

news galleryweek

December 8, 2021

Soccer City 1852 Visalia holds groundbreaking



On Saturday, dozens of young soccer players donned their uniforms to help turn a shovel of dirt at the groundbreaking of the new 1852 Visalia soccer facility in downtown Visalia. The new facility will feature three small courts – two indoors and one outdoors. The Tulare County Office of Education is sponsoring the outdoor court, which will be named CHARACTER COUNTS! Field. The facility is being developed on the site of a former warehouse at 707 West Murray Avenue, east of Valley Strong Ballpark.

The small-scale courts will be used by youth and adults to play street-style soccer with five members on each team. 1852 Visalia can accommodate five leagues per calendar year and up to 55 divisions per season. 1852 will also host pickup games, tournaments, camps, clinics, and group and personal training.



“We are proud to support Soccer City 1852 Visalia and to associate our CHARACTER COUNTS! program with this wonderful new community asset,” said Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Tim Hire. “We support the mission of Soccer City to provide fun and healthy activities for those who play, watch, coach, and officiate games at the facility. Through this partnership, we look forward to spreading the message of CHARACTER COUNTS! and its Pursuing Victory With Honor sportsmanship program – reinforcing the importance of honorable athletic competition and that victory attained in any other way is unworthy.”

One of the benefits of TCOE's partnership with 1852 Visalia is that the CHARACTER COUNTS! Program will be able to use the facilities to bring coaches of all sports, athletic directors, and officials from throughout the county to Pursuing Victory With Honor (PVWH) trainings and events. PVWH will also partner with 1852 Visalia soccer leagues to provide a foundation for ethical competition during tournaments. For more information about PVWH, contact Gene Mendes at genem@tcoe.org.

Photos above:

~ Rendering of CHARACTER COUNTS! Field at the new Soccer City 1852 Visalia complex in downtown Visalia.

~ Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Tim Hire (left), and developers and supporters of 1852 Visalia participated in the groundbreaking for the new soccer complex.

Young filmmakers invited to submit their work to annual Slick Rock Student Film Festival



Video entries for the 2022 Slick Rock Student Film Festival are due March 11. Middle and high school students living in Tulare, Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, or Merced counties may enter videos in a total of 16 categories.

New this year is a category entitled Opioids, Fentanyl & Marijuana, sponsored by the Tulare County Prevention Coalition. Filmmakers in this category are challenged to create a public service announcement about the growing use and dangers of these drugs among youth.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in 2019, an estimated 10.1 million people aged 12 or older misused opioids. More than 14,000 deaths involving prescription opioids occurred in 2019, which is equivalent to about 38 deaths per day. Opioids are a class of drugs that includes both prescription pain medications and illicit drugs.

A “Best of Show” winner for both middle and high school categories will be selected from all films entered in the festival.

Visit tcoe.org/SlickRock for information on film categories, deadlines, and the awards ceremony, which will be held live at the Visalia Fox Theatre on May 13.

Tulare students recognized for Pursuing Victory With Honor

In partnership with the Kiwanis Club of Greater Tulare, TCOE’s CHARACTER COUNTS! Program recognized this fall’s Pursuing Victory With Honor (PVWH) student-athletes at a breakfast on Tuesday. The Kiwanis Club of Greater Tulare recognizes student-athletes, nominated by their coaches, each season for their sportsmanship.

Tulare County CHARACTER COUNTS! coordinator Kelley Petty and Kiwanis member Kevin Covert were the founders of the PVWH and Kiwanis partnership for the PVWH awards program. Covert spoke at the breakfast and handed out the awards. The awards included a certificate, a PVWH pin, and a lawn sign that read "An Athlete of Character Lives Here."

Below is a list of the fall Pursuing Victory with Honor award winners along with a quote from their coaches.



Tulare Union High School

Maria Zavala – girls cross country: "Responsibility best describes Maria Zavala. During the cross country season, she has given her all no matter the level of difficulty, persevering through adversity and pushing harder than she thought possible. And most of all, (she) was accountable for her words, actions, and schoolwork, all while being a consistent and faithful member of the team."

Dylan Van Scyoc – boys water polo: "Having Dylan on our team shows how valuable leadership is on a team. He took the underclassman under his wing and taught them skills and how to behave as a person of character."



Tulare Western High School

Delanie Zavaleta – girls water polo: “Delanie is the most inclusive student athlete I have ever coached. She is always available to help freshman and new players. She is kind (and) accepting. And an all-around great person at practice, games, and on campus.”

Corbett Vander Feer – boys water polo: “Corbett exhibits the foundation of character. He makes sure everything is set up for practice for his teammates. He has a great attitude, (is a) great leader, and most of all a great person.”

Mission Oak High School

Jamie Rambur – girls golf: “As a four-year player, Jamie is a leader. She can always be counted on to do the right thing. During match play, she helps with rulings that help support officiating. She’s always on time and ready to do her best.”

Michael Iriye – football: “I had the pleasure of coaching Mike for the last two years. He is an exemplary student athlete. His ability to display the Six Pillars of Character on a daily basis is very rare at his age. Mike will be a great example of this award in the future.”



Photos above:

~ Tulare Union High School’s Dylan Van Scyoc, left, with his boys water polo coach.

~ Tulare Western High School’s Delanie Zavaleta, right, with her girls water polo coach.

~ Mission Oak High School’s Jamie Rambur, right, with her girls golf coach.

McKenna Friend-Hoffman named Theatre Company's new choreographer

McKenna Friend-Hoffman, who has assisted on several recent Theatre Company productions, has been selected as the company's new choreographer. Friend-Hoffman, an award-winning choreographer, succeeds Nicole Zweifel, who retired last week after more than 20 years of service.

A classically-trained dancer since the age of seven, she has studied dance composition, production, and pedagogy at the university level, earning a Bachelor of Social Sciences from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

"I am beyond thrilled to be working with TCOE Theatre Company," Friend-Hoffman said. "I know that by following Nicole Zweifel, I will have very large shoes to fill. Nicole is a vital member of our community who choreographed the first musical I ever performed in, and I have always looked up to her. I am looking forward to bringing new programming to students all over Tulare County who deserve access to the high-quality artistic opportunities that the Theatre Company is known for."



Baltazar, Santano promoted to Human Resources analysts



Within Human Resources, Mary Baltazar and Sarah Santano have been promoted to the position of Human Resources (HR) analyst. The former HR technicians take the place of analyst Cherí Barnes, who retired from the division this fall with 26 years of service. In the role of analyst, Baltazar and Santano will support TCOE programs with hiring, negotiations, and policies and procedures.

Additionally, Amber Arriola and Helen Tapia have been promoted to personnel technicians.

In addition to learning their new roles, all HR team members are working to transition the division to a new financial system and to streamline HR processes and procedures to better serve TCOE programs and Tulare County school districts.

“These four promotions exemplify two of our core values – ‘Grow and Empower’ and ‘Commit to Serve,’” said John Rodriguez, Human Resources director. “These individuals bring decades of combined experience, service, and enthusiasm to their new positions.”

Photo above:

~ (l-r) Sarah Santano and Mary Baltazar were promoted to Human Resources analyst.

Around the County

County sports teams recognized for top team GPAs



The CIF Central Section office has announced its Fall Academic Team Awards and 11 Tulare County teams were recognized. The other top teams consisted of programs from Kern, Kings, Fresno, Madera, Mono, San Luis Obispo, and Inyo counties.

In football, Central Valley Christian High School (Visalia) placed first with a 3.31 GPA while Tulare Union and Tulare Western tied for second with a 3.30 GPA. Tulare Western's boys water polo team also placed second with a 3.70 GPA, while Redwood's boys cross country team was third with a 3.725 GPA.

The highest GPAs for the county, regardless of sport, came from girls golf. Farmersville's girls golf team placed first with a 3.98 GPA, while Strathmore High School's team was fourth with a 3.87 GPA.

In volleyball, Farmersville once again placed first with a 3.77 GPA, while Summit Charter Collegiate Academy (Porterville) placed fourth with a 3.70 GPA. Mt. Whitney High School (Visalia) girls water polo placed fourth with a 3.68 GPA. Tulare Western's girls tennis team had a 3.74 GPA and tied for third.

The awards are based on unweighted GPAs in each team's respective sport. Schools verified GPAs with their registrars and the section office to determine the top marks. For a complete list of Fall Academic Team Awards, visit cifcs.org/general/academicchamps.

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

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 - [TCOE Learning at Home](#)
 - [TCOE's Educational Resource Services Library](#)
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To receive *News Gallery Week*, visit tcoe.org/GetTheGallery, or contact Jennifer Fisher at jenniferf@tcoe.org or (559) 733-6172.