



# Bellflower Unified School District

## Media Release

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**CONTACT:** Valerie Martinez, William Diepenbrock 909-206-5304

## Bellflower High School Celebrates 358 Seniors in Class of 2017

**BELLFLOWER** – Bellflower High School co-valedictorian Yvette Valtierra encouraged her Class of 2017 classmates on June 14 to use lessons learned at school and their ongoing pursuit of education to bring social change and make a positive impact on their community and the environment.

Valtierra shared her remarks during a commencement ceremony recognizing 358 graduating seniors – all clad in dark red gowns with golden embellishments – who accepted long-anticipated diplomas in front of more than 4,000 families, friends and educators.

“Every person graduating here has the power to make a difference in our world. Our graduation is not a moment, but a movement,” Valtierra said.

Co-valedictorian Oscar Macias expanded on her theme.

“In 2013, graduation seemed so far away. But now we’re waiting to receive our diplomas and go our separate ways,” Macias said. “I hope that we take what we learned at school to heart, and that we go forward and use it in the work force.”

Valtierra and Macias both intend to pursue careers in medicine.

Valtierra completed advanced placement (AP) and honors courses, was a member of the National Honors Society and ASB and is an active volunteer for the city of Bellflower. She will study biology at UCLA en route to becoming a pediatrician.

“I want to thank my parents for bringing me to where I am. They have endured so much for me to pursue school and follow my dreams, and I won’t stop until I make you proud and graduate from medical school,” Valtierra said.

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## Standard of Excellence; Nothing Less

Bellflower Unified School District provides a pathway for all students to attain the expertise and develop skills of academic excellence that will empower them to become lifelong active learners, demonstrate respect for themselves and others in a dynamic, diverse and global society, become responsible, informed, productive, independent and contributing citizens, and perform successfully in their chosen field and in society.



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Macias excelled in eight AP classes. He will attend UCI, also to major in biology, with an eye on a career in medicine.

The ceremony began with fireworks erupting in the sky as representatives of the U.S. Marine Corps presented the American flag and a Bellflower High School ensemble group performed the National Anthem.

An atmosphere of celebration and togetherness was highlighted with the ensemble's acapella rendition of "Lean on Me," which had graduating seniors swaying, clapping along and embracing through the smiles and tears.

Senior Class President Magnolia Sandoval spoke about her experiences at Bellflower and the lasting friendships she made, before concluding with wishes of success and prosperity for the future.

Before diplomas were awarded, students graduating with academic honors were recognized and applauded. In total, 13 students received highest academic honors with GPAs of 4.0 or higher, 32 earned high academic honors with GPAs of 3.5 to 3.99 and 64 were recognized for academic honors with GPAs of 3.0 to 3.49.

"We are extremely proud of the 64th graduating class from Bellflower High School," Bellflower Unified Superintendent Dr. Brian Jacobs said. "I know they will take their lessons and experiences from Bellflower and apply them to their academic and personal careers to continue this culture of success. Congratulations to the Class of 2017."

## PHOTOS

**BELLFLOWER\_BHSGRAD\_1:** Bellflower High School held its commencement ceremony on June 14, honoring 358 graduates eager to begin college and careers.

**BELLFLOWER\_BHSGRAD\_2:** Bellflower High School graduating seniors flipped their tassels and celebrated their academic endeavors during a June 14 ceremony.

**BELLFLOWER\_BHSGRAD\_3:** Bellflower High School's class of 2017 graduates display diplomas during their June 14 commencement.

**BELLFLOWER\_BHSGRAD\_4:** Bellflower High School's ensemble choir perform an a capella version of "Lean on Me" to kick off the June 14 graduation ceremony at Ron Yary Stadium.

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