



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 4, 2017

CONTACT: Lindsay Ivins, Maritza Fairfield

PHONE: 909-445-1001

Lynwood High Senior Celebrated for Determination, Dedication to Academics

To continue his education in the United States, Brandon Salazar crossed the border from Mexico each morning during his junior year

Lynwood – Lynwood High School senior Brandon Salazar has worked hard to become a model student, looking to pursue a college degree in computer science, participating in summer engineering programs at UCLA, involving himself in after-school clubs, working a weekend job and earning a 3.75 GPA.

The road 19-year-old Salazar has traveled in his pursuit of a high school diploma has been fraught with sacrifice and hardship – especially during his junior year when he woke up every day at 2:30 a.m. to cross the U.S./Mexico border and attend school in San Diego.

Because of his determination to succeed academically, Salazar was honored with a \$500 scholarship and an HP laptop at the Lynwood Association of School Administrators (LASA) inaugural Every Student Succeeding Banquet, held March 30 at Bateman Hall in Lynwood. The award honors students who have overcome obstacles and adversity to emerge as leaders among peers.

“Brandon’s determination and hard work is an inspiration to us all,” Lynwood Unified Superintendent Paul Gothold said. “This new award celebrates the Lynwood student achievers who refuse to let setbacks in their lives disrupt their education. We want to encourage all students to continue challenging themselves to become life-long learners and our future leaders.”

Born in Lynwood, Salazar moved with his family to Tijuana where he spent the first 15 years of his life. Just prior to entering high school, family troubles precipitated a return to Lynwood, and Salazar completed his freshman and sophomore years at Lynwood High, gradually building interest in science and engineering.

A move back to Tijuana before his junior year forced Salazar to make a hard choice – finish high school in Tijuana or cross the border every day to continue his education in the United States.

“I am motivated to do well in school because I want to help others who might be going through a similar situation,” Salazar said. “I want to show them that education is the key to achieving more for yourself.”

Though Salazar remained in the California school system, he longed to return to Lynwood High to rejoin his friends and engage in extracurricular activities. To do so, Salazar would have to live on his own and struggle to balance his personal life and academics.

MORE

The **Lynwood Unified School District** is dedicated to offering students a world-class education to prepare them for success in college and career in the 21st century. Under its Achieving Greatness Initiative, the district is realigning all aspects of its organization to strengthen and expand instructional programs, enrichment and extracurricular activities, and support system for students and staff. For more information, visit www.lynwood.k12.ca.us.

Follow us on  Twitter @LynwoodSchools, or “like” us on  Facebook at www.facebook.com/LynwoodUSD



For the last six months, Salazar has lived on his own in a rented garage, studying engineering at school and participating in Fashion Club and La Raza during the week. On the weekends, he assists with inventory and customer relations at the Cypress Swap Meet to afford rent and other essentials.

“Never give up. The first step is the hardest, but everything else will fall into place,” Salazar said. “If you work hard now, you will reap the benefits later in life.”

Accepted during his freshman year, Salazar participated in SMASH (Summer Math and Science Honors Academy) at UCLA, where he learned computer coding, web-page building and engineering sketching. Salazar is now a part of the recruiting process, finding other students like him who are interested in engineering so he can pass the baton as he prepares for graduation.

“Brandon truly is an inspiration to any other student who might be going through a difficult time,” Lynwood Unified Board President Alma-Delia Renteria said. “I hope all students can learn a valuable lesson from his story: Everyone can succeed if they put their heart and soul into their passion.”

PHOTO CAPTION

040417_LUSD_SALAZAR: Because of his determination to succeed academically against all odds, Lynwood High senior Brandon Salazar was honored with a \$500 scholarship and an HP laptop at the Lynwood Association of School Administrators (LASA) inaugural Every Student Succeeding Banquet, held on March 30 at Bateman Hall in Lynwood. The award honors students who have overcome obstacles and adversity to emerge as leaders among peers.

###

The mission of **Lynwood Unified School District**, the cultivator of innovative thinkers, is to ensure each student fearlessly achieves his or her highest academic and personal aspirations while contributing to the greater society through a unique system distinguished by:

- ★ People of great character who inspire and lead by example
- ★ The instilling of courage to be creative
- ★ The transformative uses of technology
- ★ Safe and clean environments
- ★ The honoring of all voices of our community