



Press Release

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Pioneer High Student-Athletes Make Titan History

Softball players first to formally commit to college athletics programs

WHITTIER, CA – Two members of the Titans’ softball team are making history as the first Pioneer High School athletes to formally commit to play in college athletic programs upon graduation.

Catcher Evonne Torres will attend Manhattanville College (Division III). Shortstop Amanda Fitzgerald will attend California State University, San Bernardino (Division II). Torres has a .656 batting average and has earned 15 runs and seven RBIs in the 2015 season. Fitzgerald has a .600 batting average and has made 15 runs and eight RBIs.

“Evonne and Amanda are extremely dedicated student-athletes who have worked incredibly hard to continue to play at the college level,” Principal Monica Oviedo said. “We are very proud of their success while at Pioneer and look forward to celebrating their future achievements.”

In a commitment ceremony held April 20, Torres’ family and friends clapped and cheered as she placed her signature on a university document promising she will attend Manhattanville College, where she plans to double major in psychology and sociology.

Torres, who holds a 3.6 GPA, stood tall, clad head to toe in Manhattanville swag, as she tearfully thanked her family, friends and coaches for their encouragement and support.

“My family has been through so much this year: first losing my grandfather to cancer and then supporting my aunt as she fights brain cancer. This has been an incredibly tough year,” Torres said. “I wouldn’t be going to college if it weren’t for everyone’s help.”

Fitzgerald attended the ceremony to support her teammate. She will formally sign a National Letter of Intent to play at Cal State San Bernardino at noon **Tuesday, May 12** in the school library.

Torres and Fitzgerald describe the Titan softball team as “family” and say softball has taught them to be driven, committed leaders who have gained the skills that will help them achieve in college.

Fitzgerald, who holds a 3.65 GPA, has played softball since age 5. She knew she wanted to play at the college level when she joined travel ball in middle school. She credits the teachers at Pioneer and the mentoring received from Titans’ softball coach Dyan Acevedo for making her dream a reality.

“The teachers at Pioneer work one on one with students to help us understand concepts and learn. They are always available to offer additional help if we need it,” Fitzgerald said. “On the field, Coach Dyan

works very hard to make sure we are mentally and physically prepared to play softball at the college level. As a former college softball athlete herself, she encourages us to believe playing in college can be a reality and not just a dream.”

Torres and Fitzgerald’s college-bound success represents a new chapter for the Pioneer athletic program.

“The supportive, positive culture of Pioneer athletics encourages students to build their self-confidence and work together while facing fierce competition – skills that are carried into college and beyond,” Whittier Union High School District Superintendent Sandra Thorstenson said. “We are looking forward to seeing more Pioneer athletes move on to play at the collegiate level.”

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

SOFTBALL1: Catcher Evonne Torres, left, and shortstop Amanda Fitzgerald are the first Pioneer High School athletes to formally commit to play in college athletic programs upon graduation. Torres will attend Manhattanville College, while Fitzgerald will attend California State University, San Bernardino.

SOFTBALL2: The Pioneer High School Softball Team celebrates Evonne Torres’ commitment to attend Manhattanville College during a celebration ceremony on April 20. Fitzgerald will sign her National Letter of Intent on May 12.

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