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NEWS RELEASE

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Fontana Unified Class of 2022 Graduate Recognized as NHSDA Dance Arts Scholar

FONTANA, CA – A.B. Miller High School Class of 2022 graduate Cassandra Hernandez has been dancing for as long as she can remember. Growing up, Hernandez swayed to the rhythm of the cumbia and bachata music she heard at home. At A.B. Miller High, Hernandez’s talents were nurtured to their full potential, culminating in her being selected for the school’s exclusive Conservatory of Dance as a junior.

Having mastered a number of dance styles – including jazz, hip-hop, modern and ballet – Hernandez’s long hours of practice were rewarded when she was selected as a National Honor Society for the Dance Arts (NHSDA) 2022 Dance Scholar, one of approximately 160 high school seniors from across the country honored by the NHSDA this year.

Hernandez was celebrated for her leadership skills and commitment, ability to collaborate with other dancers, grade point average, and other intangible qualities such as outreach, teaching skills and event production. Hernandez said she is thankful her A.B. Miller teachers gave her the confidence to resume dancing after an ankle injury had sidelined her for years.

“One of the statements that will stick with me is ‘Full out!’” Hernandez said. “In the field of dance, it implies to dance with all your energy, even if you’ve rehearsed a piece 20 times or more. ‘Full out!’ also entails never giving up in the face of adversity, discipline, tenacity, and giving it my all. Overall, I feel like a baby bird ready to leave its nest and thrive at college. Thank you to my amazing teachers for having faith in me.”

In addition to receiving the NHSDA honor, Hernandez departed A.B. Miller High with numerous dance accolades, receiving A.B. Miller’s 2022 Artistic Merit award, Dance Star award and Conservatory of Dance Excellence award. Hernandez also distinguished herself as a visual artist and photographer, with honors from A.B. Miller High, Fontana Unified and the Arts Education Network for San Bernardino County.

“Kassandra is a great dancer and a special student,” said Nicole Robinson, dance teacher and A.B. Miller Conservatory of Dance founder. “The Conservatory is about more than just dance, it’s about growing as a person, and I’ve had the pleasure to see Kassandra develop her skills in creative and thoughtful ways. Kassandra is a mover and a thinker, someone who can explore dance on a deeper level. I’m so proud of her.”

A.B. Miller began its dance program in 1995, establishing the Conservatory of Dance in 2009 to give advanced students an opportunity to immerse themselves fully in the art of dance, while also studying

the business of dance and developing critical skills such as advocacy, an area that brought out the creative energy in Hernandez.

“Dance allows me the ability to express myself without using words, which I enjoy,” Hernandez said. “I was able to advocate on women’s empowerment and self-doubt through dance. My classmate Mercedes Villegas and I collaborated on a project called “Divine Feminine,” which exposes the clichés of what a woman should look, and act like in our society.”

Reflecting on her time at A.B. Miller High School, Hernandez said she will miss the late-night rehearsals, stressing over her choreography, organizing pranks, engaging in flash mobs, going on field trips, opening up to mentors and, most importantly, forming a family with her classmates and teachers. She will attend Cal State University Dominguez Hills in the fall, where she plans to study community health.

PHOTO CAPTION:

FUSD_AB MILLER_DANCE: A.B. Miller High School Class of 2022 graduate Kassandra Hernandez was recently named a National Honor Society for Dance Arts 2022 Dance Scholar. Hernandez spent two years in A.B. Miller High’s Conservatory of Dance, where she mastered a number of dance styles, including jazz, hip-hop, modern and ballet.

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