



WHITTIER UNION

HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

To Achieve and Maintain Excellence...

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Oct. 20, 2026 **CONTACT:** Andrea Garcia **PHONE:** 909-447-2403

Whittier High School Seniors Explore College, Career Options at FutureReady Fair

WHITTIER – Whittier High School seniors got a head start on their post-secondary journeys, filling out college and employment applications, speaking with recruiters, and exploring career options during the school's annual FutureReady Day, held early October.

Nearly 350 students, representing more than 90% of Whittier High's senior class, submitted applications to community colleges, Cal State and University of California colleges, private colleges, trade schools, and military branches.

The event was coordinated by Whittier High's New Horizons office and co-sponsored by the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) as part of FutureReady CA, the California initiative of the American College Application Campaign.

Whittier High counselors, teachers, Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) mentors, and other school personnel were present to assist the students, as well as representatives of America's Job Center of California and the California Student Opportunity and Access Program (Cal-SOAP).

Students heard from two Whittier High teachers – English teacher Matthew Francev and Regional Occupational Program (ROP)/automotive teacher Jesse Miranda – who talked about their post-graduate experiences and answered questions from students. Two local private colleges, Whittier College and Vanguard College, were on hand to offer Cardinal students on-the-spot admissions.

"Our motto for FutureReady is enroll, enlist, or employ," New Horizons Director Norma Sierra said. "The main focus of FutureReady is college applications, but we know some students want to start work after high school, or are considering joining the military. The goal of FutureReady is for every student to fill out a college or job application, and we provide all the tools and resources for them to get it done."

FutureReady also brings equity to the college admission process, setting aside classroom time for students to work on their applications so that no student is left out.

"FutureReady is a way to ensure that all seniors have the opportunity to be a part of the process," LACOE College and Career Readiness/AVID Coordinator Cesar Castellanos said. "There are so many reasons why students can't find time in their day to explore their college and career options or talk to their guidance counselor. FutureReady gives all students a dedicated time to complete this work that is so important to their future."

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Whittier High senior Arman Bhambra is a first-generation college student and plans to attend a four-year university and study electrical engineering. As a member of Whittier High's acclaimed Cardinal Academy of Technology, Bhambra said he is also hoping to land a prestigious scholarship like the QuestBridge National Match or Edison scholarships.

"I'm excited about this hands-on experience. I'm the first one in my family who will go to college and my parents are very proud," Bhambra said. "I have received so much help from New Horizons, they have great workshops and we take field trips to colleges. The teachers at Whittier High have been so helpful to me. I will miss them when I graduate."

Whittier High senior Laila Schneider is a libero on the Cardinal girls' volleyball team and a member of the WHS Associated Student Body. Schneider is interested in education and environmental science, looking to go to a local college like UC Irvine or Cal State Long Beach. Her father is Whittier High physical education teacher Chris Schneider.

"I'm looking forward to FutureReady because the college application process can be overwhelming. I want to see how everything breaks down and look at the smaller picture," Laila said. "It will be hard to leave Whittier High. I love being at school with my dad. It's a great dynamic. But I am also very excited about graduation and going to college."

At the end of the event, students wrote their names on adhesive labels and placed them on a banner. Students also received pins, stickers, pennants, and other college swag, as well as a T-shirt that read, "Future Ready Cardinals. Every Cardinal, Every Day."

"FutureReady is a huge resource for our students, giving them the time they need to ask questions, consider their options, and take their first steps as adults," Whittier High Principal Andres Favela said. "It's also a fun day for the students. They're with their friends and learning what it takes to go to their dream college or get their dream job."

FutureReady events have continued taking place at other schools across Whittier Union, emphasizing the District's motto to do *Whatever It Takes* to help students succeed and pursue their goals.

PHOTO CAPTIONS

WUHSF_FUTURE1: Whittier High School seniors participate in a college workshop during the school's FutureReady event in early October. Nearly 350 students submitted applications to community colleges, universities, trade schools, and military branches during the event.

WUHSF_FUTURE2: Whittier High School seniors display their FutureReady swag after participating in college application workshops during the school's FutureReady event in early October.

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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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