



Fontana Unified School District

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NEWS RELEASE

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Fontana Unified High School Students Receive AVID Scholarships

FONTANA, CA – Two Fontana High School seniors enrolled in the college-prep elective Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) received scholarships worth \$1,500 to ease their transition into higher education, thanks to the Riverside Inyo Mono San Bernardino (RIMS) AVID Scholarship Program.

Fatima Kamara and Michelle Navarrete Vega are first-generation college students who joined Fontana High's AVID program as freshmen, using the program to develop study skills, learn about the college application process, access scholarship opportunities, and immerse themselves in a college-going culture. Fontana High School was redesignated as an AVID National Demonstration School in 2019 and has held the honor – awarded to less than 3% of AVID schools nationwide – since 2006.

Kamara will attend Yale University and study political science, and Navarrete Vega will attend UCLA and major in computer science.

"I really appreciate receiving the RIMS AVID scholarship," Kamara said. "My sponsor has helped me move one step closer to achieving my goals and dreams by facilitating my college education. Throughout high school AVID has been part of my family. When I started high school, I was oblivious about my surroundings and how things worked, but AVID was the community that helped define me."

Navarrete Vega was raised in Fontana after her parents immigrated from Mexico in hopes of finding better opportunities for their family. Navarrete Vega is a member of the FOHI Marching Band and Color Guard, acting as co-captain and captain since her sophomore year. She also serves as vice president of FOHI's California Scholarship Federation club and is a member of Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Inland Empire.

"The RIMS AVID scholarship will assist me immensely in affording college for my first year," Navarrete Vega said. "I feel thankful for this opportunity. As a daughter of immigrants, I have worried about the cost and expense of college. With this opportunity, I can concentrate on my academics. To have someone support you is a relief, and I will forever be grateful to my sponsor."

Navarrete Vega has been an AVID student for six years, using the instruction to prepare for the rigor of Advanced Placement and Honors classes. The AVID culture and organized structure have helped her become a successful student and aspiring scholar who is constantly challenging herself. Finding her passion in mathematics, Navarrete Vega hopes to become a software developer or work in the data science field.

Kamara is a native of Sierra Leone, Africa, moving with her sister to Fontana in 2017. Kamara has served as the Fontana Unified Board of Education Student Representative during the 2020-21 school year, assisted the District's Positive Behavioral and Interventions Support team and is a member of the California Student Board Member Association.

Kamara credits AVID for bolstering her organizational skills, strengthening her knowledge, and enhancing her critical thinking skills. In 2020, Kamara received a QuestBridge National Match scholarship to attend Yale. She hopes to become a corporate lawyer and provide financial opportunities for underrepresented communities.

The RIMS AVID program prepares traditionally underserved students for four-year college eligibility, providing a social and academic structure to support students as they work to succeed. Geared toward students who may be the first in their family to attend college, RIMS AVID saw 92% of its students accepted to a four-year college in 2019.

"Fatima and Michelle are outstanding scholars and student leaders. I am so proud of them and thrilled to see their dreams of higher education come true," Fontana High Principal Ofelia Hinojosa said. "Thank you to our AVID coordinator Dawn Costa for her hard work and dedication on behalf of our AVID students, and to RIMS AVID and their amazing team of sponsors for their unwavering support."

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

FUSD_AVID_KAMARA: Fontana High School senior Fatima Kamara has been honored with a \$1,500 scholarship from the Riverside Inyo Mono San Bernardino (RIMS) AVID Scholarship Program. Kamara will attend Yale University and study political science.

FUSD_AVID_NAVARRETE_VEGA: Fontana High School senior Michelle Navarrete Vega has received a scholarship from the RIMS AVID Scholarship Program, which will help fund her studies at UCLA.

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