



## Press Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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# 11 Whittier Union Students Set to Perform in 127<sup>th</sup> Pasadena Tournament of Roses Parade

**WHITTIER, CA** – Nearly a dozen marching band and color guard members from the Whittier Union High School District will proudly represent their schools and exhibit their talents when they perform in the 127<sup>th</sup> Pasadena Tournament of Roses Parade on New Year’s Day.

After an intense audition process that included hundreds of high school musicians from throughout Southern California, eight marching band and three color guard members won coveted spots in the Pasadena City College Tournament of Roses Honor Band.

“I am proud of what our students have accomplished and congratulate them for earning the opportunity to showcase their creative skills in front of the entire world at the Rose Parade,” Superintendent Sandra Thorstenson said. “To perform in the Rose Parade is an unforgettable experience that will stay with them forever.”

The Honor Band, which has marched in every Tournament of Roses Parade since 1930, chose for its 2016 band seven students from California High School, two students from La Serna High School and two students from Whittier High School.

From Cal High, they are: Eric Gonzalez and Alicia Huerta (color guard – banner); Olivia Huizar (flute); Haley Nelson (trombone); Gus Sausedo (tuba); Bryanda Vega (color guard – tall flag); and Colin Ward (tenor sax). From La Serna High, they are Avery Smith (alto sax) and Taylor Medina (trombone), who performed in last year’s parade. From Whittier High, they are: Austin Trujillo (alto sax) and Fawn Knifechief (trumpet).

“This is a tremendous honor for our kids, who are so dedicated to their craft, putting in extra hours and displaying such poise and purpose,” Cal High band director Doug Nordquist said. “The opportunity to march with and play alongside the Pasadena City College Lancer band is an extraordinary achievement. Congratulations to all of our District student representatives.”

Students from throughout the southland auditioned on Oct. 11 at Pasadena City College for a chance to perform in the band, comprising exceptional high school musicians. Of those who auditioned, only 229 were selected – 137 high school students and 92 members of the Lancer band.

“The competition for a position in the band is phenomenal; the best and brightest students come out to audition,” Whittier High School band director Ruben Rivas said. “You truly have to bring your ‘A’ game to march in this parade. It is very impressive that so many from our District have been selected.”

Members will practice every Sunday in November and December and almost every day during winter break to prepare for the six-mile trek along Colorado Boulevard on Jan. 1.

“Taylor and Avery represent some of the remarkable musicians we are fortunate to have here at La Serna and Whittier as a district,” La Serna High School band director Matt Rohrs said. “The honor of performing in the Rose Parade will be something these students remember for a lifetime, as it is truly a test of skill, mental stamina and endurance.”

The Tournament of Roses Parade is seen by hundreds of thousands of people along the parade route and is broadcast to 200 territories and countries world-wide. This 2016 parade theme is “Find Your Adventure.”

“The performing arts are an important part of the human spirit, and these dedicated band directors deserve the highest praise for their high-quality instruction and focus to enhance our students’ musical talents,” Thorstenson said. “We can’t wait to cheer on our students, who will be living a memorable adventure, while making Whittier Union proud.”

#### **PHOTO CAPTIONS:**

**CHS:** Seven California High School students won coveted spots in the Pasadena City College Tournament of Roses Honor Band, including, from left, Erick Gonzalez (banner); Gus Sausedo (tuba); Haley Nelson (trombone); Bryanda Vega (tall flag); Colin Ward (sax); Olivia Huizar (flute); and Alicia Huerta (banner).

**LSHS:** La Serna High School band students Avery Smith (alto sax), left, and Taylor Medina (trombone) will perform in the 2016 Tournament of Roses Honor Band.

**WHS:** Whittier High School Cardinal Brigade members Austin Trujillo (alto sax), left, and Fawn Knifechief (trumpet) will perform in the 2016 Tournament of Roses Honor Band.

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*The Whittier Union High School District provides all students with an engaging, quality standards-based instructional program delivered by a well-trained staff resulting in improved student achievement.*

*Whittier Union High School District works to achieve and maintain excellence in providing a comprehensive education for all students.*

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