

# Tulare County Office of Education

*Tim A. Hire, County Superintendent of Schools*

May 26, 2020

## Media Advisory

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**Tulare County Office of Education Announces:**

## **University Preparatory High School prepares to hold modified graduation ceremony May 28 and 29**

The 2020 class of University Preparatory High School (UPHS) is preparing to graduate this week in a modified ceremony at Gateway Church in Visalia. Out of an abundance of caution in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, administrators have organized a drive-through ceremony, May 28 and 29 from 8:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. each day. The event is not open to the public or family members other than those traveling in the vehicle with the graduate.

Seniors will arrive at designated times in one vehicle with their family members. At their appointed time, each senior will exit their vehicle to hear their name announced, receive their diploma, and have their photo taken.

The senior will then return to their family vehicle. **The event is not open to the public or family members other than those traveling in the vehicle with the graduate.**

Eric Thiessen, principal of UPHS reports that school staff will integrate the graduates' photos into a video featuring remarks by Mr. Thiessen and speeches by select students. This year, UPHS is graduating 57 students, ten of whom have simultaneously earned their associates degree from College of the Sequoias (COS). The UPHS Class of 2020 valedictorians and salutatorians are:

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## **Valedictorians**

Edward Escobar  
Aubrey Liddi  
Eileen Xue  
Alyssa Zamora

## **Salutatorians**

Joshua Calvendra  
Victoria Davila  
Kole Devereaux  
Cassidy Dodge  
Corina Feenstra  
Maya Fernandez-Arias  
Daniel Glick  
Angelina Gomez  
Lauren Hizon  
Emily Jackson  
Megan Lacy  
Savannah Ramirez  
Trinity Reimer  
Brittney Santos  
Angel Silva  
Cameron Tobin  
Claire Toomey

UPHS is an early college high school chartered by TCOE in partnership with COS. UPHS offers students the opportunity to complete high school courses while concurrently taking college courses at COS. Last year, UPHS received the California Distinguished School Award – the only school in Tulare County to receive the designation from the California Department of Education.

Students also focus on leadership at University Preparatory High School. Students organize and manage numerous clubs and school activities. Currently, the UPHS student body runs over 30 clubs, including sports, video gaming, community service, and more. Not only does UPHS offer students the opportunity to excel as leaders, the school also has many competitive academic options, including a Science Olympiad team, a Step Up Youth Challenge team, a Slick Rock Student Film Festival team, a Mock Trial team, and an award-winning robotics team. Additionally, UPHS offers a robust Fine Arts program which includes a full

# Tulare County Office of Education

*Tim A. Hire, County Superintendent of Schools*

drama production, an improvisation class, an acting class, choir, folklorico dance, and a handbell choir which performs regularly in the community.

For more information, visit [tcoe.org/UPHS](http://tcoe.org/UPHS) or email Eric Thiessen at [erict@tcoe.org](mailto:erict@tcoe.org).