



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Dec. 16, 2024 CONTACT: Maria Hernandez PHONE: (909) 447-2406

El Monte Union Staff Member Honored with Bobby Salcedo Esperanza Award for Student Advocacy

EL MONTE – Vanessa Salazar has become a cornerstone of Rosemead High School's (RHS) community, known for her steadfast commitment to ensuring every student has access to essential resources and support while leveraging her skills as a mentor to foster a supportive environment where students are encouraged to be their true selves.

In recognition of her dedication and impact on student success, Salazar was honored with the prestigious Bobby Salcedo Esperanza Award by the El Monte Promise Foundation. She received the award during the organization's annual Tamalada Gala on Dec. 12, highlighting her exceptional contributions to the school community and the well-being of her students. Each year, the award is given to a staff member from neighboring districts who best exemplifies Salcedo's commitment to education.

"This recognition is truly for the students—they are my drive, my why, and the light of my life everyday I come to work," Salazar said. "I am so thankful to my peers for this honor and their work toward supporting our Panthers and creating a space where they feel they belong."

As Rosemead's comprehensive student support coordinator, Salazar helps ninth and 10th graders overcome academic, behavioral, and social challenges. She runs the school's Student Support Center and ensures it is a welcoming space that offers resources and fosters a sense of belonging by providing an environment where students feel free to speak their minds and be themselves, she said.

Salazar was nominated for the Bobby Salcedo Award by Rosemead High's Assistant Principal of Student Services Joe Vu, a close friend and former classmate of Salcedo, who saw Salcedo's passion and dedication to help students within Salazar.

"Vanessa's dedication is a reflection of Bobby's spirit, going above and beyond in every role—motivating students, building their self-esteem, and involving parents in their success," said Vu. "Her ability to connect with and inspire students is unmatched. In the 20-year history of this award, Vanessa is the first from Rosemead High to receive it, cementing her as a true inspiration and source of pride in our school community."

Roberto "Bobby" Salcedo, a 1994 graduate of Mountain View High School, had a distinguished career in education, teaching at South El Monte High School and later serving as an administrator at South El Monte, Mountain View, and El Monte high schools. At the time of his passing in 2009, he was a valued member of the El Monte City School District Board of Education.

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This year, Salazar's focus has been on raising awareness among the Rosemead High student body of the resources available to them, ensuring they know their school is there for support.

As she continues in her role, Salazar aims to advocate for expanding resources offered at the Rosemead's Student Support Center to include laptops and study spaces to further support academic success.

"Vanessa's commitment to her students goes beyond the classroom—she is a true advocate for their growth," Superintendent Dr. Edward Zuniga said. "Her dedication to empowering students and creating an environment where they feel valued is making a lasting impact on their success, making her an invaluable asset to our community."

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

EMUHSD BOBBY SALCEDO AWARD 1: Rosemead High School comprehensive student support coordinator Vanessa Salazar receives the prestigious Bobby Salcedo Esperanza Award from the El Monte Promise Foundation for her outstanding contributions to the school community and dedication to student well-being. Salazar received the award during the foundation's annual Tamalada Gala on Dec. 12.

EMUHSD BOBBY SALCEDO AWARD 2: Rosemead High School comprehensive student support coordinator Vanessa Salazar (right) and her husband Zachary Salazar (left) celebrate after she was recognized as a Bobby Salcedo Esperanza Award recipient at the El Monte Promise Foundation's annual Tamalada Gala on Dec. 12.

EMUHSD BOBBY SALCEDO AWARD 3: Rosemead High School's academic counselor Elaine Rodriguez (left) and child welfare and attendance coordinator Guenoha Reynoso (right) celebrate colleague, friend, and comprehensive student support coordinator Vanessa Salazar as she is honored with the Bobby Salcedo Esperanza Award during the El Monte Promise Foundation's annual Tamalada Gala on Dec. 12.

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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.