



# Santa Barbara County Education Office

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Susan C. Salcido, Superintendent of Schools

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Rotary Club recognizes Vieja Valley teacher**

Third grade teacher Kim Aragon at Vieja Valley Elementary School in the Hope District was recognized on Friday, May 17 by the Rotary Club of Santa Barbara for her outstanding work and significant contributions to public education. It is the fourth and final of such awards the Rotarians presented to area educators this academic year.

Aragon has taught at Vieja Valley for the last nine years and also runs the Student Council, which she organized based on two main beliefs — that there are all different types of leaders, and leadership should be representative of the student population.

Principal Kelly Johnson said, “Not only is Kim a great teacher, she revamped the program making it much more inclusive and students have blossomed as a result.”

Since 1986, the Rotary Club of Santa Barbara has honored outstanding teachers from South Coast schools each year. It awards a high school, junior high, elementary, and special education teacher with a certificate and a \$1,000 check to spend on classroom needs.

“Ms. Aragon’s spirit of inclusivity for all students epitomizes the best of our Santa Barbara County teachers,” said County Superintendent of Schools Dr. Susan Salcido, whose office coordinates the recognition with the Rotary Club of Santa Barbara. “We appreciate the support of the Rotary Club of Santa Barbara and recognition they provide to teachers. Recognitions like these are a reflection of our community that truly values education,” Salcido continued.

“The Rotary Club of Santa Barbara is pleased to partner with the Santa Barbara County Education Office in recognizing the outstanding work of remarkable teachers like Ms. Aragon,” said Mike Bieza, president of the Rotary Club of Santa Barbara. “Rotary of Santa Barbara and Rotary International value education and all teachers who are dedicated to the young people in our communities.”

Asked to describe herself as an educator, Aragon said, “I always strive to be inclusive of all populations, beliefs, and learning styles. I really believe that I can reach every child and connect with every child if I just keep trying different approaches. And of course that connection is so important — once children know that you really care about them, that's when you can really have an impact.”

Aragon received her undergraduate degrees in English Literature and Psychology, as well as her teaching credential and Master's Degree in Education from UCLA. Aragon has two daughters; Isabel, who is in her first year at Smith College, and Emelia, who is a sophomore at Santa Barbara High School.

The Rotary Club of Santa Barbara meets for lunch from noon to 1:30 p.m. on Fridays. Recipients of the club's Teacher Recognition Awards are made with the assistance of the Teacher Programs and Support department of the Santa Barbara County Education Office.

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