



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gilroy Student Chosen to Participate in 88th Annual Capitol Christmas Tree Lighting

Event to be held on Capitol West Steps, Thursday, December 5 at 5 p.m.

SACRAMENTO – Nayeli Lemus, a 10-year-old girl from Gilroy who receives services from one of California’s 21 regional centers will help Governor Gavin Newsom and First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom light this year’s Capitol Christmas Tree. Nayeli was selected by the San Andreas Regional Center and California Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to represent more than 340,000 individuals from across the state who have intellectual and developmental disabilities and receive services from the state’s regional centers and state-operated facilities.

Nayeli, a 4th grader at the Charter School of Morgan Hill who has Down syndrome, has received specialized services from the regional center since birth. She is an independent and energetic student and loves singing, dancing, concerts, going to the beach and reading books. Members of Nayeli’s large extended family, along with her parents Angel and Rosalinda and two-year-old sister Naia, will be with her for the December 5 tree lighting ceremony at the Capitol.

“Nayeli is incredibly excited to help light the tree this year, and we are proud of her for accepting this honor on behalf of Californians across our state who have intellectual and developmental disabilities,” said DDS Director Nancy Bargmann.

The San Andreas Regional Center is one of 21 nonprofit regional centers that contract with DDS to serve both children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Regional centers administer the Early Start program, California’s early intervention program for infants and toddlers.

This year’s 66-foot white fir Capitol Christmas tree is decorated with approximately 10,000 ultra-low wattage LED lights and more than 500 hand-crafted ornaments made by children and adults who receive services from regional centers and state-operated facilities.

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