



**Discover San Ramon Honors Winners of the
“Event Innovator Competition” at City Council Meeting**
Empowering High School Students to Shape San Ramon’s Event Scene



Winner - Shiven Balaji, of Dougherty Valley High School



City Council Member Richard Adler, City Council Member Robert Jweinat,
Winners - Samhita & Akshita Chikoti of Dougherty Valley High School, Mayor Mark
Armstrong, Vice Mayor - Sridhar Verose
[Download Photos](#), photo credit: Discover San Ramon



Winners – Dhyansh Shetty, Pranav Raghunath & Sohan Babu of Dougherty Valley High School

SAN RAMON, Calif., September 25, 2025 — [Discover San Ramon](#) honored the winners of its first-ever Event Innovator Competition during a special recognition ceremony at the San Ramon City Council meeting on Tuesday, September 23. The initiative was designed to empower local high school students to imagine and design future events that celebrate San Ramon’s vibrant community spirit.

Open to 9th–11th graders who currently live in San Ramon or actively attend a high school in the city, the competition invited submissions of original event concepts. After review by the DSR board and judging panel, three winning teams were selected and each received a \$5,000 cash prize in recognition of their creativity and vision.

2025 Winning Teams:

- Shiven Balaji, *Dougherty Valley High School*
 - Lantern and Drones Festival: San Ramon Festival of the Lights
- Samhita & Akshita Chikoti, *Dougherty Valley High School*
 - San Ramon Summer Olympiad
- Dhyansh Shetty, Pranav Raghunath & Sohan Babu, *Dougherty Valley High School*
 - San Ramon Scavenger Stroll

Mayor Mark Armstrong commended the winners, saying, “San Ramon is a city built on the energy, engagement, and creativity of its people — especially our youth. This competition demonstrates how next-generation leaders can help us create events that reflect who we are, bring us together, and make our city stronger.”

Discover San Ramon Board Member Candiece Estell, Director of Marketing at the Sonesta Select San Ramon, added: “This competition celebrates our students’ creativity, civic pride, and ability to shape the future of our city’s cultural and tourism landscape. We’re excited to make this an annual tradition.”

The winners shared their excitement at being part of the inaugural competition:

“Participating in this competition was an inspiring way to connect with my community and design an event that everyone can enjoy,” said Sohan Babu.

“This competition was definitely an amazing chance to think creatively about ways to improve our city, even if just by a little. I totally encourage anyone to apply and get their voice out there!” said Pranav Raghunath.

“Participating in the Discover San Ramon competition was inspiring, as it brought our community’s creativity and energy to life. I’m honored to see the San Ramon Games become a tradition that celebrates connection, local spirit, and fun for all ages,” said Akshita Chikoti.

“Taking part in the San Ramon Event Innovator Competition was an amazing experience! It was exciting to share creative ideas and help plan an event that will bring the community together for fun and lasting memories,” said Samhita Chikoti.

“Participating in the Discover San Ramon Event Innovator Competition has been an incredible experience. The process gave me the opportunity to explore multiple parks and facilities in San Ramon and truly appreciate all the city has to offer. The coordinators were responsive and supportive, which made the experience even better,” said Shiven Balaji.

The winners were recognized by Mayor Mark Armstrong and the San Ramon City Council during a check presentation and photo at the city council meeting. Families and Discover San Ramon board members gathered to celebrate the students’ accomplishments.

The Event Innovator Competition will return in 2026, with the application announcement coming later this year. Students are encouraged to follow @DiscoverSanRamonCA on social media and visit DiscoverSanRamonCA.com for updates.

[Download Ceremony Photos](#), photo credit: Discover San Ramon

About Discover San Ramon

Discover San Ramon is a nonprofit destination management organization founded in 2015 to promote the Contra Costa County, California destination. Funded by a designated hotel room tax, Discover San Ramon reinvests in efforts that encourage overnight stays, contributing financially to hospitality jobs that support San Ramon’s long-term health and prosperity.

Contact: Beth Schnitzer, Spritz beth@spritzsf.com
Diana Silvestri, Spritz diana@spritzsf.com

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