

Tulare County Office of Education

Tim A. Hire, County Superintendent of Schools

news galleryweek

October 25, 2023

29th annual Excellence in Education Awards held this morning



This morning at the Tulare County Office of Education, 36 extraordinary Tulare County educators and school employees were honored at the 29th annual Excellence in Education Awards – an event co-hosted by EECU.

The nominees were submitted by Tulare County school districts in three categories – Administrator/Manager of the Year, Teacher of the Year, and School Employee of the Year. A committee of Tulare County business and education leaders individually reviewed and scored each nominee to determine the winners, who were announced in April.

At the conclusion of the event, the category winners posed with Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Tim Hire (far left). The winners were (left to right) Administrator/Manager of the Year Tammy Bradford (Tulare County Office of Education), Teacher of the Year Jennifer Powers (Tulare City School District), and School Employee of the Year Sonya Yvonne Lopez (Porterville Unified School District).

“Our winners are deeply committed and creative individuals – educators who go to great lengths to engage students and provide opportunities for them that they may not otherwise experience,” Hire said.

To read more about the nominees, finalists, and winners, and to see the video created about the winners, visit <https://tcoe.org/Awards>.

Stage and Space Collaborative’s *The War of the Worlds* production premieres Friday and Saturday



Tickets are still available for the Saturday showing of the Stage and Space Collaborative’s *The War of the Worlds*. This live and fully immersive production was created by the Stage and Space Collaborative in partnership with TCOE’s Theatre Company and Planetarium & Science Center.

Broadcast from New York’s Mercury Theatre in 1938, the infamous radio play – based on the novel by H. G. Wells – had some terrified listeners convinced that an actual alien invasion of Earth was taking place. The community is invited to come, sit back, and enjoy this frightening tale of an extraterrestrial takeover.

The War of the Worlds will transport audiences back to 1938, complete with sound effects, original art projections, and exciting live performances from TCOE student actors. After the show, ticket holders are invited to move to the Planetarium for a fall night sky presentation to learn about the constellations visible this season.

The production will have a sold-out premiere on October 27. Tickets are still available for the October 28 showings at 2:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.

General admission for the show is \$10 and the total run time is approximately 100 minutes. The production is suggested for ages 12 and up, but all are welcome. Tickets can be purchased at tcoe.org/TheatreCo/Tickets or tcoe.org/Planetarium/PublicShows.

All performances will be held at the Planetarium & Science Center at 11535 Ave. 264 in Visalia.

War of the Worlds Cast - 1938 Radio Personalities/Actors

Zion Sears, 11th grade, Eleanor Roosevelt Community Learning Center

Fischer Campbell, 12th grade, Golden West High School

Reagan Gilles, 11th grade, Homeschooled

Caitlin Plumlee, 12th grade, Harmony Magnet Academy

Ginny Brown, 12th grade, Homeschooled

Rachel Espinoza, 12th grade, Homeschooled

Ellie Fairbanks, 11th grade, Eleanor Roosevelt Community Learning Center

Nou Cha honored as Outstanding Workforce Professional

Nou Cha, a youth development specialist with the Tulare County Office of Education's (TCOE) Services for Education and Employment (SEE) department, was surprised to learn that the Workforce Investment Board of Tulare County (WIB) had chosen



him as the Outstanding Workforce Professional for 2023. Cha, who knew he was a finalist for the award, learned that he had been chosen as the winner at the WIB's annual INNOVATORS by Design Conference, held earlier this month.

Cha was recognized for the thousands of Tulare County adults and youth he has counseled toward a better life in his nearly 30-year career with TCOE. In nominating him for the honor, his colleagues noted that Cha uses his personal experience as motivation, encouraging each individual he works with to dig deep to unlock their potential.

While working at SEE, Cha has acted as a trainer for new staff, and has taken on young participants to gain work experience in SEE's office, training and mentoring them until they were ready to move to permanent jobs within the community.

"Nou's genuine desire to help others, his compassionate attitude toward clients and co-workers, and his leadership skills all contribute to him being worthy of the title Outstanding Workforce Professional," said Darlene Tyndal, SEE employment services coordinator.

To watch a video about Cha, click [here](#).

Bright Future uses fall outing for students to practice their skills

Last week, the Bright Future Program invited its students to meet the animals at Ford Farms in Lindsay. Nearly 40 students attended with their family members to feed and pet a variety of furry friends.

While the animals are fun, the learning doesn't stop. Ron Pekarek, program manager, shared that these outings are a way for students to practice the skills they're learning in a Bright Start center while out in the community. "It's a great opportunity to practice skills such as working in a group, waiting, socializing with peers, requesting, labeling, transitioning, and more," he said.



The Bright Future Program offers center-based Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) services for children, ages 3 to 5, with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Center-based ABA treatment allows for one-on-one instruction in combination with natural learning and opportunities for socialization in a structured environment.

For more information about the behavior services offered by Bright Future, visit www.tcoe.org/SpecialEducation/CenterBased.

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

Contributors: Nayirah Dosu, Marlene Moreno, Jennifer Fisher, Bethany Rader, Darlene Tyndal, Ron Pekarek

To receive the News Gallery Week, sign up [here](#), or contact Jennifer Fisher at jenniferf@tcoe.org or (559) 733-6172.