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**PRESS RELEASE**

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**More than 3,000 Students Graduate During  
WUHSD's 2014 Commencement Ceremonies**

WHITTIER, CA – More than 3,000 Whittier Union High School District students graduated during seven commencement ceremonies held June 3 and 4 for California, Frontier, La Serna, Pioneer, Santa Fe, Sierra Vista and Whittier high schools and the Whittier Adult School.

“Graduates of the class of 2014 distinguished themselves by reaching very high levels of academic achievement in addition to undertaking service to their schools, community, sports teams, visual and performing arts groups and more,” said Sandra Thorstenson, Superintendent of the Whittier Union High School District. “Our graduates and their families can be extremely proud, as we are, of their significant accomplishments and I am confident that they will build successful lives and be positive contributors to our communities.

During their speeches, principals for each school expressed their admiration for their students, some of whom struggled with difficult personal challenges, but persevered nonetheless in order to reach graduation day and grab hold of their diplomas. They each also encouraged the class of 2014 to continue pursuing their dreams, whether in college or careers.

“As you leave us, continue to keep your eye on the future,” said Pioneer High School Principal Monica Oviedo. “As President Obama said in this year’s State of the Union address, if we work together; if we summon what is best in us, with our feet planted firmly in today, but our eyes cast toward tomorrow – the America we want is within our reach.”

Student speakers encouraged their classmates to continue building on their current achievements.

“When I think of Whittier High School, the feeling of success and determination shoots through my body,” said Matt Oliver, Whittier High School’s senior class president. “The class of 2014 has not only raised the bar for school attendance, grades and citizenship, but also empowered the rest of the student body to uphold and stay true to our alma mater.

## **WUHSD Holds 2014 Commencement Ceremonies**

“While our dreams and goals for the future may be broad, it is time to solidify the foundation of all of your dreams and aspirations,” Oliver said.

The majority of the Whittier Union High School District’s graduates are headed for higher education, ranging from four-year universities and community colleges to technical education colleges. Some will be entering military academies and military service.

Whittier Union’s graduates will be attending prestigious universities such as Harvard University, the University of Notre Dame, Stanford University, Johns Hopkins University, Brown University, Pepperdine, USC, UCLA, UC Berkeley, Whittier College, Loyola Marymount and most of the colleges within both the University of California and California State University systems.

California High School celebrated the graduation of 709 seniors during a ceremony held at Cal High’s stadium. The class valedictorians were Tristan Navarro and Christina Ortiz and the salutatorian was Hannah Young.

La Serna High School saw 581 seniors graduate during its commencement ceremony held at La Mirada High School’s football stadium. La Serna’s valedictorian was Ye In Ra and the salutatorian was Tammy Doelker. Whittier City Mayor Cathy Warner addressed the graduates.

Pioneer High School celebrated at the Cal High Stadium this year with 300 graduates in the class of 2014. The class valedictorian was Richard Sanchez and the salutatorian was Luis Gaeta.

Santa Fe High School marked the graduation of 590 seniors during commencement held at Cerritos College’s football stadium. The class valedictorian was Joanna Tallini and the salutatorians were Joshua Rojo and Melissa Perkins.

Whittier High School celebrated the graduation of 588 seniors at its ceremony held at Whittier College’s football stadium. The valedictorians for the class of 2014 were Carlos Flores, Aaron Peretz and Daniel Rivera. Whittier High’s salutatorians were Jasmine Hernandez, Katherine Winans, and Elizabeth Woo. Congresswoman Grace Napolitano attended the event.

Frontier’s 125 seniors marked the occasion at Family Church while 155 Sierra Vista seniors and 30 Whittier Adult School graduates held commencement in Whittier High School’s Vic Lopez Auditorium.

Many parents, friends and family joined teachers, staff, administrators, members of the Whittier Union High School District Board of Trustees and representatives from local elementary school districts to attend the events, cheering for the graduates from their seats and greeting them with big hugs after the ceremonies.

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