



Board of Education

Maria M. Caceres
Maria E. Cruz
Sue L. Maulucci

Rachael Robles
Gary C. Rodriguez

District Superintendent

Elizabeth Eminhizer, Ed.D.

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Sept. 20, 2022

CONTACT: Karen McMillen,
(909) 204-0452

Covina-Valley Unified Students Hone STEM Skills in Prestigious Summer Academic Programs

COVINA, CA – Three Covina-Valley Unified School District high school students went above and beyond this summer by seeking out and participating in prestigious academic internships, programs, and camps.

Each of the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM)-focused programs enhanced the students' understanding and knowledge of STEM concepts, while also providing vital experience and insight into various careers in STEM-related fields.

"We are incredibly proud of the dedication and drive our students have displayed in their academic pursuits," Superintendent Elizabeth Eminhizer said. "These students exemplify how educational excellence can be practiced in everyday life - even outside of the classroom."

Covina High School junior Ashley Raffaelli participated in the UC Davis Young Scholars Program – a six-week residential program that introduces students to scientific research by giving them the opportunity to be mentored by postdoctoral fellows, graduate students, and principal Ph.D. investigators, all while joining in the lab's current research or conducting research of their own.

"This program not only helped me expand my knowledge and experience, but also helped me to zero in on the career path I want to follow in the future," Raffaelli said. "I participated in research and learned how to run lab procedures and experiments that will be invaluable tools in my pursuits."

During her time in the program, Raffaelli worked in the department of plant sciences in the Drakakaki lab, which focuses on endomembrane trafficking and polysaccharide deposition in plant cells. Raffaelli's project focused on callose and how it helps the structure of cell walls during cytokinesis. The summer program fulfilled five units of college credit and concluded with a letter of recommendation from Dr. Georgia Drakakaki that Raffaelli plans to include in her college applications.

Northview High School senior Leonardo Cristofaro participated in the Computer Science LAUNCHPAD program through Cal State Los Angeles. This two-week summer camp provides insight into the STEM field as a whole, with specific emphasis on engineering and computer science careers.

MORE

Educational Excellence for Every Student, Every Day

“My experience with the program completely revolutionized my insight into the STEM field,” Cristofaro said. “It educated me on the variety of engineering careers available and fueled the passion I have to pursue computer science as a career.”

Each day of the program had a unique theme that guided the day's presentations, discussions, and activities. Students worked directly with Cal State Los Angeles College of Engineering, Computer Science, and Technology faculty, participated in interactive and hands-on activities, learned from industry professionals, and completed daily surveys to display their growing knowledge.

South Hills High School senior Adam Asmaiel was selected for the Kaiser Permanente Work Prep Program and completed a high school internship in the urology department over the summer. Throughout the program, Asmaiel met and had discussions with doctors, nurses, and other medical staff. He also had the opportunity to view several different medical procedures and surgeries in action, deepening his understanding of health science and helping to solidify his commitment to a future in the medical field.

“The environment around me was filled with highly educated individuals,” Asmaiel said. “I learned so much from shadowing the doctors and nurses and am so grateful that I had the opportunity to work in the Kaiser Work Prep Program.”

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

CVUSD_ACADEMICS1: Covina High School junior Ashley Raffaeli participated in research, experiments, and procedures in the UC Davis Young Scholars Program in summer 2022.

CVUSD_ACADEMICS2: Northview High School senior Leonardo Cristofaro learned about careers in STEM fields in the Computer Science LAUNCHPAD summer program through Cal State LA.

CVUSD_ACADEMICS3: South Hills High School senior Adam Asmaiel gained insight into the medical field through the Kaiser Permanente Work Prep Program in summer 2022.

###