

news galleryweek

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In-person graduations return to Tulare County



TCOE kicked off its graduation season with in-person and drive-thru ceremonies to celebrate this year's special class.

A total of 53 students graduated from the Special Services AcCEL Programs and Community Based Instruction Classrooms (CBICs). AcCEL administrator, Sarah Hamilton, reported 13 graduates from North County, 18 from Visalia, 14 from Porterville and eight from Tulare. Tulare AcCEL hosts its graduation on Tuesday, June 8.



Forty-eight students made up the 2021 graduating class from University Preparatory High School (UPHS). Principal Eric Thiessen reported that six seniors earned their associates degree from College of the Sequoias while attending UPHS. In total, students in the Class of 2021 amassed over 1,900 college credits during their time at the school.

“We congratulate the students, parents, and teachers for the tremendous resilience they’ve shown this year,” said Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Tim Hire. “It was heartwarming to see families and parents come together in person to celebrate the graduates, and to hear several students reflect on this challenging year not in terms of what they’ve lost, but what they’ve gained.”





Photos above:

~ University Preparatory High School held an in-person graduation ceremony on Thursday, May 27, at the College of the Sequoias.

~ Porterville AcCEL held an in-person graduation ceremony on Thursday, May 27, at Porterville College.

~ Yettem AcCEL held an in-person graduation ceremony on Friday, May 28, at the Yettem Learning Center.

~ Visalia AcCEL held a drive-thru graduation ceremony on Friday, May 28, at the Akers Community Based Instruction Classroom.

Alta Sierra, El Diamante win Best of Show at Slick Rock



Alta Sierra Intermediate School and El Diamante High School took home the big prizes during the Slick Rock Student Film Festival awards special that aired on ABC30 this past Sunday evening. Alta Sierra won Middle School Best of Show with a documentary on food insecurity in Clovis Unified, while El Diamante's blockbuster *Incursion* won High School Best of Show.

The festival had 16 film categories and over 300 film entries were submitted 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 are available at tcoe.org/SlickRock.



Slick Rock Student Film Festival winners were:

- Best of Show – Middle School: *How Clovis Unified Confronts Child Hunger and Child Food Insecurity in the Pandemic*, Alta Sierra Intermediate School (Isabelle Balubar – Documentary)
- Best of Show – High School: *Incursion*, El Diamante High School (Noah Lillywhite, Kai Willey, Sam Zurek – Blockbuster)
- Alcohol/Drug Prevention PSA: *What Alcohol Does to You*, Bullard High School (Sean Linneman)
- Animation: *Orange Beasts in the Clouds*, El Diamante High School (Mario Landeros)
- Blockbuster – Middle School: *Spy War*, Fairmont K-8 School (Allison Horn, Sadie Horn, Megan Johnson, Kaelyn Johnson, Ashlyn Johnson)
- Blockbuster – High School: *Incursion*, El Diamante High School (Noah Lillywhite, Kai Willey, Sam Zurek)
- Documentary – Middle School: *How Clovis Unified Confronts Child Hunger and Child Food Insecurity in the Pandemic*, Alta Sierra Intermediate School (Isabelle Balubar)
- Documentary – High School: *Edmond Wysinger*, Redwood High School (William Youngquist, Emerson Pressley)
- Flavored Tobacco/Vaping Public Service Announcement (PSA): *Vacate the Vape*, Spring Valley Elementary School (Kaydynn Ellis, Addysen Nielsen)
- General Advertisement – Middle School: *El Tarasco Mexican Cuisine Advertisement*, St. Paul's School (Donya Hassanshahi, Camila Espinoza)
- General Advertisement – High School: *Stafford's Chocolates*, Monache High School (Roberto Cadena Parra, Sophi Orduno, Andrea Fernandez)
- General Public Service Announcement (PSA) – Middle School: *Teen Anxiety PSA*, Alta Sierra Intermediate School (Charlie Bath)
- General Public Service Announcement (PSA) – High School: *Exercise/Mental Health PSA*, Minarets High School (Hayden Livingston, Paul Havens, Solon Walker, Conner Hennard, Gianni Bellucci)
- Music Video – Cover: *When We Lived in La La Land*, Minarets High School - Johanna Ziegler, Dadalus Haynes
- Music Video – Original: *Mentality*, Mt. Whitney High School (Anneliese Bueno, Jakob Gil)
- News Broadcast: *BNN 2021*, Buchanan High School (Noah Roberto, Chris Pearce, Gabe Munro, Rylee Gonzales, Blaise Gonda, Nate Long)
- Sports Highlights: *Sports Highlights*, Redwood High School (Alia Backlund)
- Suicide Prevention PSA: *Help is Available*, Minarets High School (Jezzy Neuman)

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 (CMAC)

Photos above:

~ *Incursion*, a blockbuster film created by students at El Diamante High School, won High School Best of Show at the Slick Rock Student Film Festival.

~ *How Clovis Unified Confronts Child Hunger and Child Food Insecurity in the Pandemic*, a documentary film created by Alta Sierra Intermediate School's Isabelle Balubar, won Middle School Best of Show at the Slick Rock Student Film Festival.

Around the County

Two local academies achieve national certification

Two Tulare County Linked Learning Academies were recently recognized nationally for achieving NAF (National Academy Foundation) Distinguished Academy certification. Those honored were Pre-Med Academy of Tulare Western High School in the Tulare Joint Union High School District (TJUHSD) and ACE (Academy of Careers in Education) of Granite Hills High School in the Porterville Unified School District (PUSD). This distinction was particularly commendable as it was earned during the 2020-21 school year.

Both academy lead teachers, Pre-Med lead Jennifer O'Donohoe and ACE lead Rich Lambie, have been with their teams since the inception of the academies. "It takes an exceptionally strong team of passionate teachers, counselors, and site administration, along with district and board support, post-secondary guidance, and work-based learning support from industry partners, to make the kind of impact that we see in these certified academies," said Joy Soares, TCOE Director of College and Career. "Both academies truly exemplify exceptional academy structure with quality advisory boards, curriculum and instruction, and work-based learning. Special recognition goes to Tammy Aldaco, TJUHSD Assistant Superintendent of Special Services and Programs and Cindy Brown, PUSD Director of Student Pathways, for their leadership of these academies."

Distance Learning Resources

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

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