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Palo Alto College Awards \$86k in Scholarships to #ShowMeYourMask Finalists

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SAN ANTONIO, TX – Today, Palo Alto College awarded 14 finalists with up to two years of tuition and fees to attend Palo Alto College for their participation in the first-ever #ShowMeYourMask competition. In a collaborative effort with City of San Antonio Council District 4 Councilwoman Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, the Fiesta San Antonio Commission, and MySA, Palo Alto College launched a new event that gave residents a safe way to celebrate and prepare for their participation in the upcoming Fiesta festivities. The #ShowMeYourMask virtual competition was a spin on the popular Fiesta phrase, “Show Me Your Shoes” people say during Fiesta parades.

Each finalist took the opportunity to show off their unique, hand-made creation during a “maskerade” parade. Carolina Rico took first place in the adult category for her Flores de Fiesta mask and Emma Gomez took first place in the children’s category ages 4 – 11 for her fiesta-themed mask complete with a cactus and bedazzled Fiesta flowers. Each first-place winner took home a trophy, a gift basket from the Fiesta San Antonio Commission, and a commemorative Miss Fiesta San Antonio Fiesta medal. At the end of the parade, all participants were surprised to learn that they all were being awarded a two-year scholarship to Palo Alto College.

“We remain dedicated to ensuring educational access for students of all ages,” said Dr. Robert Garza, president of Palo Alto College. “The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to our community was tough, especially for our younger students, but we need to ensure we are providing the best educational opportunities so that these future Palominos can one day thrive and give back to their community.”

Other finalists included a kissing chicken on a stick mask created by Rene Campos in the adult category. Finalists in the children’s category included Alexa Bella Ruiz with her superhero mask, Bostyn McClearly in her bedazzled animal-themed mask, Kevin Escobedo Hernandez in his Batman mask, Misha Vallejo in her Fiesta themed mask, Valeria Alvarez in her unicorn mask, Vanessa Ramos Guerrero in her mermaid mask, Sapphire Lugo in her glitter Fiesta mask, Luis Cruz in his caterpillar mask, Lucian Elizondo Chavarria in his bunny mask, Ivana Gomez in her Loteria inspired mask, and Abraham Hernandez in his Captain America mask.

“This competition was more than just decorating a mask,” said Councilwoman Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia. “It was about recognizing how far we have come as a community since the COVID-19 pandemic began and

all that we have learned in how we care for one another. As Fiesta approaches, let's continue this momentum in working together as neighbors when celebrating safely.”

At the end of the ceremony, Athens Elementary School committed its partnership to Educate South, the first South San ISD campus that will help sustain a college-going culture in south Bexar County. Educate South is a community effort led by Palo Alto College focused on beginning educational awareness at the earliest years. Palo Alto College remains committed to creating a better future for the Southside community by providing access to quality higher education for all members of the community of all ages.

To learn more about Educate South or how to become a partner, or match our contribution, visit alamo.edu/pac/educatesouth.

About Palo Alto College

Palo Alto College, part of the Alamo Colleges District, is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, is a Rising Star winner of the 2019 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence, and is celebrating its 35-year anniversary. With over 10,000 students, Palo Alto College is accredited to offer associate degrees and short-term certificates. The College is located on the south side of San Antonio at 1400 W. Villaret Blvd. at I-410 and Texas Hwy 16 and online at alamo.edu/pac.

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