



The
Legal Aid Society –
Employment Law
Center



ALHAMBRA
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Alhambra High School Reaches Compliance with Settlement Agreement in Landmark Title IX Case *Female Athletes Now Have Equal Opportunities to Play Sports*

(ALHAMBRA, CA, December 20, 2013) – Last week, in the landmark class action Title IX lawsuit, *Cruz v. Alhambra*, the U.S. District Court in Los Angeles, California granted the parties' request for the Court to end its oversight of the case now that Alhambra High School has complied with the terms of the settlement agreement. In the past ten years, the school has built new softball fields for the girls, added a number of girls athletic teams, and remedied other athletic inequalities at the school as the result of the *Cruz* settlement.

The California Women's Law Center (CWLC) and the Legal Aid Society-Employment Law Center (LAS-ELC) brought the groundbreaking lawsuit on behalf of the Alhambra High girls for injunctive relief under Title IX, which bars sex discrimination in education, including athletic programs. The results at Alhambra High School show the benefits that female athletes see when the law is enforced.

The District is pleased with the outcome of this Agreement as it supports our established commitment to provide opportunities to all students, both on and off the athletic field.

In 1972, Title IX mandated that all public and private educational institutions receiving federal funds could no longer practice sex discrimination against female students and employees. The law is crucial to efforts to create gender equity in schools. "Title IX requires that girls be treated equally," said Vicky Barker, CWLC Legal Director. "We are pleased with everything the school has accomplished to ensure that girls have a level playing field."

"Alhambra High School's work in connection with this settlement shows that any high school in California can comply with Title IX, which has been law for over 40 years" said Elizabeth Kristen, LAS-ELC Senior Staff Attorney and Director of LAS-ELC's Fair Play for Girls in Sports Project.

(more)

The benefits of participation in sports for young girls extend beyond fitness and competition. Girls who play sports earn better grades and demonstrate higher self-esteem than those who do not. They are also more likely to graduate from high school and attend college. Female athletes are less likely to smoke, abuse drugs, or become pregnant during their teenage years. Skills gained from sports participation, including teamwork, leadership, and discipline, are crucial as women progress in the corporate world at higher levels than ever before. Eighty-percent of female managers of Fortune 500 companies have played organized sports on some level.

The girls were represented by Vicky Barker of CWLC and Claudia Center, Elizabeth Kristen, and Kim Turner of LAS-ELC. LAS-ELC and CWLC are innovators in pursuing Title IX violations at the high school level.

About the Legal Aid Society-Employment Law Center

The Legal Aid Society-Employment Law Center, founded in 1916, is the oldest legal aid organization in the West. It is committed to protecting the rights and economic self-sufficiency of low-income and disadvantaged workers and their families throughout the Bay Area, California, and nationwide. Within LAS-ELC, Fair Play for Girls in Sports aims to ensure girls in grades K-12 participate equally in school and community sports so they may reap the lifelong rewards of athletic involvement such as improved health and higher wages as adults in the workplace.

About the California Women's Law Center

The California Women's Law Center (CWLC) works to ensure, through systemic change, that life opportunities for women and girls are free from unjust social, economic, and political constraints. Founded in 1989, CWLC focuses on the following issues areas: gender discrimination, violence against women, women's health, reproductive justice, and the unique concerns of women veterans. CWLC is a leader in Title IX education and enforcement in California at the high school level.

About the District

Founded in 1886 as the Alhambra Elementary School District, the Alhambra Unified School District now serves more than 17,000 students from the communities of Alhambra, Monterey Park, and part of San Gabriel, South San Gabriel and Rosemead. With 13 elementary schools, 3 comprehensive high schools and 2 alternative education high schools, the District strives to fulfill its mission of ensuring the educational success of all students by having a comprehensive education program where students can learn and become productive members of today's diverse society.

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