



HACIENDA LA PUENTE

UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Hacienda La Puente Unified Science Olympiad Coach Honored with Yale Educator Award

CITY OF INDUSTRY – Glen A. Wilson High School science teacher Jungsoo Han has a knack for getting the best out of his students. As coach of the school's successful Science Olympiad and Future Health Professionals (HOSA) teams, Han has established each unit as perennial tournament favorites, while inspiring his students to challenge themselves and work towards careers in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields.

Among the many students Han has inspired is Wilson High Class of 2024 graduate and current Yale University freshman Emily Chang. As Science Olympiad captain during her senior year, Chang led the team to its third consecutive Southern California Science Olympiad regional championship at Río Hondo College in March 2023.

Han's influence has not gone unnoticed by his former students. Han, who is a Wilson High Class of 2000 graduate, was recently named as a recipient of the Yale Educator Award, presented to teachers who have deeply impacted their students' lives. Han was nominated for the award by Chang, then selected as a winner by a committee in Yale's Office of Undergraduate Admissions.

Han is one of just 90 teachers and counselors in the United States and beyond to receive the honor in 2024, including international educators from Mexico, South America, Asia, Europe, and Africa.

"I am very honored to receive this prestigious award," Han said. "I received tremendous inspiration from my science teachers at Wilson and it's a great feeling to give back to your community. I think the keys to a student's success in STEM are to be willing to go as far as you can, give 110%, don't be afraid to fail and, if you do, then pick yourself up. Wilson's Olympiad and HOSA students have really taken this advice to heart."

Now in his 13th year at Wilson High, Han established the Science Olympiad team in 2014 and HOSA in 2019. Both groups have seen considerable success in regional, state, and international competitions. Whereas the Olympiad is a team competition that uses cumulative scores, HOSA, with its mission to promote career opportunities in the healthcare industry, stages competitions where individual members are quizzed and ranked.

With four titles in five years, Wilson's Science Olympiad team has dominated the regional competitions, and done well at state, with a fourth-place finish in this year's Division C competition. Wilson's HOSA squad, led by Chang, took several individual awards at both state and international competitions during the 2023-24 school year.

MORE

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“Our labs and lab prep are very thorough, and our students learn very quickly to manage the progression of difficulty from year to year,” Han said. “By the time they are seniors they have mostly perfected those skills and come to class fully focused on task for the entire 55 minutes. We have seen our students go on to medical school or get hired at Google and Tesla. Really, my students motivate me. We teach each other.”

Wilson’s HOSA club has been so successful that Han and Wilson principal Dr. Danielle Kenfield worked together to establish a second HOSA club at Mesa Robles Middle School. Mesa Robles HOSA meetings are led by Wilson HOSA students, whose passion and rigor have inspired the middle school students to score well at their own competitions, winning several medals at the most recent state competition. Mesa Robles, which is a Wilson High feeder school, also has its own Science Olympiad team.

Han also serves as an advisor for Wilson’s National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) club, as well as the school’s Red Cross club, which hosts campus blood drives and teaches first aid and emergency preparations.

“Mr. Han brings passion and enthusiasm to his classrooms and is very much admired by his students, and we couldn’t be prouder that a former student has taken the initiative to have his great work honored by an elite university,” Kenfield said. “Thank you to Emily Chang for recognizing that teachers make a difference and can spur their students to reach academic heights they may have thought were unattainable. This is true Wildcat spirit.”

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

HLPUSD_WILSON1: From left to right: Glen A. Wilson High School Class of 2024 seniors Emily Chang and Helen Zhou celebrate earning high achievements alongside coach Jungsoo Han at the HOSA International Leadership Conference in Texas in June 2023.

HLPUSD_WILSON2: Glen A. Wilson High School educator Jungsoo Han and students participate in the Making Strides Breast Cancer Awareness Walk to help raise funds for cancer research in October 2023.

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