



Fontana Unified School District

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fontana Unified Celebrates Class of 2021 with Lively Stadium Ceremonies

FONTANA, CA – Fontana Unified’s Class of 2021 graduates turned their tassels as families cheered and colorful streamers cascaded through the air, marking their milestone achievement during dynamic commencement ceremonies at San Manuel Stadium, held June 8 to 10.

The District honored graduates from its five comprehensive high schools, two continuation schools and adult school with outdoor, in-person ceremonies, featuring emotional speeches from standout students, tearful renditions of the schools’ alma maters, and marquee lights spelling “Class of 2021” adorning the field.

The ceremonies, which implemented limited capacity and fixed seating in compliance with county health and safety guidelines, were also livestreamed via YouTube.

A.B. Miller High School

A.B. Miller High School kicked off the commencement festivities on June 8, recognizing approximately 450 students in the Class of 2021 who will serve in the military, enter the workforce or attend college.

The graduating class was led by valedictorian Angelica Aniciete and salutatorian Sarah Edress. Aniciete will attend UCLA in the fall and major in aerospace engineering, with dreams of becoming an aircraft designer. Edress is headed to UC Riverside to study biology and pre-med, with plans to pursue a career as a cardiothoracic surgeon.

“This was not an easy road ... not all of us realize that with success comes failure, and I am fortunate enough to be here today because I have failed multiple times,” Edress said. “Today starts a new chapter of your endless journey. Be proud of your mistakes, because without them, we would not be where we are today.”

Henry J. Kaiser High School

Henry J. Kaiser High School honored approximately 500 graduates during a lively evening ceremony on June 8, anchored by cheers of “Kaiser is No. 1!” and speeches from valedictorian David Aguilar and salutatorian Alexandra Gonzalez.

Aguilar will attend Northwestern University to study political science and mathematics on a full-ride QuestBridge National College Match Scholarship. He dreams of running for public office, serving as a voice for the unheard and making an impact on his community.

Gonzalez will major in sociology and chemistry at UCLA; she aspires to become an urban planner to provide communities in low socioeconomic areas with better resources and support.

“Class of 2021, you are incredibly special and incredibly resilient in the face of adversity,” Gonzalez said. “All of your hard work – at school, the field, and at home – is recognized and admired. I am very proud and fortunate to be a part of this graduating class. I am excited to see you all break through boundaries and achieve everything that you desire. You are powerful and beyond capable. Here’s to our future that is bright and limitless.”

Fontana High School

Fontana High School brought its Steeler pride to San Manuel Stadium for its June 9 ceremony, honoring more than 500 students in the Class of 2021. Valedictorian Fatima Kamara delivered a rousing speech, commending her peers on their resilience and success during a challenging year.

“You deserve to be celebrated and appreciated for doing your best and being the best version of yourselves,” Kamara said. “As graduating seniors, we are beginning a new chapter in our lives. The future belongs to us, and no matter how hard it gets, we will prevail. After all, we are Steelers.”

Kamara will attend Yale University on a full-ride QuestBridge National College Match Scholarship, where she will study political science on her path to a career in law. She is joined at the top of her graduating class by salutatorian Monserratt Navarrete Vega, who will continue her education at USC.

Jurupa Hills High School

Jurupa Hills High School bid farewell to its high-achieving Class of 2021 on June 9, celebrating more than 400 students. The Spartans graduating class was led by co-valedictorians Joy Anyiam, Mario Camacho and John Nino Requieron and salutatorian Elian Martin Lintag, who gave speeches full of heartfelt thanks and advice for the future.

“From tutoring your peers to prepare for upcoming finals, to getting that new job to help your family through the pandemic, you have all demonstrated that even the smallest bit of sympathy can go a long way, and there is an immense amount of impact your words, your actions, your kindness today, can have on someone’s success tomorrow,” Anyiam said.

Anyiam, who graduated summa cum laude from Jurupa Hills’ International Baccalaureate program, will attend Harvard University. Camacho and Lintag will further their education at UC Irvine. Requieron, whose studies at Boston College will be fully funded by a QuestBridge National College Match Scholarship, plans to pursue a career in nursing.

Fontana Adult School

Fontana Adult School celebrated more than 100 graduates on June 10, recognizing adult learners for earning their high school diplomas or equivalency diplomas, as well as for completing their studies in the school’s professional pathways and programs.

Class of 2021 graduate Ana Lorena Garcia delivered an emotional speech, recounting the challenges she faced as a young mother and immigrant who left school to focus on her family, worked as a server for more than 20 years and survived cancer, as well as how she was inspired to make a change.

“I started to work during the day, and going to school in the evening. When the pandemic hit, I found myself without a job, like many others,” Garcia said. “To make the best of this difficult time, I decided to



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become a full-time student. I can tell you, that was the best investment I ever made. I finished high school, my interpreter-translator class, I learned to type, I am taking a computer class ... If I can do it, you can do it too. It's never too late."

Eric Birch High School

Eric Birch High School graduated approximately 90 students during a June 10 ceremony that featured speeches from its Graduates of the Year, who were honored for their perseverance and achievement.

The continuation school graduates reflected on the challenges of completing high school during a pandemic and expressed gratitude to their families, friends, teachers and staff.

"I want to let all of you know that no matter how hard things get, I know you always come out stronger from it," said Graduate of the Year Antonia Mercado, who plans to attend college and become a family lawyer. "Always know to keep your heads held high and trust in yourselves, because this ceremony right here, in honor of every single one of you, is proof that you can do anything you put your minds to."

Citrus High School

Citrus High School celebrated more than 130 graduates during its June 10 ceremony, which featured speeches from continuation school students who overcame personal challenges on their path to graduation.

Citrus High graduate Christian Yanaga, who will attend trade school for welding, recounted his high school journey – which included an accident that led to six surgeries, a long recovery and year of missed credits.

"I caught up, and then I got ahead, and now I'm standing here telling everyone not to give up," Yanaga said. "Life can be hard, and even though you're broken, if you want something bad enough, you can find a way to make it happen. Thank you for anyone who believed in me and helped me get to where I am now."

Summit High School

Summit High School concluded the District's commencement festivities on June 10, celebrating the end of a fiercely competitive academic year for more than 575 graduates.

Summit High's Class of 2021 was led by valedictorian Christian Vaca and salutatorian Gabriel Rodriguez Cortez, who will both attend UCLA in the fall. Vaca will major in biomechanical engineering and Rodriguez Cortez will study electrical engineering.

"I think it's easy to get into the way of thinking that there's a correct path and a correct destination after we leave high school. I don't think this is the case, and I think it's okay to not have everything figured out yet," Vaca said. "The one thing I ask of all of you as I sit up here today, is that no matter what you decide to do with your life, just make it count."

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

FUSD_2021_GRAD1: Jurupa Hills High School co-valedictorian Joy Anyiam delivers a passionate speech about making a positive impact during a June 9 commencement ceremony.

FUSD_2021_GRAD2: Fontana High School Class of 2021 graduates await the conferral of diplomas during the school's commencement on June 9 at San Manuel Stadium.

FUSD_2021_GRAD3: An Eric Birch High School graduate celebrates earning his diploma during the June 10 commencement ceremony.

FUSD_2021_GRAD4: Henry J. Kaiser High School Class of 2021 president Vanessa Ojeikere addresses her fellow graduates during a June 8 ceremony.

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