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NEWS RELEASE

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Covina-Valley Unified Celebrates Class of 2024 with Vibrant Commencement Ceremonies

COVINA, CA – Covina-Valley Unified School District celebrated the culmination of a year filled with accomplishments from its talented and diverse Class of 2024 with five vibrant commencement ceremonies, held June 3-6, that honored the achievements of more than 1,000 graduates.

Among the many standout graduating seniors, the District recognized 49 valedictorians who achieved 4.0 GPAs. Class of 2024 graduates from South Hills, Covina, and Northview high schools will go on to attend esteemed schools in the fall such as Yale University, Columbia University, Northwestern University, Arizona State University, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, the University of Colorado Boulder, the University of Oregon, the University of California, Berkeley, the University of California, Los Angeles, the University of Southern California, and many more.

Many C-VUSD graduates have been awarded prestigious scholarships including a full tuition, housing, and materials scholarship through the Park Scholar Program, an \$80,000 Steinhardt scholarship, a \$50,000 Edison scholarship, and more.

"We are immensely proud of the Class of 2024 and their many remarkable achievements during their time at Covina-Valley Unified," Superintendent Dr. Elizabeth Eminhizer said. "As they embark on their future endeavors, we are confident they will accomplish extraordinary feats - continuing to achieve their limitless potential."

Northview High School graduates earned four Advanced Placement (AP) Capstone Diplomas, nine AP Scholars, and three AP Scholars with Honors on June 5. One particularly inspiring story is that of Northview High graduate Isabella Castaneda. Despite facing significant personal difficulties – including financial struggles, living out of motels, and the unexpected death of her mother – Castaneda turned her life around. She devoted herself to summer courses, significantly improved her grades and attendance, and ultimately earned two scholarships and acceptance to California State University, Los Angeles.

"As I prepare to graduate, I'm incredibly grateful for the support from my family, friends, and Northview mentors, especially my counselor, Shana Jackson, who believed in me and never gave up," Castaneda said. "Northview High School gave me the opportunity for greatness, and I'm ready and excited to embrace my future."

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South Hills High School began the ceremonies on June 3, recognizing many standout students including five International Baccalaureate Diploma scholars, nine AP Scholars with Distinction, six AP Scholars with Honor, 18 AP Scholars, and eight Deaf or Hard of Hearing graduates. Additionally, 35 graduates participated in a work-based learning program through the Medical Career Technical Education Pathway, with three securing positions as Medical Assistants post-graduation.

“Starting tomorrow, we will each venture down a different path, some of which will take us away from everything we know,” South Hills valedictorian Mia Del Real said in her speech. “So, as we walk down those stairs, flip our tassels, and toss our caps, let’s hit the pause button one more time – listen to the sounds of the laughter, the happiness of our friends, the cheers of our families – and hold onto this special moment just a while longer.”

Covina High School recognized three AP Scholars with Distinction, four AP Scholars with Honor, and seven AP Scholars on June 4. One of those AP Scholars, Eunice Chung, immigrated from Hong Kong eight years ago and speaks Cantonese, Mandarin, English, and Spanish. She will attend UCLA in the fall, majoring in biochemistry on the pre-med track with a minor in entrepreneurship.

“My time in high school flew by and I can’t believe I’m already graduating,” Chung said. “I will miss everyone from Covina High, especially all my supportive friends and staff members. But most importantly, I’m beyond excited to explore and enjoy the next chapter of my life at UCLA. My advice for everyone is to stay hungry, stay ambitious, and grind on for success!”

Fairvalley High School and the Covina Learning Options Academy added to the District's diverse success stories. Fairvalley graduated 60 students who overcame significant obstacles, including experiencing housing insecurity and the foster care system, throughout their lives during its June 5 ceremony. These students' determination is exemplified by their extra work, taking night classes and online courses to catch up on credits, often while working part-time jobs.

Tri-Community Adult Education, with 101 graduates, added to the commencement celebrations on June 6. Graduate Julia Zavalza had previously attended five high schools and a trade school before enrolling at Tri-Community. She now plans to join the U.S. Navy and pursue a career in nursing with hopes of joining the Expeditionary Medical Facilities.

“If it wasn't for our staff's patience, care, and helpfulness none of us would be here with a cap and gown moving onto the next chapter of our lives,” Zavalza said in her graduation speech. “I’m sure many of us faced setbacks and a long journey to be here sitting in this very spot, but we did it! Congratulations, Class of 2024!”

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

CVUSD_GRAD1: Covina High School recognized three AP Scholars with Distinction, four AP Scholars with Honor, and seven AP Scholars during its Class of 2024 commencement ceremony on June 4.

CVUSD_GRAD2: A South Hills High School graduate celebrates during the school's Class of 2024 commencement ceremony on June 3.

CVUSD_GRAD3: Northview High School graduates earned 129 Golden Seal Merit Diplomas and four Advanced Placement Capstone Diplomas during its Class of 2024 commencement ceremony on June 5.

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CVUSD_GRAD4: A Fairvalley High School graduate celebrates with principal Rebecca Handzel and Covina-Valley Unified Superintendent Dr. Elizabeth Eminhizer during the school's June 5 ceremony.

CVUSD_GRAD5: Tri-Community Adult Education celebrated 79 Class of 2024 graduates during its June 6 commencement.

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