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NEWS RELEASE

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Covina-Valley Unified Honors High-Achieving Class of 2023 with Inspirational Commencement Ceremonies

COVINA, CA – Covina-Valley Unified School District celebrated the resilience and remarkable accomplishments of its diverse Class of 2023 graduates with five vibrant graduation ceremonies filled with powerful music, moving speeches, and festive streamer cannons.

Over four days, a total of 1,064 Covina-Valley Unified graduates were individually recognized in front of packed, cheering crowds of friends and family. The District's Class of 2023 included 38 valedictorians, 94 graduates recognized with honors for attaining GPAs of 3.65 to 3.79, and 135 with highest honors for maintaining GPAs of 3.8 to 4.0.

Many of this year's C-VUSD graduates will go on to attend prestigious institutions nationwide, including Stanford University, Harvard University, the University of California, Los Angeles, Northwestern University, the University of California, Berkeley, the University of Southern California, and New York University.

Covina High's 126th commencement ceremony kicked off the District's graduation season on June 5. Covina's group of 277 graduates boasted seven valedictorians and 14 Advanced Placement Scholars. National Merit Scholarship Finalist Heidi Alhannat delivered a heartfelt speech during the ceremony, which was focused on gratitude, determination, and optimism for what the future holds.

"We have the power to shape our future through discipline and resolve," said Alhannat, who will attend Harvard University in the fall. "Regardless of what you decide, I encourage you to go where you are celebrated, not where you are tolerated. There is a place in this world for you. I hope that you find it, and I wish you the best of luck on your journey there."

Northview High School celebrated its 324-member class during a June 6 ceremony. Seventy graduates earned honors for sustaining GPAs at 3.65 or above. Three of the Vikings' eight valedictorians gave speeches on the resolve and impact of their class, along with the inseparable bond Northview created between them all.

"We grew together, learned together, and overcame challenges together. Every student here made high school a memorable experience," said valedictorian Yair Alcaraz, who graduated with an AP Capstone Diploma and is set to study mechanical engineering at UCLA in the fall. "Even though we had distinctive experiences, it wouldn't have been possible without everyone here."

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Fairvalley High School and Covina-Valley Learning Options Academy held a joint ceremony on June 7. During the intimate event, each of the 35 graduates presented a rose as a gift to one of their champions, be it a family member, friend, or teacher who supported their educational journey.

“I know that we are destined for great things in our future,” Fairvalley’s Hailie Benitez said to her fellow graduates. “I have no doubt that with our dedication, determination, diversity, and intelligence we will be part of something greater and become the best versions of ourselves.”

South Hills High’s graduating class – composed of 384 students and 23 valedictorians – was honored on June 7. Seven students were recognized through the school’s International Baccalaureate (IB) program, while three valedictorians delivered heartfelt speeches expressing hope for the new beginnings waiting for them after high school.

“Regardless of whether or not we feel ready, we are all prepared for whatever the world will throw at us,” South Hills High School valedictorian Jessica Limon said. “All that matters is that we made it through thick and thin. I hope we can all look toward the future with excitement and the past with pride.”

Fifty-three students, including 44 graduates and nine students who achieved high school equivalency, were recognized during Tri-Community Adult Education’s commencement on June 8. Four students received scholarships and seven were bestowed with outstanding performance awards in the fields of bookkeeping, court reporting, electrical, fabrication, HVAC, personal care, and welding.

“We have done the work and we have succeeded. In the process, we have found our voices and have followed the paths that honor who we are, and that may be the greatest lesson thus far,” said Carmen Balcazar, one of two Tri-Community student speakers. “May you never waste a moment worrying about the fairness of life, rather focus on success, positivity, and your God-given gifts to keep rising – go and make your mark on the world.”

Each day, the Covina-Valley Unified District Field transformed into a place of celebration, immersing visitors in vibrant colors and signage unique to each school. At the end of each ceremony, friends and family flowed onto the field to embrace their loved ones and celebrate their accomplishments.

“Covina-Valley Unified will always remember the Class of 2023 for its resilience and commitment to excellence,” Superintendent Dr. Elizabeth Eminhizer said. “We are so proud of all the incredible things this class has achieved over the years, both in and out of the classroom. There is no question this group will go on to achieve tremendous things in their next chapter of life.”

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

CVUSD_2023_GRAD1: Covina High School’s 126th commencement ceremony celebrated 277 graduates at the Covina-Valley Unified School District Field on June 5.

CVUSD_2023_GRAD2: Northview High School honored 324 graduating seniors, including eight valedictorians, during a ceremony on June 6.

CVUSD_2023_GRAD3: Fairvalley High School Principal Rebecca Handzel, left, and Covina-Valley Unified School District Superintendent Dr. Elizabeth Eminhizer, right, congratulated 35 graduates from Fairvalley High and the Covina-Valley Learning Options Academy during a joint graduation ceremony on June 7.

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CVUSD_2023_GRAD4: South Hills High School celebrated its Class of 2023, which was composed of 384 graduates and 23 valedictorians, at its graduation on June 7.

CVUSD_2023_GRAD5: Tri-Community Adult Education honored 53 students during its graduation ceremony at South Hills High School on June 8.

VIDEO:

Video highlights of Covina-Valley Unified School District's graduation ceremonies can be found and downloaded [here](#).

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