



News

Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Sept. 12, 2022

CONTACT: Amanda Nieto

PHONE: 909-447-2407

Baldwin Park Unified Alumna Named Cal State University Student Trustee

BALDWIN PARK – Sierra Vista High School Class of 2019 graduate Diana Aguilar-Cruz came to the U.S. as an English learner in 2015. Embracing a new language, she quickly became an advocate for equity in education.

Currently a biology major at Cal Poly Pomona, Aguilar-Cruz is using her voice to speak for nearly 500,000 collegegoers statewide as a Cal State University (CSU) Student Trustee. Aguilar-Cruz was appointed to the position by Gov. Gavin Newsom on June 1, 2022 and will serve a two-year term.

“I am honored to serve as a CSU Student Trustee,” Aguilar-Cruz said. “My priority is to focus on what is necessary for a student to be successful in the CSU system, and for our students to have an experience that is welcoming and makes everyone, including faculty and staff, feel like they are part of a family and community.”

Baldwin Park Unified School District recognized Aguilar-Cruz, alongside her mom, during a Board of Education meeting on Aug. 16, while District leaders, SVHS administrators and educators chanted her favorite phrase “Si Se Puede.”

As a junior at Sierra Vista, Aguilar-Cruz earned a \$1,000 first-place prize from the California Association of Bilingual Education (CABE) for an essay she wrote on the value of bilingualism, which recounted the trauma of leaving her parents in Mexico when she immigrated to California.

While at SVHS, Aguilar-Cruz was advocating for her classmates even as she learned a new language. After graduating, Aguilar-Cruz returned to school as a volunteer mentor for her former instructor, Sierra Vista High English teacher Charlene Fried, helping English learners develop their communication skills and find their own voice.

The experience inspired Aguilar-Cruz to start Nezhualcoyotl, a volunteer-based organization designed to help English learners realize their dreams as they navigate a path to higher education. Aguilar-Cruz is currently working toward establishing Nezhualcoyotl at Sierra Vista High with a goal of expanding the program throughout the District.

MORE



News

Release

“Diana’s relentless passion drives her to promote equity, justice and equal opportunities for all people,” Fried said. “She truly wants to make our world a safe, thriving and loving place for all of its citizens.”

At Cal Poly Pomona, Aguilar-Cruz has served in a variety of leadership positions for numerous campus organizations, including ASI student government, the Hermanas Unidas Association, COPE Health Scholars, Delta Epsilon Mu, INSAN for Humanity, Achieve Scholars, the Pre-Medicine Student Association and the Mexican American Student Association.

As a CSU Student Trustee, Aguilar-Cruz’s goal is to help CSU stakeholders – including students, faculty and staff – close the equity and opportunity gaps throughout the system. She is especially focused on quality-of-life issues, using Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs pyramid as a model for students to fulfill their physiological and safety needs as they work toward a goal of self-actualization.

“We can’t expect our students to succeed in higher education if they have not fulfilled those needs and have a sense of belonging,” Aguilar-Cruz said. “I want to be a student trustee to make a change, to serve as representation and to make sure that I speak for the students that don’t have a voice.”

Aguilar-Cruz plans to visit three CSU campuses this fall – Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, CSU San Bernardino and CSU San Marcos – and talk to underrepresented students to see how she can help them improve their college experience.

Though Aguilar-Cruz will graduate from Cal Poly Pomona in the spring of 2023, she plans to enroll in a CSU graduate program in the fall so that she can serve the remaining year of her student trustee term. She has a career goal of obtaining a medical degree in pediatric neurosurgery and a doctorate in organic chemistry.

PHOTO

08.16.22 BPUSD_Diana Aguilar-Cruz: Sierra Vista High School Class of 2019 graduate Diana Aguilar-Cruz was recognized during a Board of Education meeting on Aug. 16 for being appointed as a Cal State University (CSU) Student Trustee.

###