

news galleryweek

November 24, 2021

Two Tulare County Slick Rock films win national Emmys



Tuesday was a big day for young student filmmakers from El Diamante High School in Visalia. Mario Landeros and the team of Noah Lillywhite, Samuel Zurek, and Kai Willey learned they won Emmy Awards for their short films entered in the Sixth Annual National Student Production Awards.

Lillywhite, Zurek, and Willey were the winners of the Best of Show award for high school films in the 2021 Slick Rock Student Film Festival, coordinated annually by the Tulare County Office of Education. Their short blockbuster film, entitled *Incursion*, is a science fiction thriller set in Los Angeles 50 years in the future.

Landeros, a Best of Show award winner in the 2019 festival, this year produced an animation entitled *Beasts in the Orange Clouds*. In the 2021 festival, Landeros' film captured the top prize in the animation category.

The El Diamante students, who are advised by teacher Ellie Hebert, began their journey to national fame by entering their Slick Rock-winning films in the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences (NATAS) Foundation NorCal Chapter competition this summer. Three other Slick Rock teams from Buchanan High School in Clovis won awards at NATAS NorCal and advanced to the national competition.

"This is a great moment for Central Valley student filmmakers and the talented teachers who support them," said Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Tim Hire. "We are grateful to offer the Slick Rock Student Film Festival,

founded years ago by Visalia Unified, as a creative venue for future film and television writers, actors, animators, cinematographers, editors, and directors.”

The NATAS National Student Production Awards ceremony can be seen on the Academy's platform at: <https://watch.theemmys.tv/live-events/videos/nspa-2021>. To see the students' videos, visit tcoe.org/SlickRock/PastWinners.shtm.

Photo above:

~ From left to right, Kai Willey, Samuel Zurek, and Noah Lillywhite pose for photos on the red carpet in October at the All American High School Film Festival in New York City. Photo courtesy of the All American High School Film Festival.

SEE to hold event for adults who receive Social Security disability, income benefits and want to go to work

A to Success

Since 2003, the Tulare County Office of Education has been a national Employment Network provider with the Social Security Administration's Ticket-to-Work (Ticket) program. The Ticket Program was created to provide support to Social Security disability beneficiaries – adults receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits based on disability. The program supports beneficiaries who enter the workforce so that they can maintain employment with the goal of becoming economically self-supporting over time.

Central Valley adults, ages 18-64, who are receiving SSDI and/or SSI benefits are invited to visit a drive-thru event hosted by TCOE's SEE Program on December 4. The event will be held from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. at SEE's Ticket to Success office at 626 North Akers Street in Visalia.

Darlene Tyndal, employment services coordinator with the SEE Program, reports that benefits counselors will be on hand to meet individually with visitors who are interested in returning to work. The counselors will discuss the benefits of enrolling in the free Ticket program and how their SSDI and/or SSI benefits might be affected should they return to work.

SEE's Ticket to Success Program is approved to serve SSDI and SSI recipients throughout the United States. Adults with questions about the program are encouraged to call Darlene Tyndal at (559) 730-2737 or (800) 540-0307.

Students build leadership skills at CHOICES Leadership Training



Last Thursday, students from 23 Tulare County schools attended the annual CHOICES Leadership Training conference. After a full day of hands-on activities and learning, students left feeling inspired, empowered, and ready to take action.

"This conference was very beneficial for myself and my students," said advisor Fernando Gonzalez of Burton Middle School in Porterville. "By coming to this conference, the students felt confident in creating new activities for the students at Burton Middle School. One of the key things our leaders kept on mentioning was, 'We have to plan for all the students, not just us.' When I heard that on the way home, I knew that this conference opened the doors for new and well-thought-out ideas."

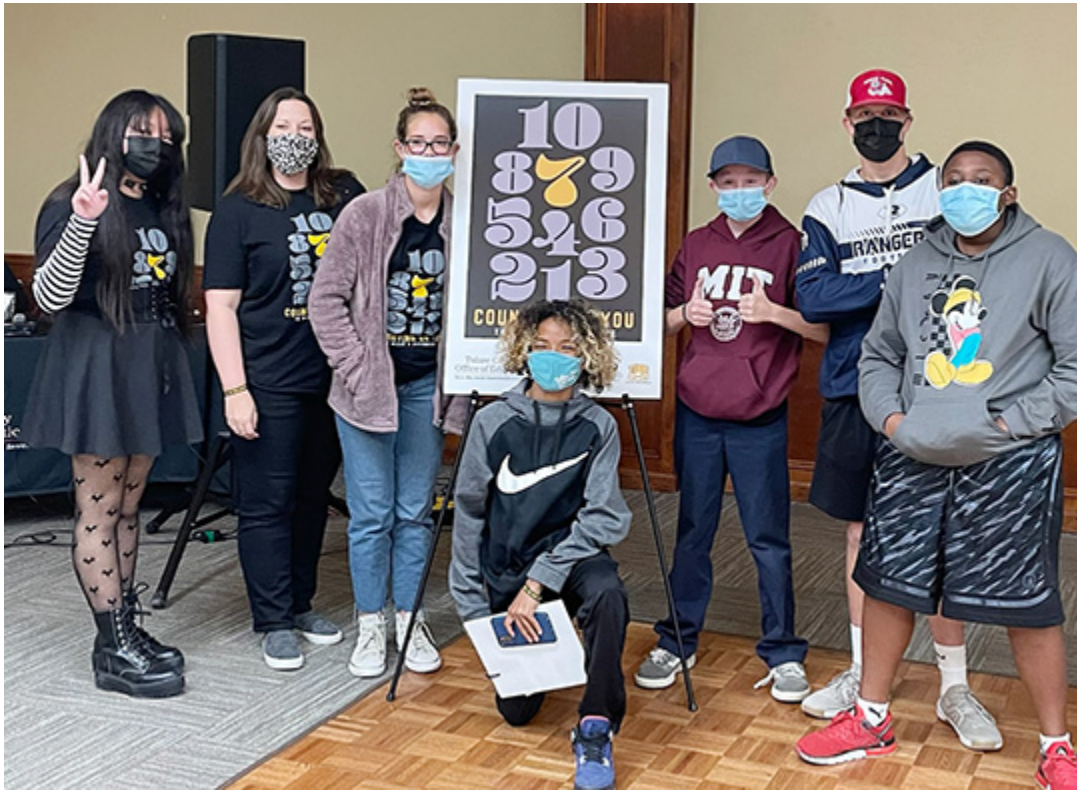
The conference was entitled, "Counting On You To Make A Difference." Along with lessons on leadership, students learned about the dangers of vaping, tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs, and how to create engaging events at school to help build inclusive, caring campus cultures.



Advisor Heather Silva of Alpine Vista School in Tulare said her students had many takeaways from the event. They learned that substance abuse awareness can be done easily; to know your “why,” audience, and purpose; and that leadership equals service.

Attendees of the conference also heard a presentation from members of the Tulare County Youth Council – high school students from throughout Tulare County – about ways they can live above the influence of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

"I was impressed with how well organized the entire event was," said advisor Jodi Hodge of Cherry Avenue Middle School in Tulare. "All the presenters were engaging and knowledgeable. The student leaders did a phenomenal job. My students told me that they felt inspired and couldn't wait to go back (to school) and plan an event!"



Thursday's annual CHOICES Leadership Training conference was sponsored by the state's Friday Night Live (FNL) and Tobacco-Use Prevention Education (TUPE) programs.

TCOE's CHOICES Program offers the Leadership Training conference annually to help young people develop as positive leaders at school and in their communities. For more information about leadership development programs, contact CHOICES at (559) 651-0155.

Photos above:

~ Middle school students who attended CHOICES Leadership Training on November 18 learned about their roles as campus leaders and received information on the dangers of alcohol, vaping, tobacco, and other drugs.

Around the County

Exeter volleyball wins CIF State Division IV regional title



The Exeter Union High School volleyball team's season ended Saturday with a 3-2 loss to University Preparatory School (Redding) in the CIF State Division IV championship game at Santiago Canyon College in Orange. Exeter won the first and third sets but lost the match 19-25, 25-21, 18-25, 25-18, 15-11.

Exeter entered the game as CIF State Division IV Southern Regional champions after defeating Capistrano Valley Christian (San Juan Capistrano) 3-1 at home on Tuesday, November 16.

Against University Prep, Exeter's Hannah Baker led the team with 16 kills and 21 digs. Haven Rich finished with 13 kills while Tiara Daly and Ivy Miller had 10 each. Avery Barber had 49 assists.

Photo above:

~ Exeter Union High School volleyball won the CIF State Division IV Southern Regional championship on Tuesday, November 16. Photo Courtesy of Ben Irwin - Reporter with The Sun-Gazette.

Around the County is a regular feature of TCOE's *News Gallery Week*. To be considered for this section, Tulare County districts are encouraged to share major student, school, and district achievements and high-resolution photography with Rob Herman, communications director, at robh@tcoe.org.

Learning Resources

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

Editor: [Robert Herman](#), Communications Director

Contributors: Nayirah Dosu, Marlene Moreno, Jennifer Fisher, Darlene Tyndal, and Stephen Amundson.

To receive *News Gallery Week*, visit tcoe.org/GetTheGallery, or contact Jennifer Fisher at jenniferf@tcoe.org or (559) 733-6172.