

Earlier this month, under a rainbow of blue, white and yellow balloons, 16 La Mirada High School student-athletes signed their letters of intent on National Signing Day Feb. 1, making official the colleges and universities they will attend in the fall on full athletic scholarships.

As their friends, family and fellow students cheered them on, 10 members of the 2016 CIF State Champion football team, and six members of the 2016 State Champion girls soccer team declared their intention to continue their athletic careers at schools that stretch from the Ivy League to Hawaii.

“There is a lot of Matadore pride today,” LMHS Principal Lisa Reed said. “This is a real testament to all the hard work and dedication of our students, who not only excel on the field, but also in the classroom. Our teachers and coaches work together to instill a student-first culture that starts on the first day of school and continues until graduation day. Congratulations to our amazing kids!”

Elijah Hicks, La Mirada’s big-play receiver and kick returner, was not present, having graduated at the end of the fall semester to begin attending classes at his new school, the University of California at Berkeley. In January, Hicks was named the Whittier Daily News All-Area Player of the Year.

“Athletics play an important role in helping our students develop their talents and abilities to become high-achievers both on and off the field, win or lose,” NLMUSD Superintendent Dr. Hasmik Danielian said. “The friendship and camaraderie they develop elevates school spirit and inspires everyone to work harder. Good luck to all of our wonderful student-athletes at their new schools.”

Two sets of teammates will find familiar faces at their new schools –Jonah Uiagalelei Aumua and Jake Bale will play together at the University of Idaho, while Natalie Day and Daisie Flores are both headed to Hawaii Pacific University.

“We are both so excited to be going to Hawaii,” Day said. “Even though we will be far from home, we will still have a piece of home with us.”

The La Mirada Matadores who signed letters of intent:

- Natalie Day – Hawaii Pacific
- Daisie Flores – Hawaii Pacific
- Vanessa Gonzalez – Cal State San Bernardino
- Simone Hardy – Loyola Marymount University
- Gabrielle Hurtado – San Jose State University
- Melissa Torres – Mercy College
- Jonah Uiagalelei Aumua – University of Idaho
- Tristian Meyer – Sacramento State
- Jeremy Clark – University of Nevada, Las Vegas
- Trevor Hollock – United States Military Academy at West Point (Army)
- Kobe Toa – Southern Utah University
- Sire Woods – University of Pennsylvania
- Chase Newman – University of Colorado
- Jake Bale – University of Idaho
- Andrew Anderson – Azusa Pacific University
- Phillip Cook – Western New Mexico University