



Whittier Union

HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

To Achieve and Maintain Excellence...

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 9, 2023 **CONTACT:** Andrea Garcia **PHONE:** 909-445-1001

High-Achieving Whittier Union Seniors Receive Prestigious Scholarships, Commit to Pursuing Careers in Service

WHITTIER – Santa Fe High School seniors Karina Ramirez and Alexis Martinez are on the path to making a difference in the world, aided by the prestigious Gates and Destiny scholarships that will enable them to attend top universities in the fall and pursue careers in service.

Out of 51,000 applicants, Ramirez is among the 750 exceptional individuals awarded the Gates Scholarship, a distinction that will enable her to attend UCLA and will offset tuition costs that are not already covered by financial aid. Ramirez will travel to Florida this summer to be recognized alongside other scholarship winners during a special ceremony held by Bill Gates.

“It is such a relief to receive this scholarship,” Ramirez said. “Being a first-generation student and coming from a low-income household, we always worried about how we were going to pay for college. I’m just so grateful.”

In her pursuit of becoming an immigration attorney, Ramirez plans to major in political science, a decision inspired by her parents' experience in navigating the immigration process after emigrating from Mexico. Witnessing the challenges they faced, she said, has fueled her passion to pursue this career path.

“I want to fight for immigration rights to help families like mine combat exploitation and feel accepted and welcomed in their new home,” Ramirez said.

Ramirez, a high-achieving scholar with a 4.37 GPA, has explored her interests through numerous clubs and extracurricular activities on campus. She is currently the president of the psychology club and science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) clubs, as well as the secretary for Interact and the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) board. Ramirez is also the vice president of the Earth club, which has helped her realize her desire to specialize in environmental law.

Martinez received the \$20,000 Santa Fe Springs Chamber/League Youth Enrichment Fund Destiny Scholarship, a scholarship awarded annually by the City of Santa Fe Springs Chamber of Commerce to help enrich the education of deserving Santa Fe Springs graduates. The scholarship has helped Martinez in solidifying her decision to attend the University of California, Berkeley in the fall.

“College never seemed attainable to me as a first-generation student from a low-income household,” Martinez said. “I knew if it was something I really wanted to do that I would have to apply to numerous scholarships to support my college attendance. I just feel so blessed to be awarded this scholarship.”

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Martinez plans to major in psychology with a minor in gender studies to realize her career goal of becoming a family marriage therapist, a career path fueled from experiencing the difficulties of single parenting following her father’s cancer-related death at a young age.

“My home experience growing up without a dad inspired me to want to help mend families like mine and help ease their struggle,” Martinez said.

Martinez has a 4.2 GPA and returned to high school after the COVID-19 pandemic with the determination to get more involved and make the most of her time at Santa Fe High School. She is an active member of the psychology club and Spanish Honors Society, as well as the co-founder of the Interact club at Santa Fe. Martinez also tutors AVID students and said she enjoys mentoring younger students, assisting them in their coursework and building lasting relationships with them.

“Karina and Alexis are both incredible inspirations to our school community,” Principal Craig Campbell said. “They are such powerful forces at Santa Fe High School, and I know that they will continue to leave lasting impacts wherever they go. Congratulations, Karina and Alexis!”

PHOTO CAPTION

WUHSD_SCHOLARSHIP1: Santa Fe High School high-achieving seniors Alexis Martinez (left) and Karina Ramirez (right) have been awarded the prestigious Destiny Scholarship and Gates Scholarship, respectively, as they prepare to attend top universities in the fall and pursue careers in service.

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OUR MISSION:

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