



# El Monte Union High School District

*Community Committed to College and Career*

## PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 21, 2022 CONTACT: Maria Hernandez PHONE: (909) 447-2406

### **El Monte Union High School Recognized by College Board for Diversity in AP Computer Science**

**EL MONTE** – El Monte High School has received the 2021 AP Computer Science Female Diversity Award from the College Board, recognizing the school for expanding women’s access to Advanced Placement (AP) Computer Science classes.

El Monte High received the award for fostering equal gender representation in AP Computer Science Principles (CSP) during the 2020-21 school year and is among 1,200 high schools across the United States honored by the College Board.

“I hope this recognition gets our diverse population of students at El Monte High and throughout our District more excited and motivated to pursue their career goals while still in high school,” El Monte High AP CSP teacher Mark Mesias said. “There continues to be a high demand for computer science skills, including coding, debugging, cybersecurity and data analysis, and there are never enough qualified candidates to fill these positions.”

Prior to the 2017-18 school year, El Monte High had no computer science classes in its curriculum. After hearing that the College Board was piloting an AP CSP class, Mesias was determined to get it added to the master schedule. In the first year of AP CSP, only two female students were enrolled. Gradually, the numbers increased, and in the 2020-21 school year, more than 50% of students in the class were female. In the 2021-22 school year, 14 of the 24 AP CSP students were female.

“I’ve enjoyed this class the most out of all the classes I’ve taken at El Monte High,” El Monte High Class of 2022 graduate Emily De La Cruz said. “This class made me feel powerful and confident as a woman and a student.”

AP CSP was created to bring more female and underrepresented students into the field of computer science. Unlike other computer science classes, which concentrate heavily on programming, AP CSP is a college-level course that introduces students to a wide range of computer principles, including creative development, data, algorithms and programming, computer systems and networking, and the impact of computing.

“During quarantine I took the introduction to JavaScript class and although I found it interesting, I wanted to go more in-depth with learning computer science,” El Monte High Class of 2022 graduate Eriko Vong said. “AP CSP has given me the opportunity to expand my knowledge on not just computer programming, but how technology has shaped our society as a whole.”

In addition to AP CSP, El Monte High offers a Career Technical Education two-year pathway for systems programming.

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“We are honored to receive this award from the College Board, which reflects our commitment to equity in education, and the high expectations we have for all of our students,” El Monte High Principal Eddie Cuevas said. “Thank you to Mark Mesias for having the vision and determination to bring this vital class into our curriculum, which is already inspiring more female students to consider career paths in STEM fields.”

**PHOTO CAPTION:**

**EMUHSD AP COMPUTER SCIENCE 1:** El Monte High School’s Advanced Placement (AP) Computer Science female students celebrate their school being recognized with the 2021 AP Computer Science Female Diversity Award.

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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.*