



Whittier Union HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

To Achieve and Maintain Excellence...

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Nov. 28, 2023 **CONTACT:** Andrea Garcia **PHONE:** 909-447-2403

California High School ACE Program Members Share Academic Success Stories with Future High School Students

WHITTIER – California High School’s Academic Commitment to Excellence (ACE) students took a journey through their unique high school experiences and stories while connecting with Hillview Middle School eighth-graders during an event that aimed to encourage students to apply for ACE, a program that provides support, encouragement and resources to at-risk students.

The ACE program provides students with additional help in making the transition from middle to high school, particularly in the subjects of math and English. In addition to the extra support students receive in these areas, the program coordinates guest speakers, college visits and enrichment activities to complement the curricula.

“We continue tracking the progress of our ACE students all the way through senior year and make sure they know we’re still here to support them on their path to success,” ACE Program teacher Ann Gonzalez said. “All of our ACE students get to sit together at graduation and wear a special stole in recognition of their achievement – it’s really a great moment!”

California High ACE juniors Elyssa Velazquez, Quentin Laporte and Savannah Apodaca accompanied Gonzalez to Hillview on Nov. 7, where they spoke with middle school students about the benefits of being part of ACE and answered questions about the program.

“I loved being able to talk to the middle schoolers about the ACE program and share how beneficial it was for me going into high school,” Velazquez said. “The ACE program is so special to me – it made me realize that there is always someone there if I need help in school or in life.”

The ACE program is partnered with local nonprofit Helpline Youth Counseling (HYC), which offers family services, homeless services, behavioral health services and more to the community. HYC representatives speak with ACE students once a week, covering life skill topics in stress management, family communication, substance abuse, how media affects mental health and more. At the end of HYC’s speaking series, ACE students receive a special certificate showing they completed the courses.

“My biggest takeaway from our time with HYC is the concept of self-love and how important it is to communicate with others to solve problems,” freshman Abbie Sykes said. “The ACE program is so great because I get extra support to help me succeed and the teachers are amazing!”

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Several middle school students applied to be part of the ACE program after hearing about all the benefits and life skills the program offers.

“Our ACE program’s visit to Hillview gave middle schoolers an early glimpse into the support and caring culture that is waiting for them in high school,” California High School principal Bill Schloss said. “ACE helps students get on the right track and ensures all students are equipped with the resources and tools they need to succeed.”

PHOTO CAPTIONS

WUHSD_ACE1: (From left to right) California High School Academic Commitment to Excellence (ACE) program juniors Savannah Apodaca, Elyssa Velazquez, and Quentin Laporte visit Hillview Middle School to share with eighth graders about the benefits of being part of ACE and to answer questions about the program.

WUHSD_ACE2: (From left to right) California High School Academic Commitment to Excellence (ACE) program freshmen Evelyn Gomez Gonzalez, Darla Encinas, Dulce Mares, and Alex Hernandez receive certificates for completing the Helpline Youth Counseling (HYC) life skills course. HYC representatives spoke with ACE students weekly, covering life skills topics in stress management, family communication, substance abuse, how media affects mental health, and more.

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OUR MISSION:

The Whittier Union High School District provides all students with an engaging, quality standards-based instructional program delivered by a well-trained staff resulting in improved student achievement. Whittier Union High School District works to achieve and maintain excellence in providing a comprehensive education for all students.

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