

news galleryweek

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Tulare County students featured in two segments of latest Children First special



On Sunday, ABC30 premiered its latest *Children First* special entitled “Standout Students.” The special featured inspiring stories about exceptional young people or student groups. Among the stories were two from Tulare County.

Dulce Soto-Sanchez is a recent graduate of Monache High School in Porterville. She came to the United States from Mexico when she was 12 and did not speak any English. “I always felt like I was less than other people,” she said. Using Google translate to help with her homework, Soto-Sanchez worked hard to achieve her goals, graduating near the top of Monache’s Manufacturing and Construction Technology Academy. She was accepted into UC Merced, University of Arizona, and many other colleges, but has decided to attend College of the Sequoias for the first two years of her studies.

The second Tulare County story focused on students from Monson-Sultana School. The students participated in the annual Step Up Youth Challenge and created a project to support farmworkers, connecting them with food, healthcare resources, and more. To gain an appreciation for the work farmworkers do, the team also packed citrus at a local packinghouse.

To see the entire *Children First* special, “Standout Students,” visit www.abc30.com/childrenfirst.

New hires for Mid-State Collaborative, California Center on Teaching Careers

This summer, the Mid-State Collaborative (MSC) and the California Center on Teaching Careers (CCTC) hired Davinder Sidhu, Ed.D. (MSC), Leslie Kelly (CCTC), and Axel Kondoh (CCTC).

Mid-State Collaborative (MSC)



Davinder K. Sidhu, Ed.D., Director

Davinder K. Sidhu, Ed.D. is the new director of the Mid-State Collaborative and comes to MSC with over 30 years of experience in K-12 education. At Fresno Unified School District, Sidhu served as a principal for nine years and as a principal on special

assignment supporting instructional superintendents for three years. For the past six years, she has served in the role of assistant superintendent, most recently at the Central Union School District in Kings County. Her most recent experience included leadership in areas of curriculum, professional learning, LCAP coordination, and coordination of differentiated assistance. Sidhu possesses a bachelor's degree from California State University, Fresno, a master's in administration in educational services from Fresno Pacific University, and a doctorate in educational leadership and management from Alliant International University in Fresno.

The Mid-State Collaborative is designed to support the continuous improvement of student performance within the state priorities, address the gaps in achievement between student groups, improve outreach and collaboration with stakeholders, and connect resources and build the capacity of county offices. The MSC is a learning community led by the Tulare County Office of Education and comprises the counties of Inyo, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Mono, Monterey, San Benito, Santa Cruz, Stanislaus, and Tulare.

California Center on Teaching Careers (the Center)



Leslie Kelly, Program Manager-I

Leslie Kelly is the program manager who oversees the Center's School Counselor Residency (SCR) Project – the first of its kind in the nation. She brings over 24 years of experience and expertise to the Center. Kelly has a gift for building strong relationships with educational partners to further the work of equity in education. She previously

served as the content coordinator overseeing the Teachers of Color Pipeline in Fresno County Superintendent of Schools. Along with her duties at the Center, Kelly is also an adjunct professor at Fresno Pacific University where she teaches various courses in the school counseling and pupil personnel services (PPS) program. She has a master's degree in educational leadership and administration, a master's in counseling, and a PPS credential.

SCR is launching its first cohort with six districts, 12 school counseling residents, 12 mentor counselors, and partnering with Fresno Pacific University, the California Association for School Counselors, and Hatching Results. The six districts are Exeter Unified School District, Tulare City School District, Tulare Joint Union High School District, Visalia Unified School District, Armona Union Elementary School District, and Hanford Joint Union High School District. SCR is open to students in Fresno Pacific's Master of Arts in school counseling program. Upon completion of their master's program and SCR, students will have finished one year of paid residency, obtained a master's degree, and earned their Pupil Personnel Services Credential, allowing them to serve as school counselors in California. For more information on SCR, visit www.thecenter-scr.org.

Axel Kondoh, Accounts Manager

Axel Kondoh is the accounts manager for CCTC, who brings over a decade of experience and expertise to his new role. Kondoh possesses Bachelor of Science in business administration from the University of California, and Master of Science in information management from Arizona State University, and CASBO Chief Business Official (CBO) certification. Formerly an internal auditor at Visalia Unified School District, Kondoh brings a wealth of school business experience with him. His expertise spans across business services, accounting, budget development, and auditing. Kondoh has a deep commitment to leveraging his skill set and expertise to drive financial sustainability and foster program growth.

For more information on the California Center on Teaching Careers, visit tcoe.org/cctc.

Photos above:

~ Davinder Sidhu is the new Mid-State Collaborative director.

~ Axel Kondoh (left) and Leslie Kelly have joined the California Center on Teaching Careers.

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