



school bulletin

ISSUED BI-WEEKLY SEPTEMBER THROUGH JUNE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

May 15, 2015

SPEAKERS –
Actor Levar Burton, former NASA astronaut Jose Hernandez and CNN anchor Fareed Zakaria will speak at a national education conference here in October.



Actor, Astronaut, Anchor to Speak Here

Actor Levar Burton, former NASA astronaut Jose M. Hernandez and CNN anchor Fareed Zakaria will address the nation's urban school leaders at the Council of the Great City Schools' 59th Annual Fall Conference, Oct. 7 to 11 in Long Beach. The Long Beach Unified School District is hosting this year's conference.

The Council is the nation's primary coalition of urban school systems, including Long Beach, and the conference is expected to draw thousands of education leaders from throughout the U.S.

"The conference planning is off to a great start. These are impressive speakers who know the value of a good education. We look forward to hearing their words of wisdom," said LBUSD Board of Education Vice President Felton Williams, who is also secretary-treasurer of the Council of the Great City Schools.

Actor and director Levar Burton is associated with TV productions such as *Roots*, *Star Trek* and *Reading Rainbow*. His first professional acting audition landed him in the

acclaimed TV miniseries *Roots*, cast as the major character Kunta Kinte.

A science fiction buff, he later appeared in and directed episodes of the *Star Trek* series. For 25 years, Burton hosted and served as executive producer of the highly acclaimed PBS children's TV series *Reading Rainbow*. Today he continues to work primarily as a film and TV director.

Former astronaut and engineer Jose Hernandez is believed to be the first person to tweet in Spanish while in space. He was part of the crew of the Space Shuttle STS-128 Discovery mission.

Hernandez has also served as chief of the Materials and Processes branch at the Johnson Space Center in Houston. As an engineer, he developed cancer-detecting equipment for full-field mammography at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory.

As host of CNN's Fareed Zakaria GPS, contributing editor at *The Atlantic*, and a Washington Post columnist, Zakaria provides

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A Record 6 Schools Make U.S. News List

The newest rankings of America's best high schools by U.S. News and World Report include six schools here, an all-time high for the Long Beach Unified School District.

The California Academy of Mathematics and Science earned a gold medal, while five other high schools earned silver.

The U.S. News rankings include data on more than 21,000 public high schools in 50 states and the District of Columbia. Schools were awarded gold, silver or bronze medals based on their performance on state assessments and how well they prepare students for college.

In the rankings, only the top 2.4 percent earned gold medals, and only 9.7 percent won silver.

To determine the rankings, schools were first analyzed on how well their students performed on state assessments, taking into account the test scores of disadvantaged students. High schools that made it through this analysis were then eligible to be ranked nationally in terms of college readiness, using Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate test data as the benchmarks

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Lindbergh Wins 3rd Straight RoboBowl

North Long Beach's Lindbergh Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Academy captured its third consecutive RoboBowl title on April 25 at McBride High School, where students from 14 local middle schools learned about science, math, engineering and technology while showing off their robotics projects.

Lindbergh won first and second place, while Tincher Academy placed third. Other participating schools included Bancroft, Hamilton, Hill, Henry, Hughes, Jefferson, Lindsey, Marshall, Powell, Robinson, Stanford and Washington.

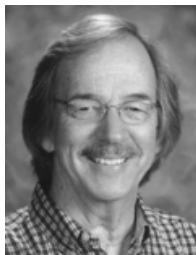
Lindbergh Middle School became the Lindbergh STEM Academy after the Long Beach Unified School District Board of Education approved the new program in February of 2014. The school serves as a pathway for students interested in careers in the sciences.

At the RoboBowl, each school's robotics club participates in the competition, which gives students a chance to test their robot designs before attending official VEX Robotics events in the fall. Since the RoboBowl's inception the event has been a partnership with Leadership Long Beach with the aim of advancing STEM education throughout the school district.

Wilson Earns Theatre, Music Accolades

Student musicians from Wilson Classical High School earned high honors at the recent San Francisco Heritage Festival, and the school's longtime drama teacher Randy Bowden has been nominated for the inaugural Excellence in Theatre Education Award to be presented by Carnegie Mellon University and the Tony Awards.

Wilson's symphonic wind and symphony string musicians performed well enough at the San Francisco festival to qualify for the Honors Festival next year at Carnegie Hall. At the San Francisco event, Wilson's jazz band brought home a second place award. The strings earned top honors with first place and



Bowden

the Outstanding Orchestra Award. The winds earned a second place honor, and both the wind and string groups earned the Adjudicators Award.

Out of 815 students at the festival, seven were selected for the Maestro Award. Two of the seven selected were Wilson students: Fabian Nunez on trumpet and Sarah Birong on violin. Michelle Ellis is the music director at Wilson.

Meanwhile, 43-year drama instructor Bowden is up for an award that will bring \$10,000 to the winning teacher's drama department. The award will be announced at this year's June 7 Tony Awards ceremony in New York City.

"It's an honor just to be nominated," Bowden said. "But I would be thrilled and humbled to get the money for the kids – that's what excites me!"

A feature story on Bowden was published April 20 at gazettes.com.

Millikan Advocates For Human Rights

By Lee Underwood,
Millikan PEACE Senior Project Facilitator

The Mayor of the City of Whittier, Fernando Dutra, listened with focused attention to PEACE Academy Senior Alfonso Garcia as he enumerated the myriad human rights violations the LGBT community in Russia faces on a daily basis. After shaking hands and congratulating him on his work, the mayor moved on to listen to an impassioned plea by Dorrianna Roberts, Chris Brio and Lance Hazan on how the lack of access to clean drinking water is not only a human rights violation but can perpetuate extreme poverty in developing nations. The message is clear: we need to act now! No one deserves to die of preventable water borne diseases.

"If these are our future leaders," Mayor Dutra (a graduate of Jordan High School) said, beaming with pride, "then the future of humanity is safe!"

On April 25, sixteen PEACE Academy seniors from Millikan High School took part in the Amy Biehl Foundation Conference at Whittier College where, along with students from other area high schools including Whittier High School and Pioneer High School, they presented their research on self-selected human rights topics to parents, teachers and professors, business executives, and members of the Whittier City Council.

The event included an elegant brunch and award ceremony. Whittier College's Joyce Kaufman, professor of political science, and Linda Biehl, co-founder of the Amy Biehl Foundation, recognized the students for their work and encouraged them to turn their research into tangible activism.

This year, the senior capstone project, ELE-VATE, took on the issue of universal human rights violations. To accomplish this, the

• Fall Conference

(Continued from first page analysis on economic and political trends. Esquire magazine described him as "the most influential foreign policy adviser of his generation."

Winner of a 2012 Peabody Award, the Emmy-nominated GPS features Zakaria's panel discussions and one-on-one interviews with heads of state, intellectuals and business leaders. His columns and cover stories reach millions of readers.

Zakaria's latest book, In Defense of a Liberal Education, (as in liberal arts) debuted at No. 6 on The New York Times best sellers list in April.

Born in India and educated at Yale and Harvard, where he received his Ph. D., Zakaria was editor of Newsweek International from 2000 to 2010 and Editor-at-Large at TIME from 2010 to 2014. He's also been one of Jon Stewart's favorite guests on The Daily Show.

In Memoriam

Becky Gowin
cafeteria supervisor, Dooley
May 3, 2015

seniors partnered with Whittier College's Center for Engagement with Communities and its Amy Biehl Foundation Project.

The Biehl project seeks to develop high school students' critical awareness of the compelling human rights issues of the 21st Century and their sense of social responsibility for addressing human rights challenges (global and local) that align with their personal values. The guiding vision for the project is to cultivate students' understanding of human dignity and the importance of confronting violence in any of its forms. Students are challenged to learn these principals while also working collectively and collaboratively in forming ideas and taking actions in response to social issues they deem important.

This vision is based on values that were dear to Amy Biehl – a 26-year-old Fulbright scholar and anti-apartheid activist who worked for social change in South Africa, and who died at the hands of young black activists in 1993. In response to her death, her mother and father (Linda and Peter Biehl – both Whittier College graduates) founded the Amy Biehl Foundation Trust as a living memorial dedicated to educating and creating opportunity for the young people living in the South African township where Amy died.

For more information on the Amy Biehl Foundation, visit [facebook.com/usaabf](https://www.facebook.com/usaabf).

• U.S. News Rankings

(Continued from first page) for success.

Local schools and their rankings are:

- CAMS (gold) – state ranking of 19; national ranking of 125
- Avalon (silver) – state ranking of 151; national ranking of 799
- Wilson (silver) – state ranking of 228; national ranking of 1,130
- Millikan (silver) – state ranking of 291; national ranking of 1,417
- Renaissance (silver) – state ranking of 297; national ranking of 1,431
- Poly (silver) – state ranking of 393; national ranking of 1,812

Learn more at usnews.com.

Retirement Event

Honoree	Date	Contact
Rod Petkovic	June 4	Synthia Kaitanjan (714) 334-9706

SCHOOL BULLETIN

Official publication of the Long Beach Unified School District issued bi-weekly during the school year from the Office of the Superintendent of Schools, 1515 Hughes Way, Long Beach, California 90810. (562) 997-8000. www.lbschools.net

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Six Finalists Vying For Employee of Year

A total of 29 nominations submitted for the Classified Employee of the Year Award have been narrowed down to six finalists. The top winner is scheduled to be announced at noon during the 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Classified Employee Celebration on Friday, May 22 at the Teacher Resource Center, 1299 E. 32nd St., Signal Hill.

The 29 nominations ultimately resulted in 15 nominees because some nominees received multiple nominations.

This year's finalists are Chett Davidson, locksmith; Sylvia Flegal, office supervisor at MacArthur; Alex Hernandez, intermediate office assistant at Willard; Richard Hoover, choral accompanist at Lakewood; DeWayne Hundley, custodian at Lakewood; and Joselito Leonor, plant supervisor at Lakewood.

The remainder of this year's nominees are Cassandra Clydesdale, office supervisor at McBride; Diane Epps, senior office assistant at Robinson; Claudia Flores, secretary at Tucker; Helena Jamadi, Risk Management technician; Millie Martin, Nutrition Services supervisor at Renaissance; Kathleen Nebrida, senior payroll accounting technician; Juanita Ramirez, intermediate office assistant at Hamilton; Maximo Vasquez, ASB financial technician at Tincher; and Robert Vidal, grounds supervisor at Lakewood.

Nomination papers were submitted by colleagues and reviewed by a committee of classified employees. The winner and finalists also will be honored at the June 2 Board of Education meeting.

The May 22 celebration event will feature a taco bar, ice cream, music and prizes. The event is made possible by donations from private sponsors and school district managers.

Names in the News

John Underkoffler, CEO of Oblong Industries (oblong.com) recently visited more than 200 Cabrillo High School students at their school to share the Gesture Data Interface technology that he helped to develop. Underkoffler is the MIT scientist who invented such technology used by **Steven Spielberg** in the movie Minority Report. He also acted as technological consultant for the films Iron Man and The Hulk. The event was sponsored by the Ivy League mentorship effort, Reach to the Stars, offered afterschool and facilitated by teacher **Ethel Laczko** and Co-Principal **Alejandro Vega**. The program aims to motivate students to study hard and apply to Ivy League schools.

Stanford Middle School student **Megan Tran** was a prizewinner in the Southern Area Youth Art Month Show in her division. The student's work, along with that of other top winners from throughout the state, will be featured at the California State Capitol in the gallery on the third floor from May 18 to 29.

Poly High School graduate **Molly Emmett**, a member of the Class of 2015 at Whitman College in Walla Walla, WA, has earned a Fulbright Award, which will provide for a teaching assistantship in the Czech Republic. About 1,700 students from throughout the United States were chosen from more than 10,000 applicants to receive grants to study, teach and conduct research. The program is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State.