



## Press Release

**For Immediate Release**  
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### **LUSD Board Awards Students for Overcoming Adversities to Graduate High School**

**Lynwood, Calif.** – Two students who were once teetering on the edge of not graduating high school were recently awarded a scholarship by Lynwood Unified’s Superintendent and Board of Education for beating the odds and setting their sights on college.

Enrique Ruelas, who dropped out of school in 10th-grade, and Milan Pearson, whose inability to cope with his mother’s death led him astray, pledged to continue their education and, with the support of their families, successfully graduated from the District’s continuation high school programs in June.

They were each recently awarded a \$250 Board of Education and Superintendent's Scholarship to go toward their pursuits in higher education.

“I am so proud of these students for fighting against the odds, being dedicated to their studies and getting that diploma that will open the doors to so many opportunities,” said LUSD Board of Education President Briseida Gonzalez. “These kids worked hard to get here, and I want to recognize the parents and families of these two deserving young men for supporting them through it all.”

Ruelas, who graduated from the Pathway Independent Study program, decided to return to school after seeing neighborhood friends getting killed or going to jail. With the support of his family, especially his mother, Ruelas enrolled in LUSD’s program and began recouping his credits.

Although he struggled at first, he earned the second highest GPA at Pathway. Ruelas will use the scholarship to attend a vocational college, where he will pursue a career in technology.

“Never in my wildest dreams did I think I’d graduate and be awarded a scholarship,” Ruelas said. “Thanks to the staff, school and administrators, I’ve had some of the best months of my life. I’ve learned that if you put your mind to it, you can do anything. I feel confident and that the world is mine. Thank you for believing in me.”

Pearson, who has eight siblings and lives with his father, Devon, is a graduate of Vista High School. He is an active church member, where he plays the drums and participates in choir.

“I’ve been through a lot of things in my life,” said Pearson, whose mother passed away in 2010. “It was a big setback, but I had to pick it back up. I didn’t think I could do it, but you have been a great help and it is an honor to receive this scholarship.”

Pearson plans to attend Cerritos College to pursue an education in culinary arts.

“After overcoming personal and academic challenges that could have impeded their growth and education, Milan and Enrique are now going to college, proving that with the right tools, our kids can achieve anything,” said LUSD Superintendent Paul Gothold. “We celebrate how far they’ve come to get to this point and I couldn’t be prouder.”

**PHOTO CAPTIONS:**

**PEARSON:** Milan Pearson, a Vista High School graduate, received a \$250 scholarship from the LUSD Board of Education and Superintendent Paul Gothold at the June 24 board meeting. He will use the funds to go to Cerritos College, where he will pursue a career in the culinary arts.

**RUELAS:** Enrique Ruelas, a graduate of Pathway High School, received a \$250 scholarship from the LUSD Board of Education and Superintendent Paul Gothold at the June 24 board meeting. He will use the funds to go to a vocational college, where he will pursue a career in technology.

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**The Lynwood Unified School District** is dedicated to offering students a world-class education to prepare them for success in college and career in the 21st century. Under its Achieving Greatness Initiative, the district is realigning all aspects of its organization to strengthen and expand instructional programs, enrichment and extracurricular activities, and support systems for students and staff.

For more information, visit [www.lynwood.k12.ca.us](http://www.lynwood.k12.ca.us).

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