

Tulare County
Office of Education

Tim A. Hire, County Superintendent of Schools

news
galleryweek

February 15, 2023

Support Staff Conference scheduled for April 26

Central California support staff are invited to attend the 30th Annual Tulare County Support Staff Conference.

Along with great food, prizes, and the opportunity to network with support staff from across the Valley, this year's attendees will get to choose from breakout sessions that include presentations on a variety of personal financial and wellness topics, useful technology trainings, and more.

Thomas Murray will serve as the keynote speaker. A passionate educator with a heartwarming message, Murray serves as the Director of Innovation for Future Ready Schools in Washington, D.C. He has worked alongside the United States Congress, the White House, the U.S. Department of Education, and state and local education organization to implement student-centered learning. A best-selling author, Murray serves as a regular conference keynote. He was named the 2018 National/Global EdTech Leader of the Year by EdTech Digest, the 2017 Education Thought Leader of the Year by Texas Computer Education Association, and one of 20 to Watch by National School Boards Association in 2016. His best-selling book, *Learning Transformed: 8 Keys to Designing Tomorrow's Schools, Today*, co-authored with Eric Sheninger, was released in June 2017. His most recent book, *Because of a Teacher: Stories of the Past to Inspire the Future of Education*, was released in 2021.



The Tulare County Support Staff Conference will be held at the Visalia Convention Center, with breakfast beginning at 7:30 a.m. Registration is now open at tcoe.org/SupportStaff. The cost to attend is \$55 per person for Tulare County

support staff; \$65 per person for staff outside Tulare County. Registration closes on April 12.

For more information, contact Marlene Moreno at marlenem@tcoe.org or call (559) 733- 6302.

Lip Sync returns with “Let’s Glow” theme, teams invited to register to compete



The CHOICES Friday Night Live (FNL) program is gearing up for the return of its high-energy, annual FNL Lip Sync Battle. The long-running live event is open to all 6th-8th grade students in Tulare County. Teachers are invited to register their teams of students by March 1. To register and for information about competition rules, visit forms.gle/UTBiMNjrjgs98bT568.

The theme of this year’s Lip Sync Battle is “Let’s Glow.” Performers are encouraged to dress in neon or black light costumes as they perform their original routines at the Visalia Convention Center Friday evening, April 28. Schools can enter one act per category – lip sync, dance, and novelty, which welcomes students to create skit-like routines using props.

The FNL Lip Sync Battle was created over 30 years ago as a fun, life-affirming event to help young people develop their courage and inner strength to lead lives free from alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and gangs.

For more information on the FNL Lip Sync Battle, contact Brittaney Quinonez at brittaney.quinonez@toce.org, or at (559) 651-0155.

Photo above:

~ The Friday Night Live Lip Sync Battle returns this April 28 for students in grades 6-8. Teachers are invited to register their teams by March 1.

Circle J-Norris Ranch to host annual Biodiversity Festival March 11



The public is invited to attend and participate in fun, hands-on outdoor activities at the annual Circle J-Norris Ranch Biodiversity Festival on Saturday, March 11. The free event is hosted in partnership with Alianza Ecologista and includes nature walks, native plant investigations, and enjoying the vernal pools filled by this year's abundant rain. The Biodiversity Festival is fully bilingual and open 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.

A program of the SCICON school of outdoor education, Circle J-Norris Ranch is located at 41893 Yokohl Valley Road in Springville. Circle J offers all grade levels a wide variety of field study experiences.

For more information on the Biodiversity Festival, contact Amanda Driver at circlej@tcoe.org or (559) 539-2263.

Around the County

Two Tulare County high school seniors win \$10K scholarships



At the opening ceremonies of the World Ag Expo this week, Charlie Simpson of E.M. Tharp, Inc. announced the winners of the annual “We Believe in Growing” scholarship.

This year, two scholarships were awarded to Tulare County seniors – Caleb Callison of Central Valley Christian High School and Sophia Gomes of Tulare Western High School. Caleb and Sofia will both receive \$10,000 scholarships to attend a four-year

college or university to major in an agricultural field. The scholarships will be disbursed over four years at \$2,500 per year, per student.

The scholarship – now in its 16th year - was created as a partnership between the World Ag Expo and E.M. Tharp to support agriculture education and careers. High school seniors from Madera, Fresno, Tulare, Kings, and Kern counties are eligible to apply. For more information, visit www.worldagexpo.com/attendees/scholarships.

Photo above:

~ Caleb Callison of Central Valley Christian High School (left) and Sophia Gomes (right) of Tulare Western High School are the two recipients of the annual “We Believe in Growing” scholarship. The pair pose with Charlie Simpson of E.M. Tharp, Inc. – the Porterville-based truck sales and service company that created the scholarship in partnership with the World Ag Expo in 2007.

Several Tulare County schools earn recognition from the California Department of Education



On Monday, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond announced that 37 schools throughout the state were recognized as Model Continuation High Schools for 2023. Of those schools, two came from Tulare County: Citrus High School in Porterville and John J. Cairns Continuation High School in Lindsay.

Citrus High School was one of the model schools highlighted in the state's announcement. The announcement stated:

Citrus High School in Porterville not only values each student but also is committed to building relationships with each student as staff "meet them where they are" and help students grow into the adults they were destined to become. Peer tutoring at the local elementary school and serving as camp counselors boost student confidence and worth but also truly connect the school to the community itself.

Last week, Pleasant View Elementary School District in Porterville/Poplar was also named a high-performing California middle grades school. The district was recognized as part of the 2023 California Schools to Watch program. Pleasant View was one of 36 new schools to be recognized, while 41 schools reapplied to the program, demonstrated their sustained progress, and were redesignated as 2023 California Schools to Watch.

For more information on the middle school recognition, visit www.cde.ca.gov/nr/ne/yr23/yr23rel10.asp.

For more information on the continuation high school recognition, visit www.cde.ca.gov/nr/ne/yr23/yr23rel11.asp.

Photo above:

~ Citrus High School in Porterville, was recognized as a 2023 Model Continuation High Schools this week by the California Department of Education. Photo courtesy of Porterville Unified School District

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

Contributors: Nayirah Dosu, Marlene Moreno, Jennifer Fisher, Brittaney Quinonez, and Amanda Driver

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