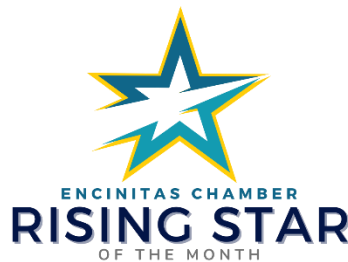


**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**



**5 LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS HONORED WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6<sup>th</sup> AT ENCINITAS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S FIRST RISING STAR OF THE MONTH PROGRAM FOR 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR**

***Students Recognized by State and Local Officials; Have Opportunity to Apply for Scholarship Awarded in May, 2024***

**Encinitas, Calif. (September 12, 2023)** -- The Encinitas Chamber of Commerce hosted its first Rising Star of the Month event for the 2023-24 school year Wednesday, September 6, 2023. The Chamber partnered with MiraCosta College this school year who will host and sponsor the monthly breakfasts honoring exceptional seniors from the five local high schools in the San Dieguito Union High School District.

The first Rising Stars students of this school year included Mariana España from San Dieguito High School Academy, a first-generation college student, and Erik Shamsedeen from Torrey Pines High School, who wants to be the next President of the United States. Also honored were Dorothy Monahan from Canyon Crest Academy, Kimball "Kimo" Oh from La Costa Canyon High School and Lauren Chemtob from Sunset High School. Their families and local city officials including Shannon Bradley - Representing Congressman Mike Levin from CA 49<sup>th</sup> District, Matt Rubel- Representing State Senator Blakespear from CA 38<sup>th</sup> District, Robson Winters Representing Assemblymember Tasha Boerner from 77<sup>th</sup> District of CA, Joy Lyndes – Encinitas Deputy Mayor and Councilmember from District 3, Captain Christopher Lawrence - from North Coastal Sheriff's Station and Fire Chief Josh Gordon were in attendance, as well as Encinitas Chamber of Commerce CEO Sherry Yardley, Encinitas Chamber of Commerce Board members and San Dieguito Union High School District principals and district officials.

The honorary program recognizes five high school students who have demonstrated character, integrity, love of learning and involvement in school and community, and/or have overcome challenging life circumstances without compromising their education. Each month during the school year, additional San Dieguito Union High School District students will be celebrated at a recognition breakfast. All Rising Star students will all have the opportunity to apply for a scholarship which will be awarded in May, 2024 at the Encinitas Chamber's annual Salute to Education event.

"Dorothy Monahan is a highly involved student at Canyon Crest Academy," said Principal Brett Killeen. "She is a co-anchor for CCA -TV and is a member of the Envision Conservatory Drama."

“Kimball “Kimo” Oh exemplifies what we do at La Costa Canyon,” said Principal Justin Conn. “He is a leader on campus who loves this community. As soon as you meet Kimo, it is evident he is something special.”

“Mariana España will be a first-generation college student for her family,” said San Dieguito Academy Principal Cara Dolnik. “She has taken advantage of every opportunity given her by enrolling in AVID and multiple AP classes. She has shown a willingness to get involved and develop her leadership skills by becoming a Link Leader to welcome incoming SDA freshmen, taking part in RYLA (Rotary Youth Leadership Awards), and taking a leadership role in our AVID Club. She is a welcoming and helpful young lady whose goal is to become a teacher. Her spirit and dedication make her a Rising Star!”

“Lauren Chemtob has stood out as a person of character and integrity since she first arrived at Sunset High School as a freshman,” said Principal Rick Ayala. “She has a level of maturity that is uncommon for teenage students. Whether it's in the classroom or as a representative of the school in extracurricular activities, Lauren serves as a model for other students to follow. She leads by example, and students and staff recognize and admire the way she carries herself. Lauren is also very personable and it's easy to get to know and like her. Students like Lauren make everyone's job at Sunset even more enjoyable and a lot easier because you can always count on her to do what's right. Lauren has been a Rising Star for a long time, but she's still moving up and her future is bright.”

“Erik Shamsedeen is truly one of a kind,” said Torrey Pines High School Principal Rob Coppo. “He is admired and respected by both his peers and his teachers alike for his kindness, empathy, energy and enthusiasm, as well as for his deep commitment to community service. Erik is a leader on campus in so many ways: organizing the Peer Tutoring Club, welcoming new students as a Link Crew Leader, participating on the robotics team, and founding the Middle Eastern Union. Erik is a scholar, an athlete, an actor, a creator, and a mentor who exemplifies the absolute best of what it means to be a Falcon. The world is a better place because Erik Shamsedeen is in it, and so is Torrey Pines High School.”

MiraCosta College is the Rising Star of the Month Event and Breakfast Sponsor. California Coast Credit Union, The Cottage Encinitas and the Encinitas Historical Society are Scholarship Donors. Gift donors include Gelato 101 Encinitas, The Baked Bear, Sambazon, Ki’s Restaurant, Broad Street Dough Co., Chick-fil-A, Cox Communications, Raising Cane’s and the Community Resource Center (CRC). Go to <https://encinitaschamber.com/events/rising-star/> for more information on how you can donate to the scholarship fund and be a part of upcoming Rising Star events enriching and uplifting our community.

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**MEDIA CONTACT:**

Laura Charlton (formerly Johnson)

[laurajohnsonpr@yahoo.com](mailto:laurajohnsonpr@yahoo.com)

(760) 450-7749 cell