



Santa Clara County Office of Education

NEWS RELEASE

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SCCOE nominates six classified school employees from across the county for statewide award

SAN JOSE, CA – Omar Gutierrez is not just a long-time employee of East Side Union High School District, but someone who went through the school system there, attended college locally and decided this was home. While working on his degree almost 15 years ago, he became an employee and has been serving students and his community ever since.

Gutierrez is one of six people with similar stories of exemplary service nominated by the Santa Clara County Office of Education for the California Department of Education’s annual [Classified School Employee of the Year recognition program](#). An enthusiastic response was received from staff within the SCCOE and from the county’s school districts, with more than two dozen nominations across the six categories.

The following countywide honorees will now proceed on to the state level for consideration in the following categories:

Child Nutrition: Keli DaSilva of Gilroy Unified School District;
Maintenance, Operations and Facilities: Adan Barajas of Oak Grove Elementary School District;
Office and Technical: Omar Gutierrez of East Side Union School District;
Paraeducator and Instructional Assistance: Victoria Santiago of Morgan Hill Unified School District;
Services and Security: Eva Chesnut of Moreland School District; and
Transportation: Jesus Contreras of Campbell Union School District.

“It was an honor to serve as a judge for this important process,” said Dr. Mary Ann Dewan, Deputy Superintendent of the SCCOE. “The accomplishments of the nominees were all very impressive. Clearly, the nominees are making a significant impact on the school communities they serve.”

Dr. Dewan judged the entries alongside Bonnie Mace, Executive Director of the Santa Clara County School Boards Association; Maria O’Hollearn, Program Director of the Family College Success Center for the Hispanic Foundation of Silicon Valley; and Sandra Fakaosi, Student Assessment Technician at Osborne School.

The Santa Clara County Board of Education will recognize the honorees during Classified School Employee Week at the May 18 meeting. They will go on to compete against other school districts at the statewide level. Awardees will be announced by the California Department of Education this month and honored at an event in Sacramento in May.

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