



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 23, 2025

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Ivy League-Bound El Monte Union Senior Surprised with \$50,000 Edison Scholarship

EL MONTE – Rosemead High School senior Carmen Ung was in second grade when her father came home with a family gift, a Dell tabletop computer. Ung was immediately fascinated – the way the screen lit up her face, the ability to explore new worlds with a touch of the keypad – she knew right away that technology would change her life.

As her computer skills grew rapidly over the next several years, Ung set a goal for herself to become a driving force in the world of tech and use tech to help change lives for underrepresented students in low-income communities – whether through artificial intelligence, software engineering, or computer science. The Ivy League-bound senior is now well on her way to achieving these goals.

In March, Ung was surprised while on the El Monte-Rosemead Adult School campus when Edison International representatives, accompanied by her parents, presented her with an Edison Scholarship worth \$50,000. Ung, who also received a QuestBridge National Match scholarship in December, will attend Yale University and plans to major in computer science or engineering.

“I was so surprised. I had no idea it was going to happen,” Ung said. “When the Edison representatives arrived, I thought they were from the District, and my parents were there to sign a few papers. When they came into the classroom, I almost started crying. This is everything I’ve dreamed of since my dad brought home our computer.”

Ung, who boasts a 4.0 GPA, has earned straight A’s since middle school. At Rosemead High, Ung has immersed herself in leadership roles while also developing into a multi-talented athlete. For Ung, the Associated Student Body (ASB) and athletics are essential components of her education.

“I’ve always been involved in leadership, it drives me,” Ung said. “I can be a voice for the student body and represent their interests. It’s a way to show Panther Pride and it allows me to meet so many new classmates.”

Ung said one of her proudest leadership moments came as junior class president when she managed the junior prom. It was a tremendous challenge for Ung, who worked to promote the prom, sell tickets, and organize with vendors to provide merchandise and giveaways at the big event.

Ultimately, Ung and her team sold 420 tickets, ensuring the night would be a huge success.

“Managing the prom was a learning experience,” Ung said. “I was really nervous because staging something of that magnitude is very challenging. But afterward, I had a great sense of accomplishment. I realized that I could do the hard things and that gave me a lot of confidence.”

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Rosemead High counselor Uyen Nguyen considers Ung to be one of the most impressive students she has seen in her 25 years at the school, citing Ung's ability to balance her workload with extracurricular activities, as well as her unwavering commitment.

"Carmen's journey at Rosemead has been one of continuous effort and inspiration, of tenacity and perseverance," Nguyen said. "She takes the toughest classes and still finds the time to be a campus leader and fierce athletic competitor. Even when Carmen has experienced disappointment, she digs in and finds a solution. It's what sets her apart from her peers."

Driven and ambitious, Ung brings passion to everything she does. Looking for a way to stay active after school as a freshman, she joined basketball, cross country, track and field, and volleyball. By her junior year, she was named varsity captain of the girls' cross country team.

Outside of sports, Ung served as president of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) club, which promotes mental health awareness on campus. She also works at the El Monte-Rosemead Adult School as an office aide and translator and has completed more than 400 hours of community service. Ung credits her growth to Rosemead's strong support system — especially her ASB advisors and teachers — who helped her navigate Advanced Placement classes and prioritize wellness.

As she prepares for Yale, Ung said she'll miss the small, everyday connections with friends and mentors in El Monte Union who have become like family.

"We are incredibly proud of Carmen for her academic excellence, leadership, and commitment to serving others," Superintendent Dr. Edward Zuniga said. "Earning a scholarship to Yale is a remarkable achievement, and she represents the very best of El Monte Union. Her success reflects her hard work, determination, and the strong support of the Rosemead High School community."

PHOTO CAPTION:

EMUHSD EDISON SCHOLAR 1: Rosemead High School senior Carmen Ung (center) received a surprise \$50,000 Edison scholarship in March, joined by an Edison International representative, her parents, and El Monte-Rosemead Adult School administrators.

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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.