

THE FOOTILLS SUN-GAZETTE

LHS Twins get some 'Self Help' for college

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BY THE SUN-GAZETTE STAFF

Visalia – Self-Help Enterprises, a community development organization whose mission is to work together with low-income families to build and sustain healthy homes and communities, has awarded \$6,500 in scholarship awards to nine local students in recognition of outstanding scholastic achievement. Two of this year's recipients are Lindsay High School seniors and sisters.

Mayra Lira-Ibarra and Lupe Lira-Ibarra, twin sisters, each received \$750 through Self-Help Enterprises' (SHE) Doris "Do" Dooley Scholarship. Mayra holds a 4.02 GPA and participates in the Future Business Leaders of America club where she has placed among the top five in business competitions at the club's Central Section Conference. Mayra plans to attend California State University, Fresno and pursue a degree in Liberal Arts or Liberal Studies as well as completing her multiple subject teaching credential to become an elementary school teacher.

Lupe has become a role model and leader among her peers. In addition to being ranked 5th among her class of 221 students, Lupe is actively involved in College of the Sequoias TRIO/Upward Bound Math & Science Program, which helps first generation students excel in college. Lupe will attend California State University, Fresno where she will major in mathematics to become a math teacher who guides students towards their own bright futures.

The Doris "Do" Dooley Scholarship, named after Self-Help Enterprises' former Board member and dedicated friend of the organization, was established to help the children of families who have participated in one of Self-Help Enterprises' programs to further their education. This competitive academic scholarship is available to students who plan to enroll full-time in a vocational or trade school, community college or four-year university. The students were selected by Self-Help Enterprises' Board of Directors based on academic merit and commitment to community service. Both of the Lindsay girls live in Self-Help funded homes.

"Self-Help Enterprises is proud to award these scholarships to students in the communities we serve," said Tom Collishaw, CEO of Self-Help Enterprises. "We applaud their achievements and are honored to support the next generation of leaders in their pursuit of higher education."

The \$1,000 scholarship awards went to Josiah Lopez of Fresno, Calif. (Self-Help Housing) and Gloria Verdugo of Shafter, Calif. (Self-Help Housing). In addition to Mayra and Lupe, \$750 scholarship awards went to Chelsea Allen of Biola, Calif. (Multi-Family Housing) and Karen Ruiz of Tulare, Calif. (Self-Help Housing). The \$500 scholarship awards went to Bibiana Barajas of Parksdale, Calif. (Multi-Family Housing), Isaiah Corona of Lemoore, Calif. (Self-Help Housing) and Yadira Zamudio of Wasco, Calif. (Multi-Family Housing).

The Doris "Do" Dooley Scholarship is possible because of the vision and generosity of many people including the Dooley family. Since 1997, Self-Help Enterprises has awarded 117 scholarships totaling \$93,750 to deserving students.