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SVC awards 28 Champions of Diversity nominees

Skagit Valley Herald staff

The 13th annual Champions of Diversity Awards ceremony held Dec. 5, 2012, honored 87 area high school students for their contributions to diversity in their schools and communities.

Of those students, 28 were Diversity nominees in grades 10-12.

Each student received a special award from the North Cascades Institute in Sedro-Woolley to participate in a North Cascades Wild program.

They can spend part of the coming summer canoeing, hiking and completing service projects in North Cascades National Park and Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

Educational institutions, local businesses and community organizations awarded \$208,366 in scholarships to 59 seniors who have shown exemplary service in leadership, community service, and in academic and educational activities. Scholarship recipients were published Jan. 13 and Jan. 20 in this section.

The December presentation was sponsored by Skagit Valley College's Multicultural Student Services and held at McIntyre Hall on the college's Mount Vernon campus.

Dozens of businesses and individuals contributed to and supported the 2012 program.

2013 Champions of Diversity Award winners

Annally Aviles, Jose Barajas, Krystal Espinoza, Anissha Gonzalez, Flor Hernandez-Morales, Dellisha Hodges, Nancy Linares, Karina Luna, Faviola Martinez Bautista, Itzel Rodriguez Ramirez, Janet Solano Cruz, Melissa Torres-Flores and Lucia Vivanco, all from Burlington-Edison High School, and Jose Fonseca from Burlington-Edison North High School;

Betsy Covarrubias, Elida Cruz, Vanessa Ruiz, Jacob Serna and Hannah Smith, all from Mount Vernon High School; Sydney Boyer, Ashley Everett, Pristinavae Manning and Courtney Opilas, all from Oak Harbor High School; Tami Garcia, Max Gregory, Mayan Magana-Ortega, Brandi Mason and Alana Ragsdale-Schuetzle, all from Sedro-Woolley High School.

Burlington-Edison High School

Annally Aviles is a junior and a volunteer at the Sea Mar Community Health Center daycare. She also helps with translation between parents and Sea Mar staff. Annally is involved in AVID and the Young Life program in Burlington.

José Barajas is a junior who volunteers at his alma mater, West View Elementary School, where he reads to children and helps at events and celebrations. He plans to earn a degree in either criminal justice or law.

Krystal Espinoza is a sophomore who tutors and translates for newly arrived students from Mexico.

She is involved in her school mentoring program, is a youth leader at her church, participates in choir and hosts a Bible study group at her home every week.

Krystal hopes to become an ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher.

Anissha Gonzalez is a junior who volunteers at Children of the Valley in Mount Vernon by assisting students in grades 2 through 6.

She has participated in AVID for several years and assists her AVID peers with their homework after school.

Flor Hernandez Morales is a sophomore who serves as translator for her family, helps at her church and participates in Habitat for Humanity projects.

She also participates in school plays, mentors incoming freshmen, plays tennis and is a Natural Helper.

Dellisha Hodges is a junior who participates in track and field, wrestles, plays in the band and is actively involved in her church. Her photo was not available.

Nancy Linares is a sophomore who has had to relearn English after returning from Mexico. She is involved in the Photo, Interact and Cosmetology clubs and mentors incoming freshmen. Nancy has volunteered at the community Harvest Festival and the community Christmas dinner.

Karina Luna is a junior who has volunteered at retirement communities and Lucille Umbarger Elementary School and is involved in Latinos in Action, working with the Hispanic population at local elementary schools.

Faviola Martínez Bautista is a junior who has tutored adults seeking a GED, watched children in the daycare at the Centro De Padres program at West View Elementary School, tutored students at Raspberry Ridge, helped with fundraisers at her church, and served as an interpreter at Burlington's Kindergarten Round Up.

Itzel Rodríguez-Ramírez is a junior who is a member of AVID and has been involved in various food bank donation drives. She is enrolled in Running Start at Skagit Valley College and is on her way to becoming a nurse.

Janet Solano Cruz is a junior and a member of Latinos in Action. She has volunteered as a tutor and interpreter at West View Elementary's Centro de Padres program.

Melissa Torres-Flores has been involved in AVID, tutored at Raspberry Ridge, volunteered during the West View Elementary Cinco de Mayo celebrations, attended La Cima Bilingual Leadership Summer Camp, and is involved in Latinos in Action.

Melissa is enrolled in the Northwest Career and Technical Academy's Dental Technology program. Her photo was not available.

Lucia Vivanco is a junior who has maintained a 3.59 GPA while being involved in AVID, volunteering at a nursing home and babysitting for her extended family.

She also is a member of Happy Hands Club, which provides services for the hearing impaired.

Burlington-Edison North High School

José Fonseca is a senior originally from Tizapan, Mexico. He has coached middle school soccer, adopted a soldier and participated in local food drives, blood drives and back-to-school fairs. His photo was not available.

Mount Vernon High School

Betsy Covarrubias, a senior, serves as a role model for younger Latino students. She is attending the Northwest Career and Technical Academy with the hopes of becoming a dental assistant.

Elida Cruz is a senior special education student who volunteers at her church and the local food bank. She would like to attend college and become a teacher's assistant.

Vanessa Ruiz is a senior who plans to attend Skagit Valley College and become a professional photographer.

Jacob Serna, a senior, is the football team captain, is involved in AVID and participates in leadership conferences and workshops. Jacob will be the first in his family to graduate from college. His photo was not available.

Hannah Smith, a junior, is involved in AVID and Family Careers and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA).

She has also participated in extensive community service around the county.

Oak Harbor High School

Sydney Boyer is a sophomore involved with Bikers Fighting Cancer, Children's Hospital and the Ronald McDonald House.

She has been an active member of her school's leadership program, volunteered at homeless shelters and worked with a domestic abuse prevention club.

Ashley Everett, a senior, participates in charity events, is involved in Teens Against Tobacco Use and is a gifted and awarded artist. Her goal is to become a registered nurse and join the military.

Pristinivae Manning, a junior, has lived in Japan most of her life. She serves as president of the Oak Harbor Robotics Club, as a National Honor Society member, and maintains a 4.0 GPA.

Pristinivae would like to work in the medical field. Her photo was not available.

Courtney Opilas is a senior who immigrated from the Philippines in 2011.

She excels in school, and was recognized as the Health Center's Student of the Month for her academic work. She plans to become a nurse.

Sedro-Woolley High School

Tami Garcia, a sophomore, has designed T-shirts and posters for school functions and teaches yearbook students how to use Photoshop and Illustrator, staples in the graphic design industry.

Tami is an active member of the student leadership team.

Max Gregory is a sophomore. He volunteers at North Cascades Institute and is involved in Varsity in Volunteerism, Earth Corps, National Honor Society, AVID and College Bound Club, in which he serves as co-president. Max also takes honors English, advanced algebra and chemistry while maintaining a 4.0 GPA. His goal is to study psychology.

Mayan Magaña-Ortega, a senior, participates in AVID, volunteers at her church and helps Latino families complete Deferred Action applications.

Mayan will be the first member of her family to graduate from college. She plans to study criminal justice. Her photo was not available.

Brandi Mason is a junior who takes high-level math, science and English classes and is a gifted actor and debater.

She has gone to state the last two years in duo interpretation.

She also is a third-year member of Club Diversity. Her photo was not available.

Alana Ragsdale-Schuetzle is a sophomore. She serves as a Challenge Day leader, Varsity Volunteer Club member and College Bound Club co-president.



Ragsdale-Schuetzle



González



Aviles



Everett



Covarrubias



Opilas



Cruz



Martínez Bautista



Hernandez Morales



Smith



Rodríguez-Ramírez



Solano Cruz



Barajas



Luna



Espinoza



Vivanco



Gregory



Linares



Boyer



Garcia



Ruíz

Information

The Champions of Diversity's Award Ceremony is airing on Comcast channels and can be viewed on TV10 at 9 a.m., 2 p.m. and 11:30 p.m., or on TV26 at 9:30 a.m., 5 p.m. and 9 p.m. Viewers can find viewing schedules for both channels at the city of Mount Vernon's website, www.mountvernonwa.gov.