



# Whittier Union

## HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

*To Achieve and Maintain Excellence...*

### NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** May 13, 2020    **CONTACT:** Juliette Funes, William Diepenbrock    **PHONE:** 909-445-1001

## Whittier Union English Learner Overcomes Obstacles to Become Student Leader

**WHITTIER** – Santa Fe High School senior Angel Moreno Gallegos has traveled a long road to become the first member of his family to graduate from an American high school and attend a four-year university.

Born in the United States but raised in Mexico, Moreno Gallegos came to Santa Fe as a freshman with almost no English language skills. Four years later, he will graduate as a student leader with a 4.12 GPA, with plans to attend Cal Poly Pomona and study chemical engineering.

For his ability to rise to numerous challenges and stay focused on his goal of academic achievement, Moreno Gallegos was honored with an Award of Merit by the Whittier Union Board of Trustees during its virtual board meeting on May 12.

“Santa Fe High School has a special place in my heart as a result of my experience and all the time I spent there,” Moreno Gallegos said. “I’ve enjoyed every moment in this school. Santa Fe has a great energy to allow you to participate in activities and I am grateful to all the administrators, counselors and teachers for supporting me through my learning and my education.”

Moreno Gallegos was a year old when his family moved to Mexico. Though supported by his family, attending school in Mexico became increasingly dangerous, prompting Moreno Gallegos to return to California prior to freshman year and stay with an aunt to pursue a high school diploma.

His transformation from English learner to student leader and scholar is reflected in his determination to challenge himself, entering high school as an English language development (ELD) Level 1 student and approaching graduation having completed nearly a dozen Honors and Advanced Placement classes.

“Angel never let his lack of mastery of the English language serve as a barrier,” Principal Craig Campbell said. “He continued to push to learn the language and make the best of his opportunities at Whittier Union. He has demonstrated incredible determination, grit and drive and is a true success story, exemplifying Santa Fe Chieftain Pride and Whittier Union’s ‘Whatever It Takes’ philosophy.”

Moreno Gallegos, an ELD student mentor, serves as Santa Fe’s ASB activities commissioner and Expanded Horizons Club president and is a member of the STEM Club, Honor Guard and Principal’s Honor Court.

Moreno Gallegos has put in 100 hours in the Santa Fe Springs Firefighter Explorer program and is a student volunteer at Studebaker Elementary School.

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“Angel is a rare gem,” Santa Fe Expanded Horizons Director Rosa Zavala-Ramirez said. “He shows a level of motivation, maturity and enthusiasm for learning that will serve him well in the future. There is no doubt that he will supersede all of our expectations.”

### PHOTO CAPTIONS

**051320\_WUHSD\_MORENOGALLEGOS1:** Santa Fe High School senior Angel Moreno Gallegos is an English learner who defied the odds to become a student leader with a 4.12 GPA. Moreno Gallegos, who plans to attend Cal Poly Pomona and study chemical engineering, was honored with an Award of Merit by the Whittier Union Board of Trustees during its virtual meeting on May 12.

**051320\_WUHSD\_MORENOGALLEGOS2:** Santa Fe High School senior Angel Moreno Gallegos, an English learner who is headed to Cal Poly Pomona, was honored with an Award of Merit by the Whittier Union Board of Trustees during its virtual meeting on May 12. Pictured on screen are Board Vice President Tim Schneider (top left), Board member Jeff Baird (top center), Board member Dr. Russell Castañeda-Calleros (top right), Board President Leighton Anderson (bottom left), Santa Fe Principal Craig Campbell (bottom center), and senior Angel Moreno Gallegos (bottom right).

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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.

#### BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

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