

## PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Monrovia Unified School District Celebrates Graduates with In-Person Commencement Ceremonies

**MONROVIA** – Nearly 430 graduates from Monrovia Unified School District cheered as they walked across the graduation stage to receive their diplomas during in-person and drive-thru commencement ceremonies, held June 8 and 9.

Canyon Oaks High School and Mountain Park School celebrated the success of 45 graduates on June 8 during a drive-thru ceremony, where administrators and teachers delivered emotional speeches that detailed each student's hardships and successes that led to graduation day.

"We are incredibly proud of the Class of 2021 and are thrilled to have celebrated their achievements in-person, acknowledging their dedication during a year that challenged us all," Board President Maritza Travanti said. "On behalf of the Board of Education, we wish all of the graduates continued success as they go on to college and career."

During the Canyon Oaks and Mountain Park graduation, students received thousands of dollars in scholarships from local organizations, including Rotary, Kiwanis, Monrovia Reads, Citrus Bright Futures, Terrance Hall Memorial and more. Many Class of 2021 graduates from Canyon Oaks and Mountain Park will continue their education at four-year universities such as California State University, Los Angeles, Utah State University and the University of La Verne.

"Congratulations to all of our graduates, who have gone above and beyond to get to where they are today," Director of Alternative Schools Flint Fertig said. "Our graduating Class of 2021 is made up of devoted students who have a great capacity to love and to serve, and that is our motto at Canyon Oaks and Mountain Park – to go forth and serve."

On June 9, Wildcat Stadium roared as administrators, teachers, and families celebrated 378 seniors who persevered during an unprecedented school year.

This year, Monrovia High School honored Zoe Gathers, Charlie Heatherly, James DeLisio, Zachary Szymkowski, Haily Sarmiento, Cory Spaeth, Allen Santos, Brooke Gould, and Anthony Nava as valedictorians for receiving a cumulative unweighted GPA of 4.0 or higher.

During the ceremony, the high-achieving scholars were recognized by Principal Kirk McGinnis as he celebrated the entire graduating class for their exceptional educational journey while at Monrovia High School.

**MORE**

### BOARD OF EDUCATION

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**Dr. Katherine Thorossian**  
Superintendent

### 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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“Congratulations to the Class of 2021 – you are all exceptional and have reached this milestone in your life during a year filled with many adversities,” McGinnis said. “Your dedication to your studies is admirable and we cannot wait to see where life after high school takes you. We know that with the skills and knowledge you have gained while being at Monrovia High, there is truly nothing you cannot achieve.”

Valedictorian Heatherly, who has helped build the school’s prestigious game development team Forge Interactive and will attend USC in the fall to study game design, addressed his classmates during a heartfelt speech which recounted their time at Monrovia High and the challenges of the last year.

“I don’t talk about all of these magical moments simply to reminisce, I do it to define. They are the meaning and value of our high school experience,” Heatherly said. “This class has been made stronger because of that struggle – not in spite of it – and now, whenever you encounter those same feelings of fear and isolation in your future, know that you have a network of friends to support and care for you. We will always be connected by the moments that defined us, and I am certain that the Class of 2021 will not leave this ceremony as graduates saying goodbye; we will leave it as Wildcats greeting the future hand-in-hand.”

Monrovia Unified School District implemented health guidelines as outlined by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, such as the use of face coverings and social distancing throughout both events, to ensure the safety of its students, families, and entire school community.

“Congratulations to the Class of 2021! You have achieved this milestone under the most difficult of circumstances,” Superintendent Dr. Katherine Thorossian said. “As you commence your journey outside our school walls, continue to work hard and be nice. We are proud of your resilience and resolve; and we look forward to celebrating your future successes.”

### PHOTO CAPTIONS

**MUSD\_GRAD1:** Monrovia High School celebrated the graduation of 378 seniors during an in-person commencement ceremony on June 9.

**MUSD\_GRAD2:** Canyon Oaks High School and Mountain Park School held a drive-thru graduation ceremony on June 8, when 45 seniors were celebrated for their achievements.

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