



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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# **Norwalk-La Mirada Unified Students Published in Literary Journal Through Reading, Writing Program**

Norwalk High School freshman Dominique Guerrero saw the possibility of becoming a writer after her short story, "This is For You, Mom," was published in a University of California, Irvine literary journal, which featured 18 writings from students across Norwalk-La Mirada Unified.

"When I heard I got published, it just blew my mind," Guerrero said. "I think it's very inspiring and great motivation to know that I can do this and that people are actually interested in my work. I could use writing to express myself and show my personality and maybe to inspire other people."

The literary journal, Pathway to Academic Success, is a collection of exemplary essays, poems and narratives written by NLMUSD students from 2014 to 2016. The District partnered with the Pathways to Success program to adapt a professional development program created by Carol Booth Olson, director of the UCI Writing Project, to improve the reading and writing skills of English learners.

The program provides strategies for teachers to help students interpret, analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions. Students take test evaluations to gauge improvements throughout the school year and have their essays assessed by UCI students for an extra level of feedback.

Tenth- and 11th-grade teacher Jennifer Naumann, who went through the writing program's training, saw significant improvements in her students' writing and reading levels.

"I've never seen a class of students make this much progress in one year and I know it's because of the tutorials and the strategic way that the lessons are laid out for the students," Naumann said. "It's easier for our students to grasp the concepts."

The Pathways to Success program provides six professional development workshops and five after-school workshops for seventh- through 12th- grade District teachers. It runs through 2017-18.

The program is funded by a four-year U.S. Department of Education grant, and provides the district with \$750 annually for books in each participating teacher's classroom and a \$1,000 yearly stipend for teachers who administer evaluations and attend professional development workshops.

"We are very proud of the students who were selected to be included in this literary magazine and of their academic advancements," Superintendent Dr. Hasmik Danielian said. "The Pathways to Success

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program has been a major success. We look forward to seeing even more benefits that will ensure that our students have the skills they need to excel in college and beyond.”

**PHOTOS:**

**042717\_NLMUSD\_PATHWAYPROGRAM1:** Lisa Tarkoff, a teacher and assistant principal at Red Hill Lutheran School, leads a Pathways to Success after-school lecture for Norwalk-La Mirada Unified teachers, providing them with strategies for improving students’ ability to analyze and understand themes in literary works.

**042717\_NLMUSD\_PATHWAYPROGRAM2:** Tenth- and 11th-grade John Glenn High School teacher Jennifer Naumann and other Norwalk-La Mirada Unified teachers attend a Pathways to Success after-school lecture to learn strategies for teaching students how to analyze and understand themes in literary works.

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