



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 26, 2018

CONTACT: Juliette Funes

Maritza Fairfield

(909) 445-1001

Whittier Union AVID Student Named 2018 Dell Scholar, Receives \$20,000 Scholarship

WHITTIER – Pioneer High School senior Nylah Garcia was born shortly after her mother was diagnosed with cancer. Tasked with caring for her through years of recovery, Garcia was determined to be the first member of her family to attend college and found support as a student in the school's Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program.

Garcia is now one step closer to her dream after being named a 2018 Dell Scholar by the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation, an honor that comes with a \$20,000 scholarship to help fund her education at Cal State Long Beach.

"It's pretty exciting," Garcia said. "As an AVID student, I have gained a support system that has compelled me to do my best."

As a Dell Scholar, Garcia will receive the scholarship over four years, a laptop and textbook credits. She will also have access to a support network made up of students, peer mentors and Dell staff, with services including confidential counseling, financial aid coaching and work-life solutions.

"My AVID advisers pushed me to apply for the Dell scholarship and to keep my life prioritized in and out of school," Garcia said. "I am thankful for the support of AVID and the Dell Foundation."

Though Garcia's mother eventually recovered, her continuing health issues require constant care. Garcia divides her time helping at home and keeping up with her studies. AVID, an elective course designed to assist students in overcoming obstacles as they prepare for higher education, was the perfect complement to Garcia's post-secondary ambitions.

Garcia enjoys the challenge of calculus, maintains a 3.63 GPA, plans to study biology and looks forward to a career as a field nurse.

"Calculus helps me with my thought processes; it's very orderly," Garcia said. "I want to study biology because I am interested in how the body works. I like helping other people and feel that my experience as a caregiver gives me insight and compassion."

Garcia is vice president of the Leos Club, a character-building youth organization sponsored by the Whittier Lions Club, and the Environmental Club, and is also a member of Pioneer's cultural club, Club Literario. Twice a year, Garcia accompanies the Leo Club to Wrightwood to clear trails for blind students.

“Nylah has developed into an outstanding student and campus leader,” Pioneer High AVID Coordinator Jennifer De Baca Sandoval said. “She approaches every task with enthusiasm and commitment and is generous with her time. By embracing AVID and taking advantage of its rigorous curriculum, Nylah has been rewarded by being named a Dell Scholar.”

The Michael and Susan Dell Foundation created Dell Scholars to recognize and assist underserved students and first-generation college students.

“I am so proud of Nylah, who embodies the Pioneer Titan spirit through her ability to overcome adversity and a desire to apply knowledge to help others in need,” Principal Lilia Bozigian said. “Thank you to our amazing AVID instructors, who are helping so many Pioneer students realize their dreams of higher education.”

PHOTO CAPTION

042618_WUHSD_DELLSCHOLAR: Pioneer High School senior Nylah Garcia is one step closer to her dream to be the first in her family to attend college after being named a 2018 Dell Scholar by the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation, an honor that comes with a \$20,000 scholarship to help fund her education at Cal State Long Beach.

###

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.

WUHSD Board of Trustees

Dr. Ralph S. Pacheco, *President* ■ Russell Castañeda-Calleros, *Vice President* ■ Jeff Baird, *Clerk* ■ Leighton Anderson, *Member* ■ Tim Schneider, *Member*
Martin Plourde, *Superintendent*

9401 S. Painter Avenue, Whittier, California 90605-2798 ■ (562) 698-8121 ■ www.wuhsd.org