



## **WNLRL Distance Runner Scholarship Award Recipients Class of 2024**

Thanks to the generous donations from our club members, from Granite Construction, and from Big Sur Marathon Foundation, WNLRL provided \$7,000 in scholarship awards this spring to outstanding track and cross country student-athletes in Monterey County's High School Graduating Class of 2024. This brings the total scholarship money awarded to Monterey County High School Seniors since the inception of this program to a whopping \$185,375. To receive this award, eligible student-athletes must have some of the most competitive track and cross country times in Monterey County, must have a GPA of at least 3.0, must demonstrate good character and leadership qualities as described in a letter of recommendation by a coach and in an interview, must be actively involved in community service, and may demonstrate financial need. Eligible students are assessed on their personal-best times for the 3-mile cross country distance, and for the 3200m, 1600m, and 800m track distances. Demonstrated improvement and dedication to the sport is crucial, and candidates must also intend to continue their running careers at the collegiate level.

This year, eleven winners were chosen from a county-wide pool of eligible student-athletes. Many of these student-athletes you may soon find running local races.

<b><u>High School</u></b>	<b><u>Recipient</u></b>
Alisal	Abigail Bustamante
Alisal	Erik Luna
Alisal	Jason Medina
Everett Alvarez	Luis Muradas
King City	Alexa Flores
Marina	Robert Tyson
North Monterey County	Alvaro Ruelas

## **Alisal High School**



### **Abigail Bustamante**

Despite being injured for most of the last year, this thoughtful and motivated student athlete has the two fastest 1600m and 800m times for this year's women's scholarship nominees: 5:39 and 2:37, respectively. As if her impressive track times and academic workload aren't enough, Abigail also started Student Voice Club at Alisal High School, which focuses on helping students find their voice for self-advocacy and empowerment. This is in addition to functioning as de-facto team captain for the Alisal women's track and cross country teams. This fall, Abigail will run at the club or recreation level at San Jose State University, where she will be studying kinesiology in pursuit of a career as a physical therapist.

### **Erik Luna**

With this year's fastest 3200m time in our group of scholarship nominees (10:00 flat), Erik is an example of a focused and driven runner with a desire to give back to his community. In-between academics and training, Erik also finds time to help teach younger migrant students English. He also aspires to become a history teacher. This fall, Erik will run for Coach Zepeda at Hartnell College. After Hartnell, Erik aims to transfer to a four-year university to gain the necessary qualifications to teach history.

## **Jason Medina**

With this year's fastest 800m times in our group of scholarship nominees (a blisteringly fast 2:04), and a respectable 16:17 in the 3mi cross country distance, Jason Medina can hold his own across a variety of races. To Jason, running represents a way to release stress and find peace, a source of socialization, and exists as a source of pride and personal growth. In these ways, running is part of his identity. When he's not competing on the track or on the trails, Jason is highly involved in VEX Robotics competition, which has informed his choice of college major: Mechanical Engineering. He will attend Chico State University in the fall where he hopes to run competitively but will be happy to run on a club team or recreationally if that is not an option.

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## **Everett Alvarez High School**

### **Luis Muradas**

Although modest to his core, Luis is an impressive scholarship candidate. With the best 1600m time in this year's group of nominees (4:37 in case you're curious) and the second best time in the 800m (2:06), it is no surprise that he is first-team all-league honoree in cross country and track & field as a senior. He was MVP of his cross country team each year he participated and was a critical part of the Everett Alvarez track team that won the League title in 2023. Luis is also a member of his school's Avid club and supports middle and elementary school athletic programs in his free time. This fall, you can find Luis running for the Portland State University NCAA track and cross country teams.





## **King City High School**

### **Alexa Flores**

This impressive and well-spoken student athlete manages an impressive academic workload AND holds the fastest 3mi and 3200m times for this year's women's scholarship nominees: 19:37 and 12:28, respectively. When not training or being team captain, you can find Alexa studying for her AP classes, volunteering with middle school and elementary school children's programs, holding leadership roles in Student Council and in FFA, and working at the King City Nursery. Most impressively, she starts everything with a "we" attitude, not an "I" attitude. This fall, you can find Alexa running for Hartnell College before she transfers to UCLA.

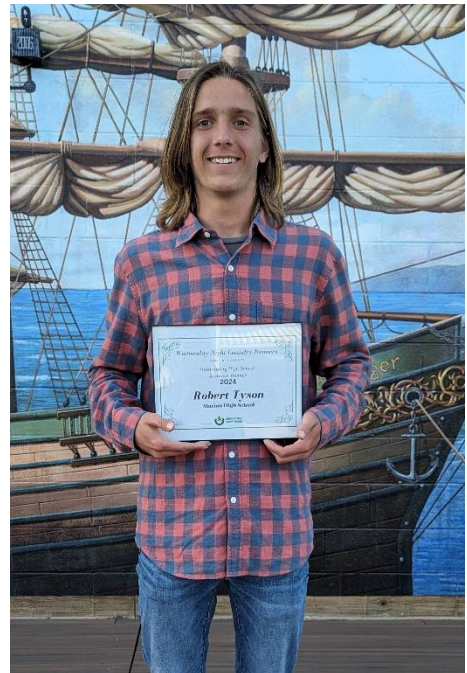


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## **Marina High School**

### **Robert Tyson**

Robert Tyson is an excellent example of a well-rounded and down-to-earth student athlete. With a personal best of 16:02 in the 3mi, Robert's times for each distance are all in the top five among this year's group of nominees. What's most impressive is that Robert only started running when he moved to Marina high school part way through his high school career! A true Marina HS kid, his favorite style of runs include a peaceful 10-miles and a jaunt through the trails of Fort Ord. This fall, you can find Robert studying physics at UCLA where he will continue running at the club or recreation level.



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## **North Monterey County High School**

### **Alvaro Ruelas**

The overall fastest runner in this year's set of scholarship nominees, Alvaro has a blisteringly fast 3mi personal record of 15:37 and a very respectable 1600m personal best of 4:38 to back it up. Alvaro also created his own Hispanic music group at his school and maintains a robust community service agenda, including supporting the local rec center, helping to run food-based fundraisers, and supporting community outreach efforts with his local church. As a runner, Alvaro was MVP for his JV year and continues to improve in his Junior and Senior years. He loves the opportunities for constant improvement in running and the sport's culture of camaraderie. This fall you can find Alvaro running at Hartnell College for Coach Zepeda where he will start studying kinesiology en route to becoming a coach.





*The purpose of the WNLRL Scholarship Program is to recognize local excellence in athletic and academic achievement and to help our Monterey County student-athletes achieve broader success. We hope to continue using the WNLRL Scholarship Program to ease the financial burden of college for exceptional Monterey County student-athletes who may otherwise find college prohibitively expensive. Your donations are welcome and encouraged.*

*For more information about the Wednesday Night Laundry Runner Scholarship Program, please visit [www.wnlr.org/scholarships](http://www.wnlr.org/scholarships)*

*Special thanks go to Pat Brew, Lan Clayton, Emily Cole, Mike Dove, Rod MacKinlay, Adam Roach, and all the Monterey County teachers and coaches for facilitating the nomination, interview, and decision-making process.*