



# FACES FOR THE FUTURE NEWS AND UPDATES



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This newsletter edition is jam packed with highlights and information! Be sure to click through to read the stories in their entirety!

## Highlights

### What's new?

- Farewell to Alex Ayala
- Salina Sithiporn and Trang Le Alumni Spotlight
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### A Farewell to our Lead Coordinator, Alexandra Ayala



The FACES for the Future team said farewell and good luck to Alexandra Ayala on August 14<sup>th</sup> and wished her well on the next phase of her career journey. Alex held the role of Lead Coordinator at Rady Children's Center for Healthier Communities and supported both the FACES for the Future and Medical Academy programs. She began her journey here as a volunteer and once hired, grew over 6 years to work in several programs while being promoted to having a greater impact. Alex completed her Master's degree in Social Work

this spring and looked forward to working towards licensure in her new position as a Bilingual Family Consultant at Southern Caregiver Resource Center. Although Alex spent several years working with high school aged youth, she will now be able to learn from and support an entirely different population- the elderly.

If you crossed paths with Alex, you knew that she worked and played hard, and had high expectations for the young people she tried to impact. Her parting words for our FACES students: ***"Follow your goals even if they change throughout your journey. Know that your FACES family will always support you. And answer our alumni calls!"***

Join me in wishing her well. Best wishes, Alex! We'll miss you!

## Alumni Spotlight

Hoover Class of 2011

## Salina Sithiporn

Salina Sithiporn graduated in 2011 from the FACES for the Future program at Hoover High School. She went on to attend college at San Francisco State University, majoring in Child and Adolescent Development with a concentration in Early Childhood Education. She graduated in spring 2016. When asked what FACES meant to her she said, "At the time, I didn't realize how much of an impact FACES had on me. The pandemic affected many of us in different ways. I lost my job and did not have any luck with job searching. I decided to reach out to FACES, not really knowing how they could help me or if they could. FACES is like family, they are not only there to guide you through high school, but they can guide you through adulthood, too." After reaching out to FACES and learning about the available job opportunities at Rady Children's Hospital, Salina applied to Alexa's PLAYC because she missed working with children and their families especially after the pandemic started. She said, "I wanted to use my degree and get more experience in this field before I decided to continue my education. I am currently going through the training process and cannot wait to be in a classroom again." We are thrilled to have another FACES alumnus as a member of the Rady Children's Hospital family and know this is another step forward in her journey to become a Pediatric Occupational Therapist.

## Crawford Class of 2017 Trang Le

Trang Le is a FACES for the Future class of 2017 alumna from Crawford High School. She is currently a senior at CSU Channel Islands University majoring in Health Science, with a minor in Sociology. Trang will graduate in the spring of 2021 with the goal of achieving a Master's of Social Work degree. Her ultimate goal is to become a social worker in a hospital or healthcare setting. "The FACES program has helped me a lot with my focus to study in the healthcare field," says Trang.

In addition to her studies, Trang has also worked hard at developing leadership skills. She is currently the secretary-treasurer for Circle K International, a service leadership program sponsored by Kiwanis International. She is also a manager for the student programming board. Her role is to work with her team to plan virtual activities and events to engage the general student population.

In December of 2019, Trang had the wonderful experience of traveling to Taiwan as part of an "International Experience" class. She learned about the Taiwanese culture, traditional music, and alternative medicine practices such as acupuncture and cupping. She also had the opportunity to visit the Taiwanese Centers for Disease Control and learned a great deal about their virus and disease prevention and control methods.

All of these experiences have helped shape Trang into a strong, confident, empathetic young person who will one day become a leader in the healthcare field. Her FACES family is extremely proud of her and all her accomplishments.



## Clinician Spotlight

As most everyone has had to do during this time of CoVid 19, FACES for the Future was required to make some significant changes to the way our program is implemented and carried out. The students are no longer allowed to visit the hospital for clinical rotations due to public health restrictions, which means that we had to bring the rotations to them! Our clinical partners have gone above and beyond to make sure the FACES students have not been forgotten during this pandemic. With the help of FACES staff and a new video camera, several clinicians recorded interviews and department walk-throughs in order to provide



students with insight into each department and the critical roles clinicians play in bringing healthcare to San Diego's youth.

### A huge thank you to:

Hematology/Oncology- Sheila Tobin and her team  
Gastroenterology- Jen Cortez and her team  
3 East Surgical- Carrie Svendsen and her team  
Child Life- Taylor Keightley  
Social Work Team  
Otolaryngology- Dr. Magit  
Neurology- Dr. Levy  
Audiology- Julie Purdy  
NICU- Peggy Grimm  
Medical Unit- Cindy Lewis  
Alexa's PLAYC- Nora Camacho  
Respiratory Therapy- Nina Haskell  
Physical Therapy Team

## Community Partner Spotlight

### United Women of East Africa



United Women of East Africa (UWEAST), located in San Diego City Heights, is a grassroots, community-driven non-profit organization comprised of over 200 East African women working on a volunteer basis to support the local East African community. UWEAST was established in 2008 in response to the overwhelming request by the East African community to address the physical and mental health needs of East African refugees and their families. Executive Director, Faiza Warsame states, "Our mission is to be the force for culturally competent health services, education, and advocacy for the well-being of the East African Community".

UWEAST offers programs centering on health, economic and educational empowerment, and leadership. Some of their health programs are, girls basketball and swimming; women's yoga; "Making Connections", which addresses social determinants for East African men; and "Urban Beats", a mental health and education program.

Their economic and educational empowerment programs consist of "Bilal & Baraka", a women's entrepreneurship training program and "Connecting Souls", a career workshop program for young girls. They also offer academic tutoring sessions and high school internships.

Their leadership programs consist of a culturally tailored Girl Scouts program, photo and film training, youth workshops, and the "Young East African Scholars" program.

UWEAST has been a FACES for the Future partner for over five years and offers our FACES students internship opportunities that allow them to learn more about the services offered in their community and assist them in their development of personal and professional skills. When it comes to community related services Ms. Warsame says, "FACES students should use their voices to advocate for themselves and ask for resources when they need them. They should not be afraid to ask for help".

We at FACES for the Future value our continued relationship with Ms. Warsame and United Women of East Africa.

## High School Spotlight

### Crawford High School Mr. John Ross

"A true leader has the confidence to stand alone, the courage to make tough decisions, and the

### Hoover High School Valerie Woodfill

Valerie Woodfill is the Sophomore English teacher for the Academy of Health and Healthier

compassion to listen to the needs of others.” - Douglas MacArthur. When reflecting on this quote, our Crawford Vice Principal Mr. John Ross comes to mind. Mr. Ross has been an amazing leader and role model for Crawford High School students. Mr. Ross has tremendous experience with encouraging students’ success and setting up programs and ways to improve their learning. Mr. Ross is a huge supporter of the FACES program. He continues to promote and encourage Crawford students not only to join our program, but to obtain leadership roles and go above and beyond to make the best of their high school experience. Mr. Ross’s dynamic, charismatic, down to earth personality allows him the opportunity to relate to the students struggles and motivate them to make a positive change. Mr. Ross has great problem solving and conflict resolution strategies that elicit greatness out of students. We want to thank him for his advocacy, support and recruiting of some amazing students to the FACES.

Communities, but she is so much more to our team and our students. Ms. Woodfill is always a ray of light for her students and teaches them far more than English lessons. She supports her students by giving them a voice to express themselves and a safe environment to feel heard. Ms. Woodfill has been a constant support of the FACES program, whether it is hosting a guest speaker, letting the coordinators pop into her class to make announcements, or just being a general cheerleader of the students we can always count on her support. We are incredibly lucky to have teachers like Ms. Woodfill as a part of our team because her enthusiasm, kind heart, and welcoming nature are always reflected in her teaching and interactions with her students.

## FACES UPDATES

### FACES- San Diego is Growing- Welcome Kearny High School

FACES- San Diego is growing!

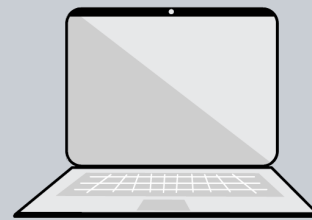


This year Kearny High School became an official FACES program. Kearny High School has offered a health career pathway program for many years. This last year Kearny High School submitted an application and was officially branded a FACES program. FACES programs differ from traditional health career pathways in that each program is required to incorporate 4 important components: Wellness and Social Support, Leadership Development, Academic Enhancement and Clinical Health Career Exposure. All components of the program are important, but the wellness and

social support is critical for providing guidance, supporting self-efficacy and leveraging each student’s protective factors. FACES programs go beyond the high school years maintaining connections and providing programming for students into their college years. This includes alumni events, which provides networking opportunities and introductions to many other college services and resources. FACES programs are part of a larger, nationwide FACES Coalition based out of Oakland, California. The many benefits of becoming a FACES program include participation in monthly programming calls, use of shared resources and participating in the annual FACES for the Future Coalition Meeting. Kearny High School is a welcome addition to FACES- San Diego and brings many assets and resources to the program. Stay tuned for a spotlight on Kearny’s dedicated coordinator in our next newsletter!

### ZOOMING in on FACES

As we all know this past year has been a year of challenges, adaptations and resiliency. The FACES team and the students at Hoover, Crawford and Kearny High Schools have all risen to the challenge and have adapted to online learning in a variety of ways. The coordinators made a special effort to connect with each student with their scheduled one on one check in sessions via zoom. This helped students stay connected, on track with the program and identify any extra support that may be needed. Academics continued on ZOOM with a variety of online workshops, career panels, and exploration activities including physical therapy, UCSD medical students, and SDSU nursing students. In lieu of Community Rotations we were able to host Virtual Community Rounds with the majority of our partner organizations. As the hospital was not able to host students on site, our clinical rotations looked very different but equally impactful. The coordinators and our committed clinical departments developed videos and learning modules to walk through a clinical experience as if they were in the facility. A silver lining is that these videos can be used for years to come to help prepare students for the clinic and broaden their experience. In order to keep the important



rituals of the program alive, the team was able to provide online, virtual experiences for graduation and the Clinical Induction Ceremony for our newly articulated seniors. The school faculty and many instructors joined in the celebrations marking the transition into a new year of FACES learning and for many, entry into the online learning experience of college. This has been a remarkable year and we are incredibly proud of the work and innovation of our FACES Coordinators, our managers and of course of the resilient and inspiring FACES students.



### Student Highlight

Jessica Ruiz, Crawford Class of '21

This school year began in a unique way. Students prepared themselves to continue with the impromptu distance online learning method. Different from years past, students are finding themselves spending more time in front of their computer screens than ever before. Although this year is different from what we have ever known, our FACES students garnered themselves with strength, resilience and determination to make the best out of the difficult situation. Jessica Ruiz, current junior from Crawford High School has done an amazing job of persevering and excelling through distance learning. We want to highlight Jessica for her resilience and dedication to her schoolwork and the FACES Program. Jessica maintains a great GPA, with 3 AP classes and has been on top of completing her assignments for this program. Jessica has an eagerness to learn about her

community and is excited to learn more about our community partners to complete her community health internship experience this year. Jessica has shown a strong desire to do well and keep going towards her career goals despite the unforeseen circumstances. We want to continue encouraging Jessica to keep up the wonderful work and hopefully see her doing great things in the healthcare field in the near future.

## FACES for the Future Coalition News

### Youth Advisory Council

Congratulations to our new Youth Advisory Council representatives: Issa Muse, Kathy Pham, and Umulkheir Sharif Ali!!!

The FACES for the Future Coalition developed a Youth Advisory Council to learn and integrate youth voice in the FACES' work. This council is composed of 12 members that include FACES alumni and current students across all sites. Students are required to commit to 1 year of participation which includes participating in quarterly video meetings, providing the FACES for the Future Coalition feedback on projects and programs, helping to inform FACES for the Future workshops and curriculum, as well as participating in race equity and social justice discussions. We are thrilled to have these 3 students representing San Diego and know that they will bring great ideas to the table!

[Learn More](#)

Stay up to date with the FACES for the Future Coalition



[More Info](#)

## Mental Health Matters in Medicine

Great news! Registration is now open for our **Weekend Medical Academy** focused on careers in mental and behavioral health. This informative weekend of activities will take place over two- half days on January 23-24 and will include career panels, short lectures and skills practice. For more information, please visit our website: <https://sdhealthscholars.org/about-weekend-medical-academy/>

This registration is open to high school and early college students. I hope you can join us to learn why, "There is no health without mental health!"

Follow our registration process here: <https://sdhealthscholars.org/wma-application-process/>

### Health Career Connection Update

Health Career Connection has been partnering with health care and public health organizations to offer 10-week, stipend-paid, fulltime summer internships for diverse college students for over thirty years! Health Career Connection's California program connects talented, diverse, undergraduate students to local public health and healthcare organizations. Internships provide invaluable exposure, experience, and mentorship in health careers. If you aspire to become a health leader, apply now for the 2021 cohort! Applications will close on December 13<sup>th</sup>.

<https://www.healthcareers.org/internship-program/application/>



### Alumni Survey 2020

FACES for the Future conducted its second annual alumni outreach effort this summer between July and August. This is our way of staying connected to our FACES students, checking in to see how everyone is doing and finding ways to provide needed support and opportunities. FACES coordinators divided a list of 359 alumni and began calling with specific questions in mind about school, employment and possible FACES alumni events. Although the task was daunting, it was heartwarming for them to reconnect with some of their students. For students not reached by phone, emails were sent with a survey link to complete instead. We're happy to report that we heard from 204 alumni (57%)! We are analyzing the data and thinking through next steps as we speak!

Thanks to those who completed the survey either by phone or survey link. We'll do it again next year and look to increase our response rate. We didn't survey the class of 2020 because they had just graduated. But rest assured, they'll be hearing from us next year!



Follow us on Instagram to stay up to date with FACES news!

