



Whittier Union HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

To Achieve and Maintain Excellence...

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Sept. 10, 2020 **CONTACT:** Juliette Funes, William Diepenbrock **PHONE:** 909-445-1001

Whittier Union Class of 2020 Graduates Receive Scholarships from Local Organizations

WHITTIER – Whittier Union High School District Class of 2020 graduates who overcame adversity to become campus leaders and enroll in college or trade school received \$11,500 in combined scholarships from the Whittier Host Lions Club and the Credit Union of Southern California, which [celebrated](#) the 23 awardees during socially distanced ceremonies at their homes and schools.

The scholarships – worth \$500 each – are given to graduating seniors who demonstrate distinguished commitment, determination and unselfish service to others while balancing schoolwork with personal challenges to ensure a successful path toward college and career.

The Lions distribute Heart of a Lion scholarships to students across District schools, while the Credit Union awards students in La Serna High School's award-winning OASIS program. Representatives from both organizations and District personnel, including Superintendent Martin Plourde, delivered plaques inscribed with student names and the organization's logos.

"The Lions Club and Credit Union of Southern California scholarships celebrate students who work hard and make positive contributions to their schools and communities," Plourde said. "We thank these amazing organizations for all of the contributions they have made to Whittier Union students, as well as recognizing these outstanding graduates, who are poised to become leaders and innovators."

Over the years, Whittier Host Lions Club has provided thousands of dollars in scholarships to high-achieving students throughout Whittier. But in 2016, the Lions Club created the Heart of a Lion scholarship program that awards students in La Serna's OASIS program, which supports struggling students with study skills, goal-setting and character building, and motivation to complete high school.

The scholarship program was expanded in 2020 to include three students from each of Whittier Union's five comprehensive high schools, and one student each from Frontier High, Sierra Vista High and Whittier Union Adult School. One additional Whittier Union student was selected by the superintendent.

Inspired by the Lions Club, the Credit Union of Southern California began issuing its own \$500 scholarships to OASIS students in 2016. This past year, the bank has established an endowment for the OASIS program with a \$50,000 initial donation.

Heart of a Lion Award recipients include:

- California High: Fabian Cohetzaltitla, Katelyn Fivecoat and Helen Martinez

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- La Serna High: Arieana Escalante, Ariel Silva and Miguel Umana
- Pioneer High: Kimberly Garcia, Elianna Gonzalez and Destiny Perez
- Santa Fe High: Anyssa Avelar, Roberto Elias and Sarah Saavedra
- Whittier High: Joseph Aldridge, Brian Rodriguez and Joscelyn Gonzalez
- Frontier High: Oscar Ugarte and Anthony Isaah Magana (Superintendent’s Award)
- Sierra Vista High: Andrew Pilani
- Whittier Union Adult School: Sachin Mishra

Credit Union of Southern California scholarship recipients include La Serna High students Aveyrey Bugarin, Bre Dixon Plonowski, Jocelyn Jasso and Bryan Morales.

“On behalf of the students, parents, and staff of the Whittier Union High School District, I want to thank the Lions Club and the Credit Union of Southern California for honoring and motivating these outstanding students at all of our schools, giving them hope and the opportunity to continue their education,” said former OASIS director Ken Lavigne, who is now retired. “Their generosity knows no bounds, and we thank them with all our hearts.”

PHOTO CAPTIONS

091020_WUHSD_SCHOLARSHIPS1: Whittier Union Superintendent Martin Plourde is pictured with Class of 2020 graduate Arieana Escalante, who was one of 19 recipients of a Heart of a Lion scholarship.

091020_WUHSD_SCHOLARSHIPS2: La Serna High School graduate Bryan Morales is one of the recipients of a Credit Union of Southern California scholarship.

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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.

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