

Tulare County Office of Education

Tim A. Hire, County Superintendent of Schools

news galleryweek

November 23, 2022

Foster & Homeless Youth Education Services' annual Education Summit set for December 15

Foster & Homeless Youth Education Services has opened registration for its annual Education Summit. The event will be held on December 15 from 8:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. in the Redwood Conference Center at 6200 S. Mooney Blvd. in Visalia.

This year, the summit will feature two prominent speakers, plus engaging audience activities. One of the featured presenters is Jessica Chandler, a nationally known children's advocate and inspirational speaker who spent her adolescence in Los Angeles group homes and the juvenile justice system. The other featured speaker is Christa Wiens, a former elementary school teacher who is the new interim executive director of the Central Valley Justice Center.

To register for the free 2022 Education Summit, visit: <https://forms.gle/6qkTiZQD9Ya2DvgX6>.

Jessica Chandler utilized the supportive adults in her life to change her trajectory when she emancipated at age 18. Since then, Chandler received her bachelor's degree in psychology and master's degree in social work from California State University, Northridge. Currently, she is a social worker with the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services, working with children and families navigating LA County's dependency and juvenile justice systems. Regarding the youth she serves, she says, "we are all one caring person away from being a success story!"



Chandler is a national advocate for children and families involved in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. She sits on the Los Angeles County Office of Child Protection

Education Coordinating Council (ECC) on behalf of probation youth and The Nehemiah Project LA to support transition-aged youth in the LA area.

In 2016, she was invited to the White House as a subject matter expert for pregnant and parenting young adults in foster care. In that same year, Chandler was selected to be included in the first-ever motion picture documentary film about the Department of Children and Family Services, as a testimony to what the department can achieve when dedication and passion are coupled with the implementation of best practices and policies. The documentary, [FOSTER](#), made its world premiere on HBO on May 7, 2019.

Christa Wiens became the interim executive director of the Central Valley Justice Coalition on October 1, 2022. The Central Valley Justice Coalition's mission is to prevent human trafficking through education, partnership, and outreach.



Wiens, a former elementary school teacher, began working with the organization first as a volunteer and later as its prevention education coordinator. In this position, she wrote program curriculum, prepared presentations, and led volunteer teams on projects. Education programs are offered at schools, churches, and other community organizations, with two dedicated to teens – a particularly at-risk demographic.

Wiens has also created a free online course for Fresno Pacific University entitled, "Understanding Human Trafficking." The course provides introductory information on what human trafficking is, why it is significant, and how to prevent oneself or others from becoming victims.

In fighting human trafficking in the Central Valley, the Justice Coalition works with a variety of organizations, including local, state and federal law enforcement agencies, and many local faith congregations representing a diverse range of beliefs.

Registration open for annual counselor conference

K-12 administrators and counselors, and post-secondary counselors, instructors, deans, and student success advisors are invited to register for the Tulare Kings College + Career Collaborative's sixth annual Counselor Conference. The conference is free and scheduled for Tuesday, January 31. It will be held from 8:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. at the Tulare County Office

of Education, located at 6200 S. Mooney Blvd. in Visalia. Industry partners and Workforce Investment Board staff members are also encouraged to attend.

Keynote speaker Principal Baruti Kafele is one of the most sought-after school leadership and classroom equity presenters in America. An expert in the area of “attitude transformation,” Principal Kafele is the leading authority on providing effective classroom and school leadership strategies toward closing what he coined, the “Attitude Gap.” In addition to writing several professional articles for popular education journals, he authored 12 books, is the creator and host of the popular Virtual Assistant Principal Leadership Academy, and is the recipient of over 150 educational, professional, and community awards.



In addition to the keynote presentation, participants can select from numerous breakout sessions. These sessions include presentations on equity and access, social-emotional needs, mental health, arts and well-being, career planning, and more.

To register for the conference, visit <https://tulare.k12oms.org/2458-225988>.

UC Merced researchers connect with students visiting SCICON

Researchers visiting the UC Merced/SCICON Field Station to conduct research are now connecting with students attending SCICON. Through live presentations about their work, researchers are engaging high school counselors



or sixth-grade students visiting the program. This new outreach is an extension of the UC Merced/SCICON Field Station and its mission to encourage young people to continue their higher education, particularly in the natural sciences.

Recently, Jessica Blois, an associate professor in the UC Merced School of Natural Sciences, conducted an outreach presentation to SCICON high school counselors. Blois' presentation included her research in climate change and paleontology. She also shared her educational background and the accessibility of the UC Merced campus as an option for Tulare County students.

"We are delighted to see an increase in the number of researchers utilizing the UC Merced/SCICON Field Station," said Tim Hire, Tulare County Superintendent of Schools. "This activity helps to fulfill the original vision of the partnership to study our important foothills environment and to expose students to opportunities for further education in the sciences."

For more information on the UC Merced/SCICON Field Station, including summer internships for high school students, contact Dianne Shew at dsheew@tcoe.org.

Photo above:

~ UC Merced Associate Professor Jessica Blois is pictured making a recent presentation to high school counselors at SCICON. Blois's presentation is the first of an ongoing education program that has researchers share with students about their work and their careers in environmental science.

Around the County

Central Valley Christian volleyball wins regional championship, Porterville High School wins Central Section championship

Central Valley Christian (CVC) High School volleyball finished its season as the state champion runner-up after the top-seeded Cavaliers fell 3-0 to ninth-seeded Ripon Christian (35-6, Sac-Joaquin Section) in the CIF



State Division IV championship game last Saturday. Prior to that match, CVC defeated third-seeded Palisades (34-11, Los Angeles City Section) 3-1 to win the CIF State Division IV SoCal Regional title.

The Cavaliers finished the season with an overall record of 26-15 and were also the CIF Central Section Division II runner-up.



Porterville High School girls water polo won its second straight Central Section championship on November 12. Seeded 14th in the Division III championship tournament, Porterville (14-16) defeated 16th-seeded San Joaquin Memorial (13-17) 10-6.

Porterville advanced to the CIF NorCal Regional championship tournament as the seventh seed, but fell 21-6 to second-seeded Stevenson (16-9, Central Coast Section).

Photos above:

~ Central Valley Christian High School volleyball celebrates winning the CIF State Division IV SoCal Regional championship on November 15. Ron Holman / Visalia Times-Delta

~ Porterville High School girls water polo pose for photos after winning the CIF Central Section Division III championship on November 12. PHS Aquatics Booster Club / Facebook

El Diamante High School film wins numerous awards at the National Student Production Awards



The winners of the seventh annual National Student Production Awards were announced November 18 during a virtual ceremony hosted by ABC News correspondent Rachel Scott. This competition is presented by the Foundation of The National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences (NATAS), which recognizes talented students from around the country.

With five winners each, the San Francisco/Northern California Chapter and the Chicago/Midwest Chapter led the list of winners in this year's national competition. Three National Student Production Awards were given to students from El Diamante High School in Visalia, with the other two going to Franklin High School in Elk Grove and Whitney High School in Rocklin.

El Diamante's film, *Come Home*, won awards in the categories of Fiction – Long Form, Audio/Sound, and Photographer. To view the winning film, visit <https://emmysf.tv/students-2/high-school-awards-2/2022-high-school-award-recipient-videos-2-2/>.

To read the full national press release, visit https://emmysf.tv/files/2022/11/NSPA_2022-Press-release_winners-Amend.pdf.

Photo above:

~ An image from El Diamante's award-winning film, *Come Home*.

Editor: [Robert Herman](#), Communications Director

Contributors: Nayirah Dosu, Marlene Moreno, Jennifer Fisher, Jaime Burnitzki, Jaclyn Garcia, Therese Arnold, and Dianne Shew

To receive the News Gallery Week, sign up [here](#), or contact Jennifer Fisher at jenniferf@tcoe.org or (559) 733-6172.