

The 2018 HOSA HERO Award

There are many kinds of heroes in the world. There are the epic figures whose bold deeds alter the course of humanity. There are those who thrill us with their unique talents or who inspire us with lives of exceptional purpose and character.

Whenever you hear the word 'hero' you automatically put the word 'super' in front of it and picture the Avengers beating up some alien-looking things coming out of the sky over New York City. These heroes are built like a tank and they always have some distinctive outfit or cape which sets them apart from the rest of us.

Heroes are a force, from the original superhero Superman, to the Fantastic Four. However, let us consider another special category: ordinary, but extraordinary people. This category of heroes is made up of people, whose heroism is selflessness and giving to others around them; individuals who focus on enriching the lives of individuals, and improving the organizations and communities they serve. There are many types of heroes, but the best have the ability to heal communities with their inclusive visions.

Heroes can be a teacher or a school counselor, a friend or a parent; they can teach you to read, write, make good decisions; but they will make a huge difference in your life. But most of the time these heroes go unnoticed. Until one day, you start reflecting on your life. You may sit back and think that without that teacher, counselor, friend or mentor you would never have had the courage to get a job or go to college. These are heroes that don't get the recognition they deserve. These heroes are ordinary people you want in your life. So, what sets these individuals, or heroes, apart?

These individuals or heroes, through a variety of actions, have rendered outstanding service or assistance to schools, students, families, communities at large, and even complete strangers. The HOSA HERO Award recognizes and honors people doing

extraordinary things for others. The HOSA HERO Award recognizes people who take action and make a difference in the lives of others.

This year's HOSA HERO Award is being given to an individual who has demonstrated throughout time a selfless commitment to the greater good. This individual has gone beyond expectations; has been a building block for leadership; is always student-centered, supporting classroom teaching, afterschool activities, and community events. This individual listens to concerns and issues, and creates solutions and strategic pathways for success. If given a pencil sketch, this individual will give you a Picasso in return!

This individual has been recognized in multiple areas from many organizations at a state, national, and international level for the quality and importance of his work. Specific examples of service and recognition are too numerous to include, as it would take a great deal of time to recognize him for all he has accomplished. All his accomplishments are centered on reaching children who feel excluded from school and community life and helping them discover their inner strengths to overcome life challenges.

This hero has proven to be one of our greatest community champions. Through his leadership, selflessness, courage, ethical behavior, and respect for others, he teaches people to always engage in actions that encourage service with empathy and equity.

He has branded our organization's role as a global and diverse youth workforce organization, seeking to increase our youths' understanding of global health care issues, and promote a diverse and holistic populations approach to better understand the societal, economic, and environmental concerns impacting underserved populations, while at the same time preparing young people for careers and postsecondary opportunities.

This year's HOSA HERO Award was conferred to **Dr. Gustavo Loera.**