



El Monte Union High School District

Community Committed to College and Career

PRESS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Juliette Funes, William Diepenbrock

PHONE: (909) 445-1001

El Monte High Senior Awarded Prestigious QuestBridge Scholarship

EL MONTE – When El Monte High School senior Dana Hua competes in a 24-hour computer coding hackathon, her ambition and drive compel her to sacrifice sleep so she can concentrate on helping her teammates develop praiseworthy apps and games that are educational and fun. Those long hours of hard work have finally paid off.

Hua – a first-generation college-goer with a 4.41 GPA and 1550 SAT score – is among 1,127 seniors (out of 15,000 applicants) to be awarded the 2019 QuestBridge National College Match Scholarship, guaranteeing her a full four-year ride to a college partner.

To top it off, Hua has been accepted to Stanford University. She is awaiting word from Yale, MIT and Columbia, all of which are QuestBridge college partners. The scholarship, worth over \$200,000 over four years, will cover tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies.

“Winning the QuestBridge feels surreal. It hasn’t settled in yet,” said Hua, who plans to study computer science. “After four years of not sleeping, I can’t believe I got into my dream school.”

Hua’s passion for science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) began in second grade, when she began participating in the Johns Hopkins University Center for Talented Youth summer enrichment program.

During her freshman year, Hua enrolled in Pasadena City College’s Upward Bound Math Science program, opening the door to her to be selected for the Girls Who Code Summer Immersion Program at the Walt Disney Co. in 2018.

“Girls Who Code really opened my eyes to all the possibilities in the computer science field,” Hua said. “We got a behind-the-scenes look at new apps Disney was developing, including Disney Plus. I was introduced to several coding programs, which helped me when I started competing in hackathons.”

Hua and a friend won Best Beginner’s Hack at the inaugural Hack SoCal for their educational web-based game, Save the Seals. Hua subsequently traveled to Northern California to compete in Los Altos Hacks, learning about android app development and hardware-software integration, and helping her team win first place overall for its face-detection app, Dotmentia.

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She has since founded the Lions Hack Club on campus, introducing students to hackathons, web design, and game and app development. Meanwhile, she remains president of the National Honor Society and Academic Decathlon.

“Dana Hua is an amazing young lady who constantly demonstrates her commitment to excellence, earning recognition as a QuestBridge College Prep Scholar and AP Scholar with Distinction,” Principal Robin Torres said. “She truly exemplifies what can be achieved when a student rises to meet academic and physical challenges. I am confident our proud Lion will continue to thrive in her academic and coding endeavors.”

PHOTO CAPTION:

022620_EMUHS_D_QUESTIONNAIRE: El Monte High School senior Dana Hua is among 1,127 seniors (out of 15,000 applicants) to be awarded the 2019 QuestBridge National College Match Scholarship, guaranteeing her a full four-year ride to a college partner. She was also accepted to Stanford University.

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The vision of the El Monte Union High School District is to empower and motivate our students to be resilient, college and career ready, lifelong learners and contributing members of our global society.