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2020 Hart Vision Awards Names AIMS K-12 College Prep Top School of the Year

AIMS receives the honor for their proven academic excellence and setting high standards for Oakland students

OAKLAND, CA - April 21, 2020. AIMS K-12 College Prep Charter District (AIMS) was presented with the Hart Vision Award for Top School of the Year in Northern California during a virtual ceremony. A huge recognition considering there are 1,306 charter schools operating across California according to the California Department of Education's data for the 2018-2019 academic year¹. AIMS is breaking barriers for the approximately 1,300 students they serve from traditionally underserved and low-income Oakland neighborhoods.

The Hart Vision Awards ceremony was originally scheduled to be presented at the 27th Annual California Charter Schools Conference held by the California Charter Schools Association (CCSA). However, due to social distancing orders following COVID-19 concerns, the Hart Vision Award ceremony was instead presented virtually through Facebook to give attendees the opportunity to celebrate and honor the award recipients.

The Hart Vision Awards were established in 1995 and named after retired California State Senator and former California Secretary of Education Gary K. Hart. Hart sponsored the legislation that established charter schools in California. The award categories included teacher, volunteer, and public officials of the year. The top award categories included School leader

¹ "Charter Schools Cal Ed Facts" CA Department of Education. April 17, 2020. Available at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/ch/cefcharterschools.asp>

(North & South) and School of the year (North & South). AIMS K-12 College Prep took home the Hart Vision Award for School of the year in Northern California.

AIMS K-12 College Prep is defying the odds and closing the achievement gap for traditionally underserved students of color from low-income families and neighborhoods. AIMS families have sought out alternatives to their traditional neighborhood schools in hopes that their students can access a high quality education for a better future. 75% of AIMS families qualify for free and reduced lunch. AIMS has proven that it is possible for underserved students to excel academically when given the adequate support and resources.

AIMS K-12 College Prep has risen to become one of the top public schools in Oakland and the Bay Area, recognized by Innovate Public Schools² as a Top Bay Area Public School for Underserved Students for 4 academic years. In 2018, AIMS was recognized by Innovate as the only middle school in the Bay Area that made significant strides in closing the achievement gap for low-income African American students in English and Math.

From their early roots as a middle school in 1996, formerly known as American Indian Model Schools, AIMS is Oakland's second publicly-funded charter school and has a long-standing history of serving Oakland students. In the years since it first opened, it has expanded to a middle and high school and, by 2012, a complete K-12 school. Today they are the AIMS K-12 College Prep Charter District serving low-income students with a success rate of 100% of graduates being accepted into 4-year colleges and universities. AIMS K-12 College Prep has a legacy of academic excellence, being the first Oakland Public school to be named a National Blue Ribbon school in 2006.

“Our school of the year in Northern California is a diverse and consistently high performing school. Their high standards have allowed them to maintain an impressively high graduation rate. AIMS is a terrific example of a school that rose from the roots of the community to serve the people.” - **Myrna Castrejon, President & CEO CCSA**

Superintendent Maya Woods-Cadiz, an Oakland native, former OUSD student, parent, and administrator with a 20+ year career in education states,...

As with any successful family, we love, provide structure, and hold a standard and commitment to success. I thank the California Charter Schools Association for honoring us in this way. My heart overflows with joy and gratitude every day that I am blessed to do this work. As our mantra goes, “We are stronger together, and together we are AIMSTRONG.” School choice allows us to do what we do, and our diverse population is better for it.

AIMS K-12 College Prep cultivates a community of diverse learners who achieve academic excellence. Our commitment to high expectations, attendance, academic achievement, and character development results in our students being prepared for lifelong success. Learn more at aimsk12.org.

² “Top Bay Area Public Schools for Underserved Students 2018 Report”, Innovate Public Schools, April 2018. Available at <https://reports.innovateschools.org/top-bay-area-public-schools/>