



# BONITA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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## NEWS RELEASE

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## Recent Bonita Unified Grads Begin Careers in Healthcare Industry after Completing CNA Training

**SAN DIMAS/LA VERNE** – Ten recent Bonita Unified graduates are ready to begin new careers in healthcare after receiving their Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) diplomas during a commencement celebration held Aug. 30 at the Village in Pomona, as part of a career technical education (CTE) partnership between the District, America's Job Center of California (AJCC), and Prestige Career College.

The former Bonita Unified students received their diplomas after completing the rigorous five-week course and passing the California CNA certification exam. As CNAs, the students will assist nurses and healthcare providers in the field, at hospitals, clinics, and long-term care facilities, providing, among many essential tasks, basic bedside care and personal hygiene while serving as patient advocates.

Bonita High Class of 2025 graduates Yude Yang, Frankie Bulhusen, and Joslyn Torres, as well as San Dimas High 2025 grads Melissa Almanza Perez, Natalya Gardea, and Soleil Multani participated in the ceremony, then recited the Florence Nightingale Pledge, holding lit candles in a darkened room as they committed to maintaining high professional standards and upholding confidentiality. Not present but receiving their diplomas were Bonita High graduate Alexis Torres and San Dimas grads Mia Hernandez, Vanessa Hoyt, and Sophia Maranjo.

"As Certified Nursing Assistants, you are entering a profession built on compassion, dignity, and service," Prestige Career College President Rick Prieto said. "You will be the first ones to greet patients and comfort families. You are part of the healthcare workforce now, and the doors will continue to open. Graduates, we look forward to all the lives you will touch in the years to come."

Yang served as commencement speaker for the graduates, and detailed the tremendous growth seen by the CNA students in such a short time.

"We have improved on skills beyond the classroom, like teamwork, compassion, responsibility, patience, demonstrating professionalism, and advocating for the rights of patients," Yang said. "CNAs are the very foundation of healthcare. We provide hands-on care, compassion, dignity to patients, as well as being the first to notice changes in the health and treatment of our patients."

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Yang took the class on the advice of his Bonita High School Purpose-Driven, Active, Career Exploration (PACE) project mentor, after expressing an interest in pursuing the nursing profession. Not only did the course provide Yang and his classmates essential CNA training, it also helped the students with soft skills like preparing for interviews and transitioning from high school to the working world.

"I feel like the most important part of the program is advocating for patient rights," Yang said. "We spent a lot of time on theory and regulations, learning what patients are allowed to do and what they aren't allowed to do. We also shadowed CNAs in the field. All our grads are CNAs today, but knowing the enthusiasm and professionalism of this class, eventually they will be LVNs, RNs, DSNs or maybe even doctors. I feel like I am ready to start my career in healthcare."

The students received the training through the Pomona Valley AJCC, which provided a Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity grant that allows high school graduates of all ages to receive training at no cost.

"This is such an exciting opportunity for our most recent Bonita Unified graduates, getting certified to begin working in one of our fastest growing industries," BUSD CTE Coordinator Vanessa Tilford said. "There are so many avenues to pursue in CTE, with good-paying jobs and lucrative careers waiting for students who are determined, ambitious, thoughtful, and committed to their post-secondary education and career journeys."

### PHOTO:

**BUSD\_CTE\_CNA:** Bonita Unified Class of 2025 graduates celebrate the completion of a five-week no-cost Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program designed to help them pass the California CNA certification exam and launch their careers in the healthcare industry. Recent graduates from both Bonita and San Dimas high schools participated in the class, which was offered through a partnership between Bonita Unified, America's Job Center of California, and Prestige Career College.

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