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Finalists Announced for Innovation in Education Awards Honoring Schools, Educators and Students in Orange County

Annual Awards Recognize New Approaches to Preparing Students for 21st Century Lives and Careers

Irvine, Calif. – Ten finalists were announced today for the 2016 [Innovation in Education Awards](#) presented by Project Tomorrow and the OC Tech Alliance to schools, educators and high school students who are charting new paths in education. [Project Tomorrow](#), a leading national education nonprofit and the [OC Tech Alliance](#) have been recognizing outstanding education programs, educators and students for their innovative uses of science, math and technology with this award since 2006.

Finalists for this year's awards are:

- **Innovative School-Wide Program of the Year in Science, Math & Technology** – distinguishing a public, private, or parochial school that demonstrates innovation with an outstanding, results-based school-wide program. Award winner will receive \$1,000.
 - **Tracy Barquer**, Principal, Tustin Ranch Elementary, Tustin Unified School District - Rocky's Creativity Den
 - **Dr. Michael Pratt**, Principal, St. John's Episcopal, Private, St. John's STEAM Program
 - **Dennis Cole**, Principal, Mendez Fundamental, Santa Ana Unified School District, Mendez GATE Symposium
- **High Impact Teacher of the Year in Science, Math & Technology** – acknowledging the influence of a great teacher in his/her use of science, math or technology to significantly impact student academic achievement. Award winner will receive \$1,000.
 - **Suzy Hardy**, St. John's Episcopal School, Private
 - **Stacy Kline**, Spurgeon Intermediate, Santa Ana Unified School District
 - **Scott Rosenkranz**, Sunny Hills High School, Fullerton Joint Union High School District

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- **Emerging Student Innovator of the Year in Science, Math & Technology** – recognizing high school students who are creatively using science, math and technology resources to solve a school or community problem. Award winner will receive a \$1,500 scholarship.
 - **Shalin Shah**, 12th grade, Tesoro High School, Capistrano Unified School District
 - **Brandon Rossano & Eric Baker**, 12th grade, Tustin High School, Tustin Unified School District
 - **Remington Wedin**, 12th grade, Brea Olinda High School, Brea Olinda Unified School District

The 2016 Innovation in Education Award recipients will be announced at the 23rd Annual High-Tech Innovation Awards Dinner on Thursday, October 6th, 2016 at the Westin South Coast Plaza in Costa Mesa. The annual education-focused segment is a partnership between Project Tomorrow and sponsors Microsemi and the Orange County Department of Education.

More about the Awards, including past recipients, can be found online:
<http://www.tomorrow.org/programs/innovationawards.html>

Nominations for the 2016 Project Tomorrow Innovation in Education Awards could be self-submitted or submitted by a district and/or school staff person. Organizations such as a PTA unit, parent advisory committee, or any youth based organization were also eligible to nominate. An independent review panel of local education and business leaders will select the award recipients. The annual Innovation in Education Awards are open to all public and private schools in Orange County.

About Project Tomorrow

Project Tomorrow (www.tomorrow.org), a national education nonprofit organization headquartered in Irvine, California, supports the innovative uses of research-based science, math and technology resources to develop critical thinking, problem solving and creativity in K-12 students. Project Tomorrow addresses the challenges of developing schools for the 21st century through national research projects, community and school-based programs, online tools and resources, and advocacy efforts to ensure that all students are prepared to be tomorrow's leaders, innovators and engaged citizens of the world.

About Orange County Technology Alliance

Orange County Technology Alliance is a 501(c)6 nonprofit trade association committed to fast-forwarding the local innovation economy. It is the only technology association addressing the needs of technology companies of all sizes, from small privately held enterprises to large publicly traded entities, based in Orange County, Calif. The alliance serves members through local networking, professional development, state and federal advocacy, savings on business services and industry recognition. To learn more about OC Tech Alliance visit www.octechalliance.com or email Brenda@octechalliance.com. Follow alliance activities on Twitter at twitter.com/octechalliance.

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