

PRESENTATION HIGH SCHOOL DANCE TEAM MAKES NORTHERN CALIFORNIA HISTORY BY WINNING THE 2021 NATIONAL GRAND CHAMPION AWARD

SAN JOSE, CA, UNITED STATES, March 9, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- WHAT: For the first time in Northern California and school history, the [Presentation High School](#) Varsity dance team was awarded the 2021 National Grand Champion award, the highest prize at the [Contest of Champions Nationals](#) competition on March 6. Normally, the 13-member varsity and 12-member junior varsity dance teams travel to Orlando, Florida to compete. Due to COVID-19, however, the contest was 100% virtual this year. All teams performed at home in accordance with school and community safety guidelines and entered their routines into the competition via video.



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Sara Fugate, Presentation High School Dance Director

The Presentation dance team has traveled to the annual Contest of Champions for the past 15 years. Over 150 groups and 100 soloists from all over the country performed this year and the broadcast of the competition took place March 1-5, followed by an awards show on the 6th where winners were announced.

This award represents a stellar team achievement because it's calculated based on the number of overall awards/points received by the group. “Given the pandemic, this is even more incredible because our restrictions in Santa Clara County were much tighter than for teams in

other parts of the country,” said Sara Fugate, Presentation High School Dance Director. This is the first time a Northern California school was awarded the Grand Nationals Champion, she

added.

Presentation students have been attending classes via Zoom since March 2020. As part of their extracurricular athletics, the dance team was able to practice on campus three times a week. Divided into cohorts, they maintained a 6-foot distance and wore masks at all times. This contactless practice meant no choreographed lifts or partnering.



Mandatory outside practice was another challenge. “We danced in our school’s courtyard, in our school’s parking lot, on our school’s turf field – we were everywhere we normally don’t practice and on surfaces that aren’t made for dance,” said Fugate.

Not only was COVID-19 challenging, there were also other setbacks including poor air quality last fall due to the wildfires, and more recently practicing in frigid temperatures. Through it all, the team not only prevailed, but danced its way to the pinnacle. Fugate isn’t surprised. “This team is such a talented group, I believed in them from the beginning. With their work ethic, I knew they could achieve anything they set out to do,” she said.

Team officer Michelle Ledezma, 17, of San Jose, has been a member of the Pres dance team since her freshman year. Her final season – and senior year – isn’t what she expected. Being at home on Zoom all day has impacted her mental health, she said, but the chance to come together, grow close and dance with her teammates has been especially meaningful. “Watching the taped competition, we saw other teams performing inside, coming in close contact, doing partner work. The day we filmed [our entry], we had to battle for a piece of the turf field while an elementary school team played Lacrosse nearby,” she recalled with a laugh. “Going through so much, this win is like the cherry on top.”

“It would be an amazing feat in a normal year, but in the midst of a pandemic? These girls are over the top incredible. We are so proud of them,” said Holly Elkins, president of Presentation High School.

In addition to the national title, the team also won the following awards:

- JV - 2nd overall for all JV teams
- Pom - 1st & 2nd best in category
- Hip Hop - 1st & 3rd best in category
- Jazz - 1st
- Contemporary - 3rd

Varsity – Grand National Championship

- Small Contemporary - 1st, 2nd best in category, & choreography award
- Medium- National champs for medium size classification
- Hip Hop - 1st, 1st best in category & choreography award
- Lyrical - 2nd & 2nd best in category
- Contemporary – 3rd, 2nd best in category, & choreography award
- Jazz – 2nd & 2nd best in category

Isabella Barrientos took 2nd place overall in junior solos and Janine Hernandez took 9th place overall in senior solos.

SPEAKERS:

- Holly Elkins, President of Presentation High School
- Sarah Fugate, Dance Team Coach

For more information, get in touch with media contact, Terry Downing.

DATE: March 9, 2021 or days following for interviews, shoot scheduling and more information.

WHERE: Contact Terry Downing for location scheduling.

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