

COMMUNITY CORNER

Developing Responsible, Respectful and Prepared Students

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: March 20, 2025

Banning USD Honors March Students of the Month

BANNING, CA — Banning Unified School District proudly recognizes two outstanding students as March’s Students of the Month. Honorees Victor Juarez Cruz from Banning High School and Oscar Ochoa from New Horizons High School were celebrated for their perseverance, leadership, and commitment to excellence during a special recognition event on March 4, 2025.

“Victor and Oscar have demonstrated the perseverance and leadership that define the students of Banning Unified School District,” said Superintendent Terrence Davis. “Their hard work and commitment to their education and community are inspiring, and we are incredibly proud to celebrate their success.”

Victor Juarez Cruz: A Resilient Leader and Mentor

Victor Juarez Cruz, a senior at Banning High School, has shown incredible determination in overcoming challenges since moving to the United States as a junior. Facing the difficulty of learning a new language, Victor refused to let obstacles define his path. Through hard work and persistence, he has stayed focused on his goal of graduating while also making a meaningful impact on his peers.

One of Victor’s greatest contributions to Banning High School has been his mentorship to fellow students who, like him, arrived from other countries without knowing English. He takes pride in helping them adjust, encouraging them to stay committed to their education. “When people from other countries come and don’t understand anything, I try to help them with their classes and motivate them to keep going and not give up,” Victor shared.

Victor is set to graduate this year and plans to pursue a career as an electrician, appreciating the hands-on nature of the field and its career opportunities. Reflecting on his journey, he said, “The greatest lesson I’ve learned is that I have to fight for everything I need, put in my full effort, and always believe in myself.”

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Oscar Ochoa: A Community-Driven Innovator

Oscar Ochoa, a student at New Horizons High School, is recognized for his leadership, school spirit, and commitment to helping others. He is known for his infectious positivity and his ability to bring people together.

Oscar has been deeply involved in school activities, most notably as the leader behind New Horizons' annual Haunted House event, where he worked with peers to design an immersive experience that brought students and staff together. The event became a highlight of the school year, teaching Oscar valuable lessons in teamwork, creativity, and community involvement.

In addition to his school involvement, Oscar has maintained strong academics, consistently making the honor roll and earning multiple attendance awards. He is passionate about entrepreneurship and plans to attend the Inland Empire Center for Entrepreneurship to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to build a successful business.

Beyond academics, Oscar has also faced personal hardships, including the loss of his uncle, which profoundly impacted him. He turned grief into motivation, using the experience to drive his ambition. "This journey has taught me resilience, the value of emotional support, and how to find strength in difficult times," he shared.

Oscar is also committed to giving back to his community through mentoring others, supporting local causes, and volunteering. "I believe small acts of kindness can inspire others to do the same, creating a stronger and more supportive community for everyone," he said.

Scholarship Opportunity for Students of the Month

All Student of the Month recipients are invited to apply for the Student of the Year Scholarship in the spring. This scholarship evaluates students on their grades, community involvement, recommendations, and essays, with the final selection made by a panel of sponsors and community leaders.

Banning Unified School District is proud to honor Victor Juarez Cruz and Oscar Ochoa, whose achievements, resilience, and leadership exemplify the District's values of excellence, service, and community commitment.

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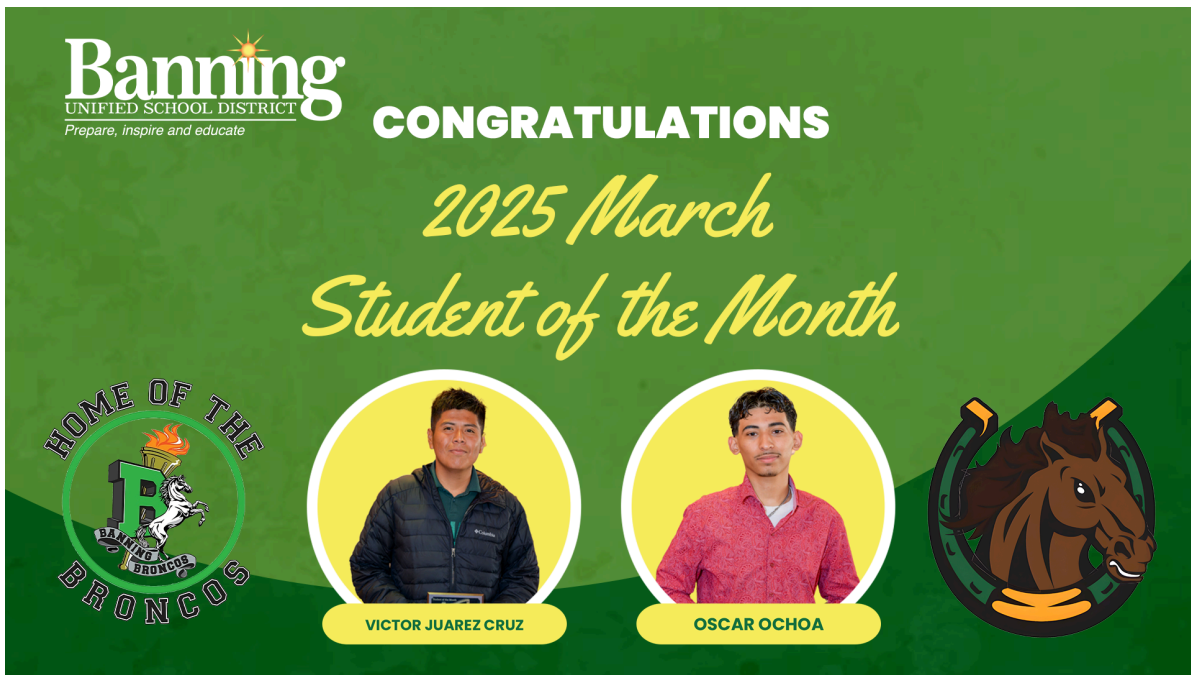


PHOTO CAPTION: Banning Unified School District students are honored at the March Student of the Month recognition breakfast, celebrating their dedication and outstanding achievements.

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PHOTO CAPTION: New Horizon High School student Oscar Ochoa proudly stands for a photo at the March Student of the Month recognition breakfast, honoring his hard work and accomplishments.

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PHOTO CAPTION: Victor Juarez Cruz, a dedicated student from Banning High School, proudly stands for a photo at the March Student of the Month recognition breakfast, celebrating his achievements and commitment to excellence.

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