



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Feb. 6, 2025

CONTACT: Lauren Creiman, (909) 833-9853

Bonita Unified Student, Children’s Rights Advocate Accepted to NYC’s Barnard College

SAN DIMAS/LA VERNE – San Dimas High School senior Jazmine Cardenas is no stranger to advocacy. Through her involvement as a member of the UNICEF National Youth Council, the YWCA San Gabriel Valley and the Harvard Youth Corps, Cardenas has fought for children’s rights and victims of domestic violence, and helped to unite students from different cultural backgrounds.

Cardenas, who has a 4.17 GPA and has taken six Advanced Placement courses and nine dual enrollment college courses, will take her love for policy-making to New York City after being accepted into Columbia University’s exclusive Barnard College, which has an acceptance rate of less than 9%. Cardenas plans to major in political science with a concentration on international relations and a minor in public policy.

“I am very amazed and full of disbelief and gratitude for being accepted to Barnard College,” Cardenas said. “I’m so excited for this. Ultimately, I would love to work with the United Nations and do humanitarian work or be a policy specialist. Really, I just want to make change. That’s why I chose Barnard; it’s perfectly located in New York City near all the places I want to be.”

Cardenas founded the school’s United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) Club as a junior and has seen it quickly turn into one of the most popular clubs on campus. As one of just 14 students across the United States to be selected as a member of the UNICEF National Youth Council, Cardenas attended the annual 2024 UNICEF Gala, where she got to meet and talk with the UNICEF CEO.

“What is great about UNICEF is that they listen to their youth voices, and allow them to come up with our own panel to tell the adults in the room how to incorporate our voices into their policy,” Cardenas said.

Cardenas has been volunteering at the YWCA San Gabriel Valley since she came to San Dimas as a sophomore, which led to a summer internship where Cardenas worked with the legal and human resources departments. Last October, Cardenas helped organize a YWCA youth advisory board-led Peace Walk for domestic violence victims, bringing with her many members of San Dimas’ UNICEF Club.

MORE

**BOARD OF
EDUCATION**

Chris Ann Horsley, President
Derek Bahmanou, Vice President

Jim Elliot, Clerk
Brittany Allison, Member

Greg Palatto, Member
Matt Wien, Superintendent



BONITA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

“As an intern, I got to see how YWCA works and became more determined to organize events to raise awareness on domestic violence and children’s rights,” Cardenas said. “At the YWCA, members are from all over the San Gabriel Valley and it’s great to work with them. We brought numerous UNICEF Club members to YWCA events such as the Hispanic Heritage Resource Fair and Domestic Violence Candle Vigil to further support our community.”

Cardenas’ enthusiasm for mixing cultures has made for some touching moments at school. As a member of San Dimas’ Spanish Honor Society, Cardenas hosted a Hispanic Heritage Month event, bringing a Peruvian dancer to campus to discuss the history of Peruvian music, dance, and culture. Cardenas, who is of Peruvian descent, hoped the visit would be impactful for her classmates.

“After the performance, these two girls came up to me and our club advisor Ms. Valencia with tears in their eyes. One of the girls was from Peru and was missing her family and seeing the dancer at school made her emotional,” Cardenas said. “She was happy that her culture was being represented, and it made me feel really good to see that bringing the dancer to school had such a positive impact.”

Cardenas said she knows that a life in advocacy can be tempered by opposing forces. As a Harvard Youth Corps member, she helped advocate for a California Assembly Bill that would ban selling over-the-counter weight loss and muscle enhancing supplements to minors. Cardenas even met with State Sen. Susan Rubio and retained her support for the bill, though it ultimately was not passed by the legislature.

“Jazmine Cardenas is a tremendous student who has developed into an academic leader and role model on campus through her ability to connect with her classmates and inspire them to advocate and fight for just causes,” San Dimas High School Principal Omar Mayen said. “We wish Jazmine all the best at Barnard College, and know that she will be working hard to make the world a better place for everyone.”

PHOTO:

BUSD_BARNARD: San Dimas High School senior Jazmine Cardenas has a love for policymaking and a passion for advocacy. Cardenas, who is a member of the exclusive UNICEF National Youth Council, has been accepted to Columbia University’s prestigious Barnard College in New York City, where she plans to major in political science with a concentration on international relations and a minor in public policy.

###

**BOARD OF
EDUCATION**

Chris Ann Horsley, President
Derek Bahmanou, Vice President

Jim Elliot, Clerk
Brittany Allison, Member

Greg Palatto, Member
Matt Wien, Superintendent