



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Cañada Middle College High School Program to Graduate a Record Number of Students Earning Both an AA Degree and H.S. Diploma

Four students will receive AA degrees with their high school diplomas at May 24 ceremony

REDWOOD CITY, CA. — A record number of students graduating from the Cañada Middle College High School Program will receive both their high school diplomas and associate degrees at this year's ceremony.

A total of 34 students will graduate at the ceremony, to be held at 3 p.m., Thursday, May 24 on the Cañada College campus, 4200 Farm Hill Blvd., in Redwood City. Kyle Bernard of Belmont (Carlmont High School), Josh Teck of Redwood City (Sequoia High School), Earl Villorente of Redwood City (Menlo-Atherton High School) and Elizabeth Sachs of Menlo Park (Menlo-Atherton High school) will all receive their associate degrees along with their high school diplomas. Bernard will attend UC Santa Barbara in the fall; Teck is going to Sonoma State; Villorente to San Jose State; and Sachs to UC Santa Cruz.

Jen Petroelje, a Middle College instructor at Cañada, said it used to be rare for students to finish the two-year Middle College program with both a high school diploma and a college degree. Now, she said, it's becoming more common as students and parents see it as a way to cut college costs. Under an agreement between the college and the Sequoia Union High School District, students enrolled in Middle College can take college courses for free. In the past few years, she said, students have gone from earning around 30 college credits to nearly 50 by the time they graduate.

“With college costs rising, parents and students see this as a good deal,” she said. “They can save up to \$20,000 a year in tuition, housing, and books by finishing their first two years of college during high school.” Petroelje said the Cañada Middle College High School Program is expanding from 30 students this year to 60 students next year and recent information sessions have been packed with parents and students.

The Middle College High School Program at Cañada is in its eighth year and draws juniors and seniors from all four comprehensive high schools in the Sequoia Union High School District as well as local charter and private high schools. Students take both high school and college courses at the college campus.

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