



Fontana Unified School District

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PRESS RELEASE

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Fontana Unified Class of 2018 Valedictorians, Salutatorians to Pursue Degrees in STEAM

FONTANA, CA – Fontana Unified’s Class of 2018 celebrated 12 valedictorians and salutatorians from five comprehensive high schools, many of whom will pursue higher education and careers in science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM) fields.

“Fontana Unified is committed to preparing our students for the careers of today and tomorrow, and our Class of 2018 graduates have shown a tremendous commitment to learning that will serve them well in their future endeavors,” Fontana Unified Superintendent Randal S. Bassett said. “We wish our graduates the best of luck as they take on life’s challenges and continue to seek new educational prospects.”

In total, Fontana Unified graduated 3,039 students from its five comprehensive high schools, two continuation schools and one adult school. Each comprehensive high school also invited one highly improved student from each of its feeder elementary and middle schools to take part in its graduation ceremony, hoping to inspire younger students to strive for excellence.

Summit High School

Summit High School celebrated the graduation of 558 students on May 21. San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools Ted Alejandre praised Summit students for their hard work and strong graduation rate – approximately 95 percent for the Class of 2018.

Both valedictorian Roma Bhojwani and salutatorian Hunter Silvey thanked the teachers, staff and friends who helped Summit’s graduates achieve this milestone.

Bhojwani, who will head to UC Berkeley in the fall, urged her fellow graduates to pursue what makes them happy.

“My hope for everyone in the class of 2018 sitting before me, is that you all find success. ... Create your own definition of success,” Silvey said. “Let success be defined by the path you desire in life, not just the path others desire for you.”

Silvey – known for his standout performances at coding and robotics competitions over the years – plans to study robotics engineering at Arizona State University.

Kaiser High School

Henry J. Kaiser High School honored the Class of 2018 on May 22, celebrating the end of a fiercely competitive academic year for its 539 graduates.

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The school named four co-valedictorians: Feliciano Cortes, Amandeep Heyer, Winnie Huang and Savannah Rodriguez, who pushed each other to new levels of excellence.

Heyer will attend Yale University to study computer science, thanks to the all-expense-paid 2018 Gates Scholarship. Huang, a 2018 Edison International Scholar, will pursue a mechanical engineering degree at Stanford University. She will be joined there by Cortes, who will study electrical engineering. Rodriguez will head to UC Berkeley in the fall, where she will major in political science.

The four valedictorians delivered a joint speech during the ceremony, sharing how their classmates encouraged each other to succeed, touching on lessons they learned and imparting advice to their peers.

“I promise you that there will be people in your life that will tell you, if they haven't already, that you can't do it and that you will not do it,” Rodriguez said. “But as I stand up here today, and I look out into a crowd of amazingly intelligent, kind, and inspiring individuals, it becomes more clear than ever before that the only answer to this is resilience.”

Fontana High School

Fontana High School honored 583 graduates – the District's largest class this year – with energetic commencement exercises on May 22.

Amid raucous cheers from their peers, friends, family and FoHi staff, valedictorian Alexandra Ortega and salutatorian Miguel Banchon reflected upon the highlights of the 2017-18 year before encouraging their peers to keep striving for success.

“We all come from different backgrounds and circumstances and have proven that we can overcome them,” Ortega said. “We are defined by how we handle the obstacles that life inevitably throws our way.”

Ortega and Banchon plan to study biochemistry before pursuing careers in medicine. Ortega – who received the all-expense-paid Gates Scholarship – will attend UCLA and Banchon will attend UC Davis.

A.B. Miller High School

A.B. Miller High School's commencement ceremony honored 483 graduates on May 24, including valedictorian Brittany Olsen-Graham and salutatorian Jakeline Larios, both of whom plan to study biology in college.

When Olsen-Graham joined A.B. Miller High's softball team as a freshman, she told her coach, “not only will I be starting [varsity] as a freshman, but I will also be valedictorian.”

In her valedictorian's address, Olsen-Graham detailed the focus and discipline that helped her achieve her goals and encouraged her peers to do the same. She will attend Franciscan University of Steubenville, continue to play softball and pursue her goal to become a pharmacist.

Larios, who served in ASB, Key Club, TV Production and cheer at A.B. Miller, plans to become a doctor after completing her studies at UCLA.

Jurupa Hills High School

Jurupa Hills High School graduate Toni Atieh shared his emotional journey of coming to the United States and the path to becoming the Class of 2018 valedictorian during the school's May 24 ceremony, which commemorated 472 graduates.

Atieh, who emigrated from Syria in 2010, thanked his family for the opportunity at a better life and his teachers and peers for sharing his passion for learning and helping him excel academically.

"We are as ready as we'll ever be to face life and its obstacles," Atieh said. "No one ever said it was going to be an easy road, but trust me it isn't an impossible one to walk down ... Class of 2018, we are the start of the new generation."

Atieh plans to study human biology at USC while salutatorian Ian Anthony Lomibao will major in math and computer science at UC San Diego.

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

052918_FUSD_GRADUATION1: Fontana High School graduate Alexandra Ortega delivers her valedictorian's address during the May 22 commencement ceremony. Ortega will study biochemistry at UCLA in the fall.

052918_FUSD_GRADUATION2: Kaiser High School co-valedictorian Winnie Huang addresses her fellow graduates during the May 22 ceremony. Huang, who was awarded a \$40,000 STEM scholarship from Edison International, plans to study mechanical engineering at Stanford University.

052918_FUSD_GRADUATION3: A.B. Miller High School salutatorian Jakeline Larios thanks her peers and teachers during the school's graduation ceremony on May 24. Larios will study biology at UCLA and plans to become a doctor.

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