



El Monte Union High School District

Community Committed to College and Career

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 23, 2022 CONTACT: Maria Hernandez PHONE: (909) 447-2406

El Monte Union Senior Receives Full Ride to UC Berkeley

EL MONTE – Rosemead High School Senior Kaila Wong has wanted to pursue medicine since she was in middle school, and with the help of \$34,000 in support through the University of California’s Blue and Gold Opportunity program, she will begin making this dream a reality when she steps onto the campus of the University of California, Berkeley, this fall.

The Blue and Gold Opportunity program fills in any gaps in funding between the grants and scholarships a student receives and their calculated financial need, ensuring that college is affordable for California residents.

Wong was first introduced to the medical field by her mother, a secretary in the Emergency Department at Garfield Medical Center. Wong began working alongside her mother as a volunteer during her sophomore year at Rosemead and then, through the guidance of nurses and doctors on staff, became certified as a Medical Assistant. In that role she helps prepare patients for exams, performs basic tests and instructs patients about medications and special diets. She also has the opportunity to observe surgeries and said that it was through that experience that she set her sights on becoming an anesthesiologist.

“In the operating room, all eyes are on the surgeon,” Wong said. “But the work of the anesthesiologist is very meticulous and extremely important. They are kind of hidden heroes.”

Having grown up in the San Gabriel Valley, Wong said she envisioned going to school closer to home. When she was waitlisted at the University of California, Los Angeles, the last thing she expected was to be accepted to Berkeley. When she opened her acceptance letter and saw the amount of the financial award, she screamed with joy. A visit to campus and the Bay Area over spring break sealed the deal.

“After visiting, I totally fell in love with the culture there,” Wong said. “I’m so excited to have the opportunity to experience a different part of California. I have been mentored by a lot of Berkeley alums at Rosemead who really encouraged me to spread my wings and give it a try.”

Wong plans to double major in molecular cell biology and business administration. She said she is passionate about helping create a better future for her community by working to make healthcare affordable for all and sees possibilities for accomplishing that through intersections in business, technology and medicine.

“El Monte Union is proud to be providing a strong foundation for students like Kaila who are devoted to making the world a better place,” said Superintendent Dr. Edward Zuniga. “Our dedicated teachers and administrators are constantly striving to build programs that challenge and motivate our students to make impactful contributions to the world around them.”

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PHOTO CAPTION:

EMUHSD SENIOR WONG: Rosemead High School senior Kaila Wong will study molecular cell biology and business administration at the University of California, Berkeley this fall thanks to full ride support from the Blue and Gold Opportunity program.

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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.