



# Fontana Unified School District

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## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Fontana Unified Senior Surprised with \$40,000 Amazon Future Engineer Scholarship and Internship

**FONTANA, CA** – Fontana High School senior Lucia Otanez was a little nervous as she gathered with her classmates for an assembly to announce which FOHI seniors had the top-10 grade point averages, but the tension was interrupted by an Amazon delivery of a large package. After sharing a laugh about the delay with her classmates, Otanez was in for a big surprise.

The deliveryman was, in fact, Amazon Community Engagement Director David Ambroz, who announced in front of the entire assembly that Otanez had been named a 2024 Amazon Future Engineer Scholar, an honor that comes with a \$40,000 scholarship to pursue a degree in engineering or computer science, and an opportunity to complete a summer internship at Amazon.

“I was completely surprised,” said Otanez, who was presented with a \$40,000 check from Amazon during the assembly. “This is a great day for my family and me. Being an Amazon Future Engineer recipient means I am guaranteed financial support to continue my education. I now feel confident in pursuing a career in engineering with the support of Amazon.”

Otanez’s parents were present to celebrate her with flowers and were joined by Fontana Mayor Aquanetta Warren, Fontana Unified Associate Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Dr. Jennifer Bourgeois, and FOHI AP Computer Science teacher Brian Rivas, who wrote a letter of recommendation to Amazon in support of Otanez.

“This is a scholarship I have urged my students to apply for the last five years; Lucia is the first to win, and we couldn’t be prouder of her,” Rivas said. “It has been wonderful to see her grow in class, she has the grit and determination to be a great engineer. She never gives up, collaborates well with her peers, and does this in every class she takes.”

Otanez, who boasts a 4.6 GPA, has taken a total of nine Advanced Placement (AP) classes at FOHI. Her interest in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) subjects led her to focus on the biotechnology side of the medical field. Otanez’s interest in STEM increased after taking AP Biology and AP Computer Science at FOHI, classes that she said impacted her academically and provided insight into what her career focus would be.

“I hope to major in either bioengineering or computer science,” Otanez said. “My main hope is to blend both biological and computational sciences and complete research in genetic mutations and disorders. My goal is to find cures and medicines for current illnesses.”

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Otanez sharpened her STEM skills through a series of high-level academic programs such as Upward Bound and the Girls Who Code Summer Immersion Program and a six-week coding camp, where she received exposure to tech jobs, met leaders in the tech community, and bonded with her fellow coders.

Twice, Otanez participated in the Scripps College STEAM Academy, where she immersed herself in microbiology and physics research. She has a busy extracurricular schedule as a member of FOHI's cheer team, vice-president of the Daisy Chain Club, and former secretary of the Key Club.

Otanez has also done extensive volunteer work in Fontana and has been accepted to nearly a dozen universities, including UC Berkeley, and plans to attend the University of Southern California.

"Lucia is an outstanding student and extremely hard worker," FOHI Principal Ofelia Hinojosa said. "When she encounters obstacles, she finds a way around them. She is a role model on campus and just a great student overall. We are all so happy for her. Nothing is going to stop Lucia from achieving her dreams."

#### **PHOTO CAPTIONS:**

**FUSD\_AMAZON1:** During a senior class assembly, Fontana High School student Lucia Otanez was surprised with a \$40,000 Amazon Future Engineer Scholarship during a senior class assembly on April 9. Otanez will pursue a degree in engineering or computer science with the scholarship, which includes an opportunity for a summer internship at Amazon.

**FUSD\_AMAZON2:** Fontana High School senior Lucia Otanez and her family celebrate her Amazon Future Engineer Scholarship with representatives from the city of Fontana, Fontana Unified School District, and Fontana High School on April 9. Otanez plans to attend the University of Southern California.

**FUSD\_AMAZON3:** Lucia Otanez, a Fontana High School senior, was surprised with the Amazon Future Engineer Scholarship during a school assembly on April 9. She has maintained a 4.6 GPA, logged a total of nine AP classes, and has been accepted to nearly a dozen universities, including UC Berkeley.

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