

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 2, 2022**CONTACT:** Ashley Visco**PHONE:** 909-204-6013

Banning Unified School District Students Honored for Academic Excellence

BANNING, CA – Four Banning Unified School District students were celebrated at the 17th annual Riverside County Office of Education Academic Award Recognition event on April 11, honoring students based on outstanding GPA and participation in extracurricular activities.

Banning High School seniors Bryn Thornton and Vanessa Phavong were recognized for maintaining the top two GPAs in their class and displaying excellence in academics and beyond.

Thornton, a high-achieving scholar with a 4.6 GPA, is the top student in the Class of 2022 and will serve as the school's valedictorian. She has been accepted to California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo where she will explore her love of nature in the environmental earth and soil science program.

"Receiving this recognition from Riverside County is rewarding because of how hard I work," Thornton said. "It has also been my dream to become valedictorian! These things help me know that all of my hard work has paid off."

Seniors Breyanna Perez and Allen Grace Gonzales Mano were also honored for their academic excellence at New Horizon High School and Banning Independent Study School, respectively. Perez graduated early with an overall GPA of 3.37 and plans to pursue her dream of becoming a forensic scientist.

Perez completed her education while caring for her daughter and fighting stage-four cancer. She is now the top of her class at New Horizons High School and is 100 percent cancer-free.

"I worked really hard and came a long way to get here," Perez said. "It makes me feel really great to receive this honor, and I am so grateful to the amazing people at New Horizons High School who helped me get here."

During the ceremony, students received a certificate as well as a gold medal to commemorate their achievements.

"Banning Unified School District is home to many exemplary students, who have shown perseverance and courage in pursuing academic excellence," Superintendent Terrence Davis said. "We are happy to see our students recognized by the Riverside County Office of Education, and we look forward to seeing them excel in college and beyond."

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PHOTO CAPTIONS:

BANNING_AWARDS1: Banning High School seniors Bryn Thornton (left) and Vanessa Phavong (center) were joined by Principal Matthew Valdivia at a celebratory program and dinner on April 11, where they received recognition for maintaining the top two GPAs in their class.

BANNING_AWARDS2: New Horizon High School senior Breyanna Perez is graduating first in the class of 2022 after surviving stage-four cancer. She was recognized for exceptional academic performance at the 17th annual Riverside County Office of Education Academic Award ceremony on April 11.

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