

MUSD Radiant



The initial architectural drawings for the new high school.

A Plan For New Innovative Schools

ANGELICA COSTILLA

AS THE CITY of Madera expands its population and businesses, so has its school district. Over the last several years, Madera Unified School District has experienced a tremendous amount of growth in its student population, leading to a high demand for changes in its school system. Recently, a 12-Year District Facilities Plan was announced.

Superintendent Ed Gonzalez explains that this plan is needed to help improve our school facilities from what they are now. Currently the majority of Madera Unified School District Schools are above capacity, over-crowded, and rely on what has become termed as expensive “band-aids,” otherwise known as portable classrooms. Approximately 32% of district classrooms are portable due to the excessive number of students present at each school. Parking lots, restrooms, and other school site factors have all been affected by the over-population that exists at schools. To help fix this problem and improve student outcomes, Superintendent Gonzalez has unveiled an ambitious 12-year facilities plan to meet the needs of students across the district.

Under the 12-Year District Facilities Plan lies a wide range of solutions. First and foremost is the emergence of a Dual Immersion Program for K-6th students. Under this program, students will be taught 90% Spanish, and 10% English. As students make progress year over year, students will shift from being taught in Spanish to English. Thus, by the time they are in 5th or 6th grade, the student will learn 50% English, and 50% Spanish. A Newcomer Center at Madison Elementary School will also be established for students who are completely brand new to our country.

Another key piece of the plan is the establishment of a concurrent-enrollment middle school. The middle school will provide 200 students from

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Mayor Rob Poythress

A Good School District Is The Foundation Of A Prosperous Community

MAYOR ROBERT POYTHRESS

MANY TIMES I am asked by citizens of Madera to “bring Target to Madera” or “bring In-N-Out to Madera” or any

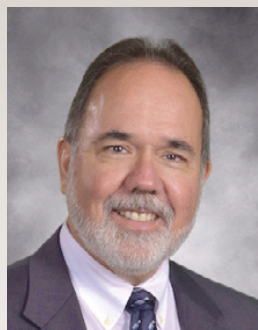
other number of popular retail or eating establishments to Madera. My answer to them is that if these businesses believed that they could make money in Madera, they would already be here. The problem is that Madera has a very low per capita household income, which was \$37,500 based on the latest data. This is compared to a per capital household income in Turlock that is approximately \$52,000. Popular retailers and restaurants are plentiful in Turlock due to the right income levels to support these businesses. Unfortunately, Madera’s per capita income makes us unattractive to retailers and restaurant chains, as they know that we don’t have the income levels to make them profitable.

So how do we increase our per capita income levels to the point that popular retailers could be attracted? The answer is simple and can be compared to a domino effect. We just need to keep more of the high-paying jobs that exist here in Madera in Madera. In other words, there are many high 5- or low 6-figure income level individuals who work in Madera but choose to live in Clovis or Fresno. The question then is why do they live in other places and commute here? For many of these individuals, their children’s education is a top priority, and they believe that their children will get a better education in the Clovis school system or in certain Fresno schools. Those are the cold hard facts.

The good news is that Madera Unified is on the move to improve the reputation of our schools through an emphasis in workforce development programs such as apprenticeship partnerships with local manufacturers such as JBT. We are also working to develop a strong STEM program that will provide better opportunities for our students to thrive in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.

Learning opportunities such as these, combined with our existing and award winning Robotics program, and combined with marketing the success of this effort, will make our school system much more attractive to those who are high wage earners who want a quality community and great schools for their families.

Higher average household income will also make Madera more attractive to popular retailers and restaurants and cause some to locate here. I urge Maderans to continue to encourage our effort to improve the quality of our schools. Become involved through volunteering, joining a school site council, and mentoring a youth. Let’s make Madera a place known for great schools! ➡



Superintendent Ed González

Message From The Superintendent

ED GONZÁLEZ

AS WE WRAP up yet another successful school year in Madera Unified, I would like to take the opportunity to thank our teachers, our support staff, our business partners, and the parent community for their support in our efforts to create a school system of which our community can be proud. I would especially like to thank our students, who never cease to amaze us and who are the reason for why we do what we do.

Madera Unified is committed to improving the educational outcomes for all of our students. Our commitment is based on two fundamental principles: 1) supporting strong families, and 2) providing our teachers with the highest quality professional development. We are supporting our teachers with resources and training to enable them to meet the needs of our next generation in an increasingly complex world of technology and curricular integration. This support has been rewarded with a tremendous vote of confidence, as our labor relationships have been closer and more productive than at any time in the Madera Unified’s history.

Looking back, we have had another phenomenal year. We anxiously await our state assessment scores, following encouraging results from last year showing our highest graduation rates, the lowest discipline rates, and the greatest improvement that we’ve seen from students who are learning fluency in English. We have continued our athletic success, with dominating Valley Championship teams from the Madera South High School Boys Cross Country team and the Stallion Girls Soccer team. Our Madera High “Mad Town” Robotics team continued its successful run with yet another appearance at the World Championships this year. The FFA continues to be recognized statewide, and our Visual and Performing Arts continue to make impressive gains in performance competitions. We competed well in the annual Academic Decathlon, sharing a Championship for the first time in more than a decade.

Madera Unified has welcomed the technology age with a tech rollout districtwide that is successful because of its unwavering support by our support staff. In January, the District unveiled its 12-Year Facilities Master Plan, detailing a comprehensive plan to build seven new schools and a new District Office utilizing two bonds, district funding, and matching funds from the State. We will soon open a new elementary school and a new high school, schools that will begin a transformation

both socially and economically within the entire Madera community. Our high student expectations, our cutting-edge technology, our community partnerships, our parent involvement, our labor collaboratives--these are the anchors of our success. It is an exciting time to be in Madera Unified.

We thank you for your support. We are committed to deliver to the community the type of school district that Madera deserves. Working together, we are making a difference in the lives of our students, and this difference will transform this community. ➡



State Superintendent Torlakson Impressed

NICOLE WHIPPLE

MADERA HIGH SCHOOL and Madera South High School are introducing a new experience for all students next school year. Career Pathways help guide students to careers that they find interest in. California's State Superintendent, Tom Torlakson, visited both Madera High and Madera South High School to evaluate and gain a better understanding of the facilities that both schools offer, in the field of agriculture at Madera South High School, and the shops full of engineering and technology at Madera High School.

Torlakson's advice for the students who are unsure about what career pathway to choose "is to go look at the sites and talk to students who have already been in the program to find out how they feel or find something that you're already interested in."

The five new electives for the Career Pathways in Agriculture will be offered at Madera South High School. Torlakson's first visit was a classroom that introduces how to create floral pieces. He was very interested in the students learning and engaged in conversations with them. The room adjacent to the classroom was the Floral Shop; students explained their job in the shop, which fascinated Torlakson. The students sell flowers and balloons to staff, students and the community.

The Welding Shop and Agriculture Mechanics class at Madera South Campus was an experience for State Superintendent that sets the school apart from many others, as he gained more insight on how the students are taught. The Diesel Mechanics Shop and



who want to go onto college." The three students involved with F.F.A. have had optimal learning and proper equipment due to the grant and will continue to have private partnership skills.

His final stop was at Madera High School, where he was greeted by the Robotics Club. The students presented State Superintendent Torlakson with an idea of the club through a video that explains their challenge at their next competition. Torlakson talked to the students working on the machines in the shop and said, "I see to-



Welding Shop were active during his visit, with many of the students explaining what they were doing or building.

His next visitation was on the 18-acre agricultural facility at Madera South High School. Three students from Future Farmers of America, F.F.A., greeted Torlakson and described what they have learned in the class and their achievements.

In May 2014, Torlakson granted Madera Unified School District's Agricultural Department a \$600,000

Career Pathways Trust Grant in the area of Plant Science.

Torlakson commented on the benefits that the students in the Career Pathways in Agriculture will receive: "The students here will graduate with marketable skills that will help them get good jobs and also those

tally engaged students, articulate and clear thinking, excited about being in school. They're excited about being in competitions, and they like working in teams; they're problem solvers."

Torlakson was shown the robot with almost exactly the characteristics that will be used in the upcoming competition for the Robotics Club. The students demonstrated some of the tasks that the robot is capable of performing by shooting a ball into a tower. After the

presentation, he was shown the robot and had the opportunity to discuss it with the students.

"Madera South High School and Madera High School are leading schools in the state of California. They get skills and have fun along the way," said Torlakson. ♣





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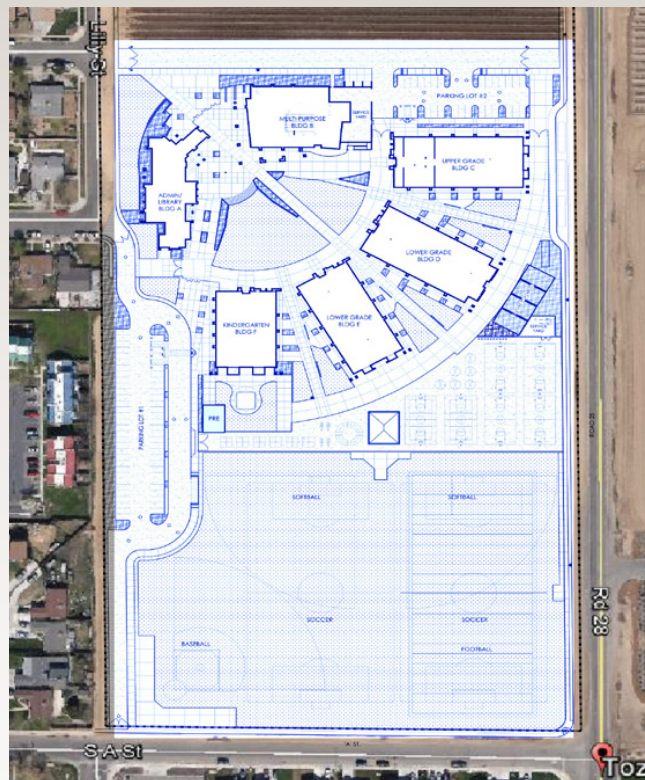
PLAN cont'd from front page ...

each of the existing middle schools in the morning, and 200 more in the afternoon, to experience a technologically advanced classroom setting at a different school site. Here, students will take interdisciplinary courses that are infused with technology and project-based learning. By 2020, a Madera Center for Technology and Professional Development will open in order to support employees with professional development needs and offerings.

Furthermore, the Madera Unified School District Office plans to “move into a bigger house,” where all employees can work under the same building to give service to what has now become 20,000 students amongst 26 schools. In August of 2016, a CAL State Program will open up for parenting students. Students who have babies will be able to stay in school and receive their diplomas along with receiving strong parenting education on how to drive their futures.

While there is indeed a lot more detail inscribed to the District’s 12-Year plan, the outcome is clear—a better future set up for the students of Madera Unified School District.

Recently, Madera Unified School Board approved plans (ABOVE RIGHT) and the name for the new elementary school. Construction for Virginia Lee Rose Elementary will begin shortly, and the school will open in the Fall of 2017. The initial plans were approved for the third high school,

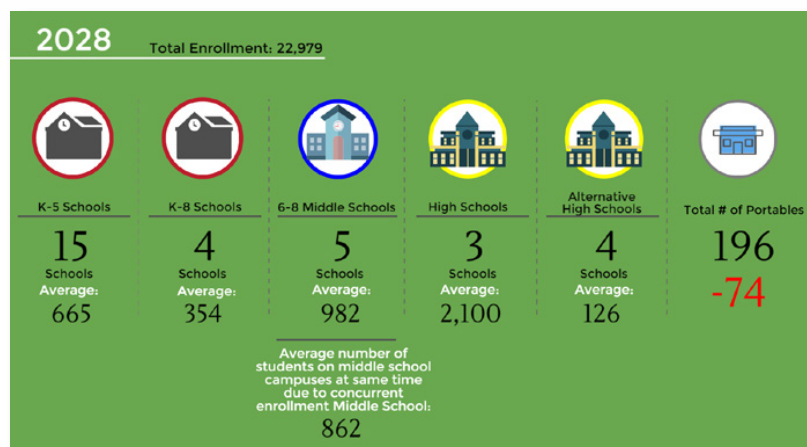
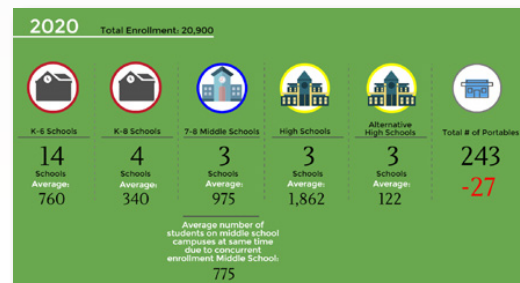
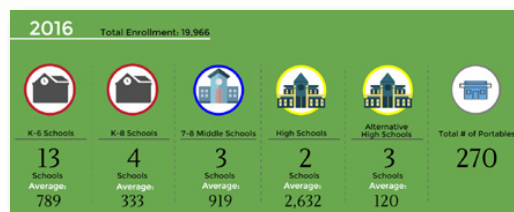


Site plan for MUSD’s new Virginia Lee Rose Elementary School at Road 28 and “A” Street.

which will be built on the corner of Road 26 and Martin.

Superintendent Gonzalez’s vision for Madera Unified is to be an innovative, technologically advanced school district with state-of-the-art facilities for teaching and learning. Superintendent Gonzalez wants everyone to know that “the true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not intend to sit.” 🌳

By the year 2028, Madera Unified School District will consist of the following facilities:



Madtown Robotics

AQSA KHALIL

RANKED IN THE top ten percent in the nation, about twenty-two members of the Madtown Robotics Team work assiduously at Madera High School. Each Robotics Team is given six weeks to design and build a robot. After six weeks, they must tag and ship the robot off until the competition begins. The team created identical robots to practice with. It is challenging to make these robots because each year the game changes, so the robot needs to be built according to the game. Armando Correa, sophomore, explains that on “announcement day,” the Robotics Team is given a video, which they use to analyze the rules and brainstorm different strategies to win the competition. After that point, the team develops the robot form, and experiments on what works and what doesn’t.

In Robotics, the team learns to manage time and improve communication skills. Each individual shares a different role during and before the competition. Armando explains, “My role is to manufacture and assemble the robot and maintain the robot throughout the competition.” During the Sacramento Regional competition, Armando worked on strategizing and figuring out what the team could do to help win the match.

In addition, Luis Martinez shares, “I am the leader of the lathe machine, which creates the shafts for the gears we need.” He is also a part of the chairman’s team, which takes care of community service and business aspects of robotics. In order to solicit donations, it is important they are out in the community. Thanks to about fifty sponsors, the Madera Robotics team has received the support and utilities they need! For example, just one robot has over \$7,000 worth of equipment. The team also fundraises, but without the support of the sponsors, they would not have been able to compete in the Central Valley competition. The team and the support of other contributors to the team have helped Madera High Robotics succeed.



Mentors are the guide that helps Robotics Teams get to where they are. As previous members of the team, the five mentors contribute their information and knowledge to the next generation of students, explains Adriana Villagomez. “They teach us the principles of the game and how to talk to other teams, as well as challenge us to use problem-solving skills and work the machine hands-on,” says Armando.

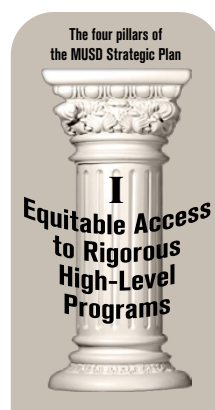
Every year, the Madtown Robotics Team registers for two events during the year: Central Valley Regional (CVR), which was held at Madera South High School, and the Sacramento Regional Competi-

tion. Madera hosted 48 teams from all over the west coast during the CVR competition. One way to qualify for the World Championship in Saint Louis, MO, is to win a wild card, which is how the Madera team qualified. “After the CVR, we had to strategize and think about what we can do to improve and be more prepared for the Sacramento competition. We have learned to treat every event, including the Sacramento competition, as a world championship to get great results,” shares Armando Correa. Because of their technique and determination, they are able to perform well.

On Saturday, March 26, the Madera Robotics Team came back from the Sacramento Competition, going against the winners of the Central Valley Regional. Armando explains, “I came across the problem where the robot was not moving or functioning, and I had to figure out how to push the robot, but as a team, we concluded that we would not be able to use the robot.” He points out that in robotics, each individual learns to tackle a specific problem, and finding a middle ground to everyone’s ideas is important. Even through obstacles that the team experienced, they made it to finals, winning eight matches and ranking in second place because of a tiebreaker. They were awarded with an innovation and control award.

“In Robotics, we learn how to present ourselves, work as a team, manage finances, communicate, and work collaboratively with others, and to problem-solve,” as well as “learn new skills that aren’t taught in class,” explains Armando. One thing Armando values about being a part of this team is that “we are all unique, and we all have our own differences, but we are still a big family.”

If you would like to become involved and support Madera Robotics, feel free to contact Principal Alan Hollman at Madera High School. ➡



Alumnus Omar Sandoval—Long Way To A Beginning

AQSA KHALIL

OMAR SANDOVAL GRADUATED from Madera South High School in 2012. He is currently enrolled in the United States Navy and qualified for the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. It is one of the top 20 colleges in the country.

Q. How did your journey and interest begin in the Navy? How did you get to where you are now?

April of my senior year, I had submitted my intent-to-enroll letter to attend San Diego State in order to pursue a degree in Sports Medicine. Three weeks before my graduation, San Diego State informed me that my Cal Grant A of \$9,000 had been lowered to a Cal Grant B of \$800, and I could not afford to pay to attend college. As graduation neared and my plans were falling apart, I remembered a presentation given by a recruiter of the Naval Nuclear Power Program, and decided to reach out to him; he told me that by enlisting in the Navy and going through their program, I could apply to the Naval Academy during training. So, I went to boot camp from December 12, 2012 to February 8, 2013 at Naval Nuclear Power School. After doing well there, I applied to the Naval Academy in the Fall of 2013 and was accepted.

Q. What obstacles have you endured during your experience and how did you overcome them?

I was going to start classes at the Naval Academy in the Fall of 2014, but I fractured my foot while rock climbing when my harness snapped and I fell forty feet. I was sent to the Naval Academy Prep School in Newport, Rhode Island for a year to have surgery and recover. After completing the Prep School in May of 2015, as well as my surgery rehab, I was finally able to report to the Naval Academy in summer of 2015 and began the initial induction training over the summer.

It set me back a whole year, and I wanted to get mad and felt frustrated. But the goal was still set in front of me and I knew that I could go forward. My dad always taught me, “No hay de otra,” which means no other way but forward. Keep going! So that is what I did.

Q. Did someone or something inspire you to become involved in the Navy?

What inspired me to become part of the Navy was the idea of the opportunity to give back to a country that has given so much to my family. I was born in Mexico and came to the U.S. when I was six, and my family and I are legal immigrants. Thus, the opportunity to give back in service to a country that took me in is an opportunity that I am really honored to have.

Q. What schools did you attend growing up?

I moved to Madera from Coalinga towards the end of 4th grade in 2004. I attended Berenda Elementary from 4th grade to 6th grade and went on to attend Desmond and Madera South.

Q. Who were some of your favorite teachers and why?

Teachers and administrators who had a profound impact along the way were:

- Desmond Principal Mike Lenneman, who made sure we all knew we could achieve great things.
- Ms. Montgomery was my 8th grade History teacher and pushed me to strive for perfection.
- Guidance Counselor Ms. Rodriguez kept my goals in perspective and motivated me to do well in school.
- South Coaches Scott Donegan, John Villa, Chris Maldonado, Randall Bartley, Nido Aranico (also English teacher), Coach Wayne Brown, Track Coach Rich Paris, all helped me bring out my work ethic, competitive spirit, and confidence. My coaches always preached that attitude and effort were the only things one could truly control.
- Guidance Counselor Lori Dugan pushed me to apply myself beyond the minimum, such as when I was taking Physics and AP English and Calculus during my senior year.
- Humanities Secretary Vicky Perez as well as Councilman/Youth Pastor Charles Rigby both kept things in perspective for me and helped me center myself going forward on my journey.

There are many other teachers who helped me in my hunger for knowledge, and the list is long because many people have helped me along the way, although I'm sure I'm leaving some out.

Q. What activities were you involved in?

While at South, I was involved in Football (Varsity from 10th–12th), Soccer (JV 9th), Wrestling (10th), Track (9th–11th), as well as Leadership (10th–11th) and ASB (11th),



and I served as Madera South's School Board Rep, in addition to Block S (10th–12th).

Q. What are some of your favorite memories of growing up in Madera?

I always had my own plan, so I was very individualistic. I loved being part of teams and clubs, but I really worked hard because I knew that I was going to have to make sacrifices to achieve my dreams. Working at Little Caesars, school work, and extra curricular activities, I didn't have a lot of time to waste.

I miss BBQing tri-tips and hanging out with my family. One of the things I really miss is the Hispanic culture. I miss going shopping in grocery stores that have taquerias in them and Mexican bakeries. It is hard to find conchas in Annapolis, Maryland, much less good tacos.

Q. What are your plans for the future?

I graduate in 2019, and then I declare what career I want to serve in the Navy. Some careers will ask for longer enlisting times. I am not really sure where I will end up or how long I will serve, but that is the plan. Graduate school is also an option in the future.

Q. How has Madera helped shape you into becoming the person you are today?

I like the fact that in Madera you have to work for it. Madera is a blue-collar town, and it really instilled that work ethic in me. Being from Madera doesn't limit you, but instead helps one grow and develop a great work ethic.

Also I miss the small town and the people I grew up knowing.

Q. What advice can you give to young students of Madera?

Do not follow the crowd—do what you want to do. It is not always hip to do the right thing, but it always pays off in the end. Avoid trouble, make good grades, and keep friends who have the same goals. ➡



MSHS Girls Soccer 2Peat Valley Champs

ANGELICA COSTILLA

FOR THE MADERA South Girls Soccer Team, 2015 was no doubt a notable year as they accomplished their first-ever Central Section Valley Championship win. When the night of February 26, 2016 came, the team would once again embrace the joys of all their hard work and dedication being paid off as, for the second time in a row, the team mastered a back-to-back Division II Valley Championship title. The Madera South Girls Soccer Team finished the game that night with a 1-0 victory over Redwood High School.

The team started off their season strong, holding a solid winning streak against some of the best teams in the valley. Although the journey to the Valley Championships was not an easy road, due to injuries and a few tough losses later on in the season against teams like Edison High School, Sanger, and Bullard, they did not let that get them down one bit. It was the team's

exceptional amount of strength, perseverance, and character that took them all the way.

"Whatever it takes," says team captain and forward starter of four years, Sophia Zertuche. "That was our team motto. We would do whatever it took to go after our one goal. Everything we pushed for made it all worth it."

After accomplishing such a great feat for the second year in a row, the Madera South team moved on to the CIF State Championships, where they would match up against southern section Division 1 El Camino Real High School. Although the team faced a 0-3 loss, what they gained was another year of great experience and a strong head for what's to come. While a total of eleven seniors will be leaving the team this year, it is safe to say that Madera South will have no trouble pursuing their goals and coming together for what is expected to be another incredible season next year. ♣



2 Adriana Arce, 3 Jasmine Garibay, 5 Vanessa Garnica, 6 Daniela Bence, 7 Sabrina Ibrahim, 8 Sophia Zertuche, 9 Brielle Bitter, 10 Itzel Rodriguez, 11 Jessica Zarate, 12 Cassandra Martinez, 14 Gabriela Jaimes, 15 Francesca Aviles-Winn, 17 Kimberly Montoya, 20 Angelica Gutierrez, 21 Tanya Hernandez, 22 Yuliana Lomeli, 23 Makayla Martinez, 25 Julie Marroquin, 66 Esmeralda Navarro, 77 Maria Leal • Head Coach Ramon Delgadillo • Assistant Coaches Natalie Perales, Esther Delgadillo, Yesseniah Delgadillo

Daniela Florian —Going Above And Beyond For Her Family

ANGELICA COSTILLA

EVERY SCHOOL YEAR, it becomes evident through numerous accomplishments and achievements that Madera Unified hosts some of the brightest and most hardworking students there are, both in the classroom and often on the field as well. However, what many don't see is the lives some of these students lead outside of school and the amount of strength, character, and leadership they continue to show there as well. For Madera South High School, senior Daniela Florian is one of those students.

Born to parents Juana Ortiz and Ricardo Florian, Daniela is the oldest child in her family of three and a remarkable student in the classroom. Throughout her four years of high school, Daniela has filled her schedule with several AP and Honors courses, which has allowed her to earn a highly respectable 4.2 grade point average. She has been involved with her school's Leadership Program for two years, Madera South's Girls Golf Team for three years, and an active member in her school's Spanish Club for a total of four years. Daniela was also a member of Madera South's Link Crew club her junior year, where she made herself available to help all new incoming freshmen with advice and guidance wherever it was needed.

While Daniela has made her success in the classroom and on school grounds look easy, it rarely ever is. Alarms clocks ring in her home at as early as one or two o'clock in the morning for her parents to travel to work in the fields. Daniela is left to be the one

who wakes her two younger siblings, 13-year-old brother Ricardo and 10-year-old sister Erika, making sure they are dressed, fed, and prepared to go to school.

After school and any extracurricular activities Daniela is involved with at the moment, she returns home with her homework on her mind. But since her parents don't return home from work until as late as seven in the evening sometimes, Daniela is the one who cooks dinner for the family and helps with anything her younger siblings need around the house. In addition to this daily routine, Daniela is the one who schedules doctor and dentist appointments for her siblings and takes them to all events they need to attend, such as sporting practices and school activities. On top of making sure she is doing everything she can in school, Daniela takes on the responsibility of keeping track of how her siblings are doing in school. She is often the one present at their parent-teacher conferences, being the one there for her family from sun up to sun down. Daniela carries her family in her heart every step of the way, always putting them first in her life.

Daniela explains that growing up with her family and attending Madera South



Daniela Florian (CENTER), with her brother Ricardo and sister Erika.

High School has taught her that "everyone has their own problems and things to deal with. But being together and working together as a family makes it that much easier to get through." Daniela's involvement with her school has furthermore helped shape her into the incredible and responsible person she is. She states, "My parents have taught me to be driven and have showed me the true essence of perseverance. I try my hardest in school for a better future. If I want something, I have to work for it." And that is exactly what she is doing.

Daniela plans on majoring in Criminology at her first choice of college options, UC Irvine, in the fall. ♣

The four pillars of the MUSD Strategic Plan





MADERA HIGH SCHOOL

Adriana Villagomez GPA 4.56

PLANS Attend UCLA. FAVE Mr. Clemensen, AP Calculus BC.

FSA Robotics. TCE! AP Chemistry.



Megan Goodacre

GPA 4.6 PLANS Attend UC

Davis, major: Bioengineering.

FAVE Chem & Calculus. FSA Band.

TCE! AP Literature and Composition.



Ailyn Hernandez GPA 4.4

PLANS Attend UC Irvine. I will major in Civil Engineering & hope also to study abroad. FAVE Mr. Howden, Physics.

FSA Robotics. TCE! AP Chemistry.



Simran Brar GPA 4.61

PLANS Attend college, UCLA, major in Biochemistry.

FAVE Mr. Clemensen, AP Calculus BC. FSA Band.

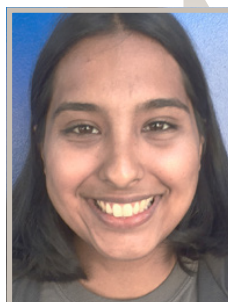
TCE! AP Literature.



Sahar Anjum GPA 4.37

PLANS Attend UCLA and major in Biological Sciences. FAVE Mr. Howden, Physics.

FSA Girls Tennis. TCE! Honors Physics.



Amrit Bola GPA 4.73

PLANS Attend a 4-year university, UCLA, majoring in Biology.

FAVE Mr. Clemensen, AP Calculus BC. FSA Track & Field.

TCE! AP Chemistry.

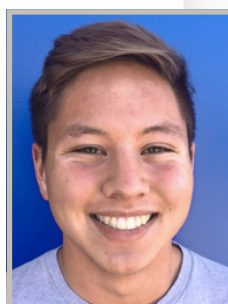


Laiba Tauseef GPA 4.63

PLANS Attend UC Davis & major in Biological Sciences. I'm deciding between UCLA & UC Davis.

FAVE Mr. Howden, Honors Physics.

FSA Tennis. TCE! AP Literature.



Eric "Ricky" Niino GPA 4.6

PLANS Attend the United States Military Academy at West Point.

FAVE Mr. Howden, Honors Physics.

FSA Water Polo. TCE! AP Literature and Composition.



Navdeep Padan GPA 4.42

PLANS Attend UC Davis, road to becoming a doctor. FAVE All of them!

FSA Playing "League Of Legends."

TCE! All of them!



Alyssa Berrelleza GPA 4.17

PLANS Attend a 4-year university, UC Davis. FAVE Diane Harper,

AP Literature. FSA California Scholarship Federation (CSF)

school club. TCE! Honors Physics.



FURMAN
HIGH
SCHOOL



Sarah Mesa GPA 2.54 PLANS I had a really rough start

at high school. Coming to Furman High School helped me regain credits and helped me to develop into a better student. I am able to work hard and excel, but also get a lot of help when I need it. The other great thing is I have time in my schedule to work at McDonald's and balance it with school. I am not sure of what I will do in the future, but now I have one, and that is exciting!

Excellent
Schools
Produce
Excellent
Students!



Jose Alvarez GPA 4.5

PLANS Attend UC Irvine, Criminology. FAVE Aranico, AP Literature. FSA Mock trial. TCE! AP Literature.



Cristian Guzman-Perez GPA 4.5

PLANS Fresno State Electrical Engineering. FAVE Ms. Larivee, Leadership. FSA Rallies & sporting events. TCE! AP Calculus.



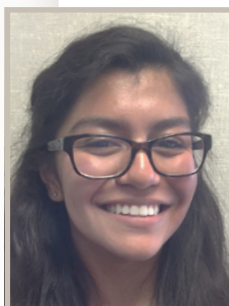
Samantha Bass GPA 4.52

PLANS Attend Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. FAVE Wasson, AP Literature. FSA Drama & MTSC shows. TCE! Calculus BC.



Joanna Belmontes GPA 4.47

PLANS Attend UC San Diego & UC Merced, Neuroscience. FAVE Mr. Richardson, Human Anatomy & Physiology. FSA Choir. TCE! AP Statistics.



Ricardo Valenzuela GPA 4.39

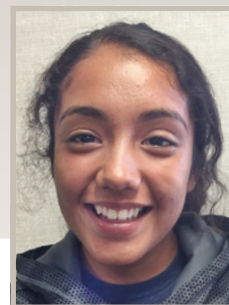
PLANS Attend UC Davis and major in Computer Science. FAVE Mike Horn, Calculus. FSA Playing golf. TCE! AP Literature.



MADERA SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL

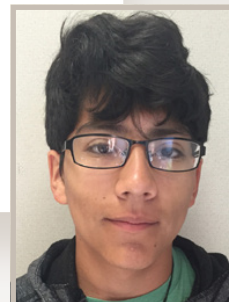
Angelica Costilla GPA 4.6

PLANS Attend UC Davis or UD Merced. FAVE Mr. Moosios, AP U.S. History. FSA Cross Country and History Club. TCE! AP Chemistry.



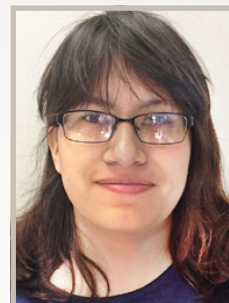
Sergio Maldonado GPA 4.5

PLANS Attend college: UC Irvine, Fresno State. Major: Electrical Engineering. FAVE Mr. Gipson, AP Chemistry. FSA Cross Country & Track. TCE! AP Calculus BC.



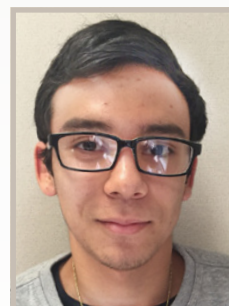
Jacqueline Mamani GPA 4.6

PLANS Attend college, BYU, Chemical Engineering and Mechanical Engineering. FAVE Mr. Gipson, AP Chemistry. FSA Going home. TCE! AP Chemistry.



Alvaro Orozco GPA 4.47

PLANS Attend either UC Davis in Bio-Medical Engineering or UC Merced in Bio-Engineering. FAVE Mr. Moosios, AP U.S. History. FSA Playing soccer. TCE! AP Chemistry.



Joanna Solano GPA 4.88

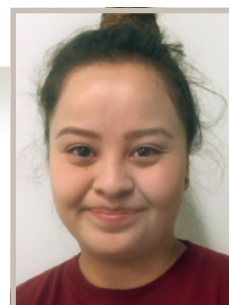
PLANS Attend college – UC Merced. FAVE Mr. Horn, AP Calculus AB/BC. FSA Floral Design. TCE! AP European History.



GPA Grade point average
PLANS Plans after high school
FAVE Favorite teacher & class
FSA Favorite school activity
TCE! Toughest class ever!

Maria Figueroa-Coronado GPA 3.63

PLANS I really had a rough time my first two years of high school and made very bad grades. After my sophomore year summer school, I realized I wanted a future. My goal is now to go to college and become a physical therapist. I will attend Madera Community College and then transfer to a four year university. Mountain Vista really helped me mature, set goals and begin working hard. I am grateful for this school and the opportunity to realize my full potential.



MT. VISTA
HIGH
SCHOOL

Dixieland Doing Great Things

ANGELICA COSTILLA

IN OCTOBER 1913, a country school was founded in Madera. Dixieland Elementary is a small school that prides itself on its unity and togetherness. With only 314 students ranging from kindergarten to eighth grade, Dixieland provides students with the quality education they need along with the many different ways in which it can be delivered.

“Do not let our size fool you,” says principal Ana Carrillo. “With the work of our staff and students, we are one of the highest performing elementary schools within all of Madera Unified School District.” As assessment scores are beginning to improve, especially in the social sciences category, it is safe to say it is not out of sheer luck. At Dixieland Elementary, students are able to engage in a wide variety of courses and activities. Journalism, Videography, and Spanish 1A that grants students 10 credits toward high school, are all classes that enable students to think and learn in different ways than what has been traditionally set out. “Not everyone is a book person,” states Carrillo. “We want our students to know that no matter what, there is always a way to learn, and that in this life there are numerous ways to succeed.”

With the Videography class offered at Dixieland Elementary, students are able to work hands-on with technology and create



relationships that the entire working staff and students have with each other that makes them stronger. This past fall season, everyone at Dixieland Elementary, including custodians, teachers, and students, gathered together and took a trip to see Madera

Dixieland Elementary continues to push an environment committed to developing children to be responsible, honorable, and motivated lifelong learners capable of making educated decisions for themselves, their family, community, and nation. If it is one



videos that push them to apply what they learn in books to something that can be presented on screen. Along with fun, innovating courses, students have the ability to participate in producing a school newsletter, be a part of school council where they give speeches, present ideas, and put on campaigns, and also participate in exciting events such as “Read Across America,” where the essence of reading is promoted.

Although the tools and courses students are provided with are a pivotal part in what makes Dixieland’s name so strong, it is the

High’s Homecoming Parade. This experience reflects how close the school really is and the positive effect it has on the children. “Because we are so small, it makes it that much easier to connect with the students and reach them in whatever way needed. If they need something or need to talk, they know that we are here,” Ms. Carrillo points out. Every morning she greets her students with love and encouragement throughout the morning announcements, providing them with a positive thought of the day and a new idiom to be learned.

thing the staff and faculty are working hard to do, it is to teach them not only how to retain information, but how to utilize that information to become better human beings in the lives they live. ➡



Stallions Jazz It Up With A Pro

MADERA SOUTH AND other local schools very fortunate to have four-time-Grammy-winning composer/pianist Billy Childs visit our campus and clinic our Jazz Band today as part of a two day event that the district put together.

Mr. Childs listened to and critiqued the Jazz Band, shared tips on the tech-



Billy Childs

nical aspects of jazz music, and offered some wonderful insight on music as a career.

He was kind enough to share his thoughts on what it took to reach the level of success that he has attained.

Students were able to engage in a discussion and were asking questions that would make AVID teachers proud.

It was an amazing experience, and the students were truly inspired. The band thanks Dr. Marcheta Williams



and the entire Madera Unified School District Administration for making this event possible. And our Superintendent Ed Gonzalez showed these kids a thing or two on the piano. It was quite impressive! ➡

Growing Great Students At La Vina

JONNIE MONTANO

WALKING ON LA Vina's Kindergarten through 8th grade campus, it is immediately evident that the staff values the importance of making sure that visitors are welcome



lift the students up." This is a concept held very close to Navarro's heart as he remembers his first day at La Vina as a 5th Grader.

La Vina has a current enrollment of 273 students, but as Principal Navarro explains, "We are a little school with high expectations." With the majority of students coming in speaking Spanish only, staff prides themselves on "re-classifying as many English learners as early as possible." Teachers such as Mr. Valdivia go as far as setting up tutor sessions with their students outside of school, asking for no pay. Teachers here on campus explain that their relationships with the students and their families far exceed that of many other schools. Mr. Valdivia states, "We have the honor of getting to teach multiple students coming from one family. In most cases we teach up to seven of the siblings and promote them from our school." Despite circumstances in the area, the whole staff gets involved from kindergarten to promotion, making sure that students are equipped with all the tools necessary to be successful students in high school and in life. Navarro emphasizes the importance of the relationships built with the students. He speaks about participating at recess and lunch, "establishing trust and credibility."

Whether it is playing basketball, volleyball, or soccer, Principal Navarro explains how athletics go hand-in-hand with the education at the school. "Sports thrive as a motivational tool for the students," says Navarro. Teachers have begun hosting events such as the La Vina World Cup, a soccer tournament that gets all students at all levels involved. Students "must do their work in the



Jesus Navarro, La Vina Principal

classroom before attending these activities," says Principal Navarro. He realizes how the benefits that events like this and similar rallies aid in motivating the students to keep up the hard work.

A former student of La Vina and a graduate of Madera High School, Principal Navarro wants to thank the community for the support that they have always given him and now give to the students at La Vina. Mr. Navarro also wants students to know that they can do anything they set their minds to. Plans for the future include incorporating more technology into lesson plans and exposing more students to robotics and community service activities. ➡



and given a friendly greeting. Jesus Navarro, the principal at La Vina, explains, "It is a family here on campus. The staff here will not allow students to fall through the cracks." In addition, he speaks about his staff, stating, "We all work together to

Alumnus Sandon Schwartz—Giving Back

ANGELICA COSTILLA

SANDON M. SCHWARTZ is a former Madera High graduate of the Class of 1991. Having grown up in Madera, he is now an Assistant Superintendent in Administrative and Support Services for Madera Unified School District. He attended John Adams Elementary School, Thomas Jefferson Middle School, and Madera High.

Q. What are some of your favorite memories of growing up in Madera?

I spent a lot of time at Town & Country Park playing sports with friends. I grew up down the street from Town & Country Park. Some of my fondest memories came from being involved with athletics. I played volleyball and basketball, and to this day I'm still great friends with my former teammates and peers.

Q. What were you like in high school?

I was a good student. I was pretty quiet, but I made sure to earn good grades. Growing up in Madera was a great experience for me because I participated in things. School kept me busy, and that's one of the things I've always appreciated.

Q. Who was your favorite teacher growing up?

I had a lot of great teachers growing up. It is difficult to single out just one. The teachers who I really remember were the ones who were positive and supportive. They helped students like me gain self-confidence. My basketball coach in high school, Bryan Tessler, was an important figure in my life. As a team, we spent a lot of time together, and after I graduated I came back and started coaching Basketball at Madera High two years later. I loved coaching very much, and that is what made me go back to school and get my teaching credential.

Q. What school did you attend after high school?

After high school, I attended Fresno State as a Business Finance major. I got a degree in Finance and received my MBA (Master of Business Administration) while doing internships as a financial advisor. I came to find that I didn't really enjoy it, but what I did enjoy was coaching. Here is

where Coach Tessler and other administrators from Madera High encouraged me to get my teaching credentials, so I went back to get my teaching credential in business. I actually started my first year of teaching in 1997 on what is now the Madera South campus.

Q. What positions have you held within Madera Unified?

I have been a Business teacher, a grant coordinator, an Assistant Athletic Director, a Vice Principal at Martin Luther King Middle School as well as at Washington Elementary, a Principal at Pershing Ele-



mentary, and a Principal at Madera South High School. I am now currently an Assistant Superintendent of Administrative and Support Services.

Q. What did it take to get where you are now?

I've always said, it's really the team that you put together and who you work with. I've always been really blessed to work with amazing people. Nobody gets to where they're at alone. It is always a team effort. That's what's been crucial for me, just being a part of a good team.

Q. What made you choose the career you have right now?

I think the career chose me. Both of my parents were teachers, and as I finished college, I found that I really did enjoy being around students and seeing them grow. As a result of that, I believed that becoming a teacher would be all that more fulfilling than what I had originally thought.

Q. What are your plans for the future?

When the time comes, I plan on ending my career here at Madera Unified. I plan on helping Madera Unified improve in every way possible as a district in both instruction and services.

Q. What kinds of opportunities did the community offer you?

We've always had a ton of support from local businesses. Our community is a community of alumni. Everyone was always supportive of graduates, whether in regards to scholarships or any type of activities taking place. Sporting events would be packed, and you could feel the support all around.

My parents also made sure that doors of opportunities would always remain open, especially in terms of education.

Q. How has Madera helped shape you into becoming the person you are today?

Because Madera is a small community, it has instilled the feel of a family. I remember looking up to the guys who were three or four or five years older than us. They were role models. You knew the people in your neighborhood, you knew the people who ran the grocery store,

and that is important to me. I value that, and that is part of the reason I love and still work in Madera.

Q. How did high school prepare you for college?

I felt really prepared for college. I was in a lot of AP and Honor classes. Our teachers did their best to prepare us. As a freshmen in college, I really felt like I was prepared and could compete with other students.

Q. What advice can you give to young students of Madera?

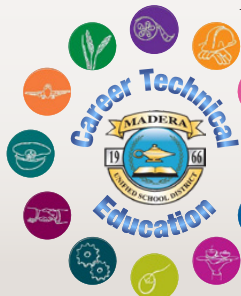
The best advice is to remember that the decisions that you make today are the decisions that are going to affect you tomorrow. Everything you do will have an impact on you down the line, so you always want to keep the doors of opportunities open. Another thing I would say is, appreciate where you grow up. Appreciate the community you live in and the support that you receive. ♣

Madera Future Teachers Head For Boston

MADERA UNIFIED HIGH School Seniors Gillian Hogan, Angelica Sangster, and Andrea Ruiz are getting ready to compete at the National Conference of Educators Rising. The conference will be held in Boston in late June. Accompanying them will be Janine Bergdahl, the instructor of Careers in Technical Education.



(L-R) Gillian Hogan, Angelica Sangster, and Andrea Ruiz.



Angelica placed 1st in the State Competition for Children's Literature Category, writing a story about Pluto the Clumsy Penguin. Gillian placed 2nd in the State, writing about Ollie the Octopus. Andrea Ruiz placed 2nd in the State for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Lesson Planning, when she

wrote and taught a lesson on turning liquid to solid as she and her first graders made home-made ice cream.

These students are part of the CTE Career Path taught at Madera and Madera South High Schools. Part of their classroom experience is that they volunteer two hours a day, four days a week in classrooms at Alpha and Madison Elementary. The CTE Career Pathway not only strengthens our schools but hopefully develops teachers of tomorrow. ➡



Millview "Walk To School" Day

ON APRIL 6TH, Madera County Public Health Department's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP-Ed), Millview Elementary School, the City of Madera Police Department, the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) and the City of Madera Parks & Community Services joined schools from around the world to celebrate Walk to School Day during the festivity of National Public Health Week.

THE PURPOSE OF this event was to create awareness for the Safe Routes to School initiative, thus creating a walkable-safe community. The absence of safe, walkable communities is a leading cause of physical inactivity. This is compounded in rural communities that lack sidewalks and other infrastructure to support walking and bicycling where people often must travel long distances to schools and other destinations.

About 300 students, parents, and school staff from Millview Elementary School walked to school, along with parents, teachers, and community leaders. The event began at 6:45 a.m. with fun exercise activities taking place in the park. Children, parents, and recognized community leaders walked from the Madera Sunrise Rotary Sports Complex (Millview Park), with



walkers and bicyclists arriving at the school at 7:45am.

Walk to School Day raises awareness of the need to create safer routes for walking and bicycling



and emphasizes the importance of issues such as increasing physical activity among children, pedestrian safety, traffic congestion, and concern for the environment. The annual event builds connections between families, schools and the broader community. ➡

For more information, please visit:

Walk to School Day in the USA:

walkbiketoschool.org

National Center for Safe Routes to School:

saferoutesinfo.org

International Walk to School Day:

iwalktoschool.org

Interact Cares

DURING SPRING BREAK our Coyotes who serve in Interact visited Los Barriles in Baja California, Mexico. The longstanding tradition of Interact service was enacted again with great results. You'll notice students you know and love and maybe even a few Coyote alumni or even a former MUSD superintendent or principal! Interact has always represented the very best of Madera and the service this March was certainly no different! Hopefully



we can spotlight their service in the Madera Tribune as well.

Until then, please acknowledge their good work. Congratulations to our students and their mentors and thank you for representing us so very well! ☺

Howard School Hosts Author And Illustrator

ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24th, students at Howard School were treated to a unique experience. Author John Walker and Illustrator Roberta Davis visited campus to discuss their new book, *It Is I!*, a fairytale. Students were fascinated as Mr. Walker read his own work and talked about how *It Is I!* began as a story he wrote for his son and blossomed into an illustrated book to be shared with all children. Mrs. Davis then produced an original work of art to show students how the characters came to life on the pages. After presentations in the morning, students were given the opportunity to purchase a copy of the book and have it signed by both Author and Illustrator. *It Is I!* is the first in a four part series. Book two is near completion and the Howard Bulldogs are looking forward to seeing Mr. Walker and Mrs. Davis again very soon. ☺

