



**Garden Grove Strawberry Festival Association**

P.O. Box 2287, Garden Grove, California 92842 (714) 638-0981

[www.strawberryfestival.org](http://www.strawberryfestival.org)

Media Contact: Steve Moyer Public Relations, Work: 818.784.7027; Cell: 818.337.9987; [moyerpr@earthlink.net](mailto:moyerpr@earthlink.net); [@stevemoyerpr](https://www.instagram.com/stevemoyerpr)

**GARDEN GROVE STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL ASSOCIATION  
ANNOUNCES \$8,000 IN STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS  
HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO EIGHT SENIOR STUDENTS  
IN THE GARDEN GROVE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PLUS AN ADDITIONAL \$2,000 AWARDED TO MISS GARDEN GROVE**

**WHAT'S NEXT FOR THESE EIGHT GRADUATES?**

**STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS INCLUDE:**

**VICTORIA NGUYEN, JACQUELINE NGUYEN, NANCY SALAZAR,  
KAITLYN ROMAN, ROBERTO PASTRANNAABARCA,  
CHRISTABELLE GARCIA, CELINE NGUYEN AND SAMANTHA MICHEL**

Garden Grove, CA (June 3, 2021) – **Garden Grove Strawberry Festival Association (GGSFA)**, producers of the ever-popular annual **Garden Grove Strawberry Festival**, have announced that **\$8,000 in Student Scholarships** have been awarded to seniors graduating this year from eight high schools in the **Garden Grove Unified School District**.

**Debbie Mahoney**, Scholarships Chair, **past President of the 2012 GGSFA**, and Board Member, said: “We are happy to announce that eight \$1,000 Student Scholarships have been awarded to one graduating senior student at eight different high schools in the Garden Grove Unified School District, for a total of \$8,000. This year we received an unprecedented 106 scholarship applications collectively from the eight high schools. In addition, in March 2021, we awarded \$2,000 to the Miss Garden Grove organization.”

**2021 School Scholarship Winners included:**

- **Victoria Nguyen**, Senior, Bolsa Grande High School
- **Jacqueline Nguyen**, Senior, Garden Grove High School
- **Nancy Salazar**, Senior, Marie L. Hare High School
- **Kaitlyn Roman**, Senior, La Quinta High School
- **Roberto PastranaAbarca**, Senior, Los Amigos High School
- **Christabelle Garcia**, Senior, Pacifica High School
- **Celine Nguyen**, Senior, Rancho Alamitos High School
- **Samantha Michel**, Senior, Santiago High School

**Debbie Mahoney** continued, “This year, with the Coronavirus pandemic becoming more manageable, directors of the GGSFA made in-person presentations to the recipients at their respective high schools. Each scholarship recipient received a beautiful plaque, designed by Awards & Trophies of Fountain Valley, CA, along with their scholarship check, presented during an ‘*invitation only*’ Senior Awards Night. However, since the Strawberry Festival and Parade has been canceled this year, the scholarship recipients didn’t have the opportunity to ride with me on the antique fire truck in our annual Strawberry Festival parade, held on Saturday during Memorial Day Weekend.”

Directors of the GGSFA who presented plaques and checks to the high school scholarship recipient this year included:

- **Scott Weimer** presented to **Jacqueline Nguyen** at **Garden Grove High School**
- **Mark and Debbie Mahoney** presented to **Kaitlyn Roman** at **La Quinta High School**
- **Andrea Perez** presented to **Celine Nguyen** at **Rancho Alamitos High School**

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- **Sue Catlin and Patrick “Pat” Catlin** presented to **Victoria Nguyen** at **Bolsa Grande High School**
- **Josh Lindsay** presented to **Christabelle Garcia** at **Pacifica High School**

Scholarship Winners, **Samantha Michel** of **Santiago High School**, **Nancy Salazar** of **Marie L. Hare High School** and **Roberto PastranaAbarca** of **Los Amigos High School**, received their plaque and check from school administrators at each of their respective high schools.

### **About The School Scholarships:**

Historically, since 2004 the Garden Grove Strawberry Festival Association has donated \$136,000 in student scholarships to seniors at eight local high schools in the Garden Grove Unified School District, in addition to \$28,000 **which has been** donated to the Miss Garden Grove organization.

The purpose of the scholarships is to provide financial assistance to eight graduating seniors from eight local Garden Grove based high schools to help them pursue further academic studies at colleges and universities of their choice.

In February, a Google form application was created and sent to the Guidance Counselors at the eight GGUSD High Schools: Bolsa Grande High School, Garden Grove High School, Marie L. Hare High School, La Quinta High School, Los Amigos High School, Pacifica High School, Rancho Alamitos High School and Santiago High School. The counselors then shared the link with all the seniors at their respective schools indicating to that one student from each of the eight schools will be chosen as the recipient of the \$1,000 scholarship. April 21st of each year is the deadline for students to submit their applications to their school Guidance Counselors for consideration.

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By May 1st of each year the Guidance Counselors at each of the eight schools select one student as the recipient from the pool of applicants who have applied for the scholarships. Then the names of the winners are given to Debbie Mahoney, who notifies the winning students that they have been chosen. However, this year, the students have not been contacted that they have won. The news of being chosen as the recipient will be shared during Awards Assemblies.

**More About The Student Scholarship Winners:**

**Victoria Nguyen**, a senior at Bolsa Grande High School (BGHS) with a 4.11 Grade Point Average, is planning to study Computer Science at the University of California at Berkeley. She aspires to be a software engineer, given her background with ciphers/problem solving (BYA), or a full-stack developer specifically working on social impact design, given her interest in civic awareness (GEM/PAWS) and her knack for design (Yearbook/Women's League). Nyugen is a Founding Member of Project Vietnam, which was created at BGHS this year. Her extracurricular activities have included the Red Cross, Spanish Honor Society, Women's League, National Honor Society, American Cancer Society Club, BGHS Aquatics Team – Water Polo and Girls Swimming, Girl's Volleyball Team and serving as a Teacher's Assistant at Christ Cathedral Tam Bien Viet Ngu.

**Jacqueline Nguyen**, a senior at Garden Grove High School (GGHS) with a 4.43 Grade Point Average, is planning to study Psychology at Cal State University, Fullerton. Her goal is to become a healthcare worker such as a PA (Physician Assistant) specializing in mental health or neuroscience. She wants to educate others about ASD and other mental disorders to relieve the surrounding stigma. Extracurricular activities have included GGHS Red Cross, GGHS AVID Club, St. Columban Church's Vietnamese Eucharistic Youth Movement, Girl's Volleyball. She also has volunteer experience with various organizations.

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**Nancy Salazar**, a senior at Marie L. Hare High School, would like to study Psychology at Santa Ana Community College and then transfer to Cal State Long Beach. Ultimately, she would like to become a Child Psychologist to help young children realize their potential. She has served as a Student Mentor for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County. She is an A.V.I.D. member (Advancement Via Individual Determination), Vice President of the Softball Club and a Student Council Advocate for the Student Government.

**Kaitlyn Roman**, as senior at La Quinta High School who plans to pursue a career in Nursing, has a 4.0 Grade Point Average. She is a first-generation college student, a Student of the Year and holds a Kray Maga Third Degree Blackbelt. Her extracurricular activities include Girls' League, Promoting Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) and Future Medial Leaders. As a Volunteer she has served as an Assistant Instructor for SureFire CPR, as a 3rd Degree Blackbelt Instructor for Kray Maga Self Defense and the Environments Nature Center Fair, among others.

**Roberto PastranaAbarca**, a senior at Los Amigos High School, plans to study Pre-Business at Cal State University. His goal in life is to financially free. His extracurricular activities include Dance, Latinos Unidos and Kiwanis. He has served as a Volunteer of the Newhope Branch Library.

**Christabelle Garcia**, a senior at Pacifica High School, plans to pursue a career in Chemical Engineering at Iowa State University. She is a Volunteer at her church, and choreographs dances for special events at Easter, Christmas, and Mother's Day. Her extracurricular activities include Latinos Unidos, Show Choir, Christian Club, Church Worship and You Ministry and Activism for Pro-Life. Her goal is to receive her doctoral degree in Chemical Engineering. She aspires to create new medicines, natural skin care products, and food that is sustainable for the environment and doesn't harm both humans and the planet.

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**Celine Nguyen**, a senior at Rancho Alamitos High School (RAHS), plans to study Human Biology and Society, pursuing a B.S. Degree (pre-med track) at UCLA. Nguyen has a 4.44 Grade Point Average. After an internship with The Boys and Girls Clubs of Garden Grove, Nguyen learned that she is particularly interested in neurology and pediatrics, because she loves working with kids. She is also passionate about social justice activism and is the Founder and Co-President of GENup Garden Grove, a chapter of a nationwide nonprofit for education reform and advocacy. Her honors and awards include RAHS Social Science Department Award, Gold Presidential Volunteer Award, ALA California Girls State Delegate, and she is the recipient of one of Orange County's 45th Annual Spirit of Volunteerism Awards. She is the Founder and Executive Director of Arts for Relief, an online initiative that uses the arts to encourage donations to mental health funds while eliminating stigma through infographics and blog articles.

**Samantha Michel**, a senior at Santiago High School (SHS) plans to major in History at the University of California at Berkeley. She is seeking a Bachelor's and Master's Degree in History, as well as teaching credentials so she can teach History. She is particularly interested in community engagement. She has worked with the LGBT Center of Orange County and wants to help create resources for LGBTQ youth. She has also worked for and collaborated with Resilience Orange County. Michel's extracurricular activities have included serving as SHS Young Senators Club President, SHS Band Euphonium Section Leader and Club Vice President, SHS Gender and Sexuality Alliance Club President, SHS National Honor Society Club President and SHS Journalism Media Coordinator. As a Volunteer she has served the Vietnamese Rainbow of Orange County Mental Health Monday's Facilitator and Researcher and as the American Legion Auxiliary California Girls State Delegate.

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**About The Garden Grove Strawberry Festival:**

The Garden Grove Strawberry Festival is an annual 501(c)(3) non-profit Admission Free community event produced by the GGSFA, a dedicated volunteer group, which has raised more than \$7 million for various charities since its inception in 1958. **To learn more and for updates, please visit, <https://strawberryfestival.org/>**

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