



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** April 30, 2025

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## **Bonita Unified Sports Medicine Program Punches Ticket to AACI National Competition**

**SAN DIMAS/LA VERNE** – The San Dimas High School Sports Medicine team will make its fifth consecutive trip to the American Academic Competition Institute (AACI) National High School Sports Medicine Competition after turning in another stellar performance at the AACI California regionals in March, with its 20-member team placing sixth in the state for medium schools.

The SDHS Sports Medicine team continues to expand under the leadership of San Dimas athletic trainer and teacher Jessica Truax, who is now in her fifth year at the school, which mirrors the AACI competition team's five consecutive years of reaching nationals.

"The Sports Medicine program continues to grow at San Dimas, with more students recognizing it as an exciting career path," Truax said. "The Sports Medicine pathway gives students a comprehensive overview of what it takes to be an athletic trainer, and the San Dimas program provides for practical on-field experience and extracurricular activities. With 20 team members, this was our biggest team yet."

The AACI competition brought together 43 schools from the California/Oregon/Washington region for a challenging series of written and practical exams, a medical terminology exam, a digital cadaver quiz, and a quiz bowl. Competitors showcased their skills in first aid, CPR, wound care, and orthopedic testing. This year's competition focused on feet and ankles. The San Dimas team finished sixth overall in California Medium Schools, eighth overall in regional Medium Schools, and 13th overall for the region.

San Dimas High senior Jordan Garcia is the captain of the AACI Sports Med team, as well as a starting offensive lineman for the Saints football team. Garcia plans to attend the University of La Verne (ULV) to play football and enter its athletic training program.

As a player, Garcia is wary of injuries and familiar with the recovery process, knowledge he has channeled into his sports medicine lessons. As a member of the Sports Med Intern Club, Garcia has gained valuable experience during athletic contests, including working at a wrestling match where a student severely fractured his nose. Garcia phoned 911 and helped to clear a path for the ambulance.

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“I can relate to being injured, so to be able to help athletes get the care they need and watch them recover, that’s what I love about athletic training,” Garcia said. “This was my first year as AACI captain. It’s a lot like being on the football team. You learn to trust your teammates and work together as a team. Being AACI captain is a lot of pressure, but Ms. Truax is an amazing teacher and keeps us prepared, so nothing that happens during the competition is a surprise to us.”

The San Dimas High Sports Medicine pathway consists of two courses – Sports Medicine and Advanced Sports Medicine – that teach basic anatomy and physiology, first aid and CPR, and prepare students to take comprehensive courses offered at colleges and universities.

Students also have the option of taking Medical Interventions – a course in the school’s Biomedical pathway – that examines how medical treatments and patient testing works, while introducing students to topics such as laparoscopic surgery, organ transplants, genetic engineering, and more.

Students can also join the Sports Medicine Intern Club, which gives students an opportunity to apply their skills during San Dimas athletic contests, working with San Dimas head athletic trainer Joelle Pasalo. The final tier is the AACI Sports Medicine competition team, which meets after school once a week, beginning in October, to train, conduct practical drills, and strategize for its end-of-the-year meets. Truax teaches all three classes, moderates the Sports Medicine Intern Club and coaches the AACI competitors.

“I am very proud of what we’ve been able to achieve here at San Dimas,” Truax said. “In just five years, we’ve already seen a number of our graduates who are applying their knowledge and skills in higher education, including an alum who earned a bachelor’s degree in nursing, two alums who are currently in pre-med, and students who have enrolled in ULV’s athletic training program.”

### PHOTOS:

**BUSD\_SPORTSMED\_AACI1:** San Dimas High School Sports Medicine team members compete during the AACI California regionals in March, a rigorous competition that presents a challenging series of written and practical exams against high school teams from across the Western United States.

**BUSD\_SPORTSMED\_AACI2:** The San Dimas High School Sports Medicine team celebrates after completing a successful AACI California regional competition with a sixth-place finish in the California medium school division, and will return to the AACI National competition for the fifth consecutive year. The San Dimas Sports Medicine pathway teaches students basic anatomy, CPR, first aid and prepares students to take comprehensive programs at colleges and universities.

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