



# BONITA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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## NEWS RELEASE

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## Bonita Unified Softball Player Fulfills Dream, Commits to Harvard University

**SAN DIMAS/LA VERNE** – When San Dimas High School junior and athletic standout Tiffany Villegas was just four years old, she joined her brother's Little League T-Ball team, getting her first taste of competition on a baseball diamond. Switching to softball as a kindergartner, Villegas quickly developed into a five-tool prospect, moving to travel softball at 10 years old.

Now, Villegas is set to fulfill her dream of playing softball for an elite university, as well as attend an Ivy League school, after committing to the application process at Harvard University for the 2027-28 school year. Villegas, who has a 4.5 GPA, plans to major in biology on her way to medical school and is interested in a career as an anesthesiologist.

"I was so surprised and excited when I received the offer from Harvard," Villegas said. "Harvard is my dream school. I can play softball and continue my educational journey to med school."

Division 1 softball coaches looking to recruit a junior-year student-athlete must wait until midnight on Sept. 1 to make contact or tender a verbal offer. Villegas said she stayed up all night and watched in amazement as three universities reached out immediately after the clock struck twelve. Harvard was at the top of the list.

Despite her young age, Villegas has considerable experience on the diamond, dividing her time between the San Dimas varsity softball team, the Athletics Mercado 16U club team, and TCS Team Philippines, helping its 16U team reach the final four against international competition during the 2025 Triple Crown Sports International Challenge, held in Denver.

At San Dimas High, Villegas is a two-time team MVP, while also earning 2025 All-CIF Div. 3 honors. With Athletics Mercado, a high-level sports academy that brings together the top female players in the region, Villegas helped the team win the 2025 PGF 16U Premier National Championship.

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"I have learned a lot about the game from my father. He was a really good baseball player and he has been coaching me since the beginning," Villegas said. "Softball is a game of failure, where you have to be mentally strong. It all clicked for me when I stopped comparing my performance with others. You can't be selfish and be a winner. You've got to be a team player."

In addition to a full slate of athletic and academic responsibilities, including taking Advanced Placement (AP) biology, AP physics, and AP calculus, Villegas finds time to pursue extracurricular activities like Science Olympiad and serve in the school's STEMster club, where she volunteers as a math tutor for BUSD elementary schools.

What also excites Villegas about the opportunity to attend Harvard is that she will not be the only San Dimas Saint alumna competing for Harvard athletics. Junior Jacqueline Chen, a world-class diving prospect who will compete in the 2026 Asian Games for Chinese Taipei, has also committed to the Harvard application process, and will begin attending the school in 2027.

"Jackie and I have been friends since elementary school," Villegas said. "We talked to each other all through the recruitment period, which is a really stressful time. It was good to have Jackie there to share the experience. We knew that recruiters were in the crowd scouting us. It makes you a little nervous. But now we can both concentrate on finishing high school and look forward to attending Harvard together!"

### PHOTOS:

**BUSD\_SDHS\_VILLEGAS1:** San Dimas High School junior Tiffany Villegas has committed to the application process at Harvard University for the 2027-28 school year, fulfilling her dream of playing softball for an elite Ivy League university. Villegas, who has a 4.5 GPA, plans to major in biology on her way to medical school and is interested in a career as an anesthesiologist.

**BUSD\_SDHS\_VILLEGAS2:** San Dimas High School junior Tiffany Villegas is a two-time MVP with the Saints softball team who also earned 2025 All-CIF Div. 3 honors. Villegas has committed to the application process at Harvard University for the 2027-28 school year, where she plans to play softball and major in biology.

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