NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE   **CONTACT:** Andrew Shortall
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Fontana Unified's Chaparral Academy of Technology Earns Three Honors for Integration of Computing, STEM Education

FONTANA, CA – Chaparral Academy of Technology's excellence in implementing innovative programming to close achievement gaps in the world of Computers, Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (C-STEM) has earned the school three C-STEM Awards, presented at the 13th annual C-STEM Conference at UC Davis on Oct. 20.

This marks the fifth year in a row Fontana Unified School District educators have been honored by the UC Davis C-STEM Center. Chaparral Academy was honored as a C-STEM Distinguished School, while Principal Dr. Andrea McClain and teacher Alexandra Cruz were named the C-STEM Administrator and Teacher of the Year, respectively.

All three awards reflect Chaparral Academy's exceptional contributions to providing students with equitable access to integrated computing and STEM education, preparing and inspiring students to pursue further studies and careers in C-STEM fields.

"We are so proud of everything we do at Chaparral Academy to ensure equity and access to coding and robotics for all of our students K-5," McClain said. "Our entire staff works tirelessly and collaboratively to ensure students are learning college-and-career-ready skills while having so much fun with coding and robotics."

Chaparral Academy utilizes the program RoboBlocky to teach students coding and robotics principles. RoboBlocky is an integrated learning environment that involves students using drag-and-drop block-based coding to solve math word problems on an x-y axis grid on their laptops. Robots then act out the students' solution on a special x-y axis floor mat so the students can immediately see if they found the correct solution to the problem.

"The students love the hands-on portion of Roboblocky, you can see the pure joy where they finally figure out all the coding and complete the challenge," Cruz said. "It has really taught them perseverance, problem solving and teamwork. It really pushes them to try hard and encourages collaboration between students."

After seeing the success of RoboBlocky's launch as an afterschool enrichment program in spring 2022, Chaparral Academy implemented the software schoolwide for the 2022-23 school year to ensure all students could benefit from the program.

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"Chaparral Academy has emerged as a leader not only in the District or region but the state overall when it comes to providing students with equitable access to integrated computing and STEM education," Fontana Unified Superintendent Miki R. Inbody said. "These awards continue Fontana Unified's excellence in C-STEM and commitment to preparing all of our students for success in college or their career."

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

FUSD_C-STEM1: Chaparral Academy of Technology Principal Dr. Andrea McClain, third from left, and teacher Alexandra Cruz, third from right, accepted three prestigious honors at the 13th annual C-STEM Conference at UC Davis on Oct. 20. Chaparral Academy was honored as a C-STEM Distinguished School, while Dr. McClain and Cruz were named the C-STEM Administrator and Teacher of the Year, respectively.

FUSD_C-STEM2: From left: Chaparral Academy of Technology Teacher Alexandra Cruz assists fourth-grade students Destiny Hernandez and Isabella Servin with a Roboblocky challenge. Chaparral Academy named a C-STEM Distinguished School honor and Cruz earned the C-STEM Teacher of the Year Award at the 13th annual C-STEM Conference at UC Davis on Oct. 20.

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