

The PLATINUM PREVIEW

SCHOOL NEWS



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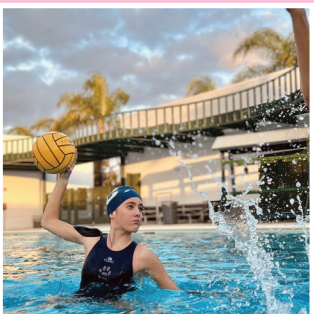
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Boys Wrestling Cements First-Ever CIF Title

Dallin Grey '24
Managing Editor

Prior to the winter sport season, the only two California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) Championships that the school held in the Southern Section were the 2003 Varsity Girls Volleyball and 2009 Varsity Football titles. But on the evening of February 1, in front of a 'white-out' Chaparral crowd, the Varsity Boys Wrestling team sealed a 50-21 win over Servite High School with a takedown and pinfall in the final match, cementing the title of '2023 Varsity Boys Wrestling Champions' in school history.

The season opened with high expectations, but a CIF title seemed out of the question. "I expected us to do ... really well, but I did not expect us to go as far as ... we really did," stated Varsity Wrestler and Senior Damian Diaz. Ten experienced seniors dominated the starting lineup, and in spite of an uncertain opening to the season that left Head Coach Mr. Max Irvin unsure of starters for several weight classes, the team exceeded their expectations. "Everything just kind of fell into place and we ended up with really good people in every single weight class," Coach Irvin said. "The expectations were high; I did think this could be the best year we've ever had, but not to the extent it was. ... At the beginning, we didn't really think a CIF title was on the radar. ... We knew we could place high, we knew we were a high-level team, but our goal originally was to make the semi[finals] in CIF, and then things just kind of fell into place."

As the season progressed, the athletes' talents became apparent; they took home a team trophy after each tournament, the only exception being one of the nation's toughest



Credit: @chspumawrestling

Varsity Boys Wrestling takes the title of Southern Section CIF champions, defeating Servite High School with a score of 50-21.

competitions. During the league season, the team only fell short of a win once, against Temecula Valley High School; "but other than that we've been basically on fire the whole year," Coach Irvin affirmed. "We started clicking when we needed to and everything just kind of came together and that's how we won the title."

Every practice helped shape the athletes and hone their talents. The team mainly focused on technique and skill; with the countless positions athletes encounter in the sport, knowing how to react in each situation is key. For team captain and Senior Justin Herrera and some other team members, wrestling means two workouts a day, making the sport very taxing on both time and body. The relationships on the team are a key factor in helping the athletes to

be able to sustain themselves in this demanding endeavor. "We have a really good team chemistry," Herrera noted. "We talk every day, we're all really close, like, we're all brothers in there." The team's bonds have been impressive to Coach Irvin, who is proud of the joy the athletes express. "I'm a competitive person, but [at] the end of the day I want them to have a good time," he stated. "I went outside to talk to them after ... we'd taken a pretty bad loss, and they were all in good spirits, having a good time ... At the end of the day, we could lose every single match and if they had a good time, then that's what matters."

Wrestling has made an important difference in the athletes' lives. Diaz stated, "Wrestling has really helped me mentally with, like, how I ... think of things and how well I can handle

them, so I'd say that's probably my favorite part about it." Herrera echoed Diaz's sentiments; "I know if I didn't wrestle I'd be a different person today, I'd be a lot softer, a lot weaker. ... That made me into a ... stronger person, mentally and physically."

With many Varsity wrestlers graduating this spring, Coach Irvin expects next season "to be a bit of a rebuilding year," but with "very solid" underclassmen moving up the ranks next year, the team still looks to finish third in the league. "[We have] high expectations because they've seen what we can achieve," Coach Irvin said. "I still think we ... [will] still do well at CIF but I guess we'll just have to see what happens." The wrestlers will keep practicing for the next round of CIF, with eyes on the Masters and State tournaments to follow.

Mrs. Gonzales Retiring, Leaving Lasting Legacy

Katherine Ivey '26
Staff Writer

Working for the past nineteen years at Chaparral, principal's secretary Mrs. Susan Gonzales has been a devoted employee and kind-hearted personality on campus to both students and staff. Prior to working at Chaparral, Gonzales had been a dedicated worker for the Temecula Valley School District since 1998, having won the Employee of the Year twice. After careful contemplation and deliberation, Gonzales will be retiring on April 15.

Gonzales started at Chaparral in 2004 as a guidance technician in the counseling department before being hired as the principal secretary in 2010. "I will always be grateful to Mr. Gil Compton for hiring me to be the principal's secretary," Gonzales attributed. "I'm grateful also to have worked with the principals after that, Mrs. Nicole Dayus ... and then ... our current principal Mrs. Tina Miller." During these past thirteen years, Gonzales has spent her workdays juggling many responsibilities. "A day in my work life is never the same," Gonzales remarked. "I always called it ... a traffic control desk because you could have so many different things happening at one time." Principal Miller stated, "[Gonzales] helps keep me organized, schedules all my things, takes phone calls. ... [She also takes] care of so many other things ... like facilities [and] absences."

Despite her busy schedule, Gonzales finds the time to go above and beyond for the school community. "When we have staff members who



Credit: Katherine Ivey

Gonzales ensures to bring a positive impact to campus.

have something happen to their family, she gets them flowers and cards that we all sign," Miller commented. Additionally, Gonzales has influenced the lives of many on campus. "She's been a mentor to me," Ms. Tina Olsen mentioned. "She's been such a good friend, such a good teammate, [and] such a good work buddy. ... I always felt safe if she was here."

While many are sad about Gonzales leaving

campus, they are happy for her and the new journeys the future has in store. "I'm sad, of course," Miller commented. "I'm happy for her. ... But at the same time, [I am] sad because [I am] losing a member of [my] work family." Similarly, Ms. Amber Ballesteros remarked, "I'm very sad to have her leave us, but I know that it's a positive move for her. [Gonzales has] loyalty, ... [always puts in the] effort, and ... she has ... a love ... for Chaparral High School." Olsen echoed, "[I am] super sad. She's my buddy, ... I'm going to miss her terribly. ... But I'm happy for her. ... I hope that she comes back and comes to lunch with us."

During her retirement, Gonzales plans to take care of and spend time with her husband. Also, Gonzales looks forward to spending more time with her family and doing activities she loves. "I want to do things that bring me joy, like spending time with grandbabies and my children. I have two sisters, and we like to go to music concerts. We saw Elton John, and we're going to see the Eagles. ... [and] I'm going to join a Pure Bar Exercise Class."

Change can be difficult as one moves from the comforts of normality to the adventures of the unknown. Gonzales feels similarly about her move to retirement. "On the one hand, I'm happy that I reached this point in my life," Gonzales said. "[In retirement] I'm going to do things that I want to do instead of things that I have to do." As Gonzales begins the next step in her journey, she hopes to leave a legacy of kindness and appreciation. "[Chaparral] is home away from home," Gonzales expressed. "[I hope to leave behind a legacy of] caring, ... compassion, and love for the staff and the students."

NJROTC Dominates the Competition

Svetlana Hohol '25
Editor in Chief

Within these past couple of years, there is no doubt that the Navy Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (NJROTC) cadets have persevered through various competitions with their strength and dedication. Through these events, cadets have built the experience and skills needed to place high in various events. Recently, it was announced that NJROTC's CyberPatriot and orienteering teams will be advancing to compete at a national level.

Handling cybersecurity is not an easy skill to master. A CyberPatriot competition is typically a six-hour event where cadets compete on three different operating systems (OS): Windows, Linux, and Cisco. They must protect these services from hostile viruses and attacks, as well as secure them to the best of their ability. With every successful defense, cadets earn points for their team, but points are also deducted if an error is made that makes an OS less secure. One of the team leaders, Cadet Master Chief Petty Officer Senior Riley Nolet, stated that the competition "really puts what you know to the test ... you have to deal with the environment and challenges it throws at you." The journey to nationals was not easy, as the teams had to go through various stages of the competition in order to qualify nationally. With every round, depending on the score earned, a team could either be placed in the Silver, Gold, or Platinum Tiers—Platinum being the highest. Depending on what tier a team is placed in, it is then determined whether a team should advance to the next level of the competition. Through rounds one and two, the Chaparral teams dominated the competition as three of NJROTC's CyberPatriot teams advanced into the state round



Credit: Riley Nolet

The CyberPatriot team defends their operating systems in the Cyber Sentinel Semi-Finals. in the Platinum Tier. Leading into the semi-finals, only one team advanced—however, not only were they granted another Platinum Tier, but they also achieved second place among the thirteen state teams who competed that day. This outstanding achievement earned the CyberPatriot team a first-time opportunity to compete nationally at the Cyber Sentinel in Washington D.C. through March 18-20. During this competition, the difficulty level will be raised, as cadets now have to defend against active hackers who constantly try to destroy their servers. Another software used during these competitions are packet tracers, Cisco operating systems that allow a person to track different packets from network to network. "You kind of have to get into the mindset of 'Okay, I am doing this, I have to kind of carry out this knowledge and apply it into an actual situation'," Cisco expert and Cadet Seaman Senior Ruby Choi recalled. Depending on the results of nationals, it can open up a variety of scholarship opportunities and experiences for the cadets.

There are no limits when it comes to the cadets of NJROTC, as other groups in the program have succeeded tremendously, with their orienteering team also advancing into a national competition. Orienteering is a navigational sport that requires cadets to use compasses, maps, and other explorational devices to locate hidden points among nature's obstacles. These points take the shape of a PVC Pipe with a check marker, and they must locate these points in an orderly and fast pace to achieve a higher score. "It's definitely a big rush ... part of it is pain," said Cadet Petty Officer third class Sophomore Joshua Garret, the team leader of the Junior Varsity (JV) Orienteering team, "but overall finding that point is extremely exhilarating." On January 22, NJROTC's JV and Varsity Orienteering teams attended the Firestone National Park Orienteering competition, which resulted in both teams receiving first place in their division and ultimately taking first overall. Due to this achievement, both teams qualified for the orienteering

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE



Principal Tina Miller

Pumas,

Second semester is moving along quickly. We hope that you enjoyed Club Rush and found a club that sparked your interest or aligned to your passion. Spring sports and performances are just around the corner, and we hope to see all of our Pumas at our upcoming events.

We are excited to kick off the month of February celebrating our awesome counseling team at CHS. It is National Counseling Week from Feb. 6 - Feb. 10. Thank you CHS counselors for all that you do to support our students! Please continue to check out the CHS Instagram page for all upcoming school events this month.

Go Pumas!

nationals in Georgia. However, due to a conflicting schedule with CyberPatriot's national competition also occurring during the same weekend, the orienteering teams will instead be attending a competition the following weekend on March 25-26 in Cincinnati, Ohio, with Orienteering U.S.A., a national organization that conducts orienteering competitions across the country. These competitions require teamwork and support that creates leaders and special bonds. Orienteering Commander Senior Egor Lebedev said, "It is

really great to know that I have these cadets by my side ... they are really great at what they do ... and honestly I am proud of them."

As time passes, NJROTC cadets grow stronger than the day before and they continue to strive to greater lengths to reach their goals. Training, discipline, competence and leadership are what strengthen NJROTC as a team. With national events coming their way, they will only continue to grow in a positive attribute and continue to expand their legacy of excellence and perseverance across the nation.

Student Activists Organize Protest in Response to CRT Ban

Chloë Zuñiga '24
Copy Editor

On December 13, the Temecula Valley School District (TVUSD) school board banned the teaching of Critical Race Theory (CRT) in its classrooms, with the notion that it could cause certain groups—specifically, white students—to feel guilty over the past. CRT is the conclusion that racism is not only the result of individual ignorance and bias, but also in part due to this prejudice being embedded in society through laws, accepted practices, etc. Although not taught in the TVUSD curriculum, the banning of CRT is important to numerous students because of the possibilities for it to lead to additional, related bannings.



Credit: Brooklyn Anderson

In response to these declarations, student activists from TVUSD high schools banded together to organize peaceful walkout protests.

Upon the planning of the event, students notified their peers that, per the administered student handbook, if they were to participate in the walkout, they would be marked truant for leaving campus unexcused. Although many students supported the cause, several opted out of the protest because of this consequence. One of the lead organizers of the walkout, Black Student Union (BSU) President Senior Chelsea Ross shared, "We worked closely with other student leaders to broadcast the [walkout] because [the banning] doesn't only affect African Americans, but everyone else at the schools as well." In addition to BSU, other activist clubs, including Latinos Unidos, March for Our Lives, Key Club, and the Gender and Sexuality Alliance, also aided in the initial arrangements.

The walkout was initiated on January 12, with students leaving their second period classes at 10:13AM. The number of protesters grew until 10:30AM, when the group of approximately 115 students began their chants and journey to Harveston Lake Park, where they then listened to the planned presentations. Ross described the assembly's commencement, "When we got there, we wanted to have a talking moment for all [of] the students. We started out with our own stories about how we [felt] and the basic idea of what we were protesting for." After the opening statements, student and supporting adult speakers were granted the floor to share their opinions about the matter at hand. One of these student speakers, BSU Social Media Officer Junior Brooklyn Anderson, shared the impact that she believed her speech had. "I think that me taking a stand aided a lot in what my purpose was," she recalled, "[which was] to educate people on the district's proclamation." Students concluded their



Credit: Lana Riesenber

BSU Officers and participating students walkout in protest of the banning of Critical Race Theory teachings.

protest, marching back to campus, where they were met with administrators marking students as truant as they checked back into school.

Anderson remarked on what inspired her to help organize and participate in the walkout, "I wanted to be able to say 'I don't agree with this censorship and I'm going to tell others about my opinion.' I wanted to educate others and give other students a platform to speak their mind on the situation." Most observers reported that the march and protest

peacefully and respectfully communicated the purpose behind the protestations. Ross found the walkout effective in educating students about the consequences of the school board's mandates and the dangers of censorship. She additionally urged everyone to try to have an open mind when observing other cultures and listening to opposing opinions. Anderson concluded, "I think it's important to utilize our voices, to teach others, and to share our stories, because that's what changes things."

Lackey Awarded Special Scholarship

Kayla Wiley ‘24
School News Editor

Dedication, passion, skill, perseverance, and commitment are all necessary characteristics for those who are a part of the Naval Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (NJROTC). The program is not made for everyone, but for Senior Evan Lackey, NJROTC has been a primary focus throughout his entire high school career. For four years, Lackey has put hours of hard work into making sure that not only he, but his fellow classmates as well, were given the opportunity to excel in the class.

On January 9, Lackey was awarded a NROTC Immediate Scholarship Reservation, granting him full tuition to colleges that offer an ROTC program. Thousands of students applied for the scholarship, but only a few were actually awarded. The application process included gathering academic statistics, requesting letters of recommendation, and completing an interview with an active-service member. Though Lackey was anxious to see the results, his application was accepted immediately. Now, with this scholarship in hand, Lackey finds himself presented with opportunities he never



Master Chief Petty Officer Evan Lackey proudly signs his Immediate Scholarship Reservation award.

once thought possible.

Before he began high school, Lackey knew that he wanted to be a part of NJROTC. “My father was in the Navy and my grandfather was in the Marines,” he shared. “I knew I wanted to join the services eventually. I thought [NJROTC] would be a natural first step.” Over the years, Lackey has experienced growth as he has learned to become a leader both inside and outside the NJROTC. “The biggest lesson [NJ]ROTC tries to teach is leadership, but a lot of people don’t know that followership is the foundation before you

yourself can become a great leader,” he explained. “Our first year is heavily oriented towards being a good follower, learning how to take orders and listen to others.” Now, Lackey is the command master chief and is in charge of making sure the unit runs smoothly and acts synchronously as one.

According to NJROTC Commander Mr. Leo Ruiz, Lackey has always been someone both staff and students can count on. Although Ruiz has only instructed the program for the past two years, he immediately noticed how dedicated Lackey

was. “As a new teacher, he really stepped up right away to make sure [myself] and Commander Lauper were educated on how things ran. He was open to adding changes and was very receptive to our ideas,” Ruiz said. “He took on a very mature role ... and now serves as our senior enlisted. He’s one of the highest ranking cadets in our program.”

One of Lackey’s biggest responsibilities as the command master chief is to ensure that every student he oversees is comfortable and never feels discouraged. While this

Mock Trial Advances in Competitions

Navin Gopalan ‘24
Copy Editor

On January 26, the Chaparral Mock Trial team competed against Paloma Valley High School in Round 1 of the 42nd Annual California Mock Trial Competition. Using great discipline, perseverance, and skill, they won their first round, allowing them to continue in the state competition. “Overall, the competition went amazing, especially considering it was our first in-person one in years,” recalled Junior Jasmin Fathi, one of the captains of the team. “I [am] proud of the entire team for bringing their all.” Similarly, another captain of the team, Junior Isabella Arietta, stated, “I was very impressed with how we did. It just felt so good to know we worked so hard and it was finally paying off.”

A mock trial is a high school competition where students from across the globe participate in a simulated courtroom trial. It is especially stressful, as the high school students are judged by actual judges and attorneys, inside a real courtroom. In these simulated courtrooms, each member of the fifteen-person team applies for certain roles, such as lawyers, witnesses, and bailiffs, and competes against other schools to win a favorable verdict from the judge presiding. Led by Captains Senior Sydney Vinson, Arietta, and Fathi, as well as Advisor Mrs. Linda Zimel, Judge Mr. Jeffrey Zimel, and

Attorneys Mr. Dan Vinson and Mr. Bob Semnar, the Mock Trial team meets after school to learn a crash course on how to be a lawyer, perfecting their knowledge of the law as well as their public speaking—vital skills in the competition. “Mock Trial’s benefits include being able to learn more about the law and the court system,” said Junior Johnathan Persechini, who is a veteran of the club and the expert witness for the prosecution, acquiring the highest score in the trial. Students also spend an immense amount of time studying a ‘case packet,’ which

work put on display,” he explained.

Mock Trial is overall a great experience for students to become familiar with the American Legal System, while also socializing with their peers. “We have made a lot of great memories,” expressed Junior Peniel Albe, another veteran of the club. “I have been in Mock Trial since my freshman year ... [and it gave] me good exposure to law and help[ed] me figure [out] if I liked it or not.” Besides frequent after-school meetups, they also do extensive practices over the video app Zoom, which bolster comradery



Senior Sullivan-Douglass and Junior Albe practice for the first trial round.

they received at the beginning of the year and that their defense or prosecution is based on. “[It’s] a combination of rules, laws, and witness statements,” Persechini continued, “[that we receive] around September, which means that we prepare our case for about five months.” It all comes together at the competitions, which they finish in the beginning of Spring. “[And a]t the competitions, we finally get to see all of our hard

and communication amongst the team. Senior Benjamin Sullivan-Douglass, a newcomer to Mock Trial, expressed his love of the social aspect of the Mock Trial team. “My favorite experiences have been the after-practice hangouts, which are always fun,” he recalled. “I also love arguing with the coaches, pretending to be a judge, and eating food in the courtroom. All around, it’s a great environment, where you also learn a lot—and it’s been a great part of my year.”

“I want to applaud everyone,” Fathi said, “for their hard work and the countless hours spent preparing, showing up to the courthouse ready to go. It was a win well deserved.” As the Mock Trial team celebrates their win, they look to the future, hoping to advance both their state ranking and their knowledge of the American legal system. No doubt, the strong communal feeling and teamwork emulated by the team will allow them to achieve this goal.

NEWS BRIEFS



Liam Rosèn ‘23
January Student
of the Month



Collin Crilly ‘23
February Student
of the Month

District Employee of the Year Award:

On January 9, Counseling Technician Amber Ballesteros was recognized by TVUSD as Classified Employee of the year.



Spring Showcase:

The 2022-2023 Spring Showcase will be held on March 16. It will be an event in which incoming freshmen can explore campus programs and possible class options for the 2023-2024 school year.

Students Attend Athletic Training Conference:

Students from Mr. Rentar’s and Dr. Corona’s CTE pathway classes attended the National Honor Society of Sports Medicine Conference, which was held on February 8 at Crypto Arena in Los Angeles.



may be a strenuous task for some, Ruiz has repeatedly watched Lackey excel in doing so. “He’s somebody who is just always supporting other students. He understands that people are different, that everybody brings different talents and struggles in different areas,” Ruiz remarked. “He doesn’t highlight the

negatives. He makes sure that everybody feels welcome.” As the end of the year rapidly approaches, those in NJROTC are sure to appreciate every lesson that Lackey provides. Although he may be going off to college and starting a new chapter of his life, Lackey’s extraordinary legacy is sure to remain at Chaparral.

Staff Facts of the Month



Mr. Bartek Krawczynski

Education
Specialist

Krawczynski has
commentated a Super
Bowl in Poland.



Mrs. Alyssa Salas

Dance Director

Salas started her teaching
career at the age of
twenty-three, and was
the first person in her
family to graduate with a
Masters degree.



Ms. Esther Sorenson

Instructional
Assistant

Sorenson made extra
money in commercials and
movies. She participated
in projects like *Coneheads*
and “*Curb Your
Enthusiam.*”



Mrs. Mayerling
Monteros-Garcia

Spanish Teacher

Monteros-Garcia has a
family farm in Temecula.



Ms. Clarissa Fernandez

Counselor

When Fernandez was
in college, she worked
alongside Kobe Bryant
and Michael Jordan in
their basketball camps at
UC Santa Barbara.



Mrs. Kris Olko

Science Teacher

Olko competes in
endurance racing, where
she races her horse over a
fifty mile course.



Mrs. Linda May

Counseling Clerk

May won the grand prize
on a television show called
Fantasy in 1980.

Imporatnce of Dating as Teens

Hailey Mera ‘25
Editorials Editor

It is commonly believed that individuals typically learn the biggest lessons after a relationship has ended. From a breakup, it is said that it is easier to see things more clearly since one is not distracted by any feelings other than oneself. While this is true, relationships do not only teach lessons once they have ended. On the contrary, being in a successful relationship with an individual can also provide much clarity; one vital time for a relationship being highschool. Being romantically involved, just as any other voluntary choice, is not always for everyone. Nonetheless, if one were to consider partaking in a relationship during highschool, it should not be seen as a waste of time nor pointless.

In most cases, authoritative figures will not literally say to stay away from relationships while in highschool, but instead promote the thought of focusing on oneself rather than partaking in a relationship. While this is understandable considering most adults have more experiences compared to a teenager, it is not always the most effective alternative to avoiding what most individuals experience much pain from: the hardships and emotional rollercoaster that is relationships. Nonetheless, heartbreak and turmoil is inevitable when it comes to relationships regardless of what point of one’s life they decide to date. Reason being that one should not shy away from a highschool relationship is because at such impressionable ages, times such as these are opportunities to not only expand one’s academic outlook on life, but also romantic ones. Surprisingly so, individuals learn more about themselves while being romantically involved than they do being alone.

Granted, being in a relationship throughout highschool comes with the stresses of not only dealing with school, but now having to take into consideration another person’s feelings. It also allows individuals to adapt to newer, more realistic environments. When it comes down to it, each and every person ultimately wants to be loved. Whether it be planned, heavily thought upon, or completely out of the blue, loving an individual other than oneself in a romantic way comes to an individual at least once in one’s life. Dating in highschool allows young adults to at least have a chance of having

an impression on what it is like to not only juggle academics and jobs, but also their love life. With that being said, highschool endeavors in a romantic sense should not primarily occur at a certain time in one’s life.

To put it in more simple terms, dating in highschool is simply fun. Yes, making friends in highschool can lead to long term beneficial bonds later in life, but in a lot of cases, relationships throughout highschool are not always as long term. With that



Teenagers engaging relationships is common, however , there are pros and cons to consider in highschool.

said, being able to have the freedom to explore one’s desires, and find romantic partners should be seen less as a waste of time, and more as a beneficial learning experience in the long run. High school should not strictly be about academics and the extracurricular activities one partakes in, but also the people individuals meet both romantically and platonically. The same way high school prepares students for the academic requirements in college, it also prepares young adults for life outside of academics.

Teens: Wake up and Break up

Brielle Olson ‘26
Staff Writer

High school students should not date in their teenage years. The time a teenager spends in high school is a time for self discovery and exploration. Dating during high school is not the best idea because the amount of change a person experiences both physically and emotionally during this time can cause

a sexually transmitted infection (STI). This can further complicate a relationship to the point where it can become uncomfortable for those involved. Being in an intimate relationship as a teenager is entirely unnecessary, a teenager is in most cases still considered a child by law, so to engage in adult activities when not even of legal age to vote is just misguided. The risk of getting an STI as a teen is much higher than as a grown adult, so it is entirely not worth it to get involved in an intimate relationship with someone when the risk outweighs the rewards.

Being in a committed relationship at a young age is not ideal, especially when many strive for independence but instead seek out relationships because of peer pressure in order to be worth something to someone. The other part of being in relationships is that getting out of them is often messy, adult or not, so to inflict this roller coaster of emotions onto any teenager is just .The amount of heartbreak some teenagers go through just so they can experience what it is like to be in a relationship is redundant.

High school is supposed to be a time of self discovery, a time to find new interests, figure out what kind of person that someone is or wants to be, who they want to be surrounded by. People should use this time as a confidence builder before tackling the real world as an adult. Being in a relationship, will do the exact opposite of that and will leave many stranded, not knowing what to do or how to act without a significant other, so they become oblivious to the effect the relationship has on them. Students should be focused on more important things such as school or building connections, rather than being blinded by love.

It is okay to wait until college or even later to start testing the waters and dating people, though people should recognize that it is okay to be single and that sometimes it is just better to wait to be in a relationship. Being single never hurt anyone and using their time while not in a relationship for self discovery and awareness can be very beneficial. Before entering into a relationship one should feel they are ready for a relationship and are in the right headspace to be in a healthy relationship while dating. People should not be in a relationship when they are not ready for a significant other in their life. Overall, high schoolers should not be dating and should wait till a time of more maturity before going and looking for a partner.

Importance of Voting, Forgotten by Today’s Young Adults

Sky Roman ‘24
Copy Writer

Politics has always and still remains a major topic of discussion within communities, social groups, and in more recent times, within social media platforms. Many teenagers often express interest in the social and political issues of the world, publishing posts online and debating viewpoints on their platforms. However, oftentimes that is where their advocacy ends, rather than taking action to actually make the difference they claim they want to see. Whenever there is pushback regarding a certain political figure or the proposal of new controversial laws, people resort to protesting online despite the fact that oftentimes they did nothing to prevent it. Instead of using the media as an outlet of change, young adults should take these viewpoints to the voting booth where it has the influence to make a real difference.

Oftentimes many people make the claim that their vote does not matter, which is proven to not be true. Especially in local elections, voting on local laws that involve the community directly, a single vote can make a big difference. When one has a problem with restrictions or acts enforced within a community, many people will complain. However they often ignore the fact that many of these things were voted upon by others, and because they decided not to vote, they allowed these laws to be passed. Teenagers and their parents often have a lot to say about decisions that school board elections come to, without ever actually taking the time to vote on matters that directly affect them. If one is at the legal age to vote, there is no reason not to take the opportunity to participate in making the decisions that are important to them. Not only that, but even in big elections such as a presidential election, votes still matter. When a large group of people collectively decide that their votes do not matter and refuse to vote even when they are legible to do so they leave it up to others to vote. When the political figure they are in favor of does not get elected, they criticize others and the system rather than acknowledging the fact that they did not do their part of the process.

It is the responsibility of young adults to educate



Young people are forgetting the consequences about not contributing to society through politics leading to greater gaps in age, and politics.

themselves on the current state of politics and societal issues. It is important that people understand how they are affected by those in power, otherwise if people remain ignorant on topics, they think that these problems they face are out of their control. But in reality, many people do have the option to take control over the direction their community goes in or even the entire nation. As the state of the world changes, many people wonder why laws and regulations do not adapt to the changing times. However young adults who advocate for more progressive ideas and beliefs will not put those into action, leaving older

generations to make all of the decisions for a world that the younger generations are going to have to live through.

Regardless of if one is the legal age to vote, there are ways in which teenagers can do their part to spark change. Urging others around such as family members or friends to educate themselves and vote is one way. Also, educating oneself and becoming familiar with voting and the political system so that when they are eligible to vote, they can. This is one of the only ways in which people cannot only promote meaningful change, but see it actually come to fruition.



The ideas expressed in the Editorials section do not reflect the views of *The Platinum Press* as a staff, but rather those of the journalist who wrote them.

If readers desire to respond to an editorial, *The Platinum Press* values all opinions and welcomes letters to the editor. Just as *The Platinum Press* respects each individual's right to a differing opinion, we ask the same of our readers. Each journalist is well within their rights to express their opinion on any given topic, no matter how controversial that topic may be. This is the intent of an editorial, not only to provide journalists with a medium to express an opinion, but to allow the editorial to be a catalyst for further discussion of a given topic.

All letters must be signed and submitted to Mr. Leonhardi in room 413 or left in his mailbox. They will also be accepted via school email at rleonhardi@tvusd.us

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Falling in Love, and Falling Out with Friends

Milyn Francis '25
Newsroom Manager

Nowadays, relationships are what everyone seems to think about. However, no one seems to consider the consequence of spending too much time with their significant other. While it may be ideal to spend twenty-four seven with "the one," it is common for people to lose touch with some of their friends when they enter into a romantic relationship. The situation may seem unlikely to some, but it is not impossible. There is a tendency to fixate on a person, which at the end of the day, the problem can be losing oneself and others due to this relationship.

People can be so consumed in their dating life that they forget to prioritize other aspects in life. Although a relationship can bring one lots of love, the importance of self-care and other relationships is important. Keep in mind, it is not the fact that friends grow apart, it is the fact that people forget to value the relationship. While it may not be a problem at first, these consequences may have an effect later down the road. Friendships provide a sense of community and as much as isolation can be a habit, it does not have to be a solution. Communication between friends is equally as important as communication with a loved one. The act of discussing certain boundaries between distant relationships can go a long way for the future



Relationships are not always all that they are cracked up to be, instead it is important to prioritize self-love and friendships.

development of relationships.

Within a romantic relationship comes the often occurrence of toxic behaviors. While some people have the skill of easily communicating to others, some may struggle to bring up the topic with all relationships. It is hard to balance a romantic relationship with an ongoing friendship or without distancing from family relationships. Although this problem may occur, this major conflict can create a form of possession of their partner. The main attention should be brought upon how people believe to always

surround themselves with their so-called "person" and not how people disregard how much of a hold that has for their relationship. That action alone may appear obsessive, as giving all of one's heart in one place is dangerous. Individuals start to depend on their partner for small things, causing a threat to their mental health. The uneven spread leads to a disconnection from their personal life. Therefore, it should be a priority to maintain a healthy social life as it is a key factor for a healthy romantic relationship.

In the long run, it is not

healthy to spend all of one's time with a loved one. It is possible to maintain a strong relationship with a partner while also taking time for others. As much as it is fun at the moment, think about other future relationships. Because at the end of the day, the question remains, "Is putting all of the eggs in one basket a good idea?" And if the answer is yes, remember how nothing lasts forever. People are constantly changing. Spending time with someone and relying on faith could either lead to years of thriving or the abandonment of a lifetime.

WNBA Star Traded at Costly Expense of Safety

Jackson Gamero '24
Staff Writer

On December 8, 2022, Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) star Brittney Griner, who had been held in Russian custody for the possession of cannabis oil since February 2022, was returned to the U.S. in exchange for Russian arms dealer Viktor Bout, who had been in U.S. custody since 2012 for his involvement in conspiracies to kill U.S. citizens. On August 4, Griner received a penalty of nine years in a Russian prison. The trade that freed Griner has been surrounded by controversy, with some arguing that this trade was worth it solely for the fact that an American citizen has returned to American soil. Despite that fact, the trade displayed outlandish ignorance due to both the character of Griner, as well as the danger of Bout and the situation in which he is reentering the Russian Federation.

Griner's overall behavior over the past couple of years serve as one reason why this trade should not have been accepted by U.S. President Joseph Biden. Griner went to Russia in the first place to make more money playing basketball for UMMC Ekaterinburg, a Russian league



Brittney Griner's actions led to consequences.



Brittney Griner's return to the United States has led to fear about the safety about the general public.

basketball team, during the WNBA offseason. Griner has been playing for Ekaterinburg since 2014, meaning that she has been familiar with the Russian regulations in regard to the possession of illegal substances. As cannabis oil falls under that category, Griner should have known from her previous experiences in Russia that carrying such oils was illegal and would land her in trouble. However, she chose to carry it anyway, and, as could be predicted, she was sentenced to nearly a decade in Russian prisons. Additionally, it is important to note that for multiple years now, Griner has been speaking out against the U.S. in somewhat extreme manners. While it is completely within a person's rights to speak out however they see fit, it is also completely unreasonable to call on the same country that the person is speaking out against to save them at a moment's notice when they are in need of rescue.

Another part of the trade that makes it unbelievable is the danger of Bout, especially when paired with the situation in Russia to which he returns. Bout has been accused of supplying weapons to terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda and the Taliban, on top of the aforementioned murder conspiracies. To trade a basketball player for someone who has actively involved themselves

in extreme terrorist groups is completely insane. Also, considering the fact that Russia has been engaged in warfare with Ukraine since February 24, 2022, the situation that Bout is entering into makes him even more dangerous to the general public, as he is now a major asset to Russian President Vladimir Putin. To make matters worse regarding Bout's newfound freedom, he has openly stated his support of the Russian invasion of Ukraine that Pres. Putin has carried out while also stating his willingness to take part in the war. This means that Bout is open to being used by Pres. Putin to carry out any tasks that he is asked to do. It is also worth noting once again Bout's openness and ability to go to extreme measures to do things that he wants to do. Ultimately, Bout poses too much of a threat to be out and about.

With this swap already finalized, one can simply move on with the hope that the damage, which has the potential to be severe considering the previously mentioned character of Bout, done by this prisoner swap does not come back to negatively affect the U.S.. Additionally, it can be hoped that a trade of such ignorance which displays this extent of a lack of care for the well-being of the general populace will not be agreed upon in the future by the U.S. government.

IMPROV Taking the Stage

Lucas Lu's Expanding Fandom

Reagan Delahunty '25
Managing Editor

Following the new renovations to the Performing Arts Center (PAC), Pumas from the Improvisation (Improv) team worked together to perform an entertaining and captivating show. On Friday, February 3, Improv A-Squad and B-Squad performed a game skit in which multiple games were played by both teams throughout the night. The games consisted of Scrapbook, Pan Left Pan Right, Director's Cut, and others. Members of each team worked together to play their game, unscripted, with enthusiasm, and give not only the audience but themselves a great time.

Both squads spent several days preparing for the show in any way they could, but ultimately the show depended on the student's creativity and playful improvisation. A-Squad co-captain Senior Sofia Santos commented before the show, "we've learned a lot of new games and ... we taught games that we've never played before," but explained that the games are all randomized and improvised on stage. The only preparation the actors did was learning to understand how the games worked. "It's honestly just a lot of fun and A-Squad is so easy to work with, everyone is so willing to learn and everyone just does a really good job," she said. A-Squad co-captain along with Santos, Senior Adam Gromoko, also talked briefly about the process of readying the teams for the show. "As captain, it's kinda just my job to teach everybody the ropes and you know, give notes on scenes and improvise and just keep it fun while they're learning."



A-Squad performs a variety of comedic games.
He also mentioned the emotion being back on the stage brought to the actors. "Their enjoyment when they're on stage is going to be felt by the audience, and that's what gives it that spark."

A-Squad member and Sophomore Maya Castañeda explained how everyone was looking forward to being back on the stage saying, "I'm excited to wear my jersey again ... I love it." Although it was the first show back in the PAC, the Improv team went all out with their performance. "[We did] unpracticed scenes, so each time it is improvising the scenes ... [and] it's randomized so we don't know which games we're going to be in," Castañeda added.

Not only was the performance successful, but both the audience and the actors enjoyed the experience. One of the main goals of the Improv team is to entertain the audience while also having fun, as emphasized by Gromoko when he said, "My main goal is like I just want everybody to know that ... as long as they're doing their best, I'm proud of them." The Improv show was successful and provided everyone with a night to remember.

Alyza Reclusado '24
Staff Writer

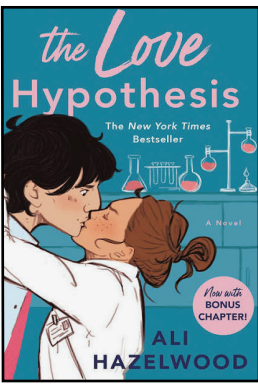
Millions of people turn to the internet in search of entertainment, some of which find what they are looking for on Sophomore Lucas Lu's *YouTube* channel, *Poocus*. Using his channel as a creative outlet, Lu centers most of his content around the game creation platform, Roblox. His unique content has gained him a devoted fanbase with his channel currently sitting at 33,000 subscribers, but with his continued passion for content creation, this number continues to grow.

In 2020, when the world was shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Lu began to look for ways to fill his free time. With his love for gaming and content creation, he started his channel *Poocus*. "It was during quarantine that I was into gaming and *Roblox*," Lu explained. "So, I decided to create a *YouTube* channel." Lu makes building tutorial videos for the *Roblox* game *Build a Boat for Treasure*, with cyber trucks, flying pods, and cable cars being his most popular creations. However, like most content creators, Lu's rise to popularity did not come instantly. "[Getting started] was a little rough," he said. "I spent a lot of time in *Roblox* trying

to create new [builds]." Though in the end, his efforts paid off. With his dedication, Lu's videos reached a larger audience. "Starting around my third video, I got 10,000 views," he said. "That is when I started fully pursuing trying to grow the *YouTube* channel." Since then, he has gained 33,000 subscribers and averages thousands of views.

Still, at times when school requires more effort, his channel takes a backseat. "Making a video usually takes thirty minutes to record, two to three hours to edit, then I have to make thumbnails and publish it," said Lu, "Homework has been really putting my upload schedule [on pause]." Although the balance between school and content creation can be swayed at times, Lu found a way to combine the two by creating the Content Creators Club. Here, members learn about the strategies of social media marketing, viewer retention, recording, and editing, with some days being devoted to having the club collaborate to produce actual content.

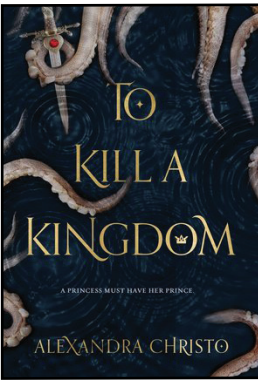
The future of *Poocus* remains undecided as Lu looks to other forms of content. "I will continue until the game I am playing dies out ... but I want to use it to shout out other channels I am trying to create." Such channels include a vlog channel, where Lu would shift his content away from gaming and more towards documenting his personal life. Nevertheless, even if his content begins to change, his passion for content creating will continue to shine through.



Loretta Topp '24
Staff Writer

The grumpy-meets-sunshine troupe is one of the most prominent and overarching ideas in Ali Hazelwood's debut novel, *The Love Hypothesis*. The story follows Olive Smith, a smart and hard-working third-year Ph.D. biology student working on finding the cure for pancreatic cancer, the same cancer that unfortunately took the life of her mother. Olive has never had time for anything else except her research, school, and friends, with romance not being a part of the equation. The story begins shortly after Olive breaks up with her recent boyfriend, Jeremy simply due to the fact they did not click. However, her best friend Anh and him did. Trying to prove she is over him, Olive kisses the first man she sees in a panic. That man just so happens to be the charming and brooding, Dr. Adam Carlsen, a professor from hell. Seeing the sheer panic and desperation in her eyes, Adam decides to play along. The romance between the two starts off very slow considering that they were thrust into this situation rather quickly, but the chemistry between the two is palpable. Over the course of the novel, Adam's rough facade and defensive walls soon go away as he continues to be surrounded by Olive.

While the core of this book is romance, there are other ideas that help to develop the characters in fascinating ways and give them realistic storylines and emotions. Ali Hazelwood also incorporates elements of STEM into her writing while creating an interesting and hard-to-put-down story about two nerds falling in love.



Katherine Ivey '26
Staff Writer

To Kill a Kingdom by Alexandra Christo is an enemies-to-lovers romance filled with a high-stakes adventure, mystery, and murder. Princess Lira is the ocean's heir and the Siren Queen's daughter. When she brakes a sacred law, the Queen forces Lira to become the thing she hates the most: human. In order to return to the life she knows and the world she is destined to rule, Lira must steal the heart of the notorious and dangerous siren hunter, Prince Elain. Prince Elain Midas is not the stereotypical prince his family wants him to be. He yearns to live amongst the waves instead of ruling his kingdom from behind the palace walls.

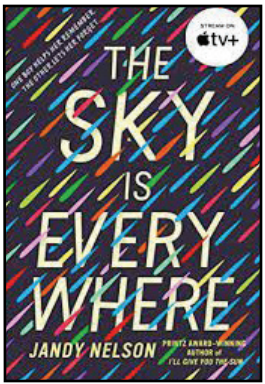
Elain finds his calling in helping keep his homeland safe from the treacherous sirens, whose songs kill sailors mercilessly. His goal is to destroy one siren, particularly the Prince's Bane, who is well known for killing any seafaring prince she can find. But when an ancient artifact with the power to wipe out sirenkind is rediscovered, Elain jumps at the opportunity to rid his land of the wretched creatures. During one of his voyages, Elain finds a young woman stranded in the middle of the ocean and is conflicted about whether or not to trust her. The two heirs are forced together, for better or worse. With each one plotting to kill the other and a dangerous quest on the horizon, Lira and Elain are torn between protecting their people or succumbing to the will of their hearts.

I would recommend this book to anyone who loves enemies to lovers romance. The characters face burdensome choices that readers can relate to. Choosing between family, love, and duty to their people prevent Lira and Elain from being together. Lira and Elain's story is one that should be shared because it teaches readers important lessons about loving others and loving yourself.

Riley Sy '26
Staff Writer

Written by Jandy Nelson, *The Sky is Everywhere* is a story of grievance, love, acceptance, and understanding. Highschooler Lennon "Lennie" Walker, who has faced emotional turbulence her entire life, has to face a much greater challenge — overcoming the death of her older sister, Bailey. She realizes that a lot is changing following Bailey's passing, from the distance she created with her friends to her loss of interest in playing music. To make matters worse, Lennie starts to face troubles in romance. She is torn between Joe, the school's new exuberant pretty boy, and Toby, her sister's boyfriend. They both guide Lennie towards healing. Unfortunately, the pressure of having to pick and choose, alongside her inability to cope with her sister's death, piles up on her, and the path to acceptance is not as easy as it seemed before.

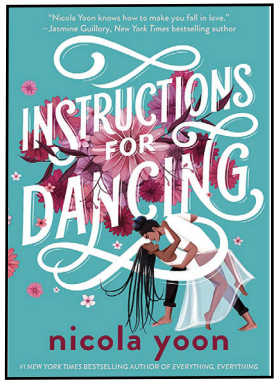
Regardless of the various cliches, Nelson was able to capture the feeling of struggling to grieve "properly." Lennie's constant push and pull between both of the boys adds depth to the plot, as well as opens a pathway for her self discovery. The heartache, humor, and overwhelming emotions all came together to create a story that showed every angle of every character. For those who are looking for a new read that is sure to break their heart and make them laugh at the same time, *The Sky is Everywhere* is a great contender.



Chloë Zuñiga '24
Copy Editor

Instructions for Dancing by Nicola Yoon is a heart-wrenching contemporary-romance novel, filled with magical realism and relatable characters. Straying from the typical storylines of her previous best-selling books, Yoon includes fantasy elements in her writing of this novel. The book follows the main character, Evie, exploring her gift of seeing the futures and pasts of couples, through witnessing the pairs kiss. After seeing the timelines of numerous couples, and concluding that even the greatest loves of all time end in heartbreak, Evie decides that she no longer believes in love. The novel follows the main character as she attempts to understand the origin of her psychic-like ability and consequently finds herself at a dance studio, paired in lessons with a boy named X. As their rhythmic steps become more synchronized, the dance partners begin to favor each other's company, and Evie rethinks her previous beliefs about love.

The story of X and Evie is one of many twists and turns, given Evie's initial and stubborn stance on romance and the obstacles that the pairing face. This novel is enticing, not only because of the powerful writing and fantasy elements, but also because of the intriguing foreshadowing illustrated throughout the story. The common "love triangle" media trope is explored through a unique lens, as readers observe the main character's development through choosing between her past, closed-off, self, and the open-hearted person of whom she is still becoming. With Yoon's distinctive writing style and short-yet-captivating chapters, *Instructions for Dancing* is surely a novel that will leave the reader turning pages until the closing line.



Agi*lity Takes Over Campus

Grace McCafferty ‘23
Staff Writer

Agi*lity (Agi) is the all-male Varsity Dance team currently composed of seven members who have a brotherly like bond. All members feel a strong sense of love and devotion to dancing, while also creating new friendships and connections they could not find anywhere else. With hard work and dedication, the members try their hardest to put out performances that audience members can connect to as well as fall in love with. When asked what the team means to him, Junior Alex Borja passionately explained how the team is



Members of AGI*LITY perform one of their various hip-hop sets at the Temecula Valley Fusion Show.

“not only a team, but also a family.” Borja mentioned how they are surrounded by supportive members who try their best to encourage each other to help promote growth and improvement. Junior Agi Captain Christian Ebuena also elaborated on how they work around the clock on their dances to make sure they give their best performances possible to their audience, but also prioritize enjoying the atmosphere and feeling

comfortable along with being able to take breaks and kick around. The team is centered around their strong relationships with one another, giving them a home away from home. As previously mentioned the team continuously works hard, not only in practice but also in their free time. Ebuena mentioned that one of his personal team goals is to “instead of building the team, build each individual up and make every individual a really talented dancer, but also someone who can really be depended on.” He explained how as a captain, it is his job to make sure each dancer is strong and confident, and possibly prepared for filling in a future captain position.

Both members emphasized the importance of seeing improvement and having commitment to help show their passion through their performances. With their love for one another keeping them steady alongside their diligent work, the club continues to pour their souls into their performances. With both dancers only having a couple years of experience, their devotion and practice

easily shows through in their performances. Agi is in constant search of new members, hoping to promote and gain growth in not only regular members, but also brother-like members in their group. While having past dance experience eases the process of being in Agi, both members explained how the club is willing to give private lessons with no cost and work hard with their future members to help prepare them for what is to come in their dance seasons. With about half of their members graduating out of the group, they are eager for their possible new members. While both members explained how they are full of nerves before a show, dancing is the most euphoric

feeling they can gain. Borja explained how during rehearsals and when he is watching the auditorium fill, he is filled to the brim with jitters, but as soon as he steps out onto the stage he is in performance mode and the only thing he is focused on is performing to the best of his abilities. Agi continues to prove how their adoration for dance as well as one another shines through within their dances.

Hutchins’ Anticipated Novel

Athena Ebuena ‘24
A&E Editor

In the fictional world, authors have been granted the opportunity to express themselves in unprecedented ways. With so many genres available, there are countless ways for authors to impress readers with their imagination and perhaps change the perspective of a student’s view of others. Senior Kylie Hutchins is one of those authors who has been spending considerable time in the fictional world writing and planning for her upcoming psychological thriller novel.

For the past year, she has been writing her fictional story called *Just Like Always*, a psychological thriller that takes place in a small town called Summerville. This type of thriller explores the character’s mentality in a way that the reader can gain a deeper understanding of how they think. Summerville is depicted as a dystopian society in which the population must constantly maintain a reputable appearance and be impeccable. Failure to maintain a farce will result in cracks beginning to surface on the person. The readers get to see each of the character’s life, who they are as a person, their occupation, and see how they try to live up to society’s expectations before crumbling down. This plot was created by Hutchins during a philosophy class she took last year. She commented, “I tried to see how dark and twisted I could turn it. Eventually, I liked what I had made and said, ‘okay, I have to write about this.’” Hutchins originally intended to publish a forty-page short



Kylie Hutchins has the intent to release her upcoming novel in 2025.

story, but the length of her novel ended up exceeding her expectations. So far, Hutchins has completed about a hundred pages. She plans to have her book reach a length of approximately 300 pages before her book is officially published. Hutchins has been writing books for several years. At an early age, she was fascinated by her mother’s books and thought they were so “grown-up.” In other words, she was captivated by the creativity of these authors and their takes on the fictional world, which later inspired her to begin writing her vision. Hutchins has created many short stories, however, all went unpublished due to the fact she did not put her “blood, sweat, and tears” into her work. “This was the first thing I had written [where] I could see myself continuing [with the story]. I didn’t want [this to] go to waste,” she explained. Creating a book is fun, however, it is quite difficult if one does not have all the information from the start. Although authors

can make adjustments, it is advised to have everything planned out before tackling the plots of each chapter. For instance, Hutchins provided each character in the story with a profile that included facts about them, their occupation, relationship status, and more. This served her as a guide while she continued to write her story as a reminder of who these characters are, which helped tremendously as she then only had to focus on the plot ahead and not worry about forgetting who represented what. When she has the opportunity, Hutchins continues to work on her book so that many students can get the chance to read her creative story, hopefully by the year 2025. Throughout the writing process, she received a great deal of support from loved ones, providing her with advice and constructive criticism to help improve her book. Though being an author does not intrigue her long-term, she anticipates finishing her novel and becoming a firefighter paramedic.

Fans Anxious for New *Ant-Man and the Wasp:Quantumania*

Athena Ebuena ‘24
A&E Editor

Ant-Man and the Wasp: Quantumania is the next Marvel movie that will kick off Phase Five of Marvel’s Cinematic Universe (MCU) on February 17. The adventure to the Quantum Realm begins when Cassandra “Cassie” Lang (Kathryn Newton), (Scott Lang (Paul Rudd)’s daughter, invents the Quantum Beacon, which serves as an antenna for inhabitants of another dimension to send signals to Earth in times of need. While the beacon was quite an innovative invention, Janet van Dyne (Michelle Pfeiffer) raised concern that it might pick up signals from dangerous natives within the dimension. Having been trapped in the Quantum Realm for what felt like five hours, Lang was able to return after a rat reactivated the Quantum tunnel. Upon his return, he realized he was gone for five years and missed out on a part of his daughter’s childhood. Despite his absence, he was proud to see Cassie develop a skill for engineering. As mentioned previously, she created the Quantum Beacon that allows inhabitants of Quantum Realm to send a distress signal. Quite ingenious as it is, Dyne warns that a potential threat could

send a signal for assistance, putting the heroes at risk. By then, according to the trailer, the beacon was triggered and took the people in the room into Quantum Realm, where they meet supervillain, Kang the Conqueror (Jonathan Majors). While Kang possesses many abilities, the writers chose to focus on his one

ability: to alter people’s timelines. As a result of this ability, Kang offers Lang a tempting chance to change the event when he disappeared so that he could spend time with Cassie again by completing a series of tasks. Although family is important, it is also imperative to consider that changing a singular event can bring

a huge impact to the future. Junior Michael Veinbergs, a Marvel fan for a few years now commented, “The past will reflect everything in the future. It would create a butterfly effect, so, everything [in the future] would be different.” Essentially, a slight change to the past could result in drastic changes to the present and

future. Similarly, Peter Parker asked Doctor Strange for help in *Spider-Man: No Way Home* to reverse time back to a time when he was unknown. This cost Parker much trouble to the world, which is what Veinbergs and other Marvel fans are afraid of happening to Lang. Something that students can take away is that it is best to not focus so much on the negative events that happened in the past. “Whatever happens in the past happened in the past. You don’t know if that could affect the future you can have. [Just] keep moving forward,” Veinbergs advised. Hopefully Lang will recognize the importance of focusing on the present rather than dwelling too much on the past. It is still too early to predict what will happen in *Ant-Man and the Wasp: Quantumania*, but Marvel fans still have high hopes for the film. In fact, one hope was confirmed during Comic Con 2022. *Marvel Studios* president, Kevin Feige, announced that Kang is the next major villain in the MCU following the previous mastermind Thanos. Aside from that, time and family are one of the themes that are showcased in the trailer. Although they are heroes, they still highlight the importance of family and how crucial it is to spend time with them. This is because something or someone can take them away at any time.



Ant-man and the Wasp: Quantumania will be introducing new characters and jump start phase five of Marvel’s grand storyline.

Connecting with Love Languages

Lauren Padilla ‘24
Copy Editor

The love languages– physical touch, quality time, words of affirmation, gift giving, and acts of service– are fundamental aspects of relationships that directly influence the way individuals desire the expression and reception of love. People are rarely restrained to a singular love language; most often, they synthesize together, creating a unique preference for certain gestures. However, one tends to dominate the others and play a prominent role in one’s life. Learning to appeal to a partner’s love language benefits the quality of romantic and platonic relationships alike.

Understanding a partner’s love language builds and maintains healthy relationships in which all parties are getting their needs met. Senior Jayden Campo finds value in knowing the way his girlfriend, Senior Olivia Castaneda, expresses love because he was able to “learn how to understand [his] partner and what to give them,” he explained, “it helps us provide for the other better.” They both share a preference towards quality time, building their connection with each day. Castaneda described, “Being in each other’s presence ... we [have] become better people.”

While knowing what a partner enjoys is important, also knowing what they do not prioritize can help to discern what type of acts they will fully appreciate. Junior Marlena Montano explained, “Why would you give gifts to somebody when they don’t care about that? It’s about knowing what makes them happy.” This knowledge allows a partner to understand what a person is looking for in a relationship. It permits them to tend to their specific wants in a way that is comfortable and effective for them.

However, one’s love language may not always remain the same throughout the course of a relationship, so constant communication aids in ensuring that both partners are informed and able to support each other with this growth. English 9 Teacher Mrs. Catherine Thiveos described how healthy communication has prevented her and Art Teacher Mr. Cristos Thiveos from experiencing “blowout fights ... because we have an understanding and respect for each other,” that originates from knowing their love



Credit: Christian Ebuen

languages. Mr. Thiveos shared, “We are always checking in, like, is your cup of love full? Do you need more? Do you need less?” Even in platonic relationships, love languages aid in building more quality and lasting bonds. The love languages around one can begin to have an impact on their own. Junior Avary Wright expressed how many adopt them to “connect with them on a different level [and] try to do as much as you can to make them feel loved,” as they are accustomed to. Being aware of what a friend welcomes as affection prevents them from crossing their boundaries. While it can be difficult to accommodate love languages that differ from one’s own, Junior Rania Kamel details, “If someone’s love language was words of affirmation, for example, I would want to use words of affirmations more often ... to make sure they’re comfortable.” Differing love languages work as a counterbalance, as it allows for equal effort between all parties involved. Once one is able to overcome the initial awkwardness of learning how to appeal to a new love language, the desire to continue is much simpler. Mr. Thiveos detailed, “There’s a natural motivation, it doesn’t feel like work, it’s like you’re happy to do it. I feel fulfilled when she’s fulfilled, I’m happy when she’s happy.” Mrs. Thiveos added, “It’s

like a team ... we are like a well-oiled machine ... where I help to motivate him, and he plays a more supportive role to me.” Being able to cater, in some way, to all of the love languages is useful for ensuring that one is able to connect to each individual as they personally desire. Junior Jackson Suemnick noted, “If you overvalue one of the love languages, you’re obviously gonna neglect some of the others, and you need a balance of everything.” Each individual will be better at expressing certain love languages compared to others, just as they prefer certain ones over others, so simply taking the time and striving to improve each day is more than sufficient. Love languages cultivate relationships where everyone receives what they need in order to feel secure and happy with each other. Although many believe this concept to be common sense, one must be careful to not assume their loved ones preferences. Disregarding this simple knowledge can grow resentment towards others if one’s needs are neglected, heightening the necessity behind sharing this information with loved ones. Adapting to the various forms of affection can benefit a person wholly as it assists them in becoming more well-rounded and considerate of the needs of those around them, rather than only tending to and expecting their own.



Credit: Catherine Thiveos

Mrs.Catherine Thiveos and Mr. Cristos Thiveos ensure they use communication to maintain a healthy relationship.

Social Workers’
Message

Violence Within Teen Dating



Elyse Mandich



Aura Contreras

MSW, LCSW, PPSC
Temecula Valley Unified School District
Licensed Clinical Social Workers

Let’s Talk: Teen Dating Violence Awareness

February is National Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month. Here’s why it’s an important topic - research suggests that one in three teens will experience some form of abuse from someone they are in a relationship with before becoming an adult. That means if there are 3,000 students here at CHS, 1,000 of them will experience an abusive relationship before turning 18. That’s pretty significant. Relationships can range from healthy, to unhealthy, to straight-up abusive. Sometimes those lines can feel blurred and it can be difficult to differentiate what’s healthy, what isn’t and what is actually abusive- especially when you’re in it. In general, a healthy relationship has mutual trust, communication, respect, and is equal. A great resource to see if your relationship is healthy AND to see if you are a healthy partner yourself is through loveisrespect.org, where you can take free quizzes. That website also has a lot of great information and resources specific to teen dating. You deserve to be in a safe relationship.

- Mrs. Mandich and Mrs. C

Seperating Toxic Friends

Riley Sy ‘26
Staff Writer

Throughout their high school years, students are bound to make countless connections and relationships. These bonds are typically formed through classes, social circles, extracurriculars, or other settings. The friends who create a positive atmosphere should be kept around, but when it comes to those who cause more bad than good, the decision of whether or not to remain friends can be a difficult one for many. Toxicity presents itself in a multitude of ways. Some signs are quite obvious, while others are much harder to recognize. Some clear warning signs consist of insults that are used to chip away one’s self esteem, betrayal of trust, and a lack of respect for boundaries. Unfortunately, there are an equal number of subtle signs. Some of these include peer pressure, little to no support, and jealousy. The feeling of walking on eggshells around toxic friends can create feelings of anxiety, insecurity, and more that, can cause a downfall in one’s mental health. Acknowledging how draining these people can be is a step toward eliminating the issue. Seeing the issue is one thing, but stepping away from these friendships can oftentimes be a lot more difficult. Sometimes, simply walking away is easier said than done. There are many factors that are important to account for before making a final decision. Confronting the person about any feelings regarding the friendship can clear up confusion or even fix the bond. Teen Suicide Awareness and Prevention

Program (TSAPP) President and Junior Jasmin Fathi shared her advice explaining, “If they’re genuine, they’ll take accountability and apologize ... At fourteen to seventeen years old, students should not allow for someone to consume their thoughts and although it may be hard, know when it’s time to let go ... There’s too many good people in the world to waste time on bad friends.” Bringing attention to the issue can help make a decision based on the response. Making an effort at all is more than enough; regardless of the outcome, it is better to at least move towards something than to remain stationary. The question of “why?” will undeniably pop up during a dysfunctional friendship. Nevertheless, it should not make students doubt themselves — in other words, the reasoning is an explanation, not an excuse. Physical Education Teacher Mr. Tony Rossi shared his thoughts. He explained, “I think that maybe they’re hurting inside, and they wanna have some power over somebody else and some control because they don’t feel like they do in their lives.” The perpetrator’s troubles are often projected onto friends, causing them to experience similar issues. Consideration is important, however, that does not mean a student cannot maintain their boundaries while doing so. In an era where reputation can be warped in seconds by gossip culture, it is not improbable students will find their friendship to be toxic. The way it is handled determines the outcome. Students should always trust their gut and proceed the way they think is best before any relationship.

Creamer Rises to New Heights

Jackson Gamero ‘24
Staff Writer

Standing at 6’5”, Junior Cooper Creamer is built to excel at basketball. He has displayed the skill set necessary to excel at the sport, which includes agility, shooting ability, as well as a large degree of physicality. His wide range of skills have earned him a spot on the Varsity Boys

Basketball team for multiple years now, including this past year, when he served as the team’s starting center.

Creamer first started playing basketball when he was in fifth grade, after a family friend suggested it to him. Since then, he grew to love the sport, eventually becoming the excellent player that he is today. However, that love for the sport has not grown without the help of others. Creamer attributed his developed love for the game to his first coach, Mr. Robin Hodgkinson. Additionally, Coach Hodgkinson has helped him the most throughout his basketball career so far, due to the foundation of the game that he helped to set for Creamer. Creamer has also been assisted and motivated by his teammates. “My teammates contribute to my success by pushing me to do my best every single day during practice and in games,” Creamer explained. This year, Creamer found great success in his ability to block opponents’ shots. He led the team with sixty-seven blocks,



Junior Cooper Creamer has developed love for the game.

one of the top totals in the Southwestern League. However, Creamer’s success has not come without difficulties. The biggest obstacle that Creamer has encountered thus far in his career is his ability to make his presence known on the court. If Creamer is able to let his opponents know that he is there to block their movements, he can potentially intimidate them with his height and improve his confidence. An improvement in performance would follow. Nevertheless, he has worked hard to overcome that difficulty and

grow even better as a player.

Since joining the school’s basketball program, Creamer has benefited in multiple ways. One of the ways that he has benefited from the program is by the teammates that he has met that have pushed him to become better. However, he has also benefited due to the guidance and coaching of Varsity Boys Basketball Coach Mr. Brad Smith. Creamer mentioned Coach Smith’s experience in basketball, saying that “[Coach Smith] has experience

at the college level and truly loves the game of basketball. He has helped me define my role on the team.” Creamer also credited the program for helping him to improve due to the high level at which it is run, which he hopes to continue this and next year.

As Creamer continues in his high school career, he will continue to work hard and improve his basketball skills. Currently, he is working to improve his defense, as well as his “ability to finish around the rim.” As he looks past high school, he hopes to play at the

Ava Li Points Way to Success

Julian Stanfield ‘24
Staff Writer

Face to face with one another, the opponent works hard to defend freshman Ava Li as she gets into position. However, the attempt proves useless as the ball once again reaches Li and she makes another three-pointer into the hoop. Li had just scored for the fourth time in a row. Despite this year being the first time she attends high school, Li is already playing as the shooting and point-guard positions for the Varsity Girls Basketball team and has been awarded the ‘Player of the Game’ for almost every match played in January. She is also leading the team in points per game, field goal percentage, and steals per game.

Li’s journey into basketball first began when her mother asked if she wanted to pursue the sport and Li chose to play, as she was inspired by her older sister, who acts as Li’s main source of motivation for her to work hard. Li was originally taught how to play by her father and would later gain much of her experience and prowess from clubs located in Los Angeles. Unfortunately, when the COVID-19 pandemic occurred,



Freshman Ava Li lines up for a three point shot.



Freshman Ava Li stops at nothing to thrive.

many issues arose for Li and the original club she was playing for. “[It] was terrible,” Li explained. “I was playing Club and then [the pandemic] hit and that Club team I’ve been with forever was shutdown” ... [S]o I had to go to a different club ... it was really hard to try and play again with a different coach ... and I [felt] like I hadn’t play in so long so it was a weird [time].” Even with the many difficulties she had faced during the time, Li still gained many friends from both the club and high school teams, since most of them had developed great chemistry and bonds with each other, making her time even more special.

According to Li, her strengths lie in scoring and assists, but she would like to “have better communication with [the team]” to help the team’s overall performance even further. She is aiming to score 250 points for this season and is hoping to have scored 1000 points in total by her high school graduation. As of now, Li is still deciding on what she wants to do in the future with her basketball career.

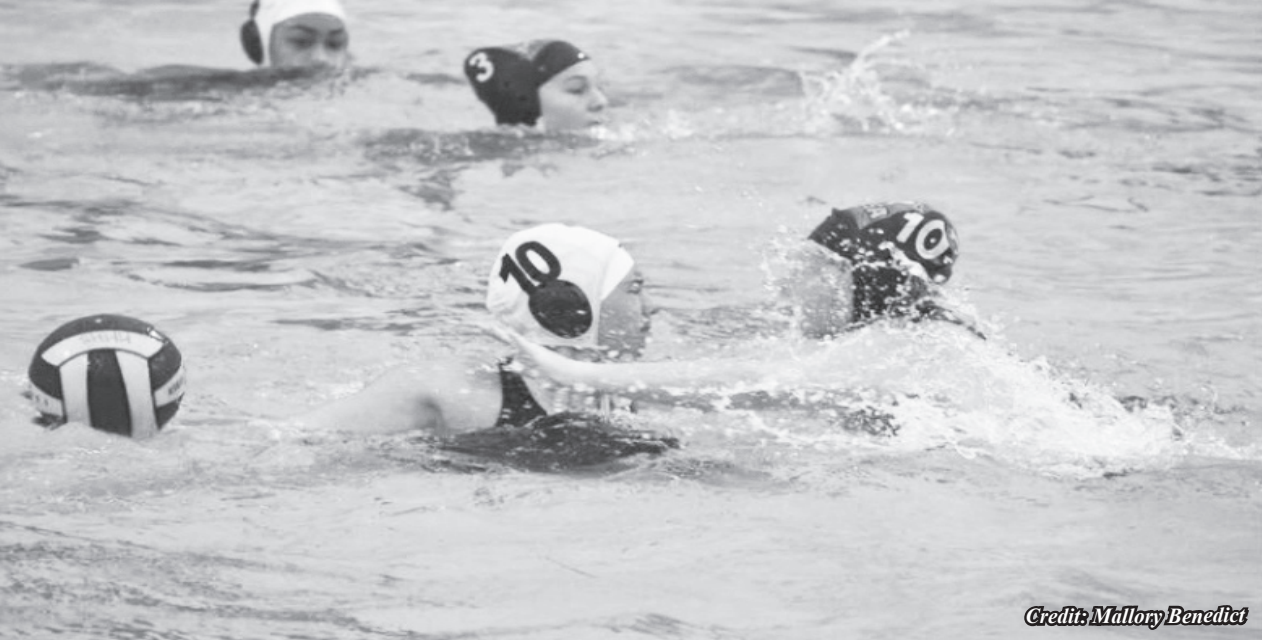
Girls Water Polo Finishes Season with a Positive Attitude

Jairus Ramos ‘23
Staff Wrtier

The Varsity Girls Water Polo team maintained a fighting spirit as they progressed through their 2022-23 season. Under the instruction of Head Coach Mr. Joshua Stone, the players underwent numerous training exercises to develop their skill sets, in order to overcome tougher opponents. However, the team’s recent league scrimmages against Murrieta Valley High School and Vista Murrieta High School did not end in their favor, with the scores concluding at 17-2 Murrieta Valley, and 18-6, Vista Murrieta. The Varsity Girls Water Polo team kept an optimistic attitude about the season throughout.

The game preparation routine for the girls included various drills that target different components of the game, such as shooting and passing. Varsity Girls Water Polo team captain Senior Mallory Benedict emphasized the importance of

communication and its purpose in continuously building unity between teammates, a vital contributor to their chemistry. “Our team is really hard working,” Benedict said. “I am grateful to call them my teammates.” The drills help Coach Stone evaluate the level at which the players execute each component of the game. He explained that the analysis of each practice session is done in order to stay sharp on each skill set before heading into a match and further strengthen the players for tough scrimmages ahead of them. Coach Stone also commented on their progress on each drill and the importance. “The girls made daily improvements, and it was evident during our game against Temecula Valley [High School],” he remarked. On January 18, the team went head to head with Temecula Valley High School, where they drew 7-7, sending them into overtime. Using the tactics they learned, several goals were successfully converted during the overtime period, while utilizing defensive moves. It eventually led the team to edge out Temecula Valley with a sudden death score of 5-4, earning them their first league win in two years. The practices



Senior Mallory Benedict keeps the ball away from her opponent in order to lead her and her team to another wonderful victory.



Senior Cailyn Griebie prepares for a powerful shot during practice.

have been strenuous, but they proved to be vital in matches. Coach Stone shared his conclusions based on the team’s major improvements as of late. “Repetitions are important for every athlete,” Stone advised. While different techniques are vital in any sport, it is important to note how those strategies are executed. Team members Seniors Leyla Houx and Cailyn Griebie briefly went over the takeaways from the season and the approaches taken so far. “This year has taught us a lot,” Houx shared. “We faced many challenges in our matches against tough opponents, and used what we learned to our advantage in the next [game].” Griebie stated what the team is truly capable of in difficult situations, and that the amount of teamwork grew them closer as they made deeper connections with each other. She also mentioned that the team members adapted to different positions, heavily influencing their versatility, and broadening their options in the event of choosing a substitute. “The roster varies from time to time,” Griebie explained, “so we practiced different positions that we don’t often play in.” The Varsity Girls Water Polo team concluded the year with a cumulative record of 5-9, and finishing fourth in the Southwestern League Division.

Chaparral High School - The Platinum Press - February 14, 2023

STUDENT ATHLETE COLLEGE COMMITMENTS

The following athletes participated in the National Letter of Intent Signing Ceremony on February 1, solidifying their college destination.



Mia Scranton
Soccer
Cal Baptist University



Cedric Jefferson
Football
Montana State University



Zack Burrow
Baseball
Lubbock Christian University



Izaiah Souriolle
Football
University of California, Davis



Yesenia Ruiz
Competitive Cheer
Hawai'i Pacific University



Bella Rittenberg
Volleyball
University of Pennsylvania



Jacob Chapman
Baseball
Oregon Tech University



Caron Tyler
Football
Valparaiso University



Robbie Stebbing
Football
Colorado State University, Pueblo



Raymond Valencia
Football
Western New Mexico University



Makayla Delarosa
Softball
Alliance University



Cooper Rasmussen
Baseball
Butler Community College

Girls Soccer Shows Grit as Their Season Comes to an End

Jackson Gamero '24
Staff Writer

As the second semester continues, so do the seasons of the winter sports teams. The Varsity Girls Soccer team is no different, as they played their last game of the season on February 1 against Great Oak High School. Led by Head Coach Ms. Brooklin Brumund, who is in her first year as the head coach, the team was able to improve upon their record from the 2021-22 season and build close bonds that will translate into lasting memories.

In a season defined as being full of “tenacity,” as according to Coach Brumund, the team’s season was highlighted by wins against Hesperia High School, Orange Vista High School, and two wins against Vista del Lago High School. This year, the team displayed extreme determination as they went through a rebuilding process. “This program has gone through a lot of change in the past couple [of] years and we rebuilt a program this year, so everybody had to work really closely together, which isn’t easy, and they had to have a lot of grit,” Coach Brumund explained. Coach Brumund’s point was reiterated by Senior Madison Brown, who explained that although the changes that encompassed the team were difficult to handle at first, the team was ultimately able to stick with each other and compete against every opponent. Brown gave Coach Brumund credit for the success that was encountered this season, explaining that “Coach Brumund’s positive outlook after every game helped build the program and players [became] more confident in their [playmaking].” In practices, the girls practice their offense—specifically their ability to finish ball possessions with a score.

Throughout the season, the team demonstrated good team chemistry, which is a part of the game that many see as essential to perform well on the field. Coach Brumund emphasized this aspect, “We built a program this year based off of teamwork.”



Credit: MaxPreps.com

The Varsity Girls Soccer team ends the 2023 season with Although it was difficult to build strong connections amongst the girls at first, the team was ultimately able to establish these needed bonds and learn how to play well with each other. “Over the span of the season, we were able to build a lot of trust and camaraderie that was the foundation of how we ended our season on such a positive note,” Coach Brumund added, “and I’m really proud of [the players].” Building the team chemistry was an ongoing process throughout the season, and it took contributions from all of the girls to develop it to the end result. In Senior Mia Scranton’s eyes, the biggest contributor to building the team chemistry was their practices together. “[Practice] allowed us to see what each

the understanding that team connections keep them strong. player wants on and off the ball and how they react to defeats and achievements,” Scranton explained. As the players got to know each other better, they were able to benefit more on the field.

Looking toward the next season, they will have to move on without the help of ten seniors. That leaves the team with gaps that will need to be filled on the offensive side of the ball, as they will be losing a considerable amount of both midfielders and offensive players. When the team for next year is finalized, Coach Brumund plans on working towards ability to attack and secure more goals. Under the leadership of Coach Brumund, the team has become closer, and is excited about the future.

Magbagbeola Speeds to Victory Leyla Houx: Determined to Win

Julian Stanfield '24
Staff Writer

Speed and physical endurance are important elements in many sports, regardless if it is a team or individual sport. In Senior David Magbagbeola’s case, these skills are what allow him to rip the ball away from his opponents and claim his well-earned spot on the Varsity Boys Soccer team.

Magbagbeola has played soccer for six years; before he started playing, he tried out several different sports like football and basketball when he finally settled on soccer—for which he found special and fun. Magbagbeola made the Junior Varsity (JV) team his freshman year, but did not play during his sophomore year. He returned to the JV team his junior year and recently became a part of the Varsity team this season. Magbagbeola played as the left fullback and wingback, which are both defensive positions that are located on the sides of the field. His goals for this year were to get his team to the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) playoffs and to score at least one goal.

Magbagbeola was also previously a runner for the Varsity Cross Country team for three years; the speed and stamina he developed from his time running has greatly assisted him in soccer games. “Running

definitely carries me. I think getting back to my position is the easiest thing [because of my speed and] I get there as fast as I can,” Magbagbeola stated. “I would be like ten times slower if I didn’t do Cross Country my junior and sophomore years.” Although his speed provides a distinct advantage over opponents, Magbagbeola still wants to improve his defending and be better at making plays.

Over the course of his time in the soccer program, Magbagbeola befriended many of the players he played alongside with and developed great trust in them. “I’ve made some great friends [and those] people I see everyday make me laugh and make me smile,” he said. He also went on to say that his teammates were the reason he wanted to keep training and have helped him in various situations by giving him advice. “I wanna be better cause they’re better,” he stated. Magbagbeola specifically credited one of the team captains, Senior Daniel Whelan, for helping him in many games and for communicating what needs to be done when the team is on the defensive. He stated, “Danny carries me in the back. Without him, I don’t think [I’d] be as good as I am today.” In the future, Magbagbeola thinks of going to the University of California, Santa Cruz, San José State University, California State University, or California State University, Long Beach, and wants to continue playing soccer recreationally.



Credit: David Magbagbeola

The team has given Senior David Magbagbeola many great friends and has developed great chemistry.

Jairus Ramos '23
Staff Writer

Varsity Girls Water Polo has dominated the pool since the beginning of the winter sports season, with new Puma, Senior Leyla Houx ready to help her team cover their top priorities. She began playing water polo seven years ago when a few friends convinced Houx to give it a try. As she started practicing everyday, her love for the sport grew stronger.

Houx is among the new additions to the Varsity Girls Water Polo team, choosing to specialize her tactics on the team’s offense to make significant impacts on the scoreline. On the day of a match, she takes time to wind down and adjust her mood after strenuous days of school, by stretching and listening to music in quiet spaces. Although a laid-back member of the team, Houx can be



Credit: Leslie Houx

Senior Leyla Houx ends her senior season with greater mental strength. incredibly competitive in her position especially when encountering defenders in critical situations. She has mastered many water polo techniques to lead her team to victory, such as scanning the environment around her, looking out for opposing defenders that may try to prevent her from scoring. “Water polo is really intense, [and] it takes a lot of strength,” she commented.

Physical ability is not the only necessary ingredient when excelling in a sport, Houx’s biggest weapon is her mental stamina, with a high level of focus and overall discipline, she can pull

off strategic decision-making in effort to outsmart defenders, while converting every shot on goal. Houx plans her moves accordingly in order to keep possession of the ball for her team. Head Coach Joshua Stone expressed his admiration for Houx’s performances and his optimism on what those efforts may bring in the future. “I am very excited that Leyla is on our team this year,” he said, “she will be a very valuable asset for us.”

Since joining the team this year, Houx looks forward to the opportunities of creating bonds with her new teammates. They often go out for team dinners the day before practices or matches, using the time together to chat and get to know one another. This has been a lasting tradition for them and helps develops comradeships. Houx emphasized the importance of building strong relationships with teammates and coaching staff to help propel the team through league games. “Hard work truly pays off,” she advised, “[and] being a part of a team sport is one of the best things you can encounter in life.” The Varsity Girls Water Polo team has made major improvements during league season, earning their first league win in two years following a 5-4 overtime victory over Temecula Valley High School, a goal Houx looked forward to achieving during her time with them. Now that the season has concluded,, Houx does not plan to leave water polo in her past. With plans to continue her athletic career with a club team and enter the Junior Olympics, water polo is clear to have a permanent place in her heart forever.

Puma Valentines Love Notes



Ellie Ray Maggiore-Anet '24,

My girl, my everything, my best friend for life, and my ride or die since birth. Thank you for endorsing me and all my delusions LOL. It's crazy that we've grown together from eating popsicles in Mrs. Jackson's class to entering senior year together next year. I appreciate and love you forever and always. Happy Gal-entine's day.

Love,
Jilli (Jillian Heeran '24)

My Dearest Elijah Jaejin Lee '24,

As I halt the process of homework to write you this, my heart fills with love that words cannot express. From the moment I saw you, I knew that you were the one for me. Ever since then, my love for you has only grown stronger. Deeper. ZESTIER.

Kevin Yang '24



Dear Alyssa Windelyn Wilson '24,

You are the light of my life. Ever since you've entered my life, I just feel a warmth. You are the bestest friend and I hope that I'm returning that. Hanging out with you is always so much fun, we can just lie on the ground or be at an amusement park. Every moment is so precious to me. I'm so glad that you're in my life, love you tons.

Eleanor Chon '24

Dear Justin Selway '25,

I can't express how amazing it is having my partner also be my best friend. I am so proud of everything you've accomplished and overcome. You are the hardest worker I know and your passion for everything you do is one of the many things I love about you.

Love,
Cammie (Camryn Brown '24)

