



Education Medal of Honor and Distinguished Service Award Recipients Honored



Congratulations to all this year's Education Medal of Honor and Distinguished Service Award winners.

It's an honor and privilege to share the outstanding accomplishments of those who are recognized as Education Medal of Honor and Distinguished Service recipients.

Each year, the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools, along with the San Bernardino County School Boards Association and County Communicators Network, recognizes individuals and groups who give superb service and support to public education with the countywide Education Medal of Honor.

These inspiring individuals are celebrated for their efforts as community volunteers, business partners, educational professionals and alumni who support our 540 county schools in our 33 school districts that are home to more than 406,000 students.

The six categories, respective winners and districts served this year are:

- **Volunteer in Action/Community Volunteer:** Suzanne Beers, Adelanto Elementary School District;
- **Volunteer in Action/Service Group:** Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation, San Bernardino City Unified School District;

Volume 6, Issue 11

Newsroom Spotlights

Teachers of the Year and Teachers For Tomorrow Celebrated



County Superintendent Ted Alejandro awarded select San Bernardino County teachers for their success and hard work at a virtual ceremony on Oct. 13. Congratulations Camille Dahnke, Vane Matsalia and Debra McMurtrey for being awarded Teacher of the Year.

[View the gallery.](#)

Three San Bernardino County Schools Named National Blue Ribbon Schools



Three schools in San Bernardino County have been named as Blue Ribbon schools - Coyote Canyon Elementary in

- [Partners in Education/Small Business or Franchise](#): Jaime Martinez, store manager of the 99 Cents Only Stores, Colton-Redlands-Yucaipa Regional Occupational Program;
- [Partners in Education/Corporation or Government Agency](#): Veronica Parks, marketing manager for Victorville Motors, Mountain Desert Career Pathways JPA;
- [Excellence in Education/Education Professional](#): Gabriel Petrocelli, Ed.D., Chaffey Joint Union High School District;
- [Excellence in Education/Student Alumni](#): Shareece Wright, Colton Joint Unified School District.

For the past 23 years, the countywide Distinguished Service Award has celebrated exceptional service to our public institutions. The purpose of the award is to recognize dedication and leadership on behalf of public education in the county.

This year's two [Distinguished Service Award](#) winners are:

- Cheryl Fischer, Ph.D., Retired California State University San Bernardino Professor;
- Marcus Funchess, Ed.D., San Bernardino City Unified School District

As county superintendent, I want to sincerely congratulate each of this year's recipients and thank the San Bernardino County School Boards Association for recognizing those who truly make a difference in public education and our communities.

Watch the narrative videos [here](#).

The World of STEM: STEPCon20



The Science and Technology Education Partnership bridged the distance learning gap at the recent STEPCon20 event. The virtual conference featured immersive workshops, motivating keynote speakers, hands-on activities and engaging panels and discussions.

More than 15,000 students from San Bernardino and Riverside County attended STEPCon20. The annual event encourages students to pursue a science, technology, engineering and mathematics education and career through hands-on learning experiences.

Central Elementary School District, Carleton P. Lightfoot Elementary in the Etiwanda School District and LaVerne Elementary Preparatory Academy in the Hesperia Unified School District.

[Read more here.](#)

Gangs and Drugs Task Force Safety Summit Video



More than 280 people visited the Gangs and Drugs Task Force virtual Safety Summit on Oct. 15. Follow the link to view highlights from this year's event.

[Watch the video.](#)



Congratulations to Jennifer Cruz for being recognized as a student who demonstrated excellence in STEM learning. Ms. Cruz is one of two recipients who was awarded a \$500 STEM scholarship!

[Watch the video.](#)

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STEPCon20 consisted of three live science shows hosted by General Atomics researchers. Workshop sessions included more than 30 interactive exhibits that focused on a variety of STEM subject areas.

The Science Technology and Education Partnership awards two \$500 scholarships to one student each from Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. Jennifer Cruz, a senior at Apple Valley High School was selected as the San Bernardino County recipient for 2020. Cruz participated in a summer aviation class through the Millionaire Mind Kids program. The experience expanded her horizons which led Cruz to learn more about avionics and aviation. She is now a licensed pilot. Exposing students to diverse careers can transform their lives and set them on new paths of learning and opportunity. Congratulations to Jennifer Cruz!

It is inspiring to see our innovative education and community partners support this annual event. Thank you for your consistent and collaborative efforts to enrich the lives of students in the Inland Empire.

SBCSS eSports League Continues to Engage Students



Click on the SBCSS eSports League logo above to [register](#) for an informational meeting on Nov. 12 for districts interested in forming their own eSports site teams.

The San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools is in the process of establishing an eSports League, creating a new way to play, connect and transform lives through education.

Our Digital Learning Services team recently held a second pilot event where seven districts with 16 participants competed virtually. The league seeks to harness the potential of an established gaming culture to expand educational opportunities for our students.

According to the [Pew Research Center](#) “97 percent of teen boys play video games on some kind of device, compared with 83 percent of girls.” Gaming is a multi-billion industry and is ingrained into teen culture in the United States. eSports embraces the opportunities to develop technical skills where students are intrinsically motivated. By using a

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gaming platform, students can engage in a diverse team environment that can spark collaboration and promote problem-solving and strategy skills. The competitive sport can increase attendance rates, and support inclusion and socialization between students and their peers. Gaming can redefine athletics where some students may not fit traditional personas. It also has been proven to increase Digital Citizenship awareness and foster STEM learning and education for students.

The [National Association of Collegiate Esports](#) estimates that there is currently \$16 million in eSports scholarships and aid. Formed in 2016 with seven colleges and universities, NACE is a non-profit membership association now with over 170 member schools. At the high school level, eSports leagues are taking advantage of this rapidly growing industry. In the Inland Empire, an eSports league has been established by the Riverside County Office of Education, and now in San Bernardino County schools.

The Digital Learning Services team will conduct an informational meeting on Nov. 12 for districts interested in forming their own eSports site teams. To register, click [here](#). For businesses and organizations interested in sponsoring the SBCSS eSports League, please contact the event organizers at esports@sbcss.net.