



Fontana Unified School District

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Four Fontana Unified Students Selected to Join 2024 Tournament of Roses Honor Band

FONTANA, CA – Four Fontana Unified School District high school students have distinguished themselves as some of the best high school musicians across Southern California, earning spots in Pasadena City College’s 2024 Tournament of Roses Honor Band.

Henry J. Kaiser High School senior David Mireles (marching snare drum), sophomore Liliana Lobo (euphonium) and Jurupa Hills High School senior Antonio De La Torre (baritone sax) and sophomore Diego Muro (clarinet) all qualified to march with the Tournament of Roses Honor Band in the 135th edition of the iconic Rose Parade on New Year’s Day.

“Performing in the Tournament of Roses is a landmark achievement and once-in-a-lifetime experience for our students,” Superintendent Miki R. Inbody said. “These achievements are an example of how our District staff and programs are empowering our students to reach for their goals and accomplish things they may have once thought impossible.”

These selections uphold a District tradition at the prestigious event, as numerous District students have previously participated in the Rose Parade, including Kaiser Band Director Roberto Ronquillo and Jurupa Hills Band Director Bill Borjan when they were students at A.B. Miller and Fontana high schools, respectively. The entire Kaiser High Catamount Pride Band and Color Guard also performed at the Rose Parade in 2019 under former band director Anthony Allmond.

For Mireles, the selection successfully capped a two-year quest to bring his percussion skills to the Honor Band after he auditioned last year and missed the cut.

“I feel like all my hard work has paid off,” Mireles said. “In 2019, my brother was in the Kaiser band that performed at the Parade. I remember being there that year, seeing all the different bands and floats and telling myself, ‘I want to do this one day.’”

All four students auditioned for the Tournament of Roses Honor Band in October after completing an application that required the approval of their band director. In November, the band began rehearsing every Sunday in Pasadena for the upcoming parade.

“David and Liliana are continuing a legacy at Kaiser,” Ronquillo said. “This honor band is a collaboration of 60 high schools across Southern California and is extremely competitive. We had six students audition and these two qualified, so their selection is something special, but everyone who tried out came away with an idea of what they can do to get better after seeing all the talent in their section.”

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Ronquillo said his goal is to make a return trip to the Rose Parade with Kaiser’s entire unit, with plans to audition for the 2026-27 event. The Catamount Pride Band and Color Guard will take a step toward that goal this upcoming May, as it was recently accepted to perform in the Memorial Day Parade in Washington, D.C.

At Jurupa Hills, Borjan said he believes Muro and De La Torre are the first two members of the Spartan Marching Band to have been selected to play for the Tournament of Roses Honor Band.

“These experiences inspire you to strive for a higher level. When students accomplish these things, come back and share these experiences with the rest of their bandmates, their confidence spreads and helps lift everyone up,” Borjan said.

For Muro, the experience helped open his eyes to the possibility of pursuing music as a career.

“This encourages me to do more because now I know I am at that next level. It makes me want to try out and explore different opportunities,” Muro said. “At first, I just saw music as a hobby but now I am thinking of pursuing it as something more after high school.”

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

FUSD_ROSES1: Henry J. Kaiser High School sophomore Liliana Lobo (left) and senior David Mireles auditioned and were selected to join Pasadena City College’s Tournament of Roses Honor Band for the 2024 Tournament of Roses Parade on New Year’s Day.

FUSD_ROSES2: Jurupa Hills High School senior Antonio De La Torre (left) and sophomore Diego Muro will perform in the 2024 Tournament of Roses Parade with the Pasadena City College Tournament of Roses Honor Band.

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