HOSA
On The Pulse
Keeping You in the Loop, One Beat at a Time.

Niha Goel Redefines the Standard

By Krisha Mehta, OA-HOSA Projects & Partnerships Chair

Many high school students want to make a difference in their communities, but Niha Goel, a sophomore at Oxford Academy and an OA-HOSA officer, is already turning that ambition into action. Through her involvement in HOSA and her growing interest in health and wellness, she has found meaningful ways to educate others about substance-use prevention and mental health.

In early 2026, Niha was selected as one of only 10 HOSA students nationwide to participate in the CADCA Voices for Youth program, making her the youngest member of her cohort. The program introduced her to community advocacy, substance-use prevention, and the role young people can play in addressing public health challenges.

Her advocacy journey continued in February, when she traveled to Washington, D.C., for CADCA's National Leadership Forum. There, she received advocacy training and represented California coalitions in meetings with U.S. Senators Alex Padilla and Adam Schiff. The experience gave her a closer look at how communities and policymakers can work together to address substance use and strengthen prevention efforts.

But Niha's work did not stop in Washington. She continued applying what she learned by working with a local substance-use prevention coalition, bringing her advocacy experience back to her community. In July, she shared her work with fellow youth delegates at CADCA's Mid-Year Training Institute in Florida, further developing her understanding of how youth-led initiatives can create meaningful change.

Through these experiences, Niha has shown that making an impact doesn't require waiting until adulthood. By combining education, advocacy, and community involvement, she is helping bring important conversations about health and wellness to the forefront.

As HOSA continues to empower future health professionals and advocates, Niha's journey reflects what it means to stay on the pulse of change: recognizing a community's needs and taking action to address them. Her work reminds us that one young voice can help move an entire community forward.



Niha Goel poses outside Senator Padilla's office before congressional advocacy meetings in Washington, D.C. (top) and presents her project at CADCA's Mid-Year Training Institute in Florida (bottom).

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The THRIVE Youth Wellness Fair brought together more than 30 health, prevention, and youth-serving organizations at Eisenhower Park on October 24. The event also welcomed special guests, including Los Alamitos Mayor Tanya Doby (right photo), Seal Beach Mayor Lisa Landau, and State Senator Tony Strickland, highlighting the community's shared commitment to youth wellness and prevention.

Rather than stopping there, Niha took her advocacy a step further. From July through October, she incorporated what she learned into the Resilient Stars Foundation, an initiative she founded two years ago to promote substance-use prevention, mental health, wellness, and youth leadership. Through the foundation, she aims to connect young people and families with valuable information, accessible community resources, and opportunities to take an active role in their well-being.

On October 24, Niha reached another milestone by launching her first major initiative, the THRIVE Youth Wellness Fair, in Seal Beach. The event brought together more than 30 organizations, giving visitors the opportunity to learn about health, safety, mental wellness, and available community services.

One participating organization was Oxford Academy HOSA (OA-HOSA). HOSA members demonstrated naloxone rescue techniques to visitors, teaching them about a lifesaving intervention used in opioid overdose emergencies. Their participation showed how students can apply what they learn in health science classes to educate and serve their community.

Organizing a wellness fair with more than 40 participating organizations was a major undertaking, especially for a high school student launching her first initiative. It required bringing different groups together around a common goal: helping young people and families become more informed about their health and the resources available to them.

As an OA-HOSA officer, Niha already belongs to a student organization focused on health science education, leadership, and service. Her work with Resilient Stars Foundation extends those interests beyond school and into the wider community.

Her journey shows how an opportunity to learn can lead to something bigger. Her experience with CADCA introduced her to community advocacy, but she took the initiative to build on it by founding an organization and creating an event others could benefit from.

Her accomplishments also demonstrate why youth involvement matters. Students are not just the people who receive health education; they can help share important information, raise awareness, and encourage others to seek support when they need it. Through Resilient Stars Foundation and the THRIVE Youth Wellness Fair, Niha has shown that students do not have to wait until they graduate to make a difference. Sometimes, making a difference starts with recognizing a need, taking initiative, and finding people willing to work together.

For Niha, this is only the beginning. What started as an opportunity to learn about prevention and advocacy has grown into an effort to help her community become healthier, more informed, and better connected.

As HOSA celebrates its 51st year under the theme Redefine the Standard, Niha Goel embodies this mission by turning her passion for health advocacy into meaningful action and inspiring change in her community.