays for the La Serna girls varsity soccer team. Perez has earned the Global Seal of Biliteracy Award, the Cesar Chavez Day of Service Award, and was selected to the National Honor Society for the past two years.

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“Ivonne is passionate about learning, is resilient, a natural leader, and is focused on her dream to become an aerospace engineer,” La Serna Principal Griselda Castro said. “For Ivonne, life hasn’t been easy. She knows she must continue to work hard to be successful. I have no doubt she will continue to shine, reach her goals as a first-generation college student, and be an asset to our community.”

PHOTO CAPTION

WUHS_D_PEREZ: La Serna High School senior Ivonne Perez has established herself as a campus leader and scholar, who sacrifices personal time to assist her classmates. As a member of Puente, Perez has enhanced her academic and leadership skills as she pursues her dream career as an aerospace engineer. Perez was recognized by the Whittier Union Board of Trustees with an Award of Merit during its March 14 Board meeting.

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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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