

news galleryweek

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Bright Future creates two new centers to support children with autism



Special Services' Bright Future program recently opened two new centers to serve children, ages 3-5, who have been diagnosed with autism. One center is located on the Snowden School campus in Farmersville, while the other is based in Visalia at TCOE's Liberty Complex.



Ron Pekarek, Bright Future program manager, reports that staff in the centers are providing behavioral health treatment services during three-hour morning and afternoon shifts at both centers. Currently, nearly 20 children are served with medical treatment services while adhering to strict daily protocols, including COVID-19 screenings, temperature checks, and handwashing.

The children, who have been previously served by the Bright Future program, receive Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA), an evidence-based practice for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder. ABA includes a variety of behavioral interventions, language training, modeling, natural teaching strategies, and student schedules and self-management. The centers were created as a service to Tulare County school districts to help develop the children's individual goals, social and play skills, and abilities in group instruction settings. "Our hope is that through center-based treatment services, these children will be better prepared and need less support once they transition to kindergarten or first grade," said Mr. Pekarek.



Tulare County students to be featured in ABC30 *Children First* special on Sunday

ABC30 will air the latest special in its *Children First* series on Sunday, September 27, at 6:30 p.m. Entitled *Children First: Distance Learning*, the special will feature stories about teachers and community organizations working together to help students and families feel connected through distance learning.



One story will profile how Cutler-Orosi Joint Unified School District is helping its rural families stay connected through MiFi wireless hotspots and other technology. The story will also feature an interview with Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Tim Hire, who will share news about TCOE's progress, through leadership of the Information Systems Department, to develop an LTE wireless network to help provide internet service to over 100,000 students across the county.

In Visalia, the Sunset Rotary Club recently partnered with Blue Oak Academy and Sycamore Valley Academy to create 700 garden kits students can use at home to learn California science standards. Human Resources Analyst Cherí Barnes, president of the Sunset Rotary Club, helped organize the project for the two charter schools.



In the special, Dr. Jennifer Johnson from Valley Children’s Hospital will share seven ways families can cope during the pandemic. The program will also report on the effects of the additional screen time children learning from home are experiencing. Finally, the special will feature the story of an outstanding Fresno teacher, Carlanda Williams, who puts a little magic into the lives of children at King Elementary in southwest Fresno.

Photo above:

~ Among the features in ABC30’s upcoming Children First special is a story about the Visalia Sunset Rotary Club partnering with Blue Oak Academy and Sycamore Valley Academy to create 700 home garden kits for students. Pictured assembling the kits are (l-r) Rotarians Matt Sozinho, Consuelo Romo, and Cheri Barnes, president.

Tulare County high school and college instructors invited to nominate students to join regional arts council



Tulare County high school teachers and college instructors are invited to nominate students in grades 10-16 for the new Highway 99 Youth Arts Council. The arts council was conceived by the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA) Region VII Arts Initiative to provide youth a voice in defining what arts education looks like in the Central Valley and Central Sierra.

Open to students in Fresno, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, and Tulare counties, Highway 99 Youth Arts Council (YAC) members will gain authentic experience in the fields of nonprofit governance, advocacy, event planning, and presenting and marketing arts education. More specifically, YAC members will be given training, resources, and a platform to use their voice to shape local, regional, and statewide conversations, policies, and practices concerning arts education and youth.

Each county will have up to five student representatives on the council. Members will serve two-year terms with the option to re-apply for a second term, and commit three to five hours each month to the YAC. Meetings will be held virtually on a monthly basis starting this fall. Regular meeting and subcommittee attendance and participation is required.

Teachers and instructors who know students who would be great candidates for the YAC are encouraged to nominate them by October 9 at bit.ly/hwy99yac. For additional information, contact Kate Stover at kate.stover@tcoe.org.

TCOE's annual Expanding Your Horizons event to be held virtually

Registration is now open for Expanding Your Horizons (EYH), the popular STEM-based conference for young women in grades 4-10 to enlighten and spark their interest in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) careers.

Due to COVID-19 public gathering restrictions, EYH will be held online November 7 and include numerous breakout sessions led by women working in STEM fields. Attendees will enjoy sessions on animal science, robotics, chemistry, biology, coding, and medical sciences. Registration is just \$10 per student and open through October 30. Registration forms can be found at tcoe.org/EYH. For additional information, contact Paula Terrill at paula.terrill@tcoe.org.



Distance Learning Resources

- [Arts All Around Us](#)
- [TCOE Learning at Home](#)
- [TCOE's Educational Resource Services Library](#)

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