

# Tulare County Office of Education

Tim A. Hire, County Superintendent of Schools

# news galleryweek

October 30, 2024

## Thirty educators celebrated at the 30th annual Excellence in Education Awards



This morning at the Tulare County Office of Education, 30 extraordinary Tulare County educators and school employees were honored at the 30th annual Excellence in Education Awards – an event co-hosted by EECU. The awards breakfast was attended by nearly 300 colleagues and family members to honor the nominees, finalists, and winners in three categories – Administrator/Manager of the Year, Teacher of the Year, and School Employee of the Year.

In the spring, 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 for a picture. The winners are (left to right) School Employee of the Year Lisa Kruger (Linwood Elementary School, Visalia), Teacher of the Year Kristy Caesar (Lincoln Elementary School, Lindsay), and Administrator/Manager of the Year Alexa Barba-Tepper (Redwood High School, Visalia).

“Tulare County students have been blessed by the natural gifts and abundant enthusiasm these women share at their schools every day,” said Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Tim Hire said. “Each is changing young lives through the personal connections and support they give to their students.”

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

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## Visalia students recognized for Pursuing Victory with Honor



In partnership with the Downtown Visalia Kiwanis, TCOE's CHARACTER COUNTS! Program celebrated this fall's Pursuing Victory with Honor (PVWH) student-athletes at a lunch on Tuesday. The Downtown Visalia Kiwanis recognizes student-athletes, nominated by their coaches, each season for their sportsmanship. The awards included a certificate, patch, and lawn sign that reads "An Athlete of Character Lives Here."

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

### **Central Valley Christian High School**

**Kamryn Westra – girls tennis:** Kamryn is an unparalleled leader. She unfailingly encourages and supports her teammates. She compliments her competitors, and she thanks her coaches.

**Brayden Sorens – boys cross country:** Brayden is a culture-shaper. He is both a capable leader and humble follower. The CVC cross country team is blessed to have a student-athlete of such high character as Brayden.

### **El Diamante High School**

**Olivia Britter – girls tennis:** Olivia is a student-athlete of the highest character. She models all aspects of responsibility to teachers, coaches, teammates, and her opponents. Olivia demonstrates good sportsmanship and leadership on and off the court.

**Audrey Barber – girls golf:** Audrey is beloved by her teammates and is a model for great sportsmanship to her fellow golfers during matches and tournaments. She has shown the attributes of an individual who constantly wants to be the best in anything that attracts her attention.

### **Golden West High School**

**Abigail Lindholm – girls water polo:** Abby has continued to grow as a leader for our program, earning a starting varsity position; and stays humble by mentoring our younger players and those new to the sport. Abby embodies every aspect of a student-athlete of character.

**Jake Westra – boys cross country:** Jake lives every aspect of his life with the goal of excellence while lifting up those around him...He takes pride in his team, his family, his school, and his friends.

### **Mt. Whitney High School**

**Arianna Diaz – girls cross country:** Arianna's character shines through in everything she does. Her honesty and respect for others, and deep sense of responsibility, make her a natural leader. She approaches competition with unwavering fairness and demonstrates great citizenship both on and off the field.

**Noah Sanchez – boys cross country:** Noah's greatest strength lies in his extraordinary character. His genuine kindness and encouragement uplift everyone around him, making him a natural team leader.

## Redwood High School

**Aubri Diaz – volleyball:** Not only is Aubri a valued member of our Redwood volleyball team, but she is a kind-hearted and hardworking example of all of the pillars of a student-athlete.

**Kelan Anderson – boys water polo:** Kelan leads by example. Just as we all should. He holds himself to a high standard morally, academically, and athletically. He understands the importance of making the right choices and the importance of treating others with kindness and respect. Kelan makes his family, teachers, and coaches very proud of him.

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