

## PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CONTACT:** Nancy Yeang  
Maritza Fairfield  
(909) 324-0345

## Monrovia High Hosts Roaring Twenties-Themed SELPA Special Needs Prom

**MONROVIA, CA** – Monrovia High senior Sam Williams and his friend, Megan Navarro, joined more than 100 students with special needs from across San Gabriel Valley donning boutonnieres, corsages, and formal wear as they enjoyed an afternoon of music at a Roaring Twenties themed prom on May 11 at Monrovia High School.

For Williams, prom was all about getting a chance to show off his dance moves.

“I’m having a lot of fun; I love being with my friends,” Williams said. “It will be sad to leave the school, but today I just want to dance with all of my friends.”

Monrovia High leadership students served as paparazzi, giving the red-carpet treatment by snapping photos for students dressed in tuxedos and silk shawls arriving from Monrovia Unified, El Monte Union, San Gabriel Unified, Arcadia Unified, Mountain View and San Marino Unified school districts, representing the West San Gabriel Valley Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA).

Sam’s dad, Monrovia Unified Board President Terrence Williams, also attended the prom to take part of the special event.

“This is a humbling, emotional experience for me,” Board President Williams said. “The most gratifying part is seeing all of the students together dancing – inclusion is the most important factor for students with or without special needs. It does your heart good.”

A DJ spun tunes under an arc of balloons and pumped up the volume as students hit the dance floor. Students took photos in a Jazz Age booth and personalized picture frames at a coloring and craft table.

Monrovia High ASB President Marissa Zubiata helped to organize this year’s prom. Her cousin attended last year, and Zubiata helped her with hair and make-up.

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### OUR MISSION

Inspire students to engage in meaningful learning in a safe and nurturing environment that embraces diversity.

Challenge students to be ethical, productive members and leaders of the community.

### OUR VISION

Our students will be ethical, compassionate individuals who:

- graduate from high school prepared for college and career,
- contribute and adapt to an ever-changing world by being resourceful and responsible citizens, and
- embrace diversity.

# MONROVIA

UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT



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“I have so much fun at the prom. The students come right up to you and ask you to dance,” Zubiata said. “Having grown up with family members who are disabled, there is so much we can learn. The more we share our experiences together, the more we grow as people.”

Monrovia Unified offers special education services for students with special needs, including those who are visually impaired, hard of hearing or deaf, have a speech or language impairment, emotional disturbance, orthopedic impairment, autism, multiple disability, or traumatic brain injury.

Monrovia is served by the West San Gabriel Valley SELPA, an independent consortium of 14 school districts in the west San Gabriel Valley area, responsible for meeting the needs of moderate to severely disabled students.

“Thank you to our Monrovia High leadership students and SELPA for providing a fun and memorable afternoon for all our students,” Monrovia Superintendent Dr. Katherine Thorossian said. “This annual event brought together students from across the San Gabriel Valley and I was so happy to see everyone having such a good time.”

### PHOTO CAPTIONS:

**051518\_MONROVIA\_SELPA\_PROM1:** Monrovia High Senior Sam Williams (left) and his father, Monrovia Unified Board of Education President Terrence Williams, enjoy the West San Gabriel Valley SELPA prom for students with special needs at Monrovia High School on May 11.

**051518\_MONROVIA\_SELPA\_PROM2:** Monrovia High Senior Sam Williams (left) and his friend Megan Navarro get dressed up for the West San Gabriel Valley SELPA prom with a Roaring Twenties theme for students with special needs on May 11.

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