

WE ARE TR!

Graduation
2018

WE DID IT!

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Read about students who overcame challenges to make it to the top of their class.



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Commemorating
10 years of
Twin Rivers

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programs

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TR employees
of the year

TwinRivers
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

SIGNS OF SUCCESS

Graduation rate*:

84.3%up from 75.3%
in 2013

(exceeds county and state averages)

Dropout rate*:

8.5%down from 16.4%
in 2013

(lower than county and state averages)

In the 2017-2018 school year:

5,728

students took the PSAT test for free

1,072

students took the SAT test for free

1,120students enrolled in
Advanced Placement classes**152**students received the
California State Seal of Biliteracy

*Figures from 2015-16 school year. The California Department of Education will release the 2017 graduation and dropout rates in June.

Cover photo by Roman Rykun

READY FOR
THE NEXT STEP

Class of 2018 will take lessons with them as they embark on their future

This moment has been 13 years in the making. Twin Rivers Unified School District graduates have been working toward this step from their first day in kindergarten.

It's been our honor as educators to support each and every student's own academic journey. We've helped them learn about the past and how to discover new solutions to the problems of our future. We've helped them make the grade, even when that meant learning from failures and finding the strength to push on. We've helped them earn a strong start to any future they choose and graduate well-prepared for college, career and life. Join me and the entire Twin Rivers community in congratulating the Class of 2018 and wishing them continued success.

Each student in every classroom across the district is working step-by-step, day-by-day, toward this moment, when they too will take the stage. At the close of this school year, we are already looking forward to the beginning of the next. We welcome those students who will be promoting to the next level. We applaud our sixth-graders, who have grown so much since kindergarten and are ready to leave elementary school behind. We recognize the accomplishments of eighth-graders who are promoting to high school, the Class of 2022, their eyes perhaps already on college and career.

We're readying our classrooms and campuses to welcome them as they begin the next phase of their journey with Twin Rivers in the fall.

Join me and the entire Twin Rivers community in congratulating the Class of 2018 and wishing them continued success.

But we won't soon forget the Class of 2018. We'll be watching as you set off across our region and the nation, following your own unique path. We hope as you work toward achieving the dream you hold in your heart, you won't forget about everyone you've met along the way and those who have championed your successes. We await great things from you! I'll leave you

with these lines from Rudyard Kipling's "If":

"If you can keep your head when all about you are losing theirs ...

If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you ...

If you can wait and not be tired by waiting ...

If you can think — and not make thoughts your aim ...

Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it."

Congratulations CLASS of 2018!!!!

We Are TR!

— Dr. Steve Martinez,
Superintendent of
Twin Rivers Unified
School District





TWIN RIVERS CELEBRATES A DECADE OF SUCCESS

Longtime staff and educators reflect on the changes they've seen



This anniversary logo was designed by Grant Union High School ninth grader Sochil Avila.

In 2008, four districts — Del Paso Heights, Grant, North Sacramento and Rio Linda — were united into one: Twin Rivers Unified School District.

Twin Rivers will be celebrating its 10th anniversary all next school year and has adopted a special 10th anniversary logo, which was designed by Sochil Avila, a ninth grader at Grant Union High School.

KJ Rhoads, Principal at Pioneer Elementary School, says since then, the unified district has improved educational opportunities for students throughout the community.

"Anyone who is an effective teacher or district leader is constantly growing and thinking and evaluating what they're doing every day," she says. "That is exactly what we want for students in the 21st century:

"Students have really been able to enjoy school, enjoy learning and come to school with a purpose."

KJ Rhoads
Principal, Pioneer Elementary School

We want them to be able to be flexible, we want them to be able to think about problems and try solutions out and make changes."

Here are reflections from three staff members who have been with the district all 10 years:

Best practices

According to Dannie Gonzalez, Data Management Specialist in special

education, the merger enabled staff in all departments to refine their operating procedures, culling the best practices of all four districts.

"I think it's better for the community ... it's more cohesive. I think it's a great environment," says Gonzalez. "Everything was reviewed and bettered moving forward after we merged."

Pooling resources

Rhoads says that the merger allowed Twin Rivers to provide more extracurricular opportunities like music and art for students.

Because they've been able to bring the money together ... there's more opportunities for these extracurricular activities," says Rhoads. "That's been

phenomenal because our students have really been able to enjoy school, enjoy learning and come to school with a purpose."

Professional development

Suzy Brusca, 5th grade teacher at Frontier Elementary, says that Twin Rivers' emphasis on professional development opportunities for teachers has had an impact on her classroom.

"There's a lot more opportunities for growth as a teacher that I don't have to seek out outside of the district," she says. "Some of it's academic-based, some of it is meeting our students' emotional needs and the diversity of our students."

GIVE STUDENTS A HEAD START WITH EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Programs provide academic and social benefits for students ages six weeks to 5 years

by Anne Stokes

Early childhood education (ECE) is more than child's play. A recent study by the Harvard Graduate School of Education found that children who attended high-quality ECE programs were less likely to be placed in special education, less likely to be held back a grade level and more likely to graduate high school.

Twin Rivers Unified School District offers ECE programs serving children as young as six weeks of age through transitional kindergarten. Full-day and part-day programs are available to families on a sliding scale or free for those who meet state income and need requirements.

"One of the things that we really want to impress upon parents in the community is the power and importance of early childhood education," says Dr. Julie Montali, Director of Early Childhood Education. "It's about putting a really strong foundation into place that's going to help them be successful."

In ECE programs, young children get a head start on fundamental academic school-readiness skills including

language, basic math and science. Additionally, students are exposed to social-emotional learning — such as problem solving, sharing and how to take turns — which is critical to their success in school.

"It's about putting a really strong foundation into place that's going to help them be successful."

Dr. Julie Montali
Director of Early Childhood Education, TRUSD

"It's really about how children learn to cooperate with another child or within a group," Montali says. "It's exciting to watch on a playground as they really learn how to navigate this and then how it translates back into the traditional classroom."

Montali says that Twin Rivers' ECE staff receives



Early childhood education programs at TRUSD give students a head start on learning.
Photo by Roman Rykun

regular professional development opportunities to learn cutting edge teaching methods and standards to help provide students with the best learning environment possible.

"It really fosters kids' growth in so many different areas of development," says Montali. "It's starting them off on an amazing trajectory all the way through their post-secondary experiences and opportunities."

For information on ECE program availability, visit www.twinriversusd.org/depts/ece or call 1-916-566-1616.



Photos by Anne Stokes

Out of all the lessons Reggie Akins learned at Vista Nueva, self-confidence is the most important one. At the beginning of his senior year, he transferred with a 2.0 GPA, but found the tools and confidence to get back on track after joining the Leadership Club under the tutelage of teacher Lynette Echelmeier.

“Leadership taught me how to use my voice, to be confident and lead as an example. It taught me how to set a plan for myself,” he says.

For other students who may be struggling, Akins has this advice: “Motivate yourself, don’t doubt yourself. You can always put your mind to it if you really want to do something.”



Reginald Akins

Vista Nueva High School

ATTENDING:

*Benedict College or
Texas Southern University*

PLANNED MAJOR:

Computer Science

Vladislav Yurashku has his sights set on the stars — literally — as a rocket scientist, hopefully with Boeing or NASA.

Yurashku credits his math and science teachers with showing him the importance of hard work and perseverance, especially when hitting life’s inevitable obstacles. Sophomore year, he took the AP Physics 1 test and didn’t pass. Undeterred, he took it again his junior year and passed it, along with the rest of his AP tests.

“It’s OK to fail,” he says. “You won’t always succeed, but if you work hard and put your head to it, you can do it.”



Vladislav Yurashku

Rio Linda High School

ATTENDING:

California Polytechnic State University

PLANNED MAJOR:

Aerospace Engineering

For Grecia Jiménez Macias, success is all about being well-rounded: She served as senior class president, played soccer and volleyball, and is graduating with the State Seal of Bilingualism at the top of her class. As a student, an athlete and a leader, she’s learned teamwork and how to efficiently balance schoolwork and extracurricular activities — a skill she will most certainly be able to use in the future.

“I’d like to go into sports medicine but I also can see myself as a doctor helping patients,” she says. “Being able to be a bilingual doctor, so all patients can get the proper medical attention, would be something I’d like to do.”



Grecia Jimenez Macias

**Creative Connections
Arts Academy**

ATTENDING:

UC Davis

PLANNED MAJOR:

Biology

Since she was a child, Laura Fernanda Sainz Merin has dreamed of helping people by becoming a neonatal pediatrician. Throughout high school, she has worked hard to build a foundation to make that possible — serving as co-president of Spanish Club, volunteering on community service projects with Key Club and graduating at the top of her class. She’s thankful to all who supported her, especially her family.

“My family is what inspires me to work hard every day. They sacrificed a lot for me, and I do not want to let them down,” she says. “I’m grateful to say I have an extremely blessed life ... No matter the obstacles, I have been able to persevere.”



Laura Fernanda Sainz Merin

Foothill High School

ATTENDING:

UCLA

PLANNED MAJOR:

Pre-med

ONWARD AND UPWARD

Twin Rivers graduates are on the move! Whether close to home, across the country or beyond, the class of 2018 is on the road to success. Here are some of the universities, colleges and armed forces our graduates are headed to in the fall.

- Stanford University
- UCLA
- Washington State University
- UC Berkeley
- UC Davis
- UC Irvine

- UC Merced
- UC Santa Barbara
- UC Santa Cruz
- Cal Poly San Luis Obispo
- CSU Bakersfield
- CSU Chico

- CSU East Bay
- CSU Fresno
- CSU Humboldt
- CSU Long Beach
- CSU Sacramento
- CSU San Francisco

- CSU San Jose
- CSU San Marcos
- CSU Sonoma
- CSU Stanislaus
- University of Hawaii
- University of Nevada, Las Vegas

8 VALEDICTORIANS

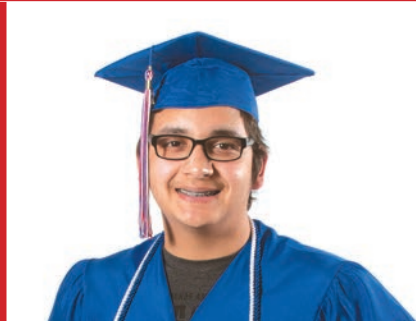


Cover Story

by Anne Stokes

Whether constructing a good argument in court, understanding the intricacies of art history or solving crimes, Cristian Sanchez likes a good puzzle. His diverse set of experiences and ability to work as a team has defined his success at Highlands High School — he was an active member of the Mock Trial Team, has a budding appreciation for art and aspirations of a career in forensic anthropology. The common element that runs through everything is hard work.

“It’s the student who has to strive for an education, not the teacher,” he says. “Hard work always pays off. Honestly, if you don’t try hard at your education, where are you going?”



Cristian Sanchez

Highlands High School

ATTENDING:

UC Davis

PLANNED MAJOR:

Biology

Making the world a better place will take a lot of hard work. And Diana Jordan is ready to do it. As a senior, she carried a full-load of AP coursework, played volleyball, participated in the Generation Green Club, volunteered with environmental causes and earned the district’s highest female SAT score, in addition to working full-time. She’s the first in her family to graduate high school and go to college, where she plans to double major in political science and international relations and eventually build a career in government, possibly with the United Nations.

“For me, seeing the current political state and how bad it is, I want to fix it,” she says.



Diana Jordan

Grant Union High School

ATTENDING:

Stanford University

PLANNED MAJOR:

Political Science and International Relations

When Andrew Inmon arrived at Pacific High School in March of his junior year, he was lacking 100 credits and wasn’t sure he would graduate on time. But through his own hard work, support from his family, and close relationships with teachers at Pacific, he’s not only graduating on time, but at the top of his class.

“I will remember being given a second chance to graduate high school. I’ll always be grateful for Pacific High School and [my] teachers,” he says. “The most important lesson I’ve learned is that you have to work hard to thrive and succeed.”



Andrew Inmon

Pacific High School

ATTENDING:

American River College

PLANNED MAJOR:

Engineering

For Benjamin Zhiry, Keema High School’s independent learning model was a perfect fit — he was able to get teachers’ support while working at his own pace without distractions.

“I couldn’t be more happier with Keema High School for the opportunity to learn and grow,” he says. “The teachers supported me all the way and when I needed help I could turn to them.”

Zhiry says that the experience taught him the value of independence and self-reliance.

“Life is never going to be easy, you have to work hard,” he says. “It’s going to be tough, but once you’re there, you’ll be happy you did it and be proud of yourself.”



Benjamin Zhiry

Keema High School

ATTENDING:

American River College

PLANNED MAJOR:

Computer Science

- University of Nevada, Reno
- University of the Pacific
- University of Southern Oregon
- University of Utah
- Cogswell Polytechnical College
- Benedict College
- Benedictine University

- Indiana State University
- Kentucky State University
- Langston University
- Northern Arizona State University
- Northland College
- Tuskegee University
- Walden University

- William Jessup University
- American River College
- Butte College
- Contra Costa College
- Cosumnes River College
- Sacramento City College
- San Jose City College

- Sierra College
- U.S. Army
- U.S. Coast Guard
- U.S. Marines
- U.S. Navy



BUILDING STUDENTS' FUTURES

At Twin Rivers, teachers lay the foundations for their students' success. Inside and out of the classroom, their hard work and dedication give students the tools they need to build their future. Every year, Twin Rivers recognizes the efforts of its teachers who go above and beyond for their students through the Sacramento County Office of Education's Teacher of the Year program.

"[It's] icing on the cake that my peers and my district have recognized the hard work and have bestowed such a great title upon me," says Elementary District Teacher of the Year Julie Harms of Regency Park Elementary. "It seems unfair to label one person with the honor, because I know I see amazing things happening around classrooms at my school each and every day!"
Twin Rivers' Secondary District

Teacher of the Year Michael Noche also says he feels very lucky to share such an honor with his family, colleagues and students at Twin Rivers.
"I'm very humbled by this recognition," says Noche, of Highlands High School. "The teachers of Twin Rivers put their hearts and souls into motivating and educating our kids. It's a labor of love and all of them deserve it."

MEET TWIN RIVERS' OUTSTANDING STAFF 2018

Allison Elementary
Teacher: Vinson Canady
Classified: Norma Torres-Gutierrez

Babcock Elementary
Teacher: Erin Adamson

Castori Elementary
Teacher: Tony Torres
Classified: Maria Sanchez

Creative Connections Arts Academy K-6
Teacher: Debra Williams
Classified: Debra Teel

Creative Connections Arts Academy 7-12
Teacher: Raul Murillo

Del Paso Heights Elementary
Teacher: Debra Nordyke
Classified: Lynn Wilson

Dry Creek Elementary
Teacher: Katie Scoggins
Classified: Candy Dixon

Fairbanks Elementary
Teacher: Barbara Borkowski
Classified: Timothy Harris

Foothill High School
Teacher: Dave Burns
Classified: Ruqia Esmatulla

Foothill Oaks Elementary
Teacher: Andrea Mondragon
Classified: Tanya Velez

Foothill Ranch Middle School
Teacher: Farah Friend
Classified: Daniel Mouanoutoua

Frontier Elementary School
Teacher: Caylee Kizer
Classified: Kim Cwiok

Garden Valley Elementary
Teacher: Andrea Walton
Classified: Yer Vue

Grant Union High School
Teacher: Maria Dolores Nuno
Classified: Jennifer Whittaker

Hagginwood Elementary
Teacher: Nancy Thao
Classified: Bonnie Pancho

Harmon Johnson Elementary
Teacher: Susan Haensel
Classified: Sean Ufland

Highlands High School
Teacher: Michael A. Noche
Classified: Kangbou Yang

Hillsdale Elementary
Teacher: Patsy Barton
Classified: Amanda Wirz

Joyce Elementary
Teacher: Vicki Foster
Classified: See Lor

Keema High School
Teacher: Monty Frick-Hisaw
Classified: Edwina Moody

Kohler Elementary
Teacher: Cherie Lorenc
Classified: Julie Branson

Madison Elementary
Teacher: Kimberly Rivera
Classified: Brandie McConahie

Martin Luther King Jr. Technology Academy
Teacher: Torianne M. Lamb
Classified: Warren Paligro

Miles P. Richmond School
Teacher: Jessica Jennings
Classified: Marco Juarez

Morey Avenue Early Childhood Development Center
Teacher: Cheng Vang
Classified: Tashamarie Brewer

Noralto Elementary
Teacher: Maxwell Jillie
Classified: Marcy Guevara



Elementary District Teacher of the Year
Julie Harms of Regency Park Elementary
Photo by Roman Rykun



Secondary District Teacher of the Year
Michael Noche of Highlands High School
Photos by Roman Rykun



Star Staff

Northwood Elementary

Teacher: Jessica Velasquez
Classified: Kendra Fields

Norwood Junior High

Teacher: Ada Michel
Classified: Ruben Guerra-Yanez

Oakdale Elementary

Teacher: Teresa Federmeyer
Classified: Otho Cheffen

Orchard Elementary

Teacher: Sarah Schwall
Classified: Alicia Harvey

Pacific Career & Technology High

Teacher: Sandra Bunch
Classified: Savannah Tapia

Pathways Community Day School

Classified: Victoria Bradley

Pioneer Elementary

Teacher: Heather Voigt
Classified: Deanne Barnett

Regency Park Elementary

Teacher: Julie Harms
Classified: Ramona Peck

Ridgepoint Elementary

Teacher: Michele McVay
Classified: Barbara Heroux

Rio Linda High School

Teacher: Teresa Taranto
Classified: Robert Whittaker

Rio Linda Preparatory Academy

Teacher: June E. Speakman
Classified: Breta Noguez

Rio Tierra Junior High

Teacher: Lupe Gonzalez
Classified: Geraldine Loper

Sierra View Elementary

Teacher: Meg Ringstrom
Classified: Jan Weiner

Smythe Academy of Arts & Sciences (PK-6)

Teacher: Annette S. Clouse
Classified: Corina Dennison

Smythe Academy of Arts & Sciences (7-8)

Teacher: James Hodnett
Classified: Mai Phia Thao

Strauch Elementary

Teacher: Mary Michelman
Classified: Scott Canty

Village Elementary

Teacher: Dimitri Masters
Classified: Karen Johnson

Vineland Preschool

Classified: Venessa Spence

Vista Nueva/NOVA Opportunity School

Teacher: Felicia Stephens
Classified: Judy Ocampo

Westside Elementary

Teacher: Jaime Hare
Classified: Kelley Hicks

Westside Preparatory Charter - Frontier, Eastside and Westside campuses

Teacher: Sloane Green

Woodlake Elementary

Teacher: Lisa Liss
Classified: Ruben Santos

Woodridge Elementary

Teacher: Heather Harris
Classified: Allison Massie

District Office Bay A / B

Allison Ambalova, Human Resources

District Office Bay C

Dannie Gonzalez, Special Education

District Office / Bay D

Conor Allison, Instructional Technology

Police Services

John Kahn

Transportation

Erika Saber

Twin Rivers Adult School

Classified: Tetyana Glubochanska

Winona Center

Teri Kuta, Print Shop
Alicia Tayag, Purchasing



SUMMER SCHOOL 2018

Twin Rivers Unified is proud to offer a variety of exciting programs and learning opportunities for elementary, middle and high school students this summer.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

When: 8:45 a.m. to 2:45 p.m., Monday through Thursday, June 11-July 12 (no school July 4 & 5)

Where: Creative Connections Arts Academy 7-12 campus

Register: Registration forms are available in the middle school counseling offices.

HIGH SCHOOL

When: Monday through Thursday, June 11-July 19 (no school July 4 & 5)

Where: Highlands High School and Grant Union High School, West Campus

Register: Twin Rivers district office, located at 5115 Dudley Boulevard, McClellan Park on June 4 and 5. Registration forms are available in counseling offices.

For more information on summer school programs, visit www.twinriversusd.org/misc/summer-school-programs or call 1-916-566-1600, ext. 63352.



Twin Rivers Unified School District
5115 Dudley Blvd.
McClellan, CA 95652
916-566-1600

Visit www.twinriversusd.org for:



List of schools



District news



Parent resources

TWIN RIVERS 2018-2019 STUDENT CALENDAR

KEEP TRACK OF ALL
IMPORTANT TWIN
RIVERS DATES AT:

www.twinriversusd.org/calendar

AUGUST 2018

8/20 First Day of School!

SEPTEMBER 2018

9/3 Labor Day

NOVEMBER 2018

11/12 Veterans Day

11/19-11/23 Thanksgiving Break

11/26-11/27 TK-6 Parent/Teacher
Conference Days
(no school)

11/26-11/27 7-12 Professional
Development (no school)

DECEMBER 2018

12/21 Minimum Day (K-12)

12/24-1/4 Winter Break

JANUARY 2019

1/17-1/18 Finals/Minimum Days
(secondary only)

1/21 Martin Luther King,
Jr. Day

FEBRUARY 2019

2/15 & 2/18 Presidents Day

MARCH 2019

3/1 TK-6 Shortened Day

APRIL 2019

4/15-4/22 Spring Break

MAY 2019

5/27 Memorial Day

JUNE 2019

6/5-6/6 Finals/Minimum Days

6/6 Last Day of School
(minimum day)