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Baldwin Park Unified Bilingual Instructional Aide Honored for Service to Students

Marie Rivas has been named Para-educator of the Year

BALDWIN PARK – Marie Margarete Rivas, a bilingual instructional aide at Sierra Vista High School, is being honored as the California Association for Bilingual Education’s Para-educator of the Year for going beyond the scope of her job to serve students and improve her community.

Rivas, who has worked for the English language learner community for 27 years, will be honored at the CAFE Awards Luncheon on Thursday, March 29. She will receive a \$500 award.

“We are proud to see the positive attention Marie is receiving for her dedicated work with Sierra Vista High School’s students,” interim Principal H. Vincent Pratt said. “She exemplifies the commitment all our educators show to helping students achieve their goals.”

Rivas, in her nomination essay, thanked her family, church and teachers for inspiring her to achieve her dreams, including her current studies to become a bilingual teacher.

“It is an honor to be among students who come from such culturally rich backgrounds and learn so much from them,” she wrote. “I plan to teach my students to have pride in themselves by helping them become responsible, contributing members of this country, which gives them so much, while maintaining the cultural values that our families hold so dear.”

Rivas already serves as a teacher in her free time, volunteering to teach literacy classes in a juvenile probation school as well as tutoring students and helping to teach parent education courses at Cal State University, Los Angeles.

In her essay, she called out specific teachers and family members for inspiring her, including a brother whose dyslexia went undiagnosed until he reached adulthood.

“When I teach, I always see my brother sitting in the back of the room,” Rivas wrote.

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In the end, her task as an educator is about creating a solid foundation for her students and teaching them that education includes service to others.

“By service, I not only mean doing kind deeds, but also serving people’s hearts through gentle words. It is my hope that I can someday live up to the legacy left to me by my own educators and CAFE,” she wrote.

PHOTOS

BPUSD_RIVAS_1: Marie Margarete Rivas, a bilingual instructional aide at Sierra Vista High School, is being honored as the California Association for Bilingual Education’s Para-educator of the Year.