



## Press Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Pioneer High School Alumni Return to Inspire Students to Follow College and Career Goals**

**WHITTIER** – Sal Rodriguez, a 1996 graduate from Pioneer High School, returned to his alma mater on March 5 to share with students his journey of trial and error as he pursued higher education and discovering his professional niche in the process.

“I was born and raised in the area, this is my community and I love coming back to tell students not to be afraid of failure,” said Rodriguez, a financial advisor at Bank of America.

Rodriguez was one of more than 50 alumni to take part in the third annual Alumni Career Day, aimed at inspiring students to pursue their college and career aspirations.

“I tell students not to be afraid of mistakes because everyone makes them eventually, and when that happens, you have to keep trying and moving toward your goal,” Rodriguez said. “You only fail when you stop trying.”

The Expanded Horizons office, which provides students with college and career support, hosted the event to provide students with inspiration from those who walked the very halls they did. Stories of overcoming hardship to reach success were heard through five informational sessions over the course of the day, which concluded with the lighting of the Titan Torch.

The speakers, whose graduation years spanned from 1969 to 2012, featured lawyers, firefighters, school psychologists and special effects makeup artists, among others.

“It is so cool that everyone can come together, even after years of not stepping foot on campus, to see old friends and return to their home to teach current Pioneer students about their struggles and successes,” Pioneer sophomore Samantha Perez said. “I’ve gained a lot of college advice and it makes me excited to go forward with my dreams.”

The Expanded Horizons team selected alumni representing a variety of fields, enabling students to explore college and technical training options that will help them achieve their professional goals. The success of last year’s event, which included about 30 speakers, boosted the number of alumni speakers this year to almost double.

“The goal of the Alumni Career Day is to inspire and motivate our students to follow their dreams by highlighting the achievements of our former Titans, some of whom also faced challenges but continued

to persevere to be the successes they are today,” Principal Lilia Bozigian said. “I want to thank our alumni speakers for taking the time to share their experiences and making the annual event such a success.”

**PHOTO CAPTION:**

**031218\_WUHSD\_PIONEERALUMNI:** More than 50 Pioneer High School alumni returned to their alma mater on March 5 to speak to students about their journeys to success during the third annual Alumni Career Day. Hosted by the Expanded Horizons office, the event connects alumni with current students to inspire them to pursue college and career aspirations through five informational sessions over the course of the day, which concluded with the lighting of the Titan Torch.

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*The Whittier Union High School District provides all students with an engaging, quality standards-based instructional program delivered by a well-trained staff resulting in improved student achievement. Whittier Union High School District works to achieve and maintain excellence in providing a comprehensive education for all students.*

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