

The 2025 Sequoia Awards

Outstanding Individual

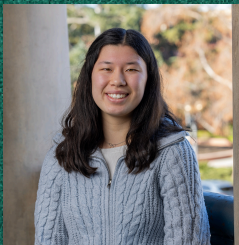
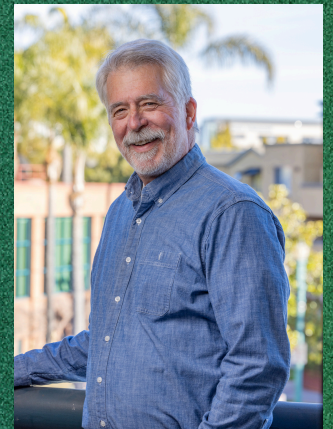
Clem Molony

Outstanding Student

Linda Molnar
Carlmont High School

Outstanding Business

J. Ennis Kirkland
Creative Services





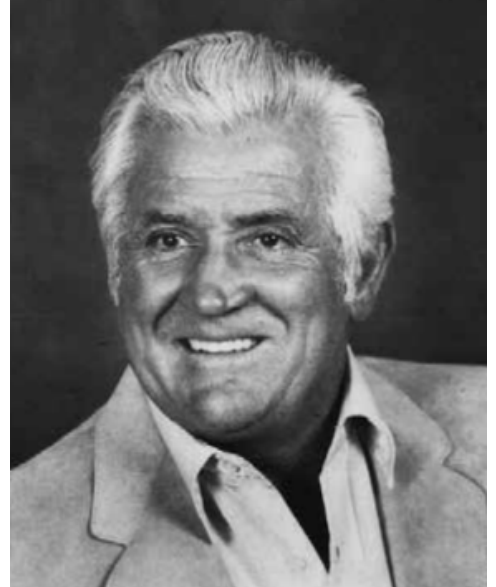
The Friends of Pete

In memory of Pete Uccelli – one of the founding members of the Sequoia Awards – we have established a way for individuals to become involved in supporting The Sequoia Awards scholarship program.

Pete Uccelli was a man who loved watching things grow. He planted trees. He built a business. He supported charities. He was generous to those who needed financial help, and he never accepted repayment but rather advised the recipients to pay it forward and assist others in their community.

Finally, he believed the future of tomorrow are the young people of today. Those values combined and resulted in the creation of The Sequoia Awards.

On behalf of The Sequoia Awards, the board invites you to join us and support the organization which Pete helped create by becoming a “Friend of Pete” and donating to The Sequoia Awards. Your tax deductible donation to The Sequoia Awards will contribute to future scholarships for other deserving students.



We encourage anyone who would like to help recognize the spirit of volunteerism in our community to make a donation, of any amount. Please join the Friends of Pete in inspiring our community and investing in youth who are committed to helping others. Recognition will be listed in next year’s program.

How to make a tax deductible contribution in any amount to The Sequoia Awards and join the Friends of Pete.

If contributing by check, please make your check payable to the Sequoia Awards and in the memo area be sure to write “Friends of Pete” and mail it to:

**Sequoia Awards
P.O. Box 2355
Redwood City, CA 94064**

If you would like to contribute this evening by cash, check, credit card, or pledge, please see one of our volunteers in the atrium.

If you would like to contribute online, please go to sequoiaawards.org/donate and select the donate button or scan the QR code below.

**SCAN TO
DONATE**





WELCOME

**Tara Fowler Saccuman
and Mark Simon**

Members, Sequoia Awards
Board of Directors

OPENING REMARKS

Jenny Corral Stahler

Chair, Sequoia Awards Board
of Directors

INVOCATION

Josue Ruiz & Bryan Ceballos

Youth Pastors at Verbo Family
Christian Church and Sequoia
Awards Scholarship Recipients

AWARD PRESENTATIONS

Outstanding Business of the Year
**J. Ennis Kirkland Creative
Services**, Introduced by Andy
Frisch, Board Member

Outstanding Individual of the Year
Clem Molony, Introduced by
Mark Simon, Board Member

Student Scholarships Awards

Outstanding Student of the Year
Linda Molnar, Introduced by
Jenny Stahler, Chair

CLOSING REMARKS

Jeri Daines

Vice Chair, Sequoia Awards
Board of Director

PROGRAM



About The Sequoia Awards

A small group of civic leaders led by Pete and Paula Uccelli established The Sequoia Awards in 1990 as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to honoring volunteerism in Redwood City. The first Sequoia Awards scholarship was for \$500. Since then, The Sequoia Awards has grown to become the largest scholarship program in Redwood City. To date, we have distributed more than \$3.7 million in scholarships thanks to the work of our board of directors and support from local businesses, other nonprofits, and individuals in our community who understand the importance of an active and engaged citizenry. Our scholarships are based solely on the volunteerism of our honorees. Academics, school-mandated volunteerism, and participation in school-sponsored activities and athletics are not part of the criteria.

Our Goals

Our mission is to inspire and recognize volunteerism in Redwood City. We do that by identifying and honoring our local high school seniors, businesses, and individuals who have had the greatest positive impact on our community through their volunteerism. True to our mission, an all-volunteer board of directors runs our organization. **We have no paid staff.**

2024 - 2025 Board of Directors

Jenny Stahler, Chair
Jeri Daines, Vice Chair
Deanna Dooley, Secretary
Dennis McBride, Treasurer
Ed Everett, Past Chair

Tony Bullock	Joel Butler
Jack Castle	Andrew Frisch
Ellen B. Haas	Diane Howard
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Sandra Rodriguez	Barbara Rovins
Tara Fowler Saccuman	George Shoenstein
Mark Simon	Paula Uccelli
	Chris Weber



March 20, 2025

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Welcome to the 35th Anniversary of the Sequoia Awards! Tonight, we celebrate the brilliant legacy of six businessmen who hatched the idea of recognizing students, adults, and businesses in Redwood City for what they give back to our community. Unlike most scholarships, the Sequoia Awards are based completely on volunteerism as our organization believes the act of volunteering is the foundation of a healthy community.

As a proud member of this community, I'm so honored to serve as this year's Chair.

In 1995, I had the privilege of receiving the Outstanding Student Award. To say that this recognition was life-changing for me would be an understatement. Along with my amazing fellow board members, I now have the privilege of helping find, interview, and select all of these outstanding community volunteers!

Tonight's honorees represent the vibrant, generous, supportive, innovative, and diverse community that is Redwood City. This year, we will be giving out \$167,500 in scholarships ranging from \$5,000 to \$25,000, thanks to the generosity of our donors. Our student winners are energetic, caring, and industrious. Meeting them, one is hopeful for the future of our community, our country, and our world. Our Outstanding Student winner, Linda Molnar, represents the group admirably. She is a shining example of the spirit and action of volunteer work.

Our Outstanding Business award recipient, J. Ennis Kirkland Creative Services, demonstrates what "giving back" truly means through his dedication and steadfast presence in Redwood City.

Finally, our Outstanding Individual, Clem Molony, has set a standard for all of us and his selfless commitment to others has inspired so many.

Please enjoy their stories, be inspired by their examples, and leave with our thanks for sharing in this wonderful event and making it possible.

My best,

Jenny Corral Stahler
2025 Sequoia Awards Board Chair



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2025 WINNERS

This year, 24 Redwood City student volunteers will receive a total of \$167,500 in college scholarships in recognition of their exemplary volunteer work. The scholarships are funded by individual contributors, local philanthropic organizations, and corporate donors.

\$5,000 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



ANGELEAH FAYETTE

Menlo Atherton High School

Sponsor: The Paula Uccelli & Marilyn Territo Scholarship
(In honor of Ted Hannig and Elmer Guererro)

At her high school, Angeleah is the co-President of DECA (a business club), the VP and co-founder of the Girls in STEM Club, and the VP of the Math Club. Angeleah's volunteerism is rooted in the struggles she faced as a young girl while being homeless, and she wants to give back the same assistance she and her family needed. Her favorite part of volunteering is seeing the smiles on people's faces and knowing she has provided a positive impact on their lives. Her experience on a service trip to Costa Rica was particularly rewarding, as she connected with the children, providing them with school supplies and teaching them literacy. She has also provided service locally, volunteering with the Ecumenical Hunger Program in East Palo Alto handing out food and household supplies. This service is especially rewarding since she and her family were benefits of the program in her childhood.

Career Goal: Angeleah plans to go into law.

Quote: *"Volunteering means a lot to me not only because I've been one of the people to receive it but also because it's important to help our community and use our own existence to have a positive impact, which I spent most of my high school years doing."*



LUIS ALDO CASIQUE-LEON

Eastside College Preparatory School

Sponsor: Sares Regis Education Community Foundation & DPR Construction

Aldo's volunteerism is rooted in his dream of becoming a NASA astronaut. Through his motivation to encourage youth to pursue STEM, he hopes to create a learning space for other latino students at his high school. This fueled him to start a Latino club called Habladores Dulces, where they celebrate their culture with events like Dia de Los Muertos and El Grito. Aldo combined his passion for aeronautics and his culture by becoming a mentor and tutor to middle schoolers through the RISE program, specifically helping in math and science. Aldo has special admiration for Jose Hernandez, the first Mexican-American farmworker to become a NASA astronaut.

Career Goal: Aldo wants to become an astronaut.

Quote: *"It's worth dreaming big, as long as you're willing to put in the work and effort to convert that dream into reality."* (Jose Hernandez)



HADE CURUP SURUY

Sequoia High School

Sponsor: W.L. Butler Construction

Hade's volunteerism is rooted in the examples set by her mother, who is her greatest influence in life. Hade's mother would volunteer and distribute food at their church, which taught her early on to show kindness to others by giving back. Hade has volunteered at the San Mateo County Sheriff's Activities League (SAL), especially the yearly Christmas Toy Drive, where she helped by carefully selecting, wrapping, and distributing toys for families lacking in resources. At her high school, Hade also joined the ASB and volunteered with various ELD functions while continuing to be a very active member of SAL.

Career Goal: Hade hopes to become an architect or work in construction management.

Quote: *"The more involved I became, the more I found myself pouring my heart into projects."*



JOSHUA EDWARDS

Carlmont High School
Sponsor: Oracle USA, Inc.

Joshua's volunteerism is rooted in his commitment to the Boy Scouts of America, especially his accomplishment of becoming an Eagle Scout (which only 6% of Boy Scouts achieve). Eagle Scout projects for Joshua included installing boot-brush wipers in heavy traffic San Mateo County Park trailheads, the Bay Trail Levee cleanup, assembling hygiene kits for homeless, and the Rise Against Hunger Initiative, packing meals to feed 1 million people in underprivileged countries. Joshua also designed (and taught) 28 course curriculums for math, English, science, and financial literacy; teaching 3rd-9th grade students weekly for three years, utilizing creative and fun ways (such as Kahoot) to engage his students.

Career Goal: Joshua plans to study computer science, and run a tech-grounded non-profit.

Quote: *"My scouting journey, community service, and Future Bridge leadership, have prepared me well to serve, collaborate, and lead."*



RIEN GUPTA

Design Tech High School
Sponsors: Monterra Credit Union & Redwood City Police Officers' Association

Rien's volunteerism began with baking cookies for seniors, where the spirit of giving gave him joy. He then realized that perhaps he could bring his passion, robotics, which he has done since the 4th grade, into his volunteer work. With the goal of helping expose robotics to a wide variety of young minds, he started Sandpiper Robotics for elementary school students in San Mateo County. To involve high school students, he started a second non-profit, WeRobot4youth, and Rien has become a leader in the organization, including the hosting of California Regional Robotics competition.

Career Goal: Rien is interested in a career in Engineering.

Quote: *"Like those warm cookies brought smiles and joy, I now know that the sweetest rewards come from the moments we share with others – whether it is through baking cookies or building robots."*



MEGHAN MOORE

Carlmont High School

Sponsor: The Alice W. Coghlan R.N. Memorial Scholarship
(Funded by Steve & Diane Howard and Frank & Liza Bizzarro)

Meghan's volunteerism, and her career goals, are both rooted in the challenges she and her family faced involving her parents. Both parents were diagnosed with rare and debilitating diseases, and when she was 11, her mom brought home a service dog. The service dog had such a positive impact on Meghan and her family, that she has been volunteering her time to raise and train service dogs for the past four years. She presents and demonstrates the dogs for donors, community events, and schools, which has boosted her public speaking confidence. While it has been painful to finally release the dogs she has trained to their new "patients", she feels rewarded that her dogs are "making the world a better place."

Career Goal: Meghan hopes to conduct medical research on rare autoimmune and genetic diseases.

Quote: *"Ultimately when I hand over the leash, every tough moment along the way becomes a way to transform a life. I never expected one of those lives to be mine."*



ROBERTO PAULINO

Sequoia High School

Sponsor: Bill Block Foundation

Roberto's volunteerism is rooted in the challenge he faced as a Spanish speaker at home who was forced to learn English at school. To help him through process, his mother signed up Roberto, and the entire family, with Project Read. Soon the entire family was engaged and improving their English-speaking skills. Roberto was so grateful for Project Read and the impact it had on him and his family that he decided to volunteer there as a tutor. Roberto, recalling his progress as a reader, found that he had great patience with the young student he was mentoring, and he found this gave him a sense of meaning.

Career Goal: Roberto's career goals are dentistry or physical therapy.

Quote: *"Being able to help a student reminded me of myself being helped with my English reading at Project Read, but this time it was me helping the student with her goal of having good grades."*



SOPHIA PESTONI

Woodside High School

Sponsor: The Crittenden Family

Sophia's volunteerism is rooted in her love of sports. Despite playing three sports in high school, taking AP courses, and being her senior class Secretary, Sophia finds time to volunteer with Best Buddies, a club that hosts activities with students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Sophia was particularly inspired by one of the students she worked with, Will, who showed her that those with disabilities are "not defined by what they can or cannot do." Not stopping there, Sophia has also volunteered at the Red Morton Community Center and picked up trash around Redwood City, while serving as President of her school's community service club, Octagon Club.

Career Goal: Sophia is interested in a career in business marketing.

Quote: *"What started as a fun volunteer opportunity soon became more meaningful. I was supporting a cause I believe in: that everyone, no matter what their circumstances, should be treated with respect."*



TAYLOR RIENHART

Woodside High School-Cañada Middle College

Sponsor: Lyngso Garden Materials, Inc.

Taylor's volunteerism is rooted in her interest in and passion for the land, and mankind's impact on it. Her volunteering journey started at nearby Cascade Ranch, where she learned methods of conservationism utilized by the Amah Mutsun people. The next step for Taylor was volunteering with CityTrees, where Taylor eventually became a group leader. Taylor subsequently became very involved with the Girl Scouts, where opportunities for volunteering were abundant, specifically working with, and learning about, the land. Taylor's dedication resulted in her achieving the highest award in Girl Scouts (something that fewer than 6% of Girl Scouts achieve). Taylor's Gold Award project involved bat conservation and education, and her educational creations can be seen at Edgewood Park and on the Stanford campus. The world will be a better place when Taylor unleashes her full potential in the years to come.

Career Goal: Taylor wants to be an Environmental Engineer.

Quote: *"Volunteering with Cascade Ranch and CityTrees has allowed me to benefit the local community which I live in, and the environment which gives everything to me and society."*



JOSUE RUIZ

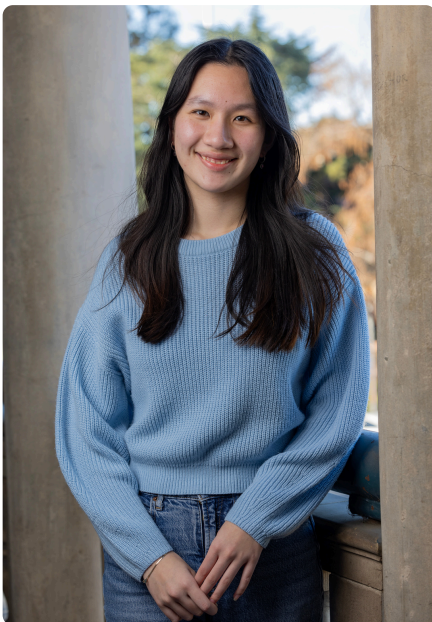
Eastside College Preparatory School

Sponsor: Stanford Health Care & Stanford University

Josue's volunteerism is rooted in his faith and his dedication to his family church, Familia Cristiana Verbo. Josue has been volunteering for many years, spending his time helping guide young Sunday school students and also a program that distributes food to members of his community. Josue has assumed a leadership role while volunteering with these endeavors and is now an assistant teacher and a supervisor for many kids. Josue says he has learned teamwork while distributing food, which requires coordination among many people. Josue used his experience at church while volunteering at Nuestra Casa, a community service-based organization that has outlets in nearby cities, including East Palo Alto and Redwood City.

Career Goal: Josue plans to enter a career in pharmaceutical chemistry.

Quote: *"Volunteering is important, it brings people together, builds relationships, and builds stronger communities."*



KAITLYN SAM

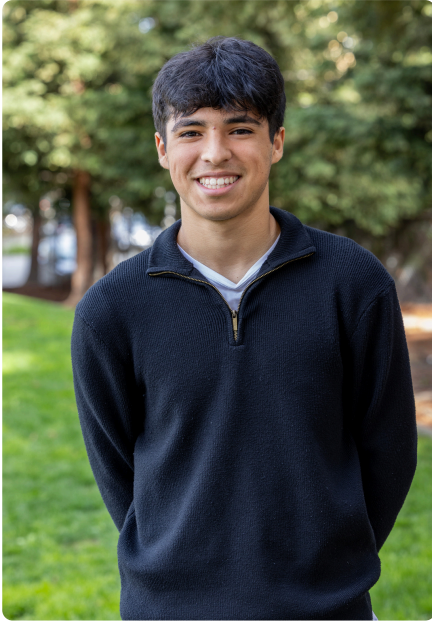
Carlmont High School

Sponsor: Dignity Health Sequoia Hospital

Kaitlyn's volunteerism is rooted in the melding of Taiwanese and Venezuelan cultures in her home. Both of her parents came to America to achieve the American Dream without being able to speak English. Kaitlyn was therefore able to fully appreciate the value of the English language and found ways to volunteer helping immigrants learn English. While just a freshman in high school, Kaitlyn tutored younger ESL students at Talkversity, teaching vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension. Kaitlyn went on to be a Digital Media Director at Talkversity, recruiting and connecting with new students to grow the program. She then participated in a year-long tutoring program under a program called ENGIN, teaching ESL to Ukrainian students. Kaitlyn expanded her volunteerism to the medical field, at a local Outpatient Nursing Department. There, she developed a passion for the research aspect of science, seeing patients who benefited from medicines created through lab research.

Career Goal: Kaitlyn wants to be an oncology researcher.

Quote: *"Volunteering has been a very insightful experience that has allowed me to become immersed in other cultures, taught me more about myself as a teacher and a person, and provided me with the motivation that will keep me driven through my career as a research scientist."*



GABRIEL SANDOVAL

Menlo School

Sponsors: BKF Engineers & Recology San Mateo County

Gabriel strives to give back to underserved Latinos in his community. He used his platform at the Peninsula Bridge Ambassador Program to speak about his experiences as a student, having been a student at Bridge since he was 10 years old. Gabriel became an educational leader and teaching assistant while volunteering with the Peninsula Bridge Summer Academy, working closely with students to help identify career paths. He also used soccer “as a medium” to teach values like respect and teamwork. Gabriel went on to become a tutor for a young student at Taft and plans to continue that this year. Gabriel has also joined Latinos Unidos, a club at his high school, which allows him to celebrate his culture.

Career Goal: Gabriel wants to become an architect.

Quote: *“Volunteering has profoundly shaped my journey, transforming me into a dedicated advocate for community and youth mentorship..”*



FRANCISCO VELASCO ORTEGA

Sequoia High School

Sponsor: Lee Cheerful Giving & Tony and Ali Ucelli

Francisco’s volunteerism began with his service as a teaching assistant for taekwondo classes at Casa Circulo Cultural, where he helped lead classes for younger students. Francisco has also been volunteering for the past two years at one of his local community organizations. From his time volunteering, Francisco has learned to have compassion and empathy for those he is helping. Aside from the reward of helping others, he feels that his communication skills have benefited from his time volunteering. Yet another benefit he notes is the networking that provided him access to other opportunities in life.

Career Goal: Francisco is interested in a career in pharmaceuticals.

Quote: *“Volunteering has taught me very valuable skills which can become important assets for my life down the line, not just for my short term future.”*



DELANEY WOLFE

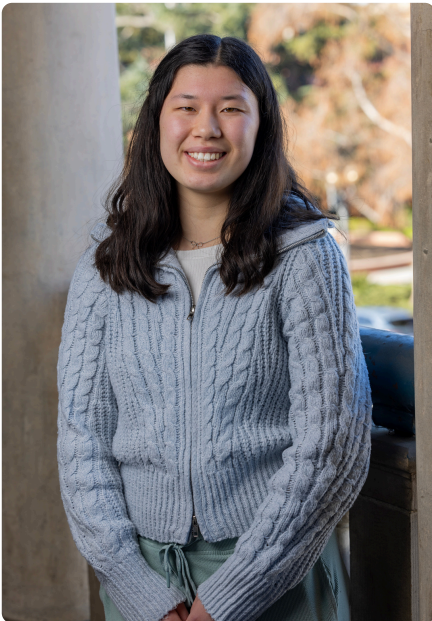
Carlmont High School

Sponsor: Kaiser Permanente & Richard Franceschini and Robyn Franceschini Budelli

Delaney's volunteerism is rooted in, well, plastics. Specifically, how to transform this ubiquitous manufacturing material into reusable items to protect the Earth. Delaney joined Peninsula Precious Plastics (PPP). When she joined, she was not only one of the youngest members, she was the first and only girl. Nonetheless, Delaney became familiar with the related machinery and eventually made presentations at sustainability and maker events, including Maker Fair, an international DIY convention. There, her group won Editor's Choice awards. The group subsequently became a 501(c)(3) charity, with Delaney serving a leading role on the club's board. PPP went on to partner with Swellcycle Surfboards, showcasing the potential for potential for recycled plastics. Her group is currently working with the California Academy of Sciences, CA State Parks, and the UCSC Seymour Marine Science Museum to spread awareness of the importance of sustainability.

Career Goal: Delaney plans to find a career as a planetary scientist, geologist, archeologist, or environmental scientist.

Quote: *"PPP has taught me that small actions can lead to significant change, and with enough collaboration, we can work towards a healthier Earth."*



LINDSAY WONG

Carlmont High School

Sponsors: The Billee Werby Memorial Scholarship (Funded by Paula Uccelli, Lori & Dennis McBride, and The Werby Family)

Lindsay's career path and volunteerism are rooted in the time she spent helping in her mother's classroom. Whether it has been filing paperwork or prepping art projects, the time Lindsay has spent in the classroom was not only rewarding and fulfilling, but it helped her realize that she too wanted to be a teacher. Lindsay continued with her service to the community through Key Club, which helped her to overcome some of the shyness that was caused by the Covid-lockdown. Lindsay discovered that service brings her joy, but she also learned that by working together with others, you can achieve great things.

Career Goal: Lindsay wants to be a teacher.

Quote: *"Service has been such a beacon of light and hope in my life, as I have learned that if individuals work together toward a common goal, we can prevail."*



TALA YOUSSEF

Carlmont High School

Sponsors: The Welch-Everett Family Trust

Tala's volunteerism started with A Gift of Sports, where she currently serves as Vice President. Tala also volunteers with Key Club, organizing food drives, volunteering at schools, and environmental clean-up campaigns. Through her dedication to Key Club, Tala developed leadership skills and learned to work collaboratively with her peers. There, she has taken on a leadership role, first designing websites as the Key Club Webmaster, then as a division leader. Tala also has volunteered with Until There's A Cure, where she developed media campaigns and advertisements for events like the San Francisco Giants AIDS benefit game. Through all of her volunteerism, Tala says she has cultivated a culture of service and empathy.

Career Goal: Tala wants to go into law.

Quote: *"Ultimately, the act of volunteering is a powerful tool for change, and it has shaped my life greatly."*



We would like to acknowledge the Peter and Paula Uccelli Foundation for its generous donation, which has contributed to awards for all students.



\$7,500 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



KIAN BHATT

Carlmont High School

Sponsor: Hannig Law, LLP (In honor of Mr. & Mrs. Anthony & Nancy Bullock) & Heritage Bank of Commerce

Kian began his volunteerism with Healthy Cities, where he tutored a young student via Zoom during the two-year Covid lockdown. As part of the Young Men's Service League, Kian volunteered with 15 local philanthropic organizations, including coaching children with intellectual and developmental disabilities in sports, in programs like AYSO VIP, Miracle League, and BelMateo Bowlers. As part of his high school's ASB, he organized school events to foster positive school spirit. Kian also has volunteered with Peninsula Food Runners, Samaritan House, and Street Life Ministries. Kian wasn't content with just his own service to the community, so he created a website called Road2Serve, to connect those who want to serve with organizations that need assistance. There, he has connected over 500 student volunteers with service and community engagement. His love of the outdoors lead him being selected for the Youth Climate Ambassadors (YCA) program.

Career Goal: Kian wants to find a career in private equity.

Quote: *"Volunteering has taught me to adapt, empathize, and work with others, and these lessons have helped me grow as a person."*



BRYAN CEBALLOS

Sequoia High School

Sponsor: Tara Fowler Saccuman and Bob Haeusslein, Merrill, a Bank of America Company & Bill Block Foundation

Bryan's journey through life has been heavily impacted by his volunteerism. In fact, he says, "doing community hours is what saved my life." Bryan's path in life was redirected in a positive direction when he started helping out at his church. Bryan's time volunteering has taught him the power of giving. When he himself felt under-valued and under-appreciated, he found that by giving himself to others he developed his own sense of worth, on his own, through his unselfish deeds and actions. His church found that during Covid, there was a massive need for their food distribution program, especially for people in his community, many of whom are immigrants with no safety net. Bryan appreciates the faith-based nature of his church and the lesson plans intertwined with their food bank program. Bryan feels that faith is the root of his organization's generosity, because "we are here to give to others."

Career Goal: Bryan hopes to find a career in personal accounting.

Quote: *"I've come to create a belief that the heart of Redwood City is the organization and people that have been created to help others when they see there is a time of need and a time of love."*



VALERIE MOYA

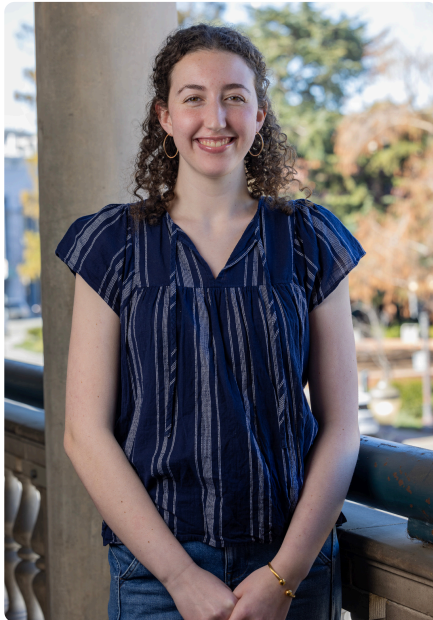
Sequoia High School

Sponsor: Hannig Sail It Forward Foundation (In honor of Joe Bullock's Birthday) & Bill Block Foundation

Valerie's quest for volunteerism started in 6th grade, when she responded to an advertisement for Redwood City's Youth Advisory Board. She not only was accepted, she served in a leadership role as Secretary and Co-Chair, volunteering for food drives, PAL toy wrapping drives, and free youth arts-and-crafts classes. When Valerie aged out of the YAB, she joined the Teen Advisory Board, a program geared for high school students in Redwood City. There, she worked with City Council, acting as a liaison for teen voices in the community. Valerie once again took on a leadership role, serving as Secretary for three years and now as Co-Chair. They plan teen events like open mics and skate nights, and volunteer at various events, including the Halloween Spooktacular and cooking food for the underserved.

Career Goal: Valerie would like to become an EMT, or Physical Therapist.

Quote: *"Any act of kindness, no matter how small, contributes to larger positive changes that inspire others to do the same, creating a ripple effect that sparks closer bonds within our communities."*



RUBY RAPPOPORT

Sequoia High School

Sponsor: Hannig Environmental Research Organization (In honor of Paula Uccelli) & Bill Block Foundation

Ruby's volunteerism is rooted in the example shown to her by her grandfather, whose Christmas traditions included donating to Wreaths Across America, an organization that places wreaths on headstones of fallen armed forces soldiers. Both her grandparents continue to serve their communities and instilled in her a mindset of gratitude and generosity. In addition to being a Girl Scout, Ruby found her own way to give back by volunteering with Friends, a group that, during the Covid lockdown, facilitated the donation of CDs, DVDs, puzzles, books, and games. The sales of these items was used to fund the library's community outreach programs. While in high school, Ruby has found a way to merge two passions, volunteerism and STEM, by serving with a group called Stemality. Stemality was created by high school students to ensure younger students have access to STEM curriculum. Ruby currently serves as CEO of this organization.

Career Goal: Ruby would like to be a Biotechnologist.

Quote: *"Volunteering has gifted me the opportunity to recognize important issues, taught me the tools I need to approach solving them, and how to create a team that has the motivation to work together as we learn from one another."*



ANGE VAIL

Sequoia High School

Sponsor: The Sobrato Organization & Bill Block Foundation

Ange's volunteerism is rooted in her faith and her family, growing up in a family that needed help, both financially and with having enough food on the table. Seeing that her family benefited from the generosity of others, Ange never forgot this and now is able to give back to her community with service. Ange's bilingual ability is especially valuable for her service with Project Read, helping young people learn to read and speak English. Additionally, Ange volunteers with Chase Love, an organization that provides meals to the the large population of homeless in San Francisco. Ange's empathy for helping people in need stems from her memories of receiving similar services as a young child. Ange also volunteers for Miracle, which gathers and provides clothes, toys, and necessities to the needy, coming full circle to the time she received gifts through the PAL holiday toy drive.

Career Goal: Ange wants to become a forensic scientist.

Quote: *"Being able to give back is something that I am always happy to do because I know what it's like being someone in need. I'm grateful that I am now able to give back and help those in need."*



Special thanks to:

Kyle Chesser, Chief Creative Officer, Hands On Studio, for videography
and the winner's portraits

Debra Hall for video/photoshoot coordination

Dave Lepori for event photography

Bianchini's Market for event catering

Copenhagen Balloons for event decor

David Stahler for written program production

Paper and Ink for program printing

Fox Theatre for event venue



\$12,500 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



SOPHIYA KARER

Woodside High School

Sponsor: Chan Zuckerberg Initiative & The Will Richardson Memorial Scholarship

Sophiya's volunteerism is rooted in the memories of the Ronald McDonald House volunteers who supported her family during her older brother's stay for a terminal illness. Sophiya spent countless months in the hospital, surrounded by pain, sickness, and even death. But despite this, Sophiya was left with a positive feeling about the kindness shown to her family by the volunteers there. In gratitude to those volunteers, she and her family started volunteering at Ronald McDonald House themselves, cooking and serving meals for other families like hers, Sophiya being just 6 years old at the time. Sophiya, at age 16, returned to Ronald McDonald House to volunteer in the Activity Rooms, playing soccer with the kids or spending time with them in the video game room. She went on to volunteer with Miracle League, a baseball league for children with disabilities, forming a bond with Henrique, a blind 2nd grader. Sophiya also volunteers with Healthy Cities Tutoring, connecting with local students who cannot afford tutors, using her positive energy to engage struggling students.

Career Goal: Sophiya wants to become a doctor or other medical professional.

Quote: *"Through my service, I have gained experience in bringing spirit to those who need it most. Just as my life was enriched by selfless volunteers, I hope my uplifting attitude continues to make a lasting difference in the lives of those that I serve."*



KEVIN OCHOA

Sequoia High School

Sponsor: Bill Block Foundation & Redwood City Firefighters Association

Kevin's volunteerism began when he realized that he had something to offer to older Latino adults in his community, namely, his knowledge of technology and ability to speak Spanish and English. He volunteers with New Voices 4 Youth, a group that helps elderly adults use their devices. He has seen first hand that he can bring joy to the lives of strangers, helping an elderly man learn to send messages to his daughter, or helping an elderly woman send a video to her landlord about a harassing neighbor, or another elderly man who wanted to communicate with his grandchildren using his cellphone. Kevin has volunteered weekly for two years, and has built relationships with those he helps. He has also learned leadership skills along the way, pushing himself out of his comfort zone.

Career Goal: Kevin wants to be a corrections officer or forensic psychologist.

Quote: *"I've developed skills in teaching technology to elderly adults and in promoting that same program in community schools. These experiences have shown me that even small actions can make a big impact, and volunteering has helped me find my passion for helping others."*



OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUAL



Clem Molony

As the 2025 Person of the Year, Clem may be the quintessential Redwood City volunteer, often working humbly behind the scenes. He has volunteered, regularly assuming leadership positions, at so many organizations that it might be impossible to count them all. Volunteerism has been a lifelong pursuit for Clem, beginning when he was 19 years old volunteering at the Boys and Girls Club of Washington, D.C.

Clem served for decades as a Sequoia Awards board member, fulfilling his duties on the board, but also organizing the annual banquet, creating slide presentations thanking our sponsors, fundraising, and many other related roles.

Clem has fulfilled a similar role for the Sequoia YMCA, where he has served on the board for 25 years, as chair of a long-term capital campaign, and as a member of the Capital Campaign Cabinet, which led the Y's substantial, and widely celebrated, renovation and expansion.

He founded the Seaport Industrial Association and served on the association board the entirety of SIA's 27-year existence. The SIA became an advocate for intelligent development that preserved the existence of the Port of Redwood City and laid the foundation of support that has made it possible for the port to survive and thrive as a major part of the economic engine of Redwood City. He also founded the Peninsula Freight Users Group, a nonprofit representing businesses at the port that rely on rail freight service as a critical lifeline.

Clem has served as a board member for Sustainable San Mateo County, a leading member of City Trees Redwood City, a community leader for Free At Last, an organization that helps people beat the cycle of addiction, and board member of the Redwood City Library Foundation.

He retired in 2017 after a career that included working as environmental and safety manager for Tandem Computers and Lyngso Garden Materials. Since his retirement, he works as a "community consultant" for Walther Community Consulting, advising nonprofits on how to maximize their impact on the mid-Peninsula community.



OUTSTANDING BUSINESS



J. Ennis Kirkland Creative Services

Jim Kirkland's name is recognized by many in Redwood City, and his company is being recognized as the 2025 Outstanding Business. His volunteer activities are such a direct reflection of his business that they are inseparable. Jim has been a steadfast supporter of Sequoia Awards for decades, serving as the official photographer, graphic artist, and publisher for many years. Jim, in characteristically low-profile style, has downplayed his role as a leading businessman in our community, but J. Ennis Kirkland Creative Services, operating since 1978, has been a prominent business in Redwood City for many years.

For nearly eight years, Jim was the professional lifeblood of Redwood City's Climate Magazine, serving as Creative Director. One year, at the annual Peninsula Press Club Awards for Excellence, Jim won first, second and third place in the category of photography and graphic arts. While operating a successful business, Jim continued to serve his community in many ways as a volunteer.

Jim previously served for many years as a board member of the Sequoia Awards, while volunteering hundreds of hours annually coordinating and overseeing the printing of the Sequoia Awards program. Jim was the Sequoia Awards photographer for many years, getting to know each award recipient as he photographed them.

Jim has been volunteering for 20 years at Kainos Home and Training Center, photographing Kainos events, providing pro bono graphic design services, and befriending Kainos clients while participating in programs and helping forge greater connections in the community.

Jim consistently donates his time and expertise to other organizations, including the Kainos Golf Tournament, the Achievement Challenge Gala, and Fashion Show. He was instrumental in bringing to Redwood City the Miracle League - an adaptive baseball league for children and adults with disabilities. He actively worked in fundraising, volunteer recruitment, and fundraising for this wonderful project.



OUTSTANDING STUDENT AWARD



Linda Molnar

Carlmont High School

Sponsor: The Sequoia Awards

Our Outstanding Student of 2025 is Linda Molnar, who attends Carlmont High School. Linda will receive our top scholarship of \$25,000.

Linda's volunteerism is rooted in her quest to spread financial literacy to others in her community, especially to young people. To address this, she co-founded Project Elevate Finance, which has impacted over 70,000 students globally.

Linda has personally engaged with over 700 students, visiting 17 middle school classes, using creative ways (Pokemon cards) to teach young people about budgeting, supply and demand, credit scores, and inflation.

To reach a wider audience, she has held similar online workshops, all free-of-charge thanks to fundraisers. To spread the word and engage with youth, she developed and managed a website, in addition to YouTube and Instagram accounts. Linda also helped publish an article in a local magazine, *The Pilot*, describing the attributes of Project Elevate.

Linda has realized that to accomplish her goal, she and her organization could use the help and influence of local government leaders, and to that end, has met with local leaders, including the San Carlos City Council. Project Elevate has received recognition from several local government officials, including the Superintendent of Schools in San Mateo County.

Linda was especially impacted by her time teaching at Kennedy Middle School in Redwood City. She (and the teacher) were impressed by how engaged the students were in her presentation, which encouraged her to create a "life skills" elective class which will continue going forward at Kennedy.

Linda's drive to educate young people continued as she started a Girls-In-STEM club at her high school, while also visiting local libraries to teach STEM topics to encourage young women to venture into this field.

Career Goal: Linda wants to be in a career developing medical devices or banking.

Quote: *"Volunteering has allowed me to turn my challenges and experiences into guidance for others. Volunteering has inspired me to continue making changes in my community and taught me the qualities necessary to be a great leader and change-maker."*



PAST HONOREES

	Outstanding Business	Outstanding Student	Outstanding Individual
1991	Bay Area Bank	Tony Campbell	Bob Franceschini
1992	Browning Ferris Industries	Rosendo Chavez	Pauline Truscelli
1993	Raychem	Aimee Barile	Frank & Theresa Hannig
1994	Redwood Mechanical	Dora Arrendondo	Bob Bury
1995	Brian, Kangas, Foulk	Jenny Corral	Bonnie Miller
1996	W. L. Butler Construction	Yenda Inigo-Prado	Pete & Paula Uccelli
1997	San Mateo Credit Union	Christine O'Neal	Eddie Mae Spiller
1998	BAK Physical Therapy	Kate Goines	Pete & Ginny Hughes
1999	Terrace Associates	Monica Sotelo	Paul Vega
2000	Sequoia Hospital	Cristelda Gutierrez Sara Elizabeth Janzen	Tony Bertetta
2001	Electronic Arts	Emilia Cerrillo	Vince Truscelli
2002	Lewis Carpet & Upholstery	Brenda Magana	Janet Borgens
2003	DES Architects + Engineers	Emily Tomita	Daniela L. Gasparini
2004	Lyngso Garden Materials	Jeis Renderos	Trynie Hermary
2005	SafKeep Storage	Agustin Valverde	Alpio Barbara
2006	Oracle Corporation	Viral Shah	Georgi LaBerge Warren Dale
2007	Wells Fargo	Alicia Beekman	Sister Christina Heltsley
2008	1-800-DryClean	Claudia Norton	Jeff & Penny Richardson
2009	Recology	Sarah Ducker	Larry Purcell
2010	Kaiser Permanente	Hannah Hamley Claire Tweedy	Millie Cole
2012	Chavez Supermarkets	Alison Logia	Richard Valente
2013	Rocket Fuel	Sofia Duenas Jeremy Smith	Richard Imperiale
2014	Hannig Law Firm	Ruth Gomez	Billee Werby
2015	Provident Credit Union	Cara Green	Karl and Paula Dresden
2016	DPR Construction	Sadie Rhen	Alyn Beals
2017	AbbVie	Karolina Soto Villa	Diane Howard
2018	Canyon Inn	Clara MacAvoy	Barbara Pierce Dee Eva
2019	The Kastrop Group	Asha Argawal	Frank Bartaldo
2020	Costco Redwood City	Maria Casique-Leon	Annette Soby
2021		Ashley Barraza-Cazares Nanci Lara Alvarez Nataly Manzanero Rohan Patel Itzel Ramos	Nancy Radcliffe
2022		Kenzy Mashraki Daniel Torres Aguilar	Gloria Kennett
2023	La Biscotteria	Celina Azeneth Reyes Barrera	George Schoenstein
2024		Antonio Campbell-Rodriguez	Ken Rolandelli



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Sequoia Awards student scholarship recipients have volunteered with the following organizations:

Aim High	New Voices For Youth
AVID	Nuestra Casa
AYSO Soccer	Octagon Club
Boy Scouts	Peninsula Bridge Summer Academy
Brave Maker	Peninsula Precious Plastics
Canine Companions	Project Elevate Finance
Carlmont High School	Project READ
Carlmont High School Scots Scoop	Reaching and Inspiring Success Through Education
Casa Circulo Cultural	Redwood City Teen Advisory Board
Cascade/Pie Ranch	Rise Against Hunger
Celebrate the Music Festival	Road2Serve
Chase Love	Ronald McDonald House
City Trees	SAGE (girls in STEM)
Ciy of Burlingame	San Mateo County Outdoor Education
Climate Resilient Communities	San Mateo County Sheriff's Activities League
Coder School (San Mateo)	San Mateo Medical Center
Dream Club	San Mateo Youth Climate
ENGin	Sandpiper Robotics
Familia Cristiana Verbo	Second Harvest of Silicon Valley
Friends of the Redwood City Public Library	Service Learning Center
Future Bridge	Stemality
Girl Scouts	Taft Elementary School
Grassroots Ecology	Talkversity
Habladores Dulces	Teen Advsory Board
Healthy Cities Tutoring	Trash Patrol
Hiller Aviation Museum	Until There's a Cure
Key Club	Verbo Redwood City
Kidizens	VIP Soccer
Latino Student Union	WeRobot
Latinos unidos	Young Men's Service League
Life Moves	Youth Advisory Board
Medaka no Gakko	Youth Research Team
Miracle League	



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Will Richardson
Memorial Scholarship



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Congratulations to the 2025 Sequoia Awards Recipients

At NuTerra Real Estate Group, we believe in more than just buying or selling homes; we believe in building communities! That's why we're thrilled to support the Sequoia Awards, which recognizes the incredible impact of volunteer work in shaping the future.



Experience the difference with Redwood City's newest real estate company!



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