



PRESS RELEASE

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Lynwood Unified Female Scholars Break Barriers, Earn Gates Scholarship to Pursue STEM Careers

LYNWOOD, CA – Lynwood Unified School District seniors Alexandra Medina and Brigitte Lopez are among 750 students across the nation to win the prestigious Gates Scholarship, a full-tuition award that will allow them to pursue STEM majors at Yale and Stanford universities, respectively.

The highly selective [Gates Scholarship](#) is awarded to exceptional students of color. It is designed to support students in realizing their full potential, empowering these Lynwood scholars to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and math – fields typically dominated by men.

"I was shocked when I received the scholarship, and I am excited that my family no longer has to worry about paying for me to go to college," said Medina, a senior at Lynwood High School who plans to study biomedical engineering at the Ivy League. "I can now fully focus on my studies without burdens."

Medina has engaged with her school and the greater community through the Project Lead the Way (PLTW) engineering pathway, National Equity Lab, Girl Empowerment Club, Society of Professional Hispanic Engineers and a Youth Leadership Program with California Assembly Speaker Emeritus Anthony Rendon.

She credits her success to the unwavering support of her teachers, counselors and classmates, inspiring her to reach new heights throughout her time at Lynwood Unified. Medina plans to attend graduate or medical school and conduct medical research on chronic illnesses. Her ultimate goal is to improve cancer detection and personalized treatments, making them more accessible and affordable.

Lopez, a senior at Firebaugh High School, was inspired by her time in the school's PLTW engineering pathway to study aerospace engineering at Stanford. She holds such leadership roles as president of Firebaugh's Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) Club and Mock Trial, secretary of the SkillsUSA Club and dance team captain. Lopez is also one of 30 students to earn a 2024 Edison Scholarship and is among 100 high-achieving scholars in the nation to be selected for the Leadership Enterprise for a Diverse America (LEDA) program, which supports students on their college-going journeys.

"This scholarship is truly life-changing, as it will ensure that I can graduate from college with zero debt," Lopez said. "It also opens multiple job and networking opportunities, allowing me to build the connections that will help me achieve my dreams. It shows no matter where you come from, who you are and what you dream of, anything is possible. Si se puede!"

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Lopez aspires to work on pioneering projects that advance current STEM technology, including developing a fuel-efficient aircraft or creating a cutting-edge spacecraft with a focus on sustainability. She hopes to contribute substantially to aerospace technology and exploration while promoting diverse perspectives and addressing disparities in scientific communities.

Lynwood Unified has focused its efforts on designing programs and enrichment opportunities such as the [Girl STEM Conference](#) to address the gender gap in STEM fields. By highlighting the achievements of women in these fields and providing hands-on activities, the District aims to ignite a passion for STEM in young girls and encourage them to pursue these rewarding career paths.

"We are incredibly proud of Brigitte and Alexandra for their achievements and the future impact they will have on generations of Lynwood Unified students as we foster a supportive environment in which girls can see themselves thriving in STEM," Superintendent Gudiel R. Crosthwaite, Ph.D. said. "The Gates Scholarship will undoubtedly give them the opportunities and resources they need to continue advocating for change and achieving their goals."

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

LUSD_GATES1: Lynwood High School senior Alexandra Medina will study biomedical engineering at Yale University after earning a full-ride Gates Scholarship for her academic performance and dedication to enacting positive change.

LUSD_GATES2: Firebaugh High School senior Brigitte Lopez received a full-ride Gates Scholarship to Stanford University for her exemplary leadership and academic performance. She plans to pursue a career in aerospace engineering.

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The mission of Lynwood Unified School District, the model urban school district, is to ensure each student fearlessly achieves their highest academic and personal aspirations while contributing to a diverse, global society through an evolving 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 inclusion of all voices in our community through equity, access and justice*

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