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State Media Release

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Jessica Salas (Bravo Medical Magnet HS) and Ali Rawaf (Beckman HS)

Named 2007 CIF Spring Spirit of Sport Award Winners

ALAMEDA – Jessica Salas, of Bravo Medical Magnet High School in Los Angeles, and Ali Rawaf, from Beckman High School in Irvine, have been selected as the Spring 2007 recipients of the prestigious CIF Spirit of Sport Award, CIF Executive Director Marie M. Ishida announced today.

The two statewide winners will receive an award and be recognized at the year-end CIF Federated Council dinner May 4, 2007 in San Jose. In addition, the year's six winners will be awarded \$500, as approved by the CIF Executive Committee in February 2006. All finalists receive a Spirit of Sport medal.

The CIF Spirit of Sport Award recognizes student-athletes who have demonstrated the 16 principles of Pursuing Victory with Honorsm, are active in school and community service, and exhibit leadership qualities. The principles of Pursuing Victory with Honorsm are the operating principles of the CIF and have been adopted by the 1,431 member high schools throughout the state.

“This award seeks to recognize student-athletes who have demonstrated great sportsmanship, the purest form of competition. These recipients understand that a positive attitude and teamwork should exist throughout sports, and they realize that winning at all costs is not really winning,” said Ishida. “The same spirit they show in athletics carries over into all aspects of their life.”

Jessica Salas, Bravo Medical Magnet High School (Los Angeles)

Salas is a four-year member of both the softball team and the High Honor Roll. She has attained perfect attendance in each of the last three years and, as a junior, was a Wendy's High School Heisman honoree. Salas is a member of the California Scholarship Federation and the National Honor Society. She has earned awards from the Social Science, Math and Spanish departments.

Salas has long been a volunteer teacher for students at St. Dominic's Church and Irving Middle School. She also has donated her time to the Los Angeles Zoo, soup kitchens, blood donations and other local organizations. Salas is a member of school organizations Real Rhythm and MEChA.

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“In my life, character is what makes me who I am. I am well respected by my peers because I choose to respect them. I choose to make myself a better person than I was the day before,” said Salas. “Sportsmanship is the quality that every person and team should possess. It is the only thing that sets a great team apart from a lot of other good teams.”

“Jessica is a very reliable person who can work independently. She has leadership ability which is shown by the respect she receives from her peers. She is a coaches’ dream because very little fazes her,” said Brian Ota, Bravo Medical Magnet High School Athletics Director.

Ali Rawaf, Beckman High School (Irvine)

Rawaf is a three-sport athlete, having competed in football, wrestling and lacrosse. A member of the new school’s first graduating class, Rawaf is a John Wooden Student-Athlete Award winner as well as a US Achievement Academy National Science Merit Award nominee. He founded the school’s Math Club and serves as its president. He also has been on the Honor Roll for four years.

Rawaf has volunteered at the Western Medical Center in the wards of Mother-Baby, Pediatrics and the Emergency Room. He also tutors younger students in Algebra II and AP Calculus in addition to coaching football and wrestling. Rawaf was recently awarded the Beckman 7 Rules of Success Award, where he was lauded for his attitude, achievement and athletic ability.

“Keeping things fair, working hard and helping others whenever possible proved to make my high school experience extremely enjoyable,” said Rawaf. “Through challenging sports and stimulating classes, I have reached a level of character that I believe will make me an ambitious and friendly person for the rest of my life.”

“Ali is a model citizen of our small community and quietly finds success in every realm in which he participates. After all of his accomplishments, the most amazing aspect of this fine young man is his humble, unassuming attitude. Ali is that one student whose leadership, scholarship, commitment and personality make him our ideal student. He is a winner in every sense of the word,” stated Kimberly Lee, Beckman High School Bilingual Counselor.