

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Public Health Agency Awards Vector Inspectors of the Year

*Middle school students complete mosquito surveillance, citizen science program*

**West Covina, Calif. (June 13, 2023)** — The [San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District](#) (SGVMVCD/District) proudly awarded 44 Vector Inspectors of the Year (VIY) from the cities of Sierra Madre, West Covina, and Monrovia for their participation in a mosquito surveillance program. Through Operation Mosquito G.R.I.D., students use the same tools as vector ecologists to determine the presence or absence of invasive *Aedes* mosquitoes.

*Aedes* mosquitoes are vectors for dengue, yellow fever, Zika, and chikungunya which can circulate in San Gabriel Valley communities if mosquitoes remain unchecked. The students' actions on their properties, during, and beyond the conclusion of the surveillance project, protect their entire neighborhood.

SGVMVCD Education Specialist Kriztian Luna Corona stated, "Operation Mosquito G.R.I.D. exposes students to real-life public health work. Their investigative efforts at home and exposure to data analysis build 21<sup>st</sup> century S.T.E.A.M. skills and prepare students to be public health heroes of tomorrow.

VIY recipients committed to the program for the length of the school year. Operation Mosquito G.R.I.D requires them to sign up for the program, prepare their property for mosquito surveillance, and submit two types of surveillance data within the first six weeks. Additionally, students submitted stagnant water samples to look for evidence of aquatic stages of mosquitoes and lure papers for evidence of egg-laying *Aedes* mosquitoes. The VIY award recipients didn't stop there, they continued to report findings through their 1-, 3-, and 6-months check-in surveys. The program is designed to make positive contributions to reducing public health risk in their communities.

"My students benefited greatly from Operation Mosquito G.R.I.D.!" said Danny Woo, a teacher from San Jose Charter Academy. "We are always looking for ways to increase their scientific agency and the fact that they were able to apply the scientific process to a task that was helpful to their community was extremely meaningful."

Teachers interested in bringing Operation Mosquito G.R.I.D. sample analysis into their classrooms can visit [www.vectoreducation.org/professionaldevelopment](http://www.vectoreducation.org/professionaldevelopment). Registration is now open for fall 2023 Operation Mosquito G.R.I.D. at [www.vectoreducation.org](http://www.vectoreducation.org).

For more information, residents can contact the San Gabriel Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District at 626-814-9466, online at [SGVmosquito.org](http://SGVmosquito.org), or on social media: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#)

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### **About SGVMVCD**

SGVMVCD is one of five vector control districts in Los Angeles County. Year-round, the agency monitors stagnant water sources, such as gutters, storm drains, channels and non-functional swimming pools. The agency also routinely monitors populations of adult mosquitoes using traps and tests groups of adult female mosquitoes for the presence of WNV and other mosquito-borne diseases. In addition, the agency submits samples from dead birds, such as crows, for testing, which can provide insight into the spread of WNV.

## **About EcoHealth Vector Education**

EcoHealth Vector Education is a K – 12 program provided by the San Gabriel Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District designed to promote simple, healthy living to reduce mosquito-borne diseases in our cities through FREE California Next Generation Science Standard (NGSS)-aligned programs.