



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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GUSD ENDS SCHOOL YEAR ON AN EXCEPTIONAL NOTE WITH MULTIPLE AWARDS

Schools and Staff recognized for their innovative programs and instruction

Gilroy, CA – The Gilroy Unified School District (GUSD) is pleased to share some of the amazing accomplishments achieved at school sites and by staff members throughout the 2017-18 school year.

Rod Kelley Elementary School was recognized as a [California Distinguished School](#) by State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tom Torlakson, and a top Bay Area public school for underserved students by [Innovate Public Schools](#) in April 2018. Rod Kelley was celebrated at the California Distinguished Schools event on May 3 in Anaheim, with Principal Maritza Salcido, Superintendent Dr. Deborah A. Flores, GUSD Board Members BC Doyle and Heather Bass, as well as other Rod Kelley staff members in attendance.

In May 2018, [Dr. TJ Owens Early College Academy](#) received a Gold ranking as the 23rd ranked high school in California (172 nationally) by [US News and World Report](#). [Gilroy High School](#) received a Silver ranking as the 480th ranked high school in California (2451 nationally) by the same publication. The magazine evaluated over 20,500 public high schools in all 50 states and the District of Columbia based on their performance on state assessments and how well they prepare students for college.

Also in May 2018, Educational Results Partnership and the Campaign for Business and Education Excellence recognized four Gilroy Unified School District schools as 2017-18 [California Honor Roll schools](#). The 2017-2018 Honor Roll recognizes public elementary, middle, and high schools that demonstrate high levels of student academic achievement, improvement in achievement over time, and reduction in achievement gaps. For high schools, Honor Roll recognition includes measures of college readiness in students. This year, the California Honor Roll recognized 1,798 higher performing schools that are distinguished for their academic achievement and closing achievement gaps. Dr. TJ Owens Early College Academy, Christopher



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High School, Rod Kelley Elementary and Las Animas Elementary were all recognized with this award.

South Valley Middle School seventh grade math teacher, Rachael Cornaggia, has recently been named the Gilroy Unified School District Teacher of the Year by the [Santa Clara Office of Education](#). The Office of Education recognizes a teacher from each of the 31 Districts in the County on an annual basis. Rachael will be honored on Monday, October 22, 2018 along with her colleagues from throughout the County.

Glen View Elementary School Principal, Christine Vasquez-Pereira, was recently named a Superstar First-Year Administrator by the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA). Christine was honored at the annual [ACSA Region 8 Awards Night](#) on May 11.

Gilroy High School's Athletic Director, Jami Reynolds, received the Norm MacKenzie "Rookie of the Year" award from the [California State Athletic Directors Association](#) on April 19. Jami was nominated by Gilroy High School Principal Dr. Marco Sanchez, who says that, "Jami is one of the best Athletic Directors in the Central Coast Section, if not the State, and deserves this recognition and more."

Finally, the Gilroy Unified School District Board of Education recently named Jean Wells-Southard as the new principal of Rucker Elementary School. Well-Southland takes over for Christine Anderson, a long-time GUSD Administrator, who is retiring June 8, 2018.

"We are so proud of our school sites, staff members, students and families that make Gilroy Unified School District the best it can be. I am especially grateful to the staff members at these school sites, and throughout the District, who do the work day-in and day-out to ensure that our students have the best educational experience possible. It is true that our people are the best thing about Gilroy Unified and these awards are evidence of this," said Superintendent Dr. Deborah A. Flores.

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