Jasmine, the princess we met over 25 years ago in Disney's 1992 Academy Award-winning film Aladdin, continues to inspire young women today. Allison Martin of El Diamante High School, who will play the independent princess in the upcoming Theatre Company production of Aladdin Jr., said that she appreciates the character. "She's definitely a strong and independent young woman," she said. Perhaps the experience of playing Jasmine has rubbed off on her. "I have definitely become more of an outgoing people person since being involved in Theatre Company productions," she smiled. Read more at tcoe.org/NewsGallery.

Fall musical features cast of 140 students and special effects to delight audiences
Theatre Co prepares production of Aladdin Jr.

Performances
November 15, 16 and 17 at 7:00 p.m. and November 17, 2018 at 2:00 p.m.
L.J. Williams Theater, 1001 W. Main St., Visalia
Tickets: $12 general admission, $20 preferred seating — now on sale at TCOE’s Mooney Blvd. and Doe Ave. offices in Visalia

Meet the Characters!
Children are invited to a preshow backstage experience that includes a visit with the fortune teller of Agrabah to learn the secret reason that the magic lamp ends up hidden in the Cave of Wonders! Children will meet Aladdin, Jasmine and many others on their special visit. The cost is $10 per child and includes a gift from the fortune teller’s collection. Tickets for this separate backstage experience are available where general admission tickets are sold.
Jim Vidak arrived at the Tulare County Office of Education in January 1991, newly elected two months prior. From the beginning, the man who would lead TCOE for seven terms began creating programs, building facilities, and supporting staff as they pursued new grant opportunities on local, regional and state levels.

“I had been on the board for two years before Jim Vidak walked into our first meeting,” said Tulare County Board of Education Trustee Chris Reed. “In 28 years, I’ve watched how he took a well-run, but rather sleepy county office and transformed it into a state and national powerhouse.”

His drive to compete and build stemmed from his vision to offer Tulare County students and the districts he served the best opportunities and services available. “We have many challenges in Tulare County – poverty, low college-going rates, English language acquisition, access to quality early childhood education, and more,” Mr. Vidak said. “Despite these challenges, we are responsible for doing what’s best for children. Often that means we have to work extra hard to make sure we have added resources to overcome these challenges so that our students have every opportunity to succeed as adults.”

All areas of TCOE’s operations benefitted from his vision, some blossoming to become exemplary state and national programs. Mr. Vidak’s early work focused on gang prevention and intervention, youth development, and character education. Outdoor education, through the SCICON and Circle J-Norris Ranch programs, benefitted from his constant attention. So too did the arts, teacher recruitment and credentialing, the delivery of curriculum and instruction to teachers and administrators, the expansion of services to children with special needs, college and career transitions, migrant education, early childhood education, and science. With each new grant or accomplishment, he would smile, offer his congratulations to the staff and say, “We’re not done yet!”

When Jim Vidak retires January 7, 2019, he will do so as Tulare County’s longest-serving county superintendent. This month, The News Gallery looks at some of the milestones created by the TCOE programs under Mr. Vidak’s leadership – from his first day in office seven months before the launch of the World Wide Web to today.
During the month of November, Tulare County Office of Education employees are invited to participate in the new Employee Giving Campaign. Entitled Giving Thanks, Giving Back, the campaign is designed to directly benefit the Tulare County Office of Education Foundation, which has provided financial support to TCOE programs and special events since 2000.

“Through a simple voluntary payroll deduction, employees can support the work of our Foundation, which awards grants to TCOE programs that apply on an annual basis,” said Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Jim Vidak. “Contributions could help fund a school garden at one of our Special Services sites, build habitats for bees at our Circle J-Norris Ranch, or supply medals and trophies to winners in dozens of our annual student events. These are examples of a few of the grants the TCOE Foundation awarded last year.”

The 30-day Employee Giving Challenge begins November 1 and continues through November 30. All employees who give to the challenge will receive a TCOE lanyard. Employees who make donations of $10 or more per month will receive a TCOE Foundation Employee Giving Shirt or a tumbler. The TCOE division with the highest participation rate will receive bragging rights and a special treat. To begin the voluntary payroll deduction, visit bit.ly/TCOEGIVING. Read more at tcoe.org/NewsGallery. 📢

Read more at tcoe.org/NewsGallery. 📢

1991
Jim Vidak begins first term as Tulare County superintendent of schools; student population is 83,000

The County School Service Fund budget adopted for the 1991-92 school year was $50 million

The Tulare County Department of Education becomes the Tulare County Office of Education

County Probation Officer Mel Borbolla makes presentation on street gangs to Tulare County School Boards Association; Street Gangs of Tulare County published as a community resource

1992
Conference held to develop TCOE mission statement and set five-year goals

SCICON Health Center built

Read more at tcoe.org/NewsGallery. 📢

Month-long campaign will benefit programs and events through TCOE Foundation

Employees invited to make monthly gift
The fundraising dinner being held November 17 to celebrate the career of Jim Vidak, retiring Tulare County superintendent of schools, will include a live auction featuring four automobiles. Included are a 1949 Chevrolet Styleline Deluxe Coupe (photo 1) and a 1960 Chevrolet Apache pickup (photo 2). The vehicles, donated by Dr. Donna Hardy, also include her performance-modified 1969 Chevrolet El Camino. Additionally, local businessman Fred Ruiz has donated his 2009 Maserati Quattroporte. The auction, which will also feature jewelry and a one-week stay in a beautiful Maui vacation home, is just one of several fundraising activities planned for the dinner event. For more information about the event and the live auction items, visit tcoe.org/FieldStationNov17. All proceeds from the evening’s activities will benefit the new UC Merced/SCICON Field Station, currently under construction at Circle J-Norris Ranch. Community members who are unable to attend the fundraising dinner may bid on any of the live auction items. For more information on placing a bid, call (559) 737-8019.

On October 18, Tulare County Board of Education Trustee Pat Hillman received ProYouth’s annual Legacy Award in recognition of her lifetime of contributions to Tulare County education. The former teacher, member of the original 1959 Tulare County Symphony organizing committee, school board member, and community supporter was honored at a fundraising dinner held at the Visalia Convention Center. Past Legacy Award recipients include ProYouth founder Laurie Isham, Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Jim Vidak, Tulare County businessman Fred Ruiz, Fresno State President Dr. Joseph Castro, and community supporters Stan and Wendy Simpson.

On October 18, the CHOICES Prevention Programs, in partnership with Tulare County Health & Human Services Agency, ProYouth, Family HealthCare Network, the Tulare County Prevention Coalition, and the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, held its annual Tulare County Red Ribbon Week Celebration. Over 1,000 individuals attended the event at the Visalia Convention Center, pledging to lead their lives free of drugs and alcohol. Attendees enjoyed a variety of student performance groups and interactive resource booths. One of the resource organizations in attendance was the California Department of Justice. Representatives spoke to students about numerous topics, including the dangers of smoking or vaping butane hash oil (BHO).

Over 300 high school juniors and seniors from districts throughout Tulare County attended the annual College and Career Fair in TCOE’s Redwood Conference Center on October 24. Organized by the Tulare County Office of Education Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA), the College and Career Fair is an event designed to provide students with various learning disabilities exposure to post-secondary education and training opportunities as they transition to adult life. Read more at tcoe.org/NewsGallery.
November ’18

1 CHARACTERS COUNTS! Provident–Salierno Family Foundation Awards Reception
6:00 p.m., TCOE Administration Building, 6200 S. Mooney Blvd., Visalia
For information, call Kellye Petty at (559) 740–4303.

2 Planetarium Public Show, Earth, Moon and Sun
Peña Planetarium, 1535 Avenue 264, Visalia
For show times, visit tcoe.org/planetarium.

3 Expanding Your Horizons (for young women in grades 4–10)
8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., College of the Sequoias, 915 S. Mooney Blvd, Visalia
For information, call Nicole Ray at (559) 651–3031.

3 Birding for Beginners at Circle J
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., Circle J-Norris Ranch, 41893 Yokohl Valley Rd., Springville
For reservations, call Nancy Bruce at (559) 539–2263.

3 Habitat Restoration Volunteer Day at Circle J
1:00 – 4:30 p.m., Circle J-Norris Ranch, 41893 Yokohl Valley Rd., Springville
For reservations, call Nancy Bruce at (559) 539–2263.

13 - A Holiday in the City (annual exhibition of holiday porcelain buildings and figurines)
TCOE Administration Building, 6200 S. Mooney Blvd., Visalia
For information, call Robert Herman at (559) 733–6606.

13 - Student Art Exhibition (displaying school districts A-P)
TCOE Administration Building, 6200 S. Mooney Blvd., Visalia
For information, call Kate Stover at (559) 741–0809.

14 Fall Institute (for Tulare County School Board Members, School Administrators, County Committee on School District Organization members) 5:00 p.m., Wyndham Visalia, 9000 W. Airport Dr.
For information, call Marlene Moreno at (559) 733–6302.

15 - Theatre Company Fall Musical, Aladdin Jr.
L. J. Williams Theater, 1001 Main St., Visalia
7:00 p.m. performances Nov. 15–17; 2:00 p.m. matinee performance Nov. 17. General admission tickets $12; preferred seating $20. Tickets available Oct. 28.
For information, call Bethany Reader at (559) 651–482.

17 The Vision & the Visionary: A Night to Celebrate Science & Service (a retirement celebration for Jim Vidak and a fundraising event for the new UC Merced/SCICON Field Station)
5:30 p.m., International Agri-Center, 4500 S. Laspin St., Tulare
For information, call Marlene Moreno at (559) 733–6302.

30 Circle J Astronomy Night (for students and families, open to the public)
5:30 - 8:00 p.m., Circle J-Norris Ranch, 41893 Yokohl Valley Rd., Springville
For reservations, call Nancy Bruce at (559) 539–2263.

30 Planetarium Public Show, Dawn of the Space Age
Peña Planetarium, 1535 Avenue 264, Visalia
For show times, visit tcoe.org/planetarium.

For more events, programs and meetings, visit our online calendar at tcoe.org/CalendarOfEvents

The TCOE Foster & Homeless Youth Services Program will be hosting its annual Foster Youth Education Summit on November 29 in TCOE’s Redwood Conference Center in Visalia. Social workers and educators in all school settings are invited to attend the full-day event, which will include hearing from foster youth about their needs and concerns, learning about resources the Foster & Homeless Youth Services Program and districts can provide, and networking with local social workers and educators. Josh Shipp will be the featured speaker. A best-selling author and youth empowerment expert, Mr. Shipp is a former at-risk foster child. He is renowned for his documentary TV series on A&E that followed his ground-breaking work with teens. Featured on Good Morning America, 20/20, Oprah, MTV, CNN, FOX, and in The New York Times, he’s worked with groups of parents, educators and mental health professionals in addition to over two million teens and parents through live events. To register for the free Foster Youth Education Summit, visit bit.ly/2PrQveF.

On October 16, the California Friday Night Live Partnership coordinated with Friday Night Live (FNL) chapters in numerous counties across California to conduct its annual Roadwatch survey. From 7:00 to 8:00 a.m., FNL student members surveyed 82 intersections near high schools and middle schools and observed 11,506 cases of distracted driving during the one-hour period—an astounding average of 140 instances per intersection surveyed. Across the state, students observed drivers distracted by phones, passengers, pets, food and more as they drove past California schools. In Tulare County, FNL students surveyed two intersections, recording over 200 instances of distracted driving. Year after year, Roadwatch, which is funded by the Allstate Foundation, proves to be a vital tool for raising awareness about the issue of distracted driving and creating student-led change in traffic safety throughout California. Read more at tcoe.org/NewsGallery.