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Stanford appointed to U.S. Naval Academy

By Darla A. Baker
dbaker@ridgecrestca.com

Every now and again, fate will put us in the path of someone who has a certain sparkle to them. Someone whose inner shine is so powerful, that it is instantly clear they are destined for great things even though you just met them.

Zoe Stanford is such a person. Stanford, who will be walking with the Burroughs High School Class of 2023 as a graduating senior Friday night, has done more in her short 18 years than many can claim to accomplish in their entire life.

Born in Virginia Beach, Virg., to Chandler and Hiroko Stanford, Zoe comes from a family who has a long history

of serving the country as members of the armed forces. Her father, Chandler, was himself a career Navy man, now retired.

According to her father, Zoe has always been extremely organized even as a young child. Planning each day meticulously, her talent for organization would serve her well when she first began high school as a freshman and was already planning for life after graduation with dreams of attending the United States Naval Academy.

After filling out the application, traveling back and forth to conduct pre-interviews and writing many, required essays, Zoe received a phone call from Kevin McCarthy, Speaker of the House, who told her she had been selected

See STANFORD, A6

SSUSD to spend \$15.8M on special ed in 2023-24

By John V. Ciani
For the Daily Independent

The Sierra Sands Unified School District Board of Education, at its meeting last week, approved the district's special education local plan area annual budget and service plan for the 2023-24 school year.

The \$15.8-million spending plan provides services such as specialized academic instruction, intensive individualized instruction, individual and small group instruction, speech and language services, adapted physical education, assistive technology, and occupational therapy.

SELPA Executive Director Paul Delbick said Assembly Bill 602 requires special education local plan areas to submit an annual budget plan and service plan that are adopted by the local Board of Education.

"As required in Education Code Section 56205, together these plans must identify expected expenditures and include a description of services, the physical location of services, and must demonstrate that all individuals with exceptional needs have access to services and instruction appropriate to meet their needs as specified in their Individualized Education Plan," he said.

According to the governance and policymaking process established within the Sierra Sands SELPA Local Plan for Special Education, completion of the process will be documented by evidence that a public hearing was held before the adoption of the annual bud-

See SSUSD, A6

Ridgecrest Chamber one of 16 named HR Champion

News release

The Ridgecrest Chamber is one of 16 local chambers of commerce to be named an HR Champion by the California Chamber of Commerce.

This inaugural award was created to recognize chambers who excelled in helping their members comply with California employment laws. Representatives of the HR Champion chambers were honored on May 17 during the CalChamber Capitol Summit in Sacramento.

"California labor law re-

quirements can be a puzzle for businesses of all sizes, especially smaller operations," said Nick Ortiz, CalChamber vice president of local chamber relations. "We are pleased to recognize these HR Champion chambers for keeping their members updated on state labor law by participating at a high level in our compliance product resale program."

The 2023 recipients of the HR Champion Award are as follows:

- Greater Bakersfield Chamber of Commerce

- Corona Chamber of Commerce
- Fresno Chamber of Commerce
- Gilroy Chamber of Commerce
- Imperial Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Oakdale Chamber of Commerce
- Palm Desert Area Chamber of Commerce
- Paso Robles Chamber of Commerce
- Porterville Chamber of Commerce
- Redding Chamber of Commerce

- Ridgecrest Chamber of Commerce
- Rohnert Park Chamber of Commerce
- Santa Fe Springs Chamber of Commerce
- The Chamber of Commerce for Greater Brawley
- Whittier Area Chamber of Commerce
- Yuba-Sutter Chamber of Commerce

The California Chamber of Commerce (CalChamber) is the largest broad-based business advocate to government in California. Membership represents one-quarter of the

private sector jobs in California and includes firms of all sizes and companies from every industry within the state. Leveraging our front-line knowledge of laws and regulations, we provide products and services to help businesses comply with both federal and state law. CalChamber, a not-for-profit organization with roots dating to 1890, promotes international trade and investment in order to stimulate California's economy and create jobs. Please visit our website at www.calchamber.com.

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