



## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Fontana Unified STEM Students Display Innovation, Creativity at Regional Science Fair**

**FONTANA, CA** – Fontana Unified STEM students showcased their talent for innovation and creativity at the 39th annual San Bernardino, Inyo and Mono Counties (SIM) Science and Engineering Fair, earning two gold medals, three silver medals, and garnering several special area awards.

Alder Middle School eighth-grader Barbara Gonzalez Lagunas and Almeria Middle School eighth-grader Alejandra Delgado were awarded gold medals in the Junior Division during the March regional fair and advanced to the California Science Fair, held April 13. Kaiser High School seniors Jose Centeno, Amitoj Lobana and Frida Monreal were awarded silver medals in the Senior Division during the regional fair.

For her project “Refraction in a Droplet: Microscope,” Gonzalez Lagunas was recognized with the Lemelson Foundation Early Inventor Prize, which highlights young inventors whose projects exemplify the ideals of inventive thinking by identifying a challenge in their community and creating a solution that will improve the lives of others.

“It was surprising at first, I didn’t expect to get chosen for regionals,” Gonzalez Lagunas said. “It was a huge honor to compete, and it felt great. Thank you to the judges for giving me the chance to continue competing, and to my parents and younger brother for their support.”

Gonzalez created a microscope with a built-in projector, allowing researchers to identify the microorganisms and bacteria existing in one drop of water while projecting it onto a big screen. The invention allows researchers to more easily pinpoint toxins in the water supply and how they engage with other microorganisms, potentially leading to gains in water purity.

Delgado earned a gold medal for her project “Anti-Static Spray.” Looking to create an eco-friendly clothes softener, Delgado tested three different sprays, using an independent variable that changed within each spray.

“I was motivated to find an ecofriendly anti-static spray because of the environmental risks of chemicals used by major companies,” Delgado said. “I started my journey by participating in our school’s science fair and I am beyond excited to have advanced to the regional and state finals. I can’t wait to see what more is to come.”

Centeno, Lobana and Monreal won silver medals for their project, “Biological Desalination of Soil through Plants.” The project garnered additional accolades, including the U.S. Agency for International Development’s Science Champion Award, the U.S. Stockholm Junior Water Prize and the Environmental Protection Agency’s Environmental Sciences and Environmental Engineering Award.

The SIM Science and Engineering Fair, held virtually for the first time, motivated students to initiate and complete scientific inquiries in their field of interest, while contributing to development and cultivation of interest and awareness of engineering and science in their everyday life.

The student projects were judged on their data collection methods, systemic analysis, recognition of potential impact of science in society and economics, engineering design process, content, clarity of presentation and originality.

“Congratulations to our SIM Science and Engineering Fair winners, who are laying the groundwork of their future success as they aspire to become leaders and innovators,” Superintendent Randal S. Bassett said. “Their achievement reflects the commitment and dedication of District teachers, administrators and staff in providing equity in STEM education.”

#### **PHOTO CAPTIONS:**

**FUSD\_STEM\_DELGAGO:** Almeria Middle School eighth-grader Alejandra Delgado was awarded a gold medal during the 39th annual San Bernardino, Inyo and Mono Counties (SIM) Science and Engineering Fair in March for her presentation “Anti-Static Spray.” Delgado was one of two Fontana Unified students to represent the District at the California Science Fair in April.

**FUSD\_STEM\_LAGUNAS:** Alder Middle School eighth-grader Barbara Gonzalez Lagunas was awarded a gold medal during the 39th annual San Bernardino, Inyo and Mono Counties (SIM) Science and Engineering Fair in March for her presentation “Refraction in a Droplet: Microscope.” Gonzalez Lagunas was presented with the Lemelson Foundation Early Inventor Prize, which highlights young inventors.

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