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May 7, 2019

### **CWU Game On! Acknowledges Honorary Consul of Spain Esteban**

Central Washington University recently recognized the Honorary Consul of Spain, Luis Fernando Esteban, for helping create an international relationship between the world-renowned soccer organization the Real Madrid—through its foundation—with Microsoft and CWU.

The resulting partnership created CWU Game On!—a program for economically-disadvantaged youth. Game On! combines the excitement of world class soccer to build leadership and social skills and the secret language of computer coding with higher education attainment.

“We are fortunate to have had Consul Esteban as a partner from the very beginning of Game On!,” said Sharon O’Hare, CWU vice president for strategic enrollment management. “He believes in leveraging partnerships that help Washington’s youth and actively participates in making these efforts a reality.”

During a Game On! award recognition luncheon on Friday, April 26, university officials praised Honorary Consul Esteban for his endless contributions to Game On! and its students.

Esteban was instrumental in bringing the Real Madrid Foundation (RMF) into the partnership and his relationship created opportunities for RMF coaches to visit CWU each year. He was also influential in having two CWU Game On! staff attend the RMF training and coaching camp in Madrid, Spain, last November—the only coaches chosen from the U.S.

“I am honored to have received this CWU recognition and I will use it to keep our key Spanish partner, the Real Madrid Foundation, fully committed to this program, so together we can serve underrepresented students and grow the Game On! program during the next few years,” Consul Esteban said.

The recognition luncheon was part of a college exploratory day where Game On! brought 157 of its students from eight of its nine partner schools\* to the Ellensburg campus. The middle- and high school students spent the day manipulating virtual reality technology, networking, touring campus, and being celebrated for their yearlong participation in the program.

The luncheon event also honored 18 Game On! students (2 from each school/site). Awards dedicated in the Consul’s name were presented to each recipient.

The Luis Fernando Esteban Game On! Outstanding Student Award was presented to the following students:

#### **Public Affairs**

400 E University Way • Ellensburg WA 98926 • Office: 509-963-1484  
Barge Hall 402 • Email: Dawn.Alford@cwu.edu • Web: cwu.edu/public-affairs  
EEO/AA/TITLE IX INSTITUTION • FOR ACCOMMODATION EMAIL: DS@CWU.EDU.

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MingYue Tang and Abel H. Valdez	[Eisenhower High School, Yakima]
Jasmin Barrientos and Wyatt Burkell	[Excel High School, Yakima]
Jackeline Arellano and Brayden Platt	[Franklin Middle School, Yakima]
Brian Buenrostro and Lisaida Vega	[Lewis & Clark Middle School, Yakima]
Christopher Barrios and Mia Rodriguez	[Mabton Middle School, Mabton]
Jasmine Garcia and Julian Naves	[Stanton High School, Yakima]
Anahi Garcia and Joseph Guzman	[Washington Middle School, Yakima]
Eric Chaves and Emma Fariás	[Wilson Middle School, Yakima]
Angel Licea and Juliana Ruelas	[Henry Beauchamp Community Center, Yakima]

The awarding of plaques is a first and will continue as an annual event to honor the Consul as well as celebrate Game On! students' leadership qualities, respect for others, active participation, creativity, and innovation.

Consul Esteban is also credited for his work with the Seattle Sounders FC. The last three years he secured tickets for Game On! students and staff to attend a Sounders match free of charge.

On Sunday, April 28, the most recent group of 200 Game On! participants attended a match courtesy of the Seattle Sounders FC. For many of the students this was their first exposure to Seattle and a professional soccer match.

"Having the world-recognized Game On! program at CWU is truly one of the greatest joys of my professional life," Consul Esteban said. "To see the many young underserved Hispanic students participate in Game On! and join the pathway to success in college, makes all our time and efforts worthwhile."

*\*All partner schools participated in the CWU campus visit with the exception of Excel High School, due to state testing.*

#### About Game On!

This unique CWU STEM program is designed to offer, students at our partner schools, a college pipeline experience by combining Real Madrid Foundation's education in values through sports methodology, and leadership skills with computer coding using curriculum provided by Microsoft, and college-ready skills from CWU. Participants are overwhelmingly Hispanic and attend middle- and high-schools where nearly 100 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced lunch. [Learn more at CWU Game On!](#) Watch CWU Game On! video at [https://youtu.be/CLiPEkm1\\_vQ](https://youtu.be/CLiPEkm1_vQ).

To donate to Game On! or learn more about the program contact Manuel Rodriguez, Game On! executive director at 509-963-2216, [Manuel.Rodriguez@cwu.edu](mailto:Manuel.Rodriguez@cwu.edu).

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