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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 24, 2026 **CONTACT:** Hannah Flanagan **PHONE:** (909) 929-1271

Upland High School Students Earn Top Honors Across Academics, Arts, and Athletics

UPLAND – Students at Upland High School (UHS) are earning widespread recognition for outstanding achievement across academics, arts, and athletics, demonstrating a strong tradition of excellence and a commitment to well-rounded success.

Academically, UHS students excelled in multiple regional competitions. Forty students participated in the San Bernardino County History Day competition on March 7 at California State University, San Bernardino, with 26 advancing to the state-level competition. Students developed original projects aligned with this year’s theme, “Revolution, Reaction and Reform in History,” choosing formats such as documentaries, performances, websites, and exhibits.

Eleven students also represented UHS at the San Bernardino County Science Fair on Feb. 26 at the University of Redlands, with all participants earning silver awards.

Academic pathways at UHS continue to prepare students for college and career success. The U’College Academy includes 57 seniors, 25 of whom are first-generation college students. Among them, 40 students will earn the California General Education Transfer Curriculum (Cal-GETC) Certificate, four will earn additional career certificates, and 16 students will graduate with associate degrees, including two students earning dual degrees.

In the arts, Upland High School’s theatre program continued its decades-long legacy of achievement at the 2026 California State Thespian Festival, held March 14–16 at the Pomona Colleges. Students have competed in the festival for more than 40 years, with this year marking the second consecutive first-place finish in the contrasting monologues category. Junior Aaliah Mansi earned first place in Costume Design, one of the festival’s top honors.

“This was my first year competing and I learned so much about the costume design process,” Mansi said. “I was very excited to win first place for our department and Upland High School.”

The theatre program is led by Director Michele Richardson and Theatre Coach Ashley Rodomanski, whose guidance help students master both performance and technical theatre disciplines.

The school's performing arts programs also achieved historic milestones this season. The Color Guard captured bronze in the Open Class Division Championships at the Winter Guard Association of Southern California (WGASC) event on April 19, marking the program's first championship-level debut. The 26-member team performed its show, "I'm Late! I'm Late! I'm Late!", under the direction of Chadd Hartman, with support from Band Directors Ernie Miranda and Derrick Nuno and an experienced instructional staff.

Additionally, the Indoor Percussion Ensemble secured back-to-back championships at the Southern California Percussion Alliance (SCPA) Percussion Scholastic A-Class Finals, held April 11. The 27-member ensemble performed its show, "Shadow," under the leadership of Percussion Directors Brian Dinkle and Andrew McAfee, alongside Miranda and Nuno.

Upland High athletes also delivered strong performances across multiple sports in the fall season. Several teams advanced to CIF competition, including girls flag football, football, boys soccer, and girls water polo. The boys soccer team earned the 2026 Baseline League Championship, while the girls tennis doubles team of sophomores Emma McNally and Riley Therrien placed second in league finals. In wrestling, sophomore Sophia Lopez placed second in state CIF, while junior Rebecca Dezan and senior Zelijah Elliston-Perez each earned third-place finishes.

Career Technical Education (CTE) programs also remain strong, with 1,217 UHS students enrolled in at least one CTE course, representing 45 percent of the student body. Seven students qualified for the SkillsUSA state competition in Ontario, where junior Geo Roybal earned a bronze medal in Automotive Action Skills. This marks the first time a UHS CTE student has received an award at the state level.

Based on the accomplishments of its students and the programs that have encouraged successes among historically underserved groups, Upland High School earned the distinction of 2026 California Distinguished School.

"From the classroom to the stage and the field of play, Upland High School students continue to embody the District's mission of *Creating Excellence*, setting a high standard for achievement across all areas of student life," Superintendent Dr. Lynn Carmen Day said. "These many achievements reflect not only their hard work, but also the dedication of our educators, coaches, and families who support them every step of the way. Upland Unified remains committed to creating environments where every student can discover their strengths and excel. Congratulations to our students."

PHOTO CAPTIONS

UUSD_UHSSuccesses1: Upland High School Color Guard earned the bronze medal at the Open Class Division Championships at the Winter Guard Association of Southern California (WGASC) state competition on April 19 with their show "I'm Late! I'm Late! I'm Late!", a first for the group.

UUSD_UHSSuccesses2: Upland High School junior Geo Roybal earned a bronze medal in Automotive Action Skills at the state-level SkillsUSA competition in Ontario, held April 9-12.

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