



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Jan. 25, 2023 CONTACT: Maria Hernandez PHONE: (909) 447-2406

6 El Monte Union Seniors Celebrate Recognition as QuestBridge Scholars, Will Attend Elite Universities

EL MONTE – When South El Monte High School senior Ruben Carrazco joined the Upward Bound Math & Science program at Pasadena City College as a sophomore, he was laser-focused on strengthening his skill set so that he could attend an elite university. As a first-generation college goer, Carrazco dared to dream big, inspired by his mother’s advice to “échale ganas” or “give it all you’ve got.”

Carrazco immersed himself in his studies, and his hard work has been rewarded. Carrazco is one of six El Monte Union students to be recognized as a QuestBridge 2022-23 National College Match scholar and will attend Stanford University. Joining him as QuestBridge scholars are Mountain View High seniors Aiden Ngo and Ruby Saldivar, Arroyo High School seniors Karita Nguyen and Colin Nguyen and Rosemead High School senior Erick Diaz.

Each student will receive a four-year full ride scholarship worth more than \$200,000 and be granted early admission to a QuestBridge partner college. Carrazco, who currently serves as the El Monte Union student board representative, has a 4.42 GPA and plans to major in mechanical engineering.

“Being a first-generation Hispanic student and child of an undocumented mother, it feels surreal to say that I’ve been accepted to Stanford with a full-ride scholarship,” Carrazco said. “The past four years of all-nighters and homework tears have paid off. Especially coming from a demographic largely consisting of underrepresented students, such a feat provides a testament that we can achieve at a high level and should not be overlooked.”

Carrazco will be joined at Stanford by Saldivar, who also plans to study mechanical engineering. With a GPA of 4.3, Saldivar is president of the Mountain View Teacher Prep Academy, where she tutors elementary school students. Saldivar has served as president of Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (MEChA), is a member of the Upward Bound program at Harvey Mudd College, and is a member of the Mountain View volleyball and soccer teams.

“Ruby is intelligent, focused and hard-working,” Mountain View counselor Janette Rodriguez said. “She is an outstanding young woman who has taken the most rigorous courses we offer. Ruby has excelled academically and is an active part of our campus life.”

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The vision of the El Monte Union High School District is to empower and motivate our students to be resilient, college and career ready, lifelong learners and contributing members of our global society.

Ngo will attend Princeton University, fulfilling a dream he has had since he was a sophomore. Ngo has a GPA of 4.32 and is a member of Link Crew, where he mentors a group of freshmen, and is a peer supporter of the Mountain View Wellness Center. Ngo has also participated in the Academic Decathlon and is a member of the Key Club and Environmental Club.

“Aiden is a very humble, down-to-earth and kind young man,” Mountain View counselor Maria Palmieri said. “Aiden is always ready to help others. He is very involved and driven with his own education and has always asked questions and advocated for himself.”

Arroyo High seniors Karita Nguyen and Colin Nguyen are not related, but both will be traveling to South Bend, Indiana to pursue their higher education at the University of Notre Dame. Karita Nguyen has a 4.4 GPA and will study applied mathematics and statistics at Notre Dame, while considering a double major in nanotechnology engineering. Karita is president of the Arroyo 2023 class council, does publicity for the Leo Club and is treasurer of Arroyo’s Cards for Kids Club. Karita enjoys playing piano in her spare time.

Colin Nguyen has a 4.26 GPA and will study computer science at Notre Dame as he plans for a career as a video game software engineer or developer. Colin is treasurer of the Arroyo 2023 class council and has immersed himself in a number of extracurricular activities, including Robotics Club, Leo Club, Medical Club and the California Scholarship Federation (CSF).

“Karita and Colin are excellent students, campus leaders and bright lights of the future,” Arroyo High counselor Laura Vazquez said. “I am very proud of their accomplishments, but my joy does not compare to that of their families.”

Rosemead High senior Erick Diaz has a 4.32 GPA and will attend Pomona College, after having participated in the exclusive Pomona College Academy for Youth Success and serving on its Student Advisory Board. Diaz has also worked extensively in his community, volunteering his services to the El Monte Tenants Collective. He has not declared a major, but is interested in math, history and economics.

“Erick is a resilient, diligent and dedicated young man who has consistently prioritized his education,” Rosemead High counselor Brenda Magana said. “Erick is a deserving student who has remained committed to supporting his community throughout his high school career.”

QuestBridge partners with dozens of elite universities across the United States to offer financial assistance to underrepresented students so that they can fulfill their dream of pursuing higher education. Of more than 17,000 applicants in 2022, only 1,755 students were awarded full scholarships to QuestBridge partner colleges.

“Congratulations to our El Monte Union QuestBridge scholarship winners, who are not just academic leaders but also role models and passionate advocates for education and their community,” Superintendent Dr. Edward Zuniga said. “Our scholars could not succeed without the support of their hard-working and dedicated teachers, administrators, and counseling staff. I wish all of our QuestBridge recipients the best of luck in their higher education journey.”

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

EMUHSD QUESTBRIDGE SCHOLARS 1: South El Monte High School senior Ruben Carrazco, is one of six El Monte Union students to be recognized as a QuestBridge 2022-23 National College Match scholar and will attend Stanford University in the fall.

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El Monte Union High School District

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EMUHSD QUESTBRIDGE SCHOLARS 2: Mountain View High School senior Aiden Ngo, is one of six El Monte Union students to be recognized as a QuestBridge 2022-23 National College Match scholar and will attend Princeton University.

EMUHSD QUESTBRIDGE SCHOLARS 3: Mountain View High School senior Ruby Saldivar, is one of six El Monte Union students to be recognized as a QuestBridge 2022-23 National College Match scholar and will attend Stanford University.

EMUHSD QUESTBRIDGE SCHOLARS 4: Arroyo High School seniors Karita Nguyen and Colin Nguyen are not related, but both will be traveling to South Bend, Indiana to pursue their higher education at the University of Notre Dame. They are two of six El Monte Union students to be recognized as QuestBridge 2022-23 National College Match scholars.

EMUHSD QUESTBRIDGE SCHOLARS 5: Rosemead High senior Erick Diaz will attend Pomona College in the fall and is one of six El Monte Union students to be recognized as a QuestBridge 2022-23 National College Match scholar.

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