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PRESS RELEASE

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Ruben S. Ayala High School Engineering and Architecture Instructor Recognized as One of Nine 2024 Claes Nobel Educator of the Year Finalists

Mr. Michael Collins earns national recognition and \$1,000 grant for his commitment to student learning.

Chino, CA – On August 17, 2024, Mr. Michael Collins, the CTE Engineering and Architecture instructor at Ruben S. Ayala High School, was recognized as one of nine 2024 Claes Nobel Educator of the Year Finalists by the National Society of High School Scholars (NSHSS). The NSHSS Claes Nobel Educator of the Year Awards honor outstanding educators worldwide for their significant contributions to student growth and community development. More than just a recognition of teaching expertise, NSHSS shares that *this award celebrates educators who go above and beyond inside and outside the classroom, embodying the highest standards of leadership, innovation, and dedication to their craft.*

Established in 2011, the Claes Nobel Educator of the Year Award honors one outstanding Educator of the Year and presents them with a \$5,000 grant. An additional nine finalist awardees receive \$1,000 awards. Co-founded by the grandnephew of Alfred Nobel, NSHSS members hail from more than 170 countries throughout the world and are committed to supporting academic achievement and world betterment.

Celebrating his sixth year as an Ayala Bulldog, Mr. Collins transitioned to the classroom to teach high school students after practicing architecture and design for more than 24 years. During the 2022-2023 school year, Mr. Collins and Ayala High School Engineering and Architecture students were awarded the highly prized Golden Bell Award under the Career Technical Education (CTE) category by the California School Boards Association (CSBA). Under the CTE grouping, the Golden Bell reflects the depth and breadth of education programs and governance decisions supporting students' changing needs.

As the Engineering and Architecture advisor, Mr. Collins has seen enrollment for Ayala's program increase from 125 students to 210, with female participation surging from 13% to 24%! Program seniors who graduated during the 2023-2024 school year received approximately 177 college acceptances and \$1.2 million in scholarships. Of his program graduates, approximately 77% of students enrolled in a STEM major to continue their post-secondary aspirations.

After receiving a student nomination for the award, Mr. Collins fulfilled his award eligibility by submitting a 1,000-word prompt response that reflected on his teaching philosophy over the past few years and what he believed to be his greatest impact on student learning. His applicant submission also included pictures and video of his leadership in action, a recommendation from the nominating student attesting to his teaching excellence, his professional resume, and a color headshot.

To learn more about the NSHSS Claes Nobel Educator of the Year Award, please visit <https://www.nshss.org/educators/grants/grant-items/nshss-educator-of-the-year-award/>

About Chino Valley Unified School District:

Founded in 1860, Chino Valley Unified School District serves approximately 26,000 students across 36 schools within the Chino Valley and South Ontario areas. Home to 18 California Distinguished schools, students receive a rigorous, 21st century education in preparation for college and career. Thriving performing arts and athletic programs, nationally recognized marching bands and engaging parent-school partnerships distinguish Chino Valley Unified School District as one of the best school districts in California. For more information about Chino Valley Unified School district, please visit www.chino.k12.ca.us.

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