



Whittier Union HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

To Achieve and Maintain Excellence...

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 26, 2022 **CONTACT:** Andrea Garcia **PHONE:** 909-273-9840

Whittier Union Puente Students Celebrate Cesar Chavez, Create Service Project

WHITTIER – Whittier Union High School District’s Puente Program students celebrated the birthday and legacy of Cesar Chavez by creating community service and awareness art projects, studying activism and learning about the fight for justice from Paul Chavez, son of Cesar Chavez, who joined students for a keynote presentation during an awards ceremony on April 21.

The awards ceremony served as the culmination event to celebrate Puente students and their service projects. Paul, who is president of the Cesar Chavez Foundation, shared his experience of growing up within the Farmworkers’ Movement founded by his father, and told stories of how the foundation has helped transform communities from rural to urban areas.

“My advice to you is to have faith in people,” Paul said. “My father once told me that in our work, you only lose when you stop fighting, you only lose when you give up and you only lose when you quit. Victory is ours when we persist, victory is our when we resist and victory is ours when we refuse to give up. It was that lesson from my father that is especially relevant today.”

Puente students who created art projects were celebrated for their achievements and selected to receive Puente Mini Scholarships. La Serna High School junior Kayla Quintana received first place and was awarded \$150 for her double exposure art piece that depicted Cesar Chavez as he protested alongside the farmworkers and encouraged them with the words “Si Se Puede.”

“The project took me two days and five hours to complete but I am overwhelmingly happy with the result,” Quintana said. “I feel this art piece truly embodies what Cesar Chavez stood for and his legacy will forever be known as he continues to inspire people like me to serve their community.”

Second place went to La Serna High School freshman Lilyanna Cadenas Shanks, who received \$100 for writing letters of appreciation and baking cookies for the people in her great grandmother’s life who lend a helping hand.

Two students tied for third place, receiving each a \$50 mini scholarship. Whittier High School sophomore Julissa Escobar was selected for her painted piece that displayed the Farmworkers’ Movement, Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta. La Serna High School junior Cristal Favela was recognized for her art piece that emphasized the importance of asking for help when needed.

MORE

Whittier Union’s Puente Program aims to increase the number of educationally underserved students who apply to four-year colleges and universities, as well as inspire students to return to their community as leaders and mentors for generations to come.

Sponsors for the event included Community Activist Margie Rodriguez, the Cesar Chavez Foundation, Puente Project, Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn, and Whittier Union Puente Project teachers and counselors.

“Congratulations to all of our student participants who embarked on a journey of community service and created remarkable community awareness art projects,” Superintendent Martin Plourde said. “Service is at the root of everything we do and we are honored to have the Puente Program at our District, which teaches our students the fundamental importance of community service and how to become true leaders.”

PHOTO CAPTIONS

WUHSU_PUENTE1: La Serna High School junior Kayla Quintana received first place and was awarded \$150 for her double exposure art piece that depicted Cesar Chavez as he protested alongside the farmworkers during the Farmworkers’ Movement.

WUHSU_PUENTE2: Whittier High School sophomore Julissa Escobar received third place and a \$50 mini scholarship for her painted piece that displayed the Farmworkers’ Movement, Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta.

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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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