

Susan Clay
STUDENT OF THE MONTH
Los Altos High School
December 2022



Senior

Los Altos High School is excited to honor Susan Clay as our December Student of the Month. It is a privilege to recognize all of her accomplishments throughout her time at Los Altos High School.

Susan is the co-captain of the school robotics team and the lead programmer of the team, a job that entails the design, creation, and testing of the team's robot code. She also maintains the programming team's schedule, mentors junior programmers, and leads curriculum development and teaching of new robotics students. In her freshman year, they were in the LA North Regional Finals and last year they attended the World Championship. Last year her design for their robot helped them win a first robotics competition Creativity award.

Before she was a co-captain at LAHS robotics, Susan competed in Botball, an international fully autonomous middle & high school robotics competition. In her 8th grade year, she joined a team of 11th and 12th graders. Although she was young, she became the primary programmer of one of the robots and competed in the International Finals competition.

Susan's passion for computer science has led her to learn and become proficient in Computer Programming languages like C++, Java, and Python. She is currently learning C# Unity and HTML/CSS, and has competed with USACO, an algorithmic programming competition. Currently, she is in the silver level, with around 4,500 high school and college competitors. She wants to encourage middle schools to get involved and passionate about computer programming too, and right now, she is teaching python to 6-8th graders with backgrounds traditionally underrepresented in STEM. But her love of science goes beyond computers. She is also interested in biology, particularly in improving new medicines and advancing knowledge of diseases. In her research project, she is working on predicting the toxicity and side effects of a group of drugs integral to the current treatment of HIV. She is training neural networks to assist with predicting and analyzing the toxicity and specific effects of HIV-1 protease inhibitors.

Since she was 6, Susan has loved dancing. Right now, she practices ballet 8-10 hours a week. One of her favorite productions was when she played Clara in The Nutcracker. She was also a ballet instructor for two years, where she helped teach and guide younger students. But, her artistic talents go beyond just performing arts. Susan also plays the violin and sings in her choir, Cantabile Youth Singers. She started playing the violin five years ago, and has performed with her choir in Carnegie Hall. She was even awarded a rating of "excellent" in a California Music Educators Association violin competition in 2018!

As Susan thinks about what her next steps are after LAHS, she knows that she wants to continue her education of computer science and STEM, and hopes to prepare for a career in computer science.

Congratulations, Susan Clay, for receiving December Student of the Month and for all of your amazing success and dedication to give back to your community and school. As a model student and leader, we can't wait to see all of the amazing accomplishments coming your way in the future!