

## Annual Slick Rock Student Film Festival scheduled to air on Sunday, May 30



The public is invited to watch the Slick Rock Student Film Festival awards special airing on ABC30 Sunday, May 30, at 6:30 p.m. Traditionally, the awards program for Central California's largest student film festival has been held at the Visalia Fox Theater, complete with limo rides, paparazzi, a red carpet walk, and an Academy Awards-style ceremony. This is the second year that event organizers have turned to ABC30 to televise the winners in the festival's 16 film categories. At the end of the half-hour program, one middle school and one high school film will be given "best of show" honors.

This year, the festival received more than 300 film entries from 35 Central Valley middle schools and high schools. These films represent the work of over 500 students from schools in Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, and Tulare counties. In addition to the "best of show" and category award winners, over 250 of the submitted films received "Premiere Cut" honors. Links to the winners and "Premiere Cut" films will be available after the special at [tcoe.org/SlickRock](http://tcoe.org/SlickRock).

"Congratulations to Central California's talented student filmmakers, who again this year have shown amazing creativity despite the challenges of the pandemic," said Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Tim Hire. "We appreciate the support of school advisors and our judges in making this another successful year."

The Slick Rock Student Film Festival is generously sponsored by the following organizations:

- Tulare County Suicide Prevention Task Force
- ABC30
- Tulare County Health & Human Services Agency, Public Health and Mental Health Programs
- Community Media Access Collaborative

For more information, visit [tcoe.org/SlickRock](http://tcoe.org/SlickRock) or email Kathleen Green-Martins at [kgreen@tcoe.org](mailto:kgreen@tcoe.org).



Photos above:

~ *Incursion*, a film created by students at El Diamante High School, is a contender in the Slick Rock Student Film Festival high school blockbuster category. Winners will be announced Sunday evening during a half-hour special on ABC30.

~ Students from Minarets High School in O'Neals created a public service announcement (PSA) about the positive benefits of exercise related to mental health. The Minarets video is a contender in the high school PSA category.

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## ***Dream Roles* concert now available online**

Tulare County  
Office of Education  
*Tim A. Hire, County Superintendent of Schools*

**DREAM ROLES**  
A VIRTUAL CABARET CONCERT EXPERIENCE

Elphaba  
Jenna Hutcherson  
Eliza Schuyler  
Regina George  
and more...

Fiyero  
Aaron Burr  
Dr. Potmatter  
Evan Hansen  
and more...

TCOE Theatre Company's teen spring online video project, *Dream Roles – a Virtual Concert Cabaret Experience!*, is now available online. The video was created from a collection of virtual performances recorded while observing COVID-19 safety protocols, including social distancing for group numbers and the pre-recording of vocals.

In January 2021, over 20 middle and high school students from around the county submitted audition videos to be a part of this virtual project. Through Zoom rehearsals beginning in late February, Theatre Company directors brought Porterville, Three Rivers, Tulare, Exeter, and Visalia talent together to create the concert event.

This concert project is a collaboration between Theatre Company vocal director Charlotte Garcia Da Rosa and the cast based on the question, "If you could perform a song from your musical theatre dream role, what would it be?" Similar to a New York cabaret, this concert weaves together different themes and stories featuring Broadway hit songs from current shows including *Dear Evan Hansen*, *Waitress*, *Les Misérables*, *Phantom of the Opera* and others. Garcia Da Rosa reports that the cast wrote their own dialogue, staged their performances, costumed themselves, designed their own lighting effects, and self-recorded their solos – with some performers even editing their own audio and video.

When COVID-19 restrictions eased slightly for Tulare County residents in April, several students were able to come together to stage four songs directed and choreographed by Garcia Da Rosa. Travis Walters, owner of Film Owl Productions, filmed the four group numbers and edited them with the solo acts into a two-hour concert experience.

"Keeping our students' performance dreams alive as they continue to brave this pandemic is the driving force behind this project," Garcia Da Rosa said. "We hope this concert inspires our audience to keep dreaming as we forge through this challenging year."

The community is invited to enjoy the talents of Tulare County students in *Dream Roles – a Virtual Concert Cabaret Experience!* by visiting [tcoe.org/TheatreCabaret](http://tcoe.org/TheatreCabaret).

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## Student-athletes celebrated at *Pursuing Victory With Honor* event



This week, the Tulare County Office of Education CHARACTER COUNTS! (CC!) office celebrated county high school student-athletes in good academic standing who exemplify good character, ethics, and sportsmanship. These student-athletes maintain honorable athletic competition and know that victory attained in any other way is empty and unworthy.

More than 40 students were honored at the Sports Recognition Drive-Thru Celebration on Tuesday at the Tulare County Office of Education Complex.

"Knowing some of our student-athletes worked all year for a shortened season or no season at all, our office did not want the year to go by without recognizing the character these young people have upheld whether they had a season of competition or not," CC! coordinator Kelley Petty said.

The essential elements of character-building and ethics in sports are embodied in the six core ethical principles: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and good citizenship.

The students honored were:

- Jamie Rambur, Crystal Franco-Bourez, Qyncee Patterson, Jocelyn Gomez Ontiveros, Kailey Silva, James Isaac Malloy, and Mike Iriye from Mission Oak High School (Tulare)
- Gina Dykstra, Nolan Zuiderveld, and Caitlin Brown from Central Valley Christian (Visalia)
- Nathan De Boef, McKenna Ruby, Laine Garcia, Colton Montgomery, Destiny Espino, and Ariana Ruiz from El Diamante High School (Visalia)



- Mackenzie German, Chase Banks, Samuel Felstead, and Mia Gilcrest from Redwood High School (Visalia)
- Sydney Nunes, Peyton McKinzie, Riley Duffy, Leonardo Julian Serrano, Jose Reyes Rivera, Jose Tinoco, Anthony Alcaraz, and Joseph Machado from Tulare Western High School
- Danielle Doria, Kristen Ledesma, Angelica Soto, and Fernando Navarro from Woodlake High School
- Brianna Santos and Katelyn Volanti from Tulare Union High School
- Brenna Jackson, Emmalee Lopez, Autum Monty, Brooke Ray, and Maya Bivens-Sommerville from Mt. Whitney High School (Visalia)
- Karla Torres from Exeter Union High School
- Lauryn Stotelo from Dinuba High School

*Photos above:*

*~ Tulare Western High School senior Joseph Machado poses with members of COS Cheerleading. Joseph, who will attend Stanford University, was recognized for his sportsmanship on the Tulare Western water polo team.*

*~ Ariana Ruiz, a junior softball player at El Diamante High School in Visalia, poses with her mother at the Sports Recognition Drive-Thru Celebration.*

## **Migrant speech tournament held virtually this year**



Earlier this month, the Migrant Education Program Region VIII virtually hosted its culminating activity for students participating in the Speech & Debate Program. Traditionally, the Speech & Debate Program is a regional tournament held in March with Migrant students competing in either speech or debate events for a spot in the state tournament held in May. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this year the program included virtual speeches only. Prior to the

competition, participating students chose one or two topics on current events and prepared their speeches with guidance from a certificated teacher.

The Speech & Debate Program's culminating activity was held virtually on Saturday, May 15, with 21 students from Dinuba Unified, Earlimart, Exeter Unified, Farmersville Unified, Porterville Unified, Tulare Joint Union High School, and Woodlake Unified school districts participating.

*Photo above:*

*~ (l-r) David Olea, Alonso Rios, Ana Zavala Alcantar, and Montserrat Garcia from Dinuba Unified School District participated in the Migrant Education Speech & Debate Program. Their instructor is Elmer Guzman.*

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## ***Around the County***

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### **Strathmore's Soto breaks county and section records**

A record-breaking year is continuing for Strathmore High School's Jazmine Soto.

In May, Soto broke the all-time boys and girls records for both Tulare County and the CIF Central Section in basketball. The Tulare County scoring record was previously set in 2012 by Central Valley Christian's Grant Verhoeven with 2,598 points. West Bakersfield's Nikki Blue set the former section record in 2002 with 2,938 points.

Soto, who started the season with 2,498 points, currently has 3,098 points and is averaging 30 points per game. On the state's all-time girls scoring list, Soto sits at number 12.

In her time at Strathmore, Soto also set the Central Section freshman scoring record (712 points) and the Central Section single-season scoring record (989). Soto is also the only 3,000 point-scorer in Tulare County and the CIF Central Section, and one of only 14 girls to ever score 3,000 or more points in the state.

In January, Soto accepted a full-ride scholarship to play women's basketball for the NCAA Division II Holy Names University in Oakland, California.

## McCarthy announces Congressional Merit Awards

In mid-May, Congressman Kevin McCarthy announced the Tulare County students and teachers who are this year's recipients of the 23rd Congressional District of California Merit Award and Inspirational High School Educator Award.

"In a challenging year when so many students and teachers have faced the difficulties of remote learning, this year's awards are truly special," McCarthy said in a statement. "Our students have exhibited determination and tenacity – remaining on task with assignments while developing relationships with their classmates virtually. Teachers have shown innovation and compassion – creating novel ways to engage with their students to ensure they are receiving the best educational experience possible amid uncertain and unprecedented circumstances. All, however, have been brilliant examples of what it means to persevere despite adversity, and I congratulate them on this notable achievement today."



The 2021 Merit Award Recipients for Tulare County are Chloe Ross, Granite Hills High School (Porterville); Lena Bennett, Harmony Magnet Academy (Strathmore); Hassoon Sarwar, Monache High School (Porterville); Aaron Morales, Porterville High School; and Citlali Romero, Strathmore High School.

The 2021 Inspirational High School Educator Award recipients for Tulare County are Sandra Verduzco, Granite Hills High School (Porterville); Vicky Edwards, Harmony Magnet Academy (Strathmore); Matthew Sonstegard, Monache High School (Porterville); Pam Avila, Porterville High School; and Dana Resendez, Strathmore High School.

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*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](mailto:robh@tcoe.org).

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## Distance Learning Resources

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