



Whittier Union HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

To Achieve and Maintain Excellence...

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Apr. 20, 2021 **CONTACT:** Andrea Garcia **PHONE:** 909-273-9840

Whittier Union Senior Overcomes Hardship, Continues Family Legacy with Acceptance to UCLA

WHITTIER – Pioneer High School senior Genessa Frondarina has always aspired to attend an elite university. What she never dreamed possible was continuing her education alongside her older sisters – Pioneer High Class of 2019 graduate Alyssa Suarez and Pioneer High Class of 2020 graduate Lanessa Frondarina, who are both attending UCLA.

Frondarina, who has completed eight AP and seven Honors classes and has a 4.41 GPA, will become the third member of her family to wear the blue and gold after being accepted to UCLA. Frondarina plans to major in international affairs.

“It feels amazing. Words can’t describe how awesome it is to see my sisters and myself accomplishing things like this with our background,” Frondarina said. “Alyssa and Lanessa inspired me to want more for my education. Just seeing them strive to do better made me want the same. Together we pushed each other to become better.”

Genessa, Lanessa and Alyssa are first-generation college goers who grew up in a low-income household with many hardships. Their father left school after the fifth grade and their mother became pregnant in high school. Even with enthusiastic support from their parents to pursue higher education, the sisters had to navigate the college application process on their own.

The sisters received support and guidance from Pioneer’s college-prep elective Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID). AVID teaches students how to create an application that stands out, stresses the importance of deadlines, and instills a climate of high expectations that motivates students to flourish academically.

Pioneer is an AVID National Demonstration School, a distinction accorded to only 3% of all AVID programs.

“Genessa and her sisters are amazing. They all had the goal of going to college and they continually challenged themselves by taking the most rigorous courses,” Pioneer AVID Coordinator Jennifer De Baca Sandoval said. “I have known them since they were freshmen and see how they take care of each other. The best part of my job is seeing that dreams can come true.”

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Frondarina and her sisters bonded through long bus rides and walks to school, moments where they would have their best conversations about college and life. On campus, the sisters engaged in friendly sibling rivalries while playing tennis together. When Alyssa became the first to be admitted to UCLA, the sisters rejoiced.

“I am so proud of what we all have been able to achieve,” Frondarina said. “We received so much help from our teachers, including Jennifer Sandoval, Jasmin Perez, Dyan Acevedo and Bob Dubesa. It’s been a wonderful journey.”

Frondarina is varsity captain for the Pioneer tennis team, a member of the Science Club and Titans for Christ, supervises children at her church once a week and worked over the summer as a geometry tutor.

“I am so proud of Genessa, Lanessa and Alyssa, whose hard work and dedication provide inspiration to all students who want to follow their dreams,” Pioneer Principal Lilia Bozgian said. “I can’t say enough about our AVID program and instructors, who have the ability to connect with our students and put them on the path to success. This is Titan spirit at its best.”

PHOTO CAPTION

042021_WUHSD_FRONDARINA: Pioneer High School senior Genessa Frondarina (middle) will continue her family legacy and join her sisters Lanessa (left) and Alyssa (right) at UCLA this fall.

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OUR MISSION:

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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