



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **2023 Arthur S. Marmaduke High School Counselor Award Winner Announced**

“This year, we proudly recognize Paula Riesenbeck for her exemplary dedication in helping students and families complete their financial aid applications”

**SACRAMENTO, Calif., June 12, 2023** – Paula Riesenbeck, a high school counselor at Chaparral High School has been selected as the winner of the 2022-23 Arthur S. Marmaduke High School Counselor Award for her outstanding achievements in high school counseling.

“One of the most important and inspiring recognitions the California Student Aid Commission offers each year is the Marmaduke Counselor of the Year award. This year, we proudly recognize Paula Riesenbeck for her exemplary dedication in helping students and families complete their financial aid applications,” said Marlene Garcia, Executive Director of the California Student Aid Commission. “Paula has continued to go the extra mile to make sure students are prepared for their higher education journey.”

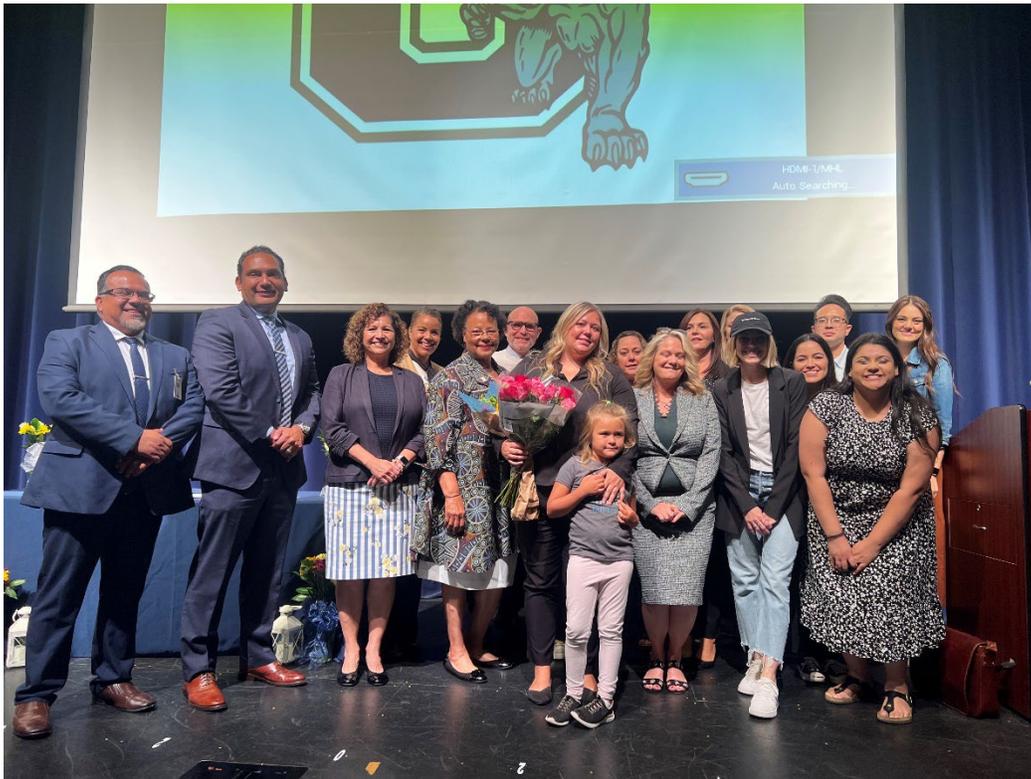
Paula’s commitment to her students and families is exemplified by her sixteen years of being a school counselor. She has worked in various leadership positions, at both middle and high school levels, and holds two masters’ degrees, a Master of Education in School Counseling and a Master’s in Educational Administration. From finding ways to engage with students virtually amidst the pandemic, to volunteering to stay during after school hours when the school returned to in-person learning, Paula has led countless initiatives to help her students and their families. Paula organized the school’s first counseling committee and continues to be a trailblazer when it comes to engaging and preparing her students for college and career-readiness.

“Once we were back in person, Paula brought big energy, big plan, big dreams, and a huge organizational structure to get us to the point where we are now,” said Tina Mey, a fellow counselor at Chaparral High School who nominated Paula.

All of Paula’s hard work and time paid off, as she led her team at Chaparral High School to achieve “Top Ten” in the Riverside County of Education Race to Submit campaign in 2022 and 2023. Paula had a 100% graduation rate for her caseload last year and helped the

school raise the college-going rate to nearly 70%. In addition to this, Chaparral High School saw nearly a 15% increase in financial aid application submissions – 4 out of every 5 seniors, 83%, submitted a financial aid application. Counselors, like Paula, are the reason California has seen a significant statewide increase, with 2 out of every 3 high school seniors submitting a financial aid application.

Paula was honored at a ceremony at Chaparral High school, with school district leaders, family members, friends, students, and community leaders last week. The presentation of Paula's award included a California Legislative resolution, a commemorative plaque, and a cash prize sponsored by the ECMC Foundation.



Marmaduke Award nominations are solicited annually by the California Student Aid Commission and is named after one of the longest running executive directors of the Commission, Arthur S. Marmaduke. Mr. Marmaduke served the Commission for 25 years from 1960 to 1985 and the award was established in 1985 to carry on his legacy of making education beyond high school financially accessible to all Californians.

For more information on the Arthur S. Marmaduke High School Counselor Award, please visit <https://www.csac.ca.gov/arthur-s-marmaduke-high-school-counselor-award>.

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*The California Student Aid Commission currently serves over 400,000 students and administers the state's \$3 billion portfolio of student financial aid programs and services, including the Cal Grant, the Middle Class Scholarship, and the California Dream Act Application. The Commission serves as a resource for policymakers and the public on college affordability and financing issues, and advocates for policy changes to eliminate cost as a barrier to any qualified California student pursuing a higher education. Visit our website at [www.csac.ca.gov](http://www.csac.ca.gov) or follow us on social media by clicking on our [Link Tree](#).*