Congratulations to the 2023 Orange County Teachers of the Year



Ben Case
Northwood High School
Irvine Unified
School District



Tracy Dawson
Arnold O. Beckman
High School
Tustin Unified School District



Emily Liu, Ph.D.
Irvine Valley College
South Orange County
Community College District



Jamie Morgan
Cerritos Elementary School
Savanna School District



Sergio Sanabria
Marco Forster Middle School
Capistrano Unified
School District



Jill Summerhays
Plavan Elementary School
Fountain Valley
School District

The Rewards of Teaching

This evening, at the Disneyland® Resort Hotel, many of Orange County's best and brightest teachers will be honored at the 2023 Orange County Teachers of the Year gala. The event celebrates teachers who have made extraordinary contributions to quality education.

"Orange County's teachers are equipping today's learners to be tomorrow's leaders, and their contributions go far beyond building skills, sharing knowledge and documenting progress," said Dr. Al Mijares, County Superintendent of Schools. "On a daily basis, our outstanding educators are securing a better future by encouraging, uplifting and empowering students to make a difference in their communities and the world around them. On behalf of the Orange County Department of Education, I want to congratulate and commend those exemplars of the teaching profession who address each student's unique academic, social and emotional needs in equitable and supportive learning environments. To quote the theme of this year's event, our 2023 Orange County Teachers of the Year are reaping 'The Rewards of Teaching,' and their stellar work allows our county and its students to do the same."

The Orange County Teachers of the Year gala is proudly sponsored by SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union. Since 1992, the credit union's contribution has exceeded two million dollars. In addition to sponsoring the event, SchoolsFirst provides a cash award of $500.00 and a personalized gift to every nominee.

Each teacher will also receive a cash award from the Orange County Teachers of the Year Award Foundation, established by Bill, Jeff, and Jennifer Gross. The Gross family has generously contributed over $4 million to more than 1,700 teachers since 1992.

Semifinalists

Leslie Adcock, ACCESS/El Modena, Orange County Department of Education

Jill Berrner, Olinda Elementary School, Brea Olinda Unified School District

Megan Bhaskaran, Thurston Middle School, Laguna Beach Unified School District

Jeannean Casolari, Vista Condor Global Academy, Vista Charter Public Schools

Suzanne Duris, Walker Junior High School, Anaheim Union High School District

Monique Flores, Western High School, Anaheim Union High School District

Angie Haas, Hopkinson Elementary School, Los Alamitos Unified School District

Sandra Jackson, Juliette Low School of the Arts, Magnolia School District

Jennifer Resendiz, Robert Heideman Elementary School, Tustin Unified School District

Brian Shay, Travis Ranch School, Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District

Nominees

Leonor Aguilera, Santiago Canyon College, Rancho Santiago Community College District

Kathryn Allsman, Olita Elementary School, Lowell Joint School District

Alejandra Ayala, Nohl Canyon Elementary School, Orange Unified School District

Gloria Badal, Ph.D., Cypress College, North Orange County Community College District

Berlio Beltran, Rose Drive & Melrose Elementary School, Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District

Earl Bench, Buena Park High School, Fullerton Joint Union High School District

Matthew Bridgeford, Washington Middle School, La Habra City School District

Rhonda Brown, CCA Training Center, College and Career Advantage

Ann Chung, Margaret Landell Elementary School, Cypress School District

Sara Cooper, Richman Elementary School, Fullerton School District

Claire Coyne, Santa Ana College, Rancho Santiago Community College District

Pita Dargavel, Mission Viejo High School, Saddleback Valley Unified School District

Marie Finman, San Juan Hills High School, Capistrano Unified School District

Danièle Fuson, James A. Whitaker Elementary School, Buena Park School District

Brandon Futagaki, Valley Vista High School, Huntington Beach Union High School District

Farida Gabdrakhmanova, Saddleback College, South Orange County Community College District

Sabina Giakoumis, Magnolia High School, Anaheim Union High School District

Michelle Goldman, Portola Middle School, Orange Unified School District

Sheryl Gomez, Rancho Santa Margarita Intermediate School, Saddleback Valley Unified School District

Denise Gribbin, Mesa View Middle School, Ocean View School District

Roseann Halcomb, La Vista High School, Fullerton Joint Union High School District

Marisa Hansink, College Park Elementary School, Irvine Unified School District

Megan Hornyak, Schroeder Elementary School, Westminster School District

Deidre Hughes, Fullerton College, North Orange County Community College District

Richard Ireland, Crescent Elementary School, Orange Unified School District

Julie Jansz-Martinez, Glenn L. Martin Elementary School, Santa Ana Unified School District

Karen Kauo, Castille Elementary School, Capistrano Unified School District

Caroline Kim, North Orange Continuing Education, North Orange County Community College District

MaryLynne LaMantia, Ph.D., Golden West College, Coast Community College District

Tim Leavey, South Lake Middle School, Irvine Unified School District

Christopher Maroney, Walton Intermediate School, Garden Grove Unified School District

Jennifer Messick, Yorba Linda High School, North Orange County ROP

Theresa Ogawa, Danbrook Elementary School, Centralia Elementary School District

Huy Pham, Westminster High School, Huntington Beach Union High School District

Antonio Pietrolungo, Crean Lutheran High School, Private School

Tran Polizzi, Orange Grove Elementary School, Anaheim Elementary School District

Patricia Reddick, Cielo Vista Elementary School, Saddleback Valley Unified School District

Socorro Sánchez-Vargas, Adelaide Price Elementary School, Anaheim Elementary School District

Rebecca Sims, Psy.D., Orange Coast College, Coast Community College District

Joelynn Strickland, Huntington Seacliff Elementary School, Huntington Beach City School District

Erin Thomas, Coastline Community College, Coast Community College District

Hanh Tran, Post Elementary School, Garden Grove Unified School District

Rita Hanna Yost, Morningside Elementary School, Garden Grove Unified School District

Dana Zywiciel, Yorba Linda High School, North Orange County ROP

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COORDINATED BY: Orange County Department of Education

PREMIER SPONSOR: SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union