



WHITTIER UNION

HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

To Achieve and Maintain Excellence...

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 21, 2025 **CONTACT:** Andrea Garcia **PHONE:** 909-447-2403

Whittier Union Adult School Student Receives Award of Merit for Resilience, Determination

WHITTIER – At a crossroads with her education, California High School Class of 2018 graduate Abigail Villanueva had completed her bachelor's degree in biological sciences and public health at the University of Southern California, with a goal of enrolling in medical school. But before she could apply to a college, Villanueva needed to gain clinical experience in a medical setting.

Taking the advice of a friend and former Whittier Union Adult School (WUAS) student, Villanueva enrolled in the WUAS medical assistant program, a comprehensive two-quarter course where students gain essential clinical and administrative skills through hands-on training that prepares them for real-world scenarios, clinical training, and internships.

After completing the program, Villanueva had to get creative as she looked for an externship that would fulfill her clinical experience obligations, although she didn't have far to look, finding an externship through WUAS' phlebotomy program. The phlebotomy program allowed Villanueva to put in her required hours and move forward with her dream to attend medical school.

For her perseverance and determination, Villanueva was presented with an Award of Merit by the Whittier Union Board of Trustees during its April 8 Board meeting.

"Thank you to the Whittier Union Board, my teachers, and my family," Villanueva said. "To my instructors, I'm the mere reflection of the wonderful education and support I received at the adult school. They provide an environment where the students not only thrive academically but professionally as well. You have all played a critical role in my journey towards medical school."

Villanueva said her inspiration to attend medical school comes from her older sister, who is currently in her second year in medical school. Her determination to succeed greatly impressed her peers and teachers in the program, as well as the entire WUAS administration and staff.

"Abigail demonstrates the tremendous breadth of who our Adult School students really are," WUAS Principal Margie Moriarty said. "As a bilingual, biliterate person, Abigail has a bright future in the medical field and her resilience will be a big asset for her in her career. When we looked at all our students in all our programs, Abigail rose to the top. We all wish her success in her future endeavors."

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PHOTO CAPTION

WUHSD_AWARD1: Whittier Union Adult School student Abigail Villanueva was presented with an Award of Merit by the Whittier Union Board of Trustees during its April 8 meeting.

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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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