

Tulare County
Office of Education

Tim A. Hire, County Superintendent of Schools

news
galleryweek

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TCOE chosen by California Department of Education to lead Golden State Pathways Program



The Tulare County Office of Education (TCOE) was recently chosen by the California Department of Education to lead the Golden State Pathways Program (GSPP). TCOE has been named the Lead Technical Assistance Center for the GSPP. In this role, TCOE's College and Career Readiness department will lead the charge in bringing the State of California's \$500 million investment in college and career readiness to communities across the state.

The GSPP intends to align education systems and experiences with high-wage, high-growth industries, increasing access to learning opportunities and providing the workforce needed for economic growth. It dedicates funding to high-quality academic

pathways that blend rigorous college preparation with career technical learning to provide young people the experience they need for postsecondary success.

As the LTAC, TCOE will work in collaboration with the California Department of Education (CDE) to support eight Regional Technical Assistance Centers (RTAC). The GSPP RTACs will provide technical assistance to grant applicants and recipients seeking to establish or expand their pathway programs. Two grant programs will be available to local LEAs — Consortium Development and Planning Grants, and Implementation Grants. The RTACs include: Napa County Office of Education, Yuba Wheatland Union High School District, San Luis Obispo County Office of Education, Kern County Superintendent of Schools, Los Angeles County Office of Education, Humboldt County Office of Education, San Diego County Office of Education, and San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools.

TCOE has a nearly 30-year history of innovative, career technical education (CTE) pathways development in the Tulare-Kings region. Since the School-to-Career days in the 1990s, districts in the region have collaborated to promote CTE, creating career-based programs with elements of work-based learning. The secret to Tulare County's success in developing successful pathway programs throughout the region has been a warm, deeply shared commitment among all partners — county offices of education, school districts, community colleges, and workforce partners.

In 2013, six districts joined Porterville Unified School District to create the Tulare Kings Linked Learning (TKLL) Consortium. TCOE was selected to lead this work as the technical assistance provider and, the following year, received a \$15 million California Career Pathways Trust (CCPT) grant to develop a regional partnership focused on developing academies. In 2018, the TKLL Consortium transitioned to the Tulare Kings College and Career Collaborative (TKCCC), a regional collaborative of 14 K-12 school districts, two county offices of education, eight postsecondary institutions, and 500 industry partners and workforce development agencies. Today, TKCCC districts offer 1,150 industry pathway courses across nine industry sectors.

TKCCC also launched the region's Counselor Network and has led the way in regional professional learning with industry sector learning summits focused on current curriculum, high demand jobs, and industry and post-secondary engagement.

"In Tulare County we have both the passion and expertise for this work," said Tim Hire, Tulare County Superintendent of Schools. "We are excited to share the success that our students have seen with young people across the state. We know what it takes to make this type of progress — from building educator capacity and providing essential student supports, to connecting with local industry and performing regular data analysis. We're thrilled to bring our expertise to the table to advance the goals of Golden State Pathways."

For additional information about the Lead Technical Assistance Center, contact Bill Davis at bill.davis@tcoe.org or (559) 302-3674.

Photo above:

~ The College and Career Readiness department will build the Lead Technical Assistance Center for the new Golden State Pathways Program, an investment by the state of \$500 million to support the creation and expansion of quality academic pathway programs. The team includes (l-r) Heather Elias, administrator Bill Davis, Lori Narahara, and Shelsy Hutchison.

Harmony Magnet Academy wins Tulare County Academic Decathlon for the second year in a row



Last Saturday, Harmony Magnet Academy (Strathmore) defended its champion title by once again being crowned the overall Tulare County Academic Decathlon winner. This is the second time Harmony has won back-to-back titles after a three-peat spanning 2012, 2013, and 2014.

“It feels amazing,” said Kimberly Marsh, Harmony's coach. I knew the kids had worked really hard, and I expected them to do really well. I'm just so proud that we were able to defend the title, and I couldn't be more proud of them.”

This year's championship team was composed of Alyssandra Oracion, Danny Rodriguez, Judith Gomez, John Bailey, Shivaraj Thiagarajan, Lizbeth Ramirez, Alexander Delgado, Elisabeth Ceballos, and Owen Newsom.

Marsh said part of the team's success was due to how well students bonded and learned from each other. "They contribute to each other's learning, more than just me teaching them. Part of this year's success is that we had a lot of student leaders in the group," she said.

Harmony Magnet Academy also won Top Small School Team and Super Quiz, while El Diamante High School (Visalia) was this year's Top Large School Team. Harmony will represent Tulare County at the state Academic Decathlon championship, March 22-24 in Los Angeles.

All Academic Decathlon teams are comprised of two to three students in each of three grade divisions: Honors (GPA 3.800 and higher), Scholastic (GPA 3.200-3.799), and Varsity (GPA 3.199 and below).

Harmony's Rodriguez and Thiagarajan were the Top Honors and Top Scholastic individual winners, respectively. Joshua Viveros of Granite Hills High School (Porterville) was the Top Varsity winner. All three received individual trophies.



Rodriguez was the top-scoring decathlete in four categories – Interview, Music, Science, and Social Science.

"I definitely didn't expect to acquire this much hardware," Rodriguez joked after the awards ceremony. He added, "This was my first time ever doing Academic Decathlon. A lot of all-nighters, but I guess it paid off!"

Students also received medals and awards in each of the competition's 10 categories.

The top students in each category were:

Art: Judith Gomez, Harmony Magnet Academy

Economics: Stone Martin, El Diamante High School

Essay: Derrick Smith, Granite Hills High School; Stone Martin, El Diamante High School; Kris Kashyap, Harmony Magnet Academy; AND Joshua Viveros, Granite Hills High School

Interview: Kim Perez, Granite Hills High School; Derrick Smith, Granite Hills High School; Santiago Villegas, Dinuba High School; Alex Dowdy, El Diamante High School; Stone Martin, El Diamante High School; Ahla Saleh, Harmony Magnet Academy; Isabel Aguilar, Harmony Magnet Academy; Alyssandra Oracion, Harmony Magnet Academy; Danny Rodriguez, Harmony Magnet Academy; Judith Gomez, Harmony Magnet Academy; Vanessa Augustin Aguilar, Orosi High School; Yeshua Valdez, Dinuba High School; Ethan Rojas, Dinuba High School; Shivaraj Thiagarajan, Harmony Magnet Academy; AND Kevin Avila-Arias, El Diamante High School

Literature: Stone Martin, El Diamante High School

Math: Andrew Ward, El Diamante High School AND Ahla Saleh, Harmony Magnet Academy

Music: Danny Rodriguez, Harmony Magnet Academy

Science: Danny Rodriguez, Harmony Magnet Academy

Social Science: Danny Rodriguez, Harmony Magnet Academy

Speech: Derrick Smith, Granite Hills High School

Photos above:

~ Harmony Magnet Academy (Strathmore) was the small school and overall winner of this year's Tulare County Academic Decathlon.

~ The top individual scoring decathletes were (l-r) Danny Rodriguez (Honors) of Harmony Magnet Academy, Shivaraj Thiagarajan (Scholastic) of Harmony Magnet Academy, and Joshua Viveros (Varsity) of Granite Hills High School.

Mission Oak High School's Alondra Gutierrez wins both Poetry Out Loud and Poet's Own Voice



Poetry Live! – the spoken word event for middle and high school students with two competitions, Poetry Out Loud and Poet's Own Voice – was held Friday night at the Arts Consortium in downtown Visalia. Alondra Gutierrez, a senior at Mission Oak High School in Tulare, swept both events.

Gutierrez first competed in Poetry Out Loud, which is an annual, national competition enjoyed by nearly 400,000 students around the country. Students that participate in Poetry Out Loud choose three pieces from the organization's national archive to recite in front of a live audience. As the champion, Gutierrez will represent Tulare County at the California Poetry Out Loud competition next month in Sacramento. In second place was last year's champion, Sabrina Castillo of Tulare Union High School.

For Poet's Own Voice, competitors submitted five original pieces and performed two of them for the judges. For the beauty of her writing and her outstanding recitation, Gutierrez earned first place. She will advance to the regional California Youth Poet Laureate competition this summer. Anais Ceballos of Monache High School finished second.



Another group of students participated in the Poet's Own Voice Showcase event by submitting five original works for judges to review, but chose not to perform them. Winning first place in the Showcase event was Stephanie Acosta Quintero of Summit Charter Collegiate Academy (SCCA) in Porterville. In second place was Austin Martin of SCCA.

Teachers - for more information on how your students can participate next year, visit www.tcoe.org/PoetryLive.

Photos above:

~ Alondra Gutierrez is the winner of both the Poetry Out Loud and the Poet's Own Voice competitions. She will advance to state competitions in both events. She has also been crowned the 2024-25 Tulare County Youth Poet Laureate.

~ Winners in the Poetry Live! event included (l-r) Alondra Gutierrez (first place in Poetry Out Loud and Poet's Own Voice); Stephanie Acosta Quintero (first place in Poet's Own Voice Showcase); Sabrina Castillo (second place in Poetry Out Loud); and Anais Ceballos (second place in Poet's Own Voice).

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