



EDUCATION

## 12th grade: Mehikpreet Sidhu, Sunnyside High School

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At just 17 years old, Mehikpreet is already deeply involved in the medical field, while holding down a part-time job.

As a member of her high school's prestigious Doctors Academy, and through volunteer work at a local hospital and various leadership positions, she has been accepted into UC Davis to work toward becoming a neurosurgeon.

"The list goes on and on of what Mehikpreet has done to help others," says her academic counselor, Shelley Kiritani. "She wants to help people overcome health disparities," Kiritani says. "She witnessed people with various health disparities when she lived in a rural village in India for eight years, so she still volunteers at the hospital during the school year."

Mehikpreet is active at school, Kiritani says, helping organize the AVID Halloween Carnival, serving as a Link Leader who helps freshmen get connected with the school, tutoring elementary students and organizing the club fair, among many pursuits. All her years in high school she has been a member of the Don't Laugh at Me Club that spreads the word that bullying is wrong.

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Mehikpreet's mother, Gurpreet Sidhu, who works as a nurse, says she and their family cannot put into words how proud they are of her many accomplishments. "Coming from a working-class family, she's doing an awesome job."

#### NOTABLE

**Age:** 17

**School:** Sunnyside High School

**Home:** Fresno

**Parents:** Harjinder Singh and Gurpreet Sidhu

**Achievements:** 4.32 GPA, first place in Music in Academic Decathlon competition, AP Scholar Award (national) for passing three or more AP exams, first place in Social Science in Academic Decathlon competition, California Scholarship Federation vice president, historian of the Doctors Academy, certificate for the UCSF Fresno Doctors Academy Senior Summer Clinical and Research Internship, certificate for the UCSF Fresno Mini-Med School Series (Class of 2017), vice president for Sunnyside High School student government.

#### HONORABLE MENTION

**Cirilo A. Ordaz Perez, 17, Fresno**

**School:** Design Science Early College High School

**Parents:** Luisa Perez and Efren Ordaz

**Achievements:** "There are few times in a teacher's career that you have a student who embodies everything that's right in education," said Robert DeMichillie, Cirilo's teacher and college mentor. Competition is what drove Cirilo to be at the top of his class and earned his acceptance to at least eight universities. If being on the highest honor roll for all four years of high school wasn't impressive enough, Cirilo has taken a full load of classes at Fresno City College during his junior and senior years. The soon-to-be first-generation college student will be attending UC Berkeley to study biomedical engineering in the fall.

**Kelsey Ewing, 18, Clovis**

**School:** Buchanan High School

**Parents:** Kimberly and David Ewing

**Achievements:** Kelsey is described as a natural-born leader by her mother. When she's not in the classroom, she's educating fellow young women. Kelsey founded, directed and taught a technology program for girls in grades 7 through 11. "She developed this program in an attempt to narrow the gender gap that currently exists in STEM fields," her mother says. As an AP scholar with honors, Kelsey has experience ranging from robotics, being a teen mentor, a National History Day participant, volunteering at St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital, Fresno's Poverello House and many more academic and social activities.



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