

Tulare County Office of Education

Tim A. Hire, County Superintendent of Schools

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For Immediate Release

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Tulare County Office of Education Announces:

Educators of the Year to be honored Thursday, September 19, 2024

At an invitation-only dinner on Thursday, September 19, the Central California Chinese Cultural Center and the Tulare County Office of Education (TCOE) will again honor three Tulare County teachers at the Confucius' Birthday/Educators of the Year Awards.

On May 3 of this year, Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Tim Hire and Wendy Jay, a member of the Chinese Cultural Center's Board of Directors, surprised the three honorees with the news that they had been selected as Educators of the Year.

Since 1994, the Central California Chinese Cultural Center has partnered with the Tulare County Office of Education to honor one elementary, one middle school, and one high school teacher as part of the Confucius' Birthday/Educators of the Year Awards. Chinese people around the world often mark the occasion of Confucius' birthday in late September by recognizing exemplary teachers. Each year, members of the Chinese Cultural Center hold a dinner celebration at their center in Visalia for the honorees, and their colleagues, and family members.

"This year's winners are exceptional in their abilities to engage students and make learning exciting for each one," said Hire.

The winners of the 2024 Educators of the Year Awards are:

Elementary Educator of the Year Glenda Landin, Reading Intervention Specialist Hope School, Porterville

Glenda Landin is a reading intervention specialist at Hope School in Porterville. Melanie Matta, Hope School's superintendent, credits her for transforming the way teachers engage with reading across all grades. The beloved former first-grade teacher now works directly with students identified as needing reading intervention, painstakingly selecting books that satisfy

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their curiosities and ensure that reading becomes a journey of exploration and delight. This personal touch has sparked a newfound passion for reading among students, helping some struggling students advance several grade levels in one year.

Through her mentorship, Landin has empowered teachers and paraprofessionals with innovative strategies and insights into fostering literacy. Her workshops and one-on-one coaching sessions have spread her effective methodologies throughout Hope's staff. This has led to Hope School rising from one of the poorest performing districts in the county to one of the top.

Middle School Educator of the Year

Anthony Nguyen, Sixth-Grade Teacher

Palo Verde Union School, Tulare

Anthony Nguyen's journey toward a career in education began at UCLA, where he discovered his love for teaching while working in an afterschool program. Today, he is a sixth-grade teacher at Palo Verde Union School, west of Tulare. He serves on the school's leadership team, provides photography and coordinates the annual yearbook, and coaches Palo Verde's spelling championship participants and the Anti-Tobacco & Marijuana Challenge Bowl team, which achieved remarkable success in both 2023 and 2024 county competitions. Nguyen also continually looks for ways to expand students' access to technology, incorporating 3D printers into his classroom.

Palo Verde administrators say that his greatest strength is his ability to connect with students on a personal level. As a bilingual communicator, he effortlessly translates for others and kindly mentors students facing challenges in behavior, relationships, and academics. Nguyen embodies the essence of an educator who goes beyond the classroom, leaving an indelible mark on all the lives he touches.

High School Educator of the Year

Jacob Avila, Business Teacher and FBLA Advisor

Redwood High School, Visalia

Jacob Avila teaches business courses within the Business Management Pathway program at Redwood High School in Visalia. He is also the school's Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) advisor. Brandon Gridiron, Ed.D., principal at Redwood High School, praised Avila for his natural ability to connect with people and to lead students to their highest level of achievement, whether it is through his program or in other academic settings.

As Redwood's FBLA advisor, Avila runs a nationally notarized and award-winning program, building strategic partnerships with local organizations to complete the club's

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annual community service project. He also facilitates connections with the business community for his students, utilizing his creativity and solutions development skills for the benefit of the program and those he serves.

For more information on the Educators of the Year Awards, visit www.tcoe.org/EOTY.