



El Monte Union High School District

Community Committed to College and Career

PRESS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Maria Hernandez

PHONE: (909) 447-2406

Rosemead High School Instructor Named El Monte Union 2022-23 Teacher of the Year

EL MONTE – Rosemead High School AP U.S. History teacher Michelle Ban sets a goal at the beginning of each school year to learn the names of her students by the end of her first week. This personal connection and building positive relationships with students are the first steps in creating a classroom environment that encourages her students to engage in the subject matter and have a unique learning experience.

For her ability to connect with her students and create lesson plans that are both relevant and challenging, Ban was named El Monte Union’s 2022-23 Teacher of the Year. The El Monte Union Board of Trustees recognized Ban with a plaque, bouquet of flowers and her name on the District’s Teacher of the year honoree display plaque at its Oct. 5 Board meeting. Each Board Member praised Ban’s accomplishments as a classroom teacher and for the impact she has on her students. Ban has also been named a 2022 Los Angeles County Teacher of the Year by the Los Angeles County Office of Education, one of just 16 teachers to earn this distinction.

“I am honored and humbled to receive this award,” Ban said. “It makes me reflect on my career and the progress I have made. I have been surrounded by so many great educators, and we have all dealt with myriad challenges. Being a teacher is not what I do, it’s who I am. I want to have my students see a piece of themselves in me. Many of them know me better than my closest friends.”

Ban came to Rosemead High as an intern in 2009, teaching world history. She carefully crafted ambitious lesson plans designed to transport her students back in time to experience historical events. Even though the lesson plans occasionally went overboard – like when a reenactment of the French Revolution descended into a food fight – Ban realized that they still held value, as they were creating classroom experiences her students would learn from and remember for years to come.

Ban connects to her students by allowing them to see that she is vulnerable, honest and transparent. Her students know what her favorite music video is, her latest online shopping purchases, even the personal and academic challenges she faced in high school. As a result, students come to class excited to chat, to catch up and then to learn.

Ban’s understanding of students has also been shaped by her time as a leadership advisor for the Associated Student Body and Link Crew, which helps her contextualize what Rosemead students deal with on a day-to-day basis. This perspective helped Ban navigate the challenges of distance learning when her AP students’ uncertainty and worry threatened to derail their studies and plans for higher education.

At the beginning of online learning, Ban created an assignment to prep for the AP U.S. History exam in which students interviewed family members, researched news posts, and recorded diary entries, creating their own

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document-based question, which is a major component of the exam. This not only prepared her students for the exam but allowed Ban the opportunity to check in on their social and emotional well-being. The assignment was a success, resulting in a nearly 80% pass rate for the AP exam.

Ban has come a long way since her first day of college when, as a prospective med school student, she ran out of a calculus class, embarrassed because she did not understand any of the mathematical concepts. Though Ban switched her major to history, she found that the usual career paths – museum curator, historian, anthropologist – did not appeal to her. Wanting to share her love of history with others led Ban to seek a teaching credential.

“Congratulations to Michelle Ban for being named El Monte Union’s teacher of the year,” Superintendent Dr. Edward Zuniga said. “Michelle brings heart and passion to everything she does and is a role model for both our teachers and our students. She epitomizes the District’s vision to empower and motivate its students to become lifelong learners.”

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

EMUHSD TEACHER OF THE YEAR 1: El Monte Union High School District honors Rosemead High School’s AP U.S. History teacher Michelle Ban as the District’s 2022-23 Teacher of the Year during a Board meeting on Oct. 5.

EMUHSD TEACHER OF THE YEAR 2: Rosemead High School’s AP U.S. History teacher, Michelle Ban (bottom left), who has been named El Monte Union High School District’s 2022-23 Teacher of the Year, celebrates finishing finals week with her AP U.S. History class to commemorate the end of the 2021-22 school year.

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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.