

Student Recipients



Ella Fuentes



Jiexi Qiao

Ella Fuentes and Jiexi Qiao cofounded a non-profit business in 2019 at the end of their freshman year at Lake Oswego High School. Their business is called “I Love Lake Oswego Clothing Closet.” They started the business to serve students from low-income families. They knew that students need appropriate clothes for school in order to feel confident and to be able to focus on learning. They also knew that good clothing is expensive. While their initial focus was on students, the clothing closet has now expanded to serve anyone in need and, in doing so, it now helps more than 500 people on an ongoing basis.

As you might expect, Ella and Jiexi have encountered many unexpected challenges due to the pandemic. Over the course of the past year, they’ve figured out ways to continue to work with donors and serve their patrons while always assuring their safety.

When it became clear that their business was going to be a success, Ella and Jiexi created a junior board of directors to help to assure continuity after the founders leave for college. At that time, the junior board members will transition into managing the business. Each junior high board member has been assigned a high school student who will teach them how to run the clothing closet. This process has empowered the high school board members to be mentors and a good example to the next generation of management.

What started as a simple idea has resulted in an important community service in Lake Oswego, and it’s the reason that Ella Fuentes and Jiexi Qiao are recipients of the 2021 SASEE Student Award.