

The PLATINUM PREVIEW

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Holiday Extravaganza IMPACT Show Spreads Festivity and Inclusivity to All

Emma Horwood '22
Staff Writer

On December 9, the Impact Events club put on a fantastic show in the Performing Arts Center (PAC) for the Special Education students on campus, also known as Impact Buddies, as a way to show them that they are an important part of the culture on campus. The event was accessible to the entire student body, and those who attended the Holiday Extravaganza Impact Show got to see performances by the intermediate girls' dance team, Vicious, as well as the Tahitian Dance Team, and Intellect Boys. The hard work put into setting up the show was shown through the final product, as both the performers and the audience were enthusiastic and enjoying the event.

The members of Impact Events dedicated months worth of CAT30s, lunches, and after school sessions into perfecting the show and gathering performers. This year, with a new board of leaders, the group aims to carry on their six year standing tradition of putting on entertaining and meaningful shows for students and their families to enjoy. With the holiday show being their first event of the year, they continue to learn and grow in hopes to set up more exciting

productions as the year goes on. Senior Gabby Diaz-Narte, a member of Impact Events, explained, "I think [the show is] important because it allows for the students to be able to feel like they are a part of something bigger than just their classrooms, and it gives them a chance to shine in their own way." Thanks to the hard work of the members of Impact Events, the holiday show was successful in delivering holiday entertainment to the Special Education class and students.

Impact Events always strive to make inclusive events that highlight an often overlooked part of the student body. The Impact Buddies performed in several acts alongside the teams in their dazzling performances. Regarding what his favorite part of the night was, Impact Buddy Senior Joey Hoke said, "Just seeing everybody dancing around... was fun." The positive impact made by the production set a truly excellent example of how students should embrace all of their peers and celebrate their differences.

Between the holiday spirit, and the encouraging message of inclusion, the exciting event brought a sense of joy and acceptance befitting of the holiday season. Students should make sure not to miss future Impact Events, which promise more outstanding entertainment for purposeful causes.



Credit: Emily Pham

For the finale, Senior Joey Hoke led fellow performers in a festive holiday dance to "This Christmas".

Allison Casasola Achieves Perfect ACT Score

Annaliese Arnsten '20
Editor-in-Chief

Senior Allison Casasola recently became one of the top 0.05% American College Testing (ACT) scorers after earning a perfect composite score of 36. When asked about her initial reaction upon learning of her commendable achievement, Casasola expressed, "I knew that I was working really hard towards getting a good score, but I didn't think it would be that good... It's really a blessing... at some point getting a perfect score is really just luck."

Although there are always elements test takers cannot control on the day of the exam, it takes a lot of preparation to earn such an incredible score. "[Preparing involved] a lot of self-studying and then I did get, like, tutoring lessons here and there," Casasola recalled. As far as advice for students planning to take an upcoming test, Casasola suggested, "Take a lot of previously released practice tests... bring a watch... give yourself a lot of options and times to take the test, like, don't just take it one time and say, 'this is my one

shot,' because I took it four times... and it wasn't until the fourth one that [my score] finally bumped up... It could be anything: testing conditions, your mood, your sleep, like, just give yourself a lot of options."

Casasola has more to her achievements than simply a perfect ACT score, however. A self-proclaimed "proud STEM gal," Casasola demonstrates her love of coding and further strives to reach a future career as a software engineer through her participation in Science Olympiad, which she has been a part of for four years, CyberPatriot, a program designed to challenge students with problem-solving cyber security, and Girls in STEM, a club which Casasola herself has pioneered on campus as an outlet for female students to compete along with teaching coding to middle schoolers once a week. She also expresses her passion for leadership through her participation in Peer Leaders, and Associated Student Body (ASB). In regards to her recent delve into theater along with prior interests, Casasola shared, "I've always, like, had an affinity and a love for performing and for, like, music but over high school I

got so caught up in academics that... failed to give a part of myself to drama still. I'm now in Advanced Drama and it's literally, like, the best thing ever. I regret not joining sooner."

When it comes to balancing her various activities, Casasola reported, "It's a lot of compartmentalizing and just fitting things like a puzzle piece in my head." She continued, "They've helped me grow in both, like, academics and leadership, and also in, like, my love for performing arts... I would consider myself a more well-rounded student than I am a person whose completely invested in just one thing."

In the future, Casasola hopes to expand her knowledge of software engineering, as well as the ethics of the field, in hopes to continue her trajectory as a well-rounded learner throughout life. "I think everything that we learn is so interdisciplinary, and it can be applied to other things in so many other ways," Casasola expressed. "Our world is progressing so quickly towards technology that literally you can look at society, economics, politics, all through the lens of technology, and I think being well-rounded is just fun. You

never feel like you're missing out on something, you just feel balanced."

"At the end of the day, [the test is] just numbers... like, it doesn't really tell people anything about like who you are, or what you do, what you're passionate about," Casasola emphasized. "[The score] doesn't determine anything. I'm really happy I got the score, but it's never my end goal, and it never should be anybody's end goal."



Credit: Michael Tan

Allison Casasola is proud of her ACT score.

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE



Principal Tina Miller



Pumas,

I hope everyone had an enjoyable Thanksgiving break with family and friends. We are approaching the end of the first semester of the 19/20 school year. Students, keep up the great work and do not lose focus during the next few weeks. It has been a wonderful first half of the year. I enjoyed being part of the Puma traditions at CHS during the first semester, and I look forward to celebrating more Puma traditions throughout the remainder of the school year.

Staff, thank you for your hard work day in and day out to serve our students and make CHS a great place to be every day. I want you all to know how thankful I am to work with a team that is as dedicated and hardworking as you. I am very fortunate to be part of the CHS school community. Go Pumas!

Mock Election Teaches Students About Politics

Crystal Rivera '20
Staff Writer

Today during lunch, three candidates from each of Mr. Slojkowski's Advanced Placement (AP) Government classes will hope to be voted as president by the student body during their mock election. This simulated electoral process was created with the purpose to showcase what a real election would feel like, and to expand the thought process behind complex political systems. With teamwork, cooperation, and communication skills needed for this project, students formed groups under the candidates who will represent one of the different political parties: Republican, Democratic, and Independent. As students begin to understand what is needed to run a functional campaign, this annual event will benefit those who wish to grasp the ideology behind today's politics.

There are multiple components needed to form an appropriate organized party, such as conducting interviews in different government periods, making videos for campaigns, and answering questions on certain topics.

For Senior David Zografos, the third period Democratic Candidate, this is the perfect event for him to demonstrate another side of himself. "It's a chance to prove myself because I have always been very passionate about politics and very few classes allow me to express my political opinion," he stated. However, winning will not be an easy task, as Zografos will have to compete against two other candidates within his class period. In fifth period, Senior Morgan Larson is running as the Independent candidate representing the Libertarian party. In regards to his experience in the process, Larson commented, "I've learned about relations with other people and diplomacy, trying to gain favor from certain people to help yourself." Larson understands that it takes time to fully attain the knowledge with "finding lobbyists and interest groups, talking to media teams and trying to see how the election process works, in a sense." Along with Larson and Zografos, Senior Nicholas Thieme is running as a modern Republican candidate for first period. He stated, "The one part about me being more of an independent Republican is



Credit: Hannah Monnartz

Senior Morgan Larson delivers a speech to kick off his campaign. that I support a conservative policy, however, I am socially liberal." Thieme believes that his stance in both political party ideas "...would give [him] a one-up to an extent just because [he is] able to kind of show [his] position but also positions that other people can agree with." Thieme believed more in the experience part of the project, stating "If you don't try it, then you are possibly missing out," whereas Zografos understood that "Even though you don't get typical benefits out of a normal election, you still get the satisfaction of knowing that 'Hey, I was able to do something' at the end of the day and be able to change people's minds on subjects." All candidates with varying perspectives now have a better understanding of what it takes to run in politics.

Canned Food Drive Helps End Hunger During the Holiday Season

Elizabeth Clavin '20
School News Editor

It is the time of the year to give back, and the annual canned food drive is a great opportunity to donate for a good cause. As of October 28, students started bringing in various food cans to their second period class until November 14. After all were collected, they were donated to the Temecula/Murrieta Police Activities League (PALs). The collection dates this year occurred on October 31, November 7, and November 14.

A food drive is a form of charity that is conducted in order to provide

food for those in need. On campus, this is an annual occurrence around the holiday season. Students and teachers are always immensely enthusiastic to try to reach the goal that is set for each year. As of last year, the reachable goal was to raise 1,800 cans. Fortunately, that goal was vastly exceeded, as the school raised and donated approximately 2,870 cans. In addition, the three classes that collect the most cans become the winners. First place wins a pizza party, second place earns ice cream sandwiches, and third place wins a candy prize. Last year, Mrs. Anne McNulty's class came in first, Mr. Larry Wells' class came in second, and Mr. Paul

Bishop's class came in third place. As of this year, the goal was 2,500 cans, and 1,867 were collected; the winners were as follows: NJROTC came in third, Wells' class came in second, and McNulty's class came in first.

Some of the best canned food to donate to an event such as this includes canned beans, soup, vegetables, fruit, beans, etcetera, whereas not so favorable items include various beverages and peanut butter; basically, anything that is not canned food. These events increase the supply of high-need items for various groups. Food drive donations can save pantries thousands of dollars a year, and even

the smallest of donations adds up to a large amount of food for those in need. ASB President, Senior Taylor Silva, stated, "My favorite part about the event is the impact that it has on our community! The canned food drive is for such a great cause, and it means so much to those receiving the donations, and it's so rewarding to hear the positive impact we're able to make on our community by doing something so simple. There's a lot of advertising that goes into this event and spreading the word is critical to the event's success. Having a lot of dedicated individuals is also really important because we couldn't do it without dedicated people like Mr.

Wells and Mrs. McNulty." As stated, Wells and McNulty take the canned food drive rather seriously, and have competed every year, just as they have this year as well. The constant advertisements and announcements get everyone excited to participate, and the competition between classes to win each year is intriguing.

All in all, the annual canned food drive never fails to impress and exceed expectations. Many students on campus have helped more greatly than they know, and many pantries have been filled. With many more food drives to come, there are many more opportunities to donate to a good cause.

Students Tune in to Good Morning Pumas for Weekly Announcements



Credit: Michael Tan

Eugenia Hernandez '21
Staff Writer

The Chaparral High School Video Media Arts Program has been hard at work producing a revamped version of the morning announcements known as *Good Morning Pumas*. After months of hard work, *Good Morning Pumas* premiered on October 18. Although the elements of a high school news show were there, the crew put quite an entertaining twist on the show. During the months of preparation and production, the members of the media arts program were hard at work editing, setting up interviews, and getting information for the announcements. With the improved quality of the show seen thus far, there

is bound to be lots of hard work put into the production.

The school's morning announcements have gone under a lot of changes since last year. For one, the production value and editing has improved. When asked about what changes the program had gone under, Member and Anchor for *Good Morning Pumas*, Jesse Moritz, voiced, "Big changes. We stopped using a green screen and now we have a set that we've been putting together, obviously, it's still very much in progress. . .we have better lights now. . .it's a lot better, but we still want to improve more." Despite all the positive changes within the program, the crew is still hard at work on improving different aspects of their production. For example, they hope to create different

sets for various different segments of the show, and they there are also working to cut back on the length of future videos. The *Good Morning Pumas* crew has also voiced their need for new equipment such as more powerful computers to run their editing program. Apart from just giving the student body the news and announcements, *Good Morning Pumas* hopes to include more skits and inclusive content that appeals to all types of students on campus. They want the show to be more than just a school news show; they hope that it becomes something truly enjoyable.

Although there have been improvements to make the process a little easier, there are still a few challenges. The overall process consists of editing,

recording, and getting announcements, as well as finding people to interview and important topics to cover. Moritz explained, "It takes all week to film, so we'll film some on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and [then] Thursday comes along, we get our final filming in. . .we try to edit what we can at school."

The overall goal for the crew is to give the student body news, but to also included a bit of humor rather than just giving facts. *Good Morning Pumas* hopes to continue to add more creative twists to the bland school news announcements that they typically report on. Moving forward, the crew will continue to improve and with all the positive feedback they have received recently they are sure to be motivated to continue working hard.

Operation Christmas Child Allows Students to Donate to Youth in Need

Crystal Rivera '20
Staff Writer

Operation Christmas Child once again returned to school grounds, giving students the opportunity to earn community service. This operation is an organization dedicated to those who wish to donate toys, school supplies, clothing, and various other items for people around the world in need. Students here contributed to the cause by donating items to the Associated Student Body (ASB Room 260), as well as in Ms. Grover's room (Room 448), Mrs. Schmidt's room (Room 421), Mrs. Shea's room (Room 464), and in the counseling office to Mrs. Gandy, by November 1.

Operation Christmas Child is aimed towards providing children with not only toys but common items such as clothing, shoes, school supplies, or utilities. Unfortunately, children in low providing countries cannot access these items easily, so this organization develops a gateway for students and staff to donate items and help out a child's life. Kindness can start with one small step, which for others, makes a positive impact

on their lives. Donating can provide not only hope but also happiness for children.

The school contributes to this cause by maintaining drop-off locations on campus for students and gives the donations to the operation Christmas collectors. These collectors will then proceed to hand the donations to children around the world. Mrs. Jackie Schmidt is the organizer for the program here at school, while the leader of this year's operation committee is Sophomore Payton Gapen, who is excited to contribute to an important cause. While in charge, Gapen feels "As teenagers, we don't get a lot of things where we could like help out the entire world and its mostly for college and stuff. So I feel like doing this [is] not only helpful for us with our leadership skills but for everyone around the world," which is indeed true, since students are not able to help around the world. Gapen believes that students "get to play a part in it" with helping out in difficult situations. Everyone needs a helping hand, and this program will be able to give students the opportunity to offer as many helping hands as they can while donating to a good cause.

The operation started as a project

partnership with the Samaritan's Purse International Disaster Relief, an organization that is a self-titled "nondenominational evangelical Christian organization providing spiritual and physical aid to hurting people around the world." They offer help to the needs of people who are victims of war, poverty, natural disasters, disease, and famine. The Operation started in the United Kingdom in 1990 by Dave and Jill Cooke. Since the partnership with Samaritan's Purse, Operation Christmas Child has delivered gifts to over 168 million children in more than 100 countries. The organization created not only Operation Christmas Child but many more beneficial projects dedicated to the same cause. The purpose of this cause is to "teach kids about giving" and to provide hope and materials for people around the world.

The operation lasted until November 25, where students and staff alike not only participated but also improved the well being of thousands. The overall donations have already been sent to the organizers, where they will be delivered to children and adults around the world, spreading the Christmas cheer throughout the month.



Credit: samaritanspurse.org
Operation Christmas Child gives to a child in Paraguay.

Annual Miss Marvelous Pageant: A Dazzling Night of Empowerment



Credit: Crystal Rivera
Senior Jena Wilemon takes the stage at Miss Marvelous, accompanied by Senior Jesse Moritz.

Elisa Trujillo '23
Publicity Manager

The dictionary defines 'disability' as a physical or mental condition that limits a person's movements, senses, or activities, and while the girls who participated in this year's Miss Marvelous Pageant may have disabilities, they did not let any definition stop them from doing what they love. On November 13, 2019, at Temecula Valley High School, special needs students got a chance to show that they are more than their impediments at the Miss Marvelous Pageant.

The Temecula Valley High School auditorium was full of student and parent supporters alike. The participants came from various schools such as Temecula Valley High School and Great Oak High School, along with students on-campus. At the end of the pageant, all participants received a special title, such as Ms. Elegant, Ms. Empowering, Ms. Enthusiastic, etc. There were a total of twenty-one amazing participants, all who went through a series of events to be able to receive their titles, and there were a total of four separate pieces of Miss Marvelous.

The first was the introduction of all of the contestants and their male escorts. Out of the twenty-one participants, there were a total of nine Pumas represented. These students were Faith Bailes, Kaylee Colville, Nadia Engert, Ryla Espineli, Jordan Henderson, Kylee Hosking, Jovanna Ibarra, Samantha Martinez, and Jena Wilemon. While these students are all in the same special education program, they could not be more different. From personality to grade level, they each have amazing qualities that make them diverse. This idea leads to the second portion of the event. Some of the girls did dances, like Henderson who danced to the song, "Shut Up and Dance" by Walk the Moon, while others sang songs from popular movies like Colville who sang "Never Enough" by Loren Allred from "The Greatest Showman." Not only is the talent portion of the show fun for the girls, but it is also incredibly entertaining for the crowd. "I love the talent, I love when they are doing their performances and then working with their peer buddies to put on something fun for us," Associate Student Body (ASB) Director Mrs. Kristy Baron said. While the talent section is very exciting to the participants and the audience,

another important part of Miss Marvelous is the interview segment.

The third part of the show are the essential interviews. Many of the questions throughout the interviews are to get to know more about the girls and their personalities to be able to give them an accurate title. Also, the interview section was important to the judges, who wanted to see what kind of people the contestants looked up to and the kind of people they want to be. While this section was short, it gave an insight into what these girls are like.

The last and final part of the night was the awards ceremony where all of the participants received a title, crown, sash, and a small bouquet of flowers; many of the girls were ecstatic when they received their title. Then, they gathered for one last picture, and the pageant came to an end.

This year's annual Miss. Marvelous Pageant was a huge success. "We even have a bigger crowd tonight and a lot more community support. . . I think every year they [ASB] find a way to make things better" said Mrs. Baron. While this year's pageant was a huge success, parents, students, and this year's contestants cannot wait for the next Miss Marvelous.

Parent Universities Enhance Bonds Between Students and Their Families

Bella Quintanilla '22
Staff Writer

Parent universities, implemented by the Student Welfare and Success Department as a parent education system for the 2019-2020 school year and led by the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Team, is a series of hour-long workshop meetings in order to support parents and their relationships with their child(ren). The system was put in place to guide parents to better understand and support their children's social and academic needs. The SEL was introduced to all Temecula Valley District school sites last year for the 2018-2019 school year, their main focus being on supporting students through the school day. The main goal of incorporating Parent University workshops is to better educate and prepare both students and parents for their school year, providing these meetings to create a positive impact. These meetings present tips for a good school year such as bully prevention, self-reliance, positive choices, and many more.

All workshops are held at TVUSD's District office facility, Conference Room A,

31350 Rancho Vista Road which are conducted by different social workers from the district. There are fifteen total who get to choose what topic or topics they would like to present. While their target demographic are parents

of children in the school district, they also welcome students from all grade levels. In a typical meeting, the social worker(s) will not only present information about their topic, but also try to include participation from parents

and students in answering related questions and also providing tips for anyone who may have specific questions or concerns. In having these meetings, the SEL hopes to encourage better parent-child relationships. Many of these meetings are full of information for both parents and children to understand and communicate with one another thus creating a start for a good school year, educationally and socially.

The relationship between students and parents is crucial to ensure that the student creates a good life for themselves in the future, including goals and aspirations for them to reach. Parents should also be able to enjoy their year, helping and guiding their child through it. Teen years can be especially difficult for both parties because of the different social and emotional issues that can arise. These meetings have been put in place specifically to support this relationship and educate both parents and their children to create a safe environment between one another. Each meeting is meant to enable a better understanding of the topic and provide ways to make healthy habits and choices for everyone to feel more comfortable and content with themselves and their loved ones.

Parent Universities: Upcoming Workshops

- January 9:** "Substance Abuse: What Today's Parents Need to Know"
- January 16:** "Understanding the Impact of Trauma"
- February 6:** "Positive Choices: Helping Kids Decrease Stress & Anxiety"
- February 27:** "Connected & Safe"
- March 12:** "Trauma-Informed Practices: When Children Experience Grief & Loss"
- April 9:** "Positive Parenting: Positive Discipline"
- April 16:** "Relationships & Resilience"
- May 7:** "Mental Health Awareness/Foster Youth"
- May 28:** "Nurturing Empathy & Compassion in Children"

== All workshops are open to both students and parents ==

NROTC Unit Celebrates 244th Annual Navy-Marine Corps Birthday Ball

Michael Tan '21
Video Manager

On Wednesday, November 6, the school's Navy Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (NJROTC) program hosted their annual Navy-Marine Corps Birthday Ball. During this event, cadets gather together at Monteleone Meadows to celebrate the 244th birthday of the Navy and Marine Corps.

The Navy-Marine Corps birthday ball consists of the opening ceremony, which introduced the top staff and a guest speaker. This was vital to the event, as it provided an environment that represents military customs. Another important portion to the event was the cake cutting ceremony, which included the youngest and oldest cadet to perform the cake cutting. This year, the youngest cadet to cut the cake was Freshman Mason Goggins, and the oldest cadet was Senior Ryan Dimapilis. Naval Science Instructor

Senior Chief McGovern explained, "We have a cake cutting ceremony, which symbolizes traditions being passed from generation to generation. Being a Navy unit with a Marine instructor also, we combine the two and we celebrate both the Navy and the Marine birthday. This year, both services are 244 years old." Likewise to a formal ROTC ceremony, the birthday ball follows closely to the Marine Corps courtesy. McGovern continued, "We talk about how the Navy was formed back in 1775, as well as the Marine Corps. We also read the messages from the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps, the leaders of those respected branches." The ceremony was complemented with the school's Color Guard with the nation's colors, alongside the Honor Guard presenting their swords. Both teams had played a major role in showing courtesy and respect to the distinguished guest, Master Chief Cheri Galvez, the Intelligence Directorate Senior Enlisted leader of the United States

Third Fleet, along with Senior Naval Science Instructor Lieutenant Colonel Bishop. Master Chief Galvez has been serving the United States Navy since 1996, and Lieutenant Colonel Bishop served in the United States Marine Corps for twenty years.

Once the ceremony was concluded, the cadets were led to the dining tables where food was provided, and they danced the night away to music. Sophomore Eilene Paniagua stated, "My overall enjoyment at [the birthday ball] was being able to hang out with my friends while enjoying an old-fashioned traditional military ceremony. My favorite moment of the birthday ball was getting to hear the guest speakers inspirational speech. Her speech was overall telling the cadets about having inspiration and trusting your strengths and your confidence, those characteristics can take you far in the military but also anywhere in life." With the guest speakers finishing off their closing remarks, it left students and their fellow peers empowered



Credit: Stephen McGovern

The NROTC unit feasts in celebration of the 244th Navy-Marine Corps Birthday Ball.

by the advice given to them. The annual NJROTC Navy-Marine Corps Birthday Ball provides an opportunity for incoming first year cadets to have a night to remember with dancing, bonding with others,

and a military-style ceremony. As the year progresses with more events coming up for the program, it further prepares one for the upcoming school year, develop leadership skills, and to help learn more about the unit.

Students from Around the World Learn About a Traditional Thanksgiving



Credit: Elizabeth Clavin

International students get together to enjoy a traditional American Thanksgiving feast in the Student Union.

Elizabeth Clavin '20
School News Editor

On November 21, 2019, a collection of approximately twenty students from eight different countries came together during fourth period to enjoy a Thanksgiving feast, hosted in the student union for their fifth year now. This

allowed students from around the world to adopt and learn more about the Thanksgiving tradition in the United States, while enjoying a traditional Thanksgiving feast, listening to music, and making many new friends amongst their peers.

First, the students were warmly welcomed into the classroom, which was decorated appropriately for a Thanksgiving dinner. They colored together on the large dining room

table, all while waiting for their meal. Students would draw Thanksgiving themed pictures, or simply choose to write things about them, their name, or doodle on the paper. Before the meal was served, teachers around the classroom explained the traditional courses which will be served, and the origin of the Thanksgiving holiday. They explained why it was celebrated, when it is celebrated, and how. In doing so, some foods that were served include turkey, mashed potatoes with gravy, yams, green beans, biscuits, and of course, pumpkin pie. The students were ecstatic about the course, and learned a good amount about the holiday. Mrs. Martha Campbell stated, "It's so amazing that we can put an event together like this and teach the students about the Thanksgiving traditions. I love and care for them so much, and it just makes me so happy that this is possible, and I hope they will bring home the Thanksgiving tradition to their families as well." Some teachers that made this event possible include Mr. Mike Perales, Mrs. Laura Ruelas, and Mrs. Linda Zimel, all of whom have been keeping the tradition alive for five years now.

It is imperative that all students on campus feel welcome and involved, whether it be in

certain clubs, groups, or simply events like this. Evidently, the sole purpose is unity. With this event, only positive feedback has been received from students and teachers, and Zimel stated "We hope that they will make this become their tradition as well, it's so amazing to see the students come together and enjoy something we care so much about and worked hard to put together. We also hope they loved the desserts, especially the pumpkin pie," which is exactly what they did. Traditions are important to everyone's culture, yet it is also important to invite new cultures to different traditions. The sole purpose of "Friendsgiving" is to enjoy a feast with friends, and these students did exactly that. In fact, they even made new friends all while enjoying wonderful food.

All in all, the importance of tradition is very significant, yet it is even more important to welcome others to traditions. This is what the Student Union did as they hosted their annual "Friendsgiving" with students who have come from all different countries across the world. After learning the traditions of Thanksgiving, all while eating a homemade feast, the event was successful, and created a new Thanksgiving tradition for all.

Pumas Make a Positive Impact Through Community Service Opportunities

Crystal Rivera '20
Staff Writer

Community service plays a vital role among students who wish to make a positive impact on the world.

As the year progresses, not many students understand the importance of community service and how one act of kindness can change the future. There are countless opportunities that occur in Temecula, such as volunteering at animal shelters or helping out at local libraries. Although the task may seem meaningless, the activities organized by different on-campus clubs and outside the campus have a life-changing impact on the community.

One of the many clubs that offer amazing opportunities is the Interact club, organized by Senior President Jennifer Valencia and Senior Vice President Sydney Moreno. These two, as well as many other wonderful officers, have created a welcoming environment

where they encourage others to take on opportunities to change the world. Valencia believes that "Community service is important not just for high school but a lesson for every human being mainly because it teaches you what it means to contribute to society." If change is needed to improve the state of the world, then action must start with the people.

By taking on community service opportunities, students learn valuable lessons in life, as well as increase their character for colleges to observe. As Valencia stated, "Our mantra is 'Service Above Self', so we have to put the good of the community over our personal standards." For some it is no easy task, as there are those who believe community service is not beneficial and are merely participating to achieve the basic minimum of forty hours. As Senior Alexandra Kim stated, "We tend to live in an individualistic society where people only care about themselves and are very closed

off with what they're doing. I think the more people who begin to promote community service, the more people are willing to follow in those footsteps and to really help each other out." Community service highly encourages cooperation with others and allows students to follow the path for a better future, not only for our generation but for future generations as well.

There are numerous benefits for those who achieve a large sum of community service hours. "It's called the Principal's Service Award, so if you'd like an award definitely shoot for that, especially if you are a freshman you can get a lot of hours if you join enough clubs," Valencia stated.

As students progress into the year, colleges tend to look for those who commit themselves to the idea of positively impacting the world. According to Kim, "...Colleges tend to look at those who excel and really commit themselves to certain things, which is why I would shoot pretty far above the forty

limit." For students who need a chance to change the world, there are numerous clubs that offer different opportunities for different passions. "I'd say Girl Talk is a good one, Peer leaders is a good one if you are interested in tutoring, CSF (California Scholarship Federation) is a great one too," Valencia recommended.

Other opportunities include Key Club, Environmental Club, National Honor Society (NHS) and many more.

Earning community service hours may sound like a difficult task to complete, but with the right people to interact, there are multiple opportunities that students can contribute to help the world.

"My advice is to be more willing to put yourself out there in order to find what you can contribute to," Valencia stated.

The world is changing and the future needs students who are willing to contribute to helping others and form a more positive environment. One small action is all it takes to change the future.

NAMES IN THE NEWS

Photos by Michael Tan



Charlene Miciano
November Student of the Month



Rachel Danover
December Student of the Month



Kristy Baron
Recognized as TVUSD Superstar



Stephanie Rittenhouse
Recognized as TVUSD Superstar

Promising Freshman Benjamin S. Douglass Excels in STEM Programs

Crystal Rivera '20
Staff Writer

High school can be an intimidating place to be in, especially when it comes to selecting classes and meeting new people. Most students may not have an exact idea of what career they want, but this is not the case for one particular student. Freshman Benjamin Sullivan Douglass started his high school year by taking not one, but two, Advanced Placement (AP) classes, and an advanced algebra class, while participating in Science Olympiad. He is striving towards his own successful future, filled with knowledge and the ability to work with others who love taking a challenge. For him, this is the start to an amazing high school experience.

Choosing classes was nothing new for Douglass. He was always interested in the field of science, even taking difficult classes back in middle school. Douglass eagerly stated how "it's definitely a nice experience to be in an environment with people who are also trying to take on new things, so that's really cool." With an open mind, Douglass is excited about the new possibilities and experiences high school will offer. The advanced classes he is currently enrolled in are AP Chemistry and Algebra 2+, all while participating in the Science Olympiad Club. Before taking the classes, Douglass had plenty of reasons as to why he decided to take them during his freshman year. As Douglass stated, "It's a lot of combinations [of reasons] 'cause you know

colleges like AP classes so that's a part of it, but it's mostly the new experiences and the challenge... and the AP classes that I was able to choose looked really cool." Although he enjoyed taking the AP classes, it clearly was not enough to satisfy his curiosity for science.

His next plan was joining Science Olympiad, a club that improves the quality of K-12 science education, increasing male, female, and minority interest. The club is known for competing in regional and state competitions. Before joining this year's Science Olympiad, Douglass stated, "I did science olympiad in middle school, and the science olympiad here in high school is just so great, it's an awesome learning environment and all the people are great." Without a doubt, Douglass is thrilled to be

able to compete and demonstrate his scientific skills with his peers.

As Douglass proceeds through the rest of the semester, all of these classes and activities are aimed towards a specific career. In the future, Douglass stated, "For my main career, I really want to be a rocket scientist." As he takes these classes, he is gaining more information about himself and where he stands in academics. With that in mind, his goal is "to take as many [AP classes] as [he] can," to study hard, pass the AP tests and complete his first year of high school with a positive academic outlook. He has never been more excited to see what the rest of the school year has to offer. As the year progresses, his future looks bright, with the world containing new and incredible possibilities.



Credit: Crystal Rivera
Douglass '23 with his most recent science project.



Credit: Vikki Thongrattana
Sophomores Rachael Mae Jaymalin, Abby Denila, and Angelica Galban enjoy a cultural Thanksgiving feast.

Cultural Clubs Join to Give Thanks

Vikki Thongrattana '20
Copy Editor

On November 21, two cultural clubs, Asian Pacific Culture (APC) and Black Student Union (BSU), joined forces for a Thanksgiving potluck in Room 506 during lunch. This special occasion offered a place for students to come and share an intimate part of their culture: food. Both APC and BSU hoped to host a friendly event in which students could bond with their peers over their cultures' food, thus maintaining respect and acceptance among all customs.

Being the first collaboration between APC and BSU, this Thanksgiving potluck gave students a hearty meal that consisted of other cultures' food. The event itself was a success, as many different entrees were given. Spam musubi, adobo, lumpia, mac and cheese, fried chicken, and many other dishes were provided. APC's Junior President, Mia To, hoped to collaborate with BSU for a while, since she believed that "[both of their clubs] could share that common thread of wanting representation and love for [their] culture." BSU's Junior President, Tianna Cox, shared the same sentiments as To, thinking that this event was a good opportunity to show the

differences in these various cultures. In the near future, these clubs hope to participate in more collaborations with other similar clubs to continue spreading cultural awareness.

Students can feel unsure about sharing their culture to others, thus hiding the beauty of their customs. Lack of representation is still prevalent in America today despite it being such a diverse country. To combat underrepresentation, To "[hopes] to promote an open environment for people to share. . .and embrace their culture [through APC]. . .[as] it's hard for people to accept or embrace what they are, or the things that they love, especially around their peers." Even though it is a new club that was established this year, students have a platform to share Asian and Pacific Islander culture with more ease; anyone is welcome to join APC meetings in room 312 every other Wednesday, whether they want to learn more about Asian and Pacific Islander cultures or want to share their own culture with others. Other cultural clubs, such as BSU, also strive to maintain such openness to other cultures as well, improving each students' confidence in their roots, as well as growing their respect for other cultures.

Culture is not exclusive

to only some within certain ethnic groups, rather, it is a set of beliefs and values that should be shared and accepted among people. Unlike APC, which focuses primarily on Asian and Pacific Islander culture, BSU puts more spotlight on Black culture. "A lot of people perceive it as some radical club, or . . . misconstrue it as a club [just] for black people," Cox stated, "but the main purpose of it is to provide a community where people can speak upon issues that not just black people, but primarily black people, face. . .it's a club where we can promote unity and educate people about what's going on." BSU participates in discussions about issues that affect students; to continue, they also meet with other BSUs in the county to talk about such topics. For those interested in attending a meeting, BSU meets every Wednesday in room 517. Like To, Cox wishes to provide a safe environment for students to share their thoughts and feelings about their cultures.

Anyone, no matter their race, is allowed to attend APC and BSU meetings, whether to share their own culture, or to hear about others in order to gain more knowledge. As long as a student holds a positive and respectful demeanor towards other cultures, they are welcomed.

Ms. Grover Inspires Many Students

Mackenzie Cox '20
Copy Editor

Life can be strenuous and unclear, and it can push obstacles in the way of goals and everyday tasks. Ms. Sonja Grover, one of Chaparral High School's English teachers, knows this first-hand, being a cancer survivor. She is always working hard and persevering through any challenges that come her way, especially with the four clubs she advises. Throughout her post-secondary, academic career, Ms. Grover attended five colleges: Azusa Pacific University, University of California San Diego (UCSD), San Diego State University, University of San Diego (USD), and University of California Los Angeles (UCLA). Originally, Ms. Grover wanted to become a psychologist, so she worked on a degree in the field. After obtaining her undergraduate degree in Psychology, she began working towards her Master's degree. However, mid-way through, Ms. Grover discovered a passion to teach and decided to change her degree to a Master's in Teaching. When all her academics were complete, she left schooling with an undergraduate degree in Psychology, a Master's in Teaching, and two teaching credentials in multiple subjects and a single subject in English. She was ready to become a teacher.

At first, Ms. Grover wanted to teach elementary school, which is why she taught second grade at Temecula Elementary School, and a second-third combo class at Rancho Elementary. Eventually, life pushed her towards where she is today, at Chaparral High School, teaching freshman English as well as AP English Language and Composition. But the road to get to where she is today was not always easy. During her time at Rancho Elementary School, she had developed acinic cell carcinoma, a rare type of cancer. "I continued

to work full-time while I had radiation. I also had to have surgery which was really tough. I would come to school, and then go to the radiation treatment, and then go home and prepare for the next day," Ms. Grover commented on the hardships of having developed cancer. "But the classes I had at Rancho Elementary. . .[that] was where I could escape, and not think about it for a while because I'm interacting with kids. So for me. . .I wouldn't have wanted to stay home, wouldn't have wanted to miss the opportunity to be with those kids, and I think that's actually what helped keep me going." Although the battle was hard, Ms. Grover was able to persevere and is now cancer-free.

Even with the difficulties she has faced, Ms. Grover is always working hard and puts the academic careers of her students first. She stated, "If you want to give the students the feedback that they deserve, you're grading after school, you're grading on weekends, you're grading

on your vacation." She loves teaching English because of how many elements go into the subject and because of just how interactive it can be. Ms. Grover finds one of the most gratifying things about teaching as seeing her students succeed and tell her that she has made a difference in their lives. She does not want her class to be remembered as just an English class but as a place where her students grew as people and as writers. That is why Ms. Grover advises four clubs (Tri-M Music Honors Society, California Scholar Federation (CSF), Paws for a Cause, and the Creative Writing club): so her students, and students outside her class, can progress as people and grow throughout their academic careers. Ms. Grover is an amazing teacher, and she puts her all into her teaching. Despite some of the difficulties that she has had to face throughout her career, she has been able to persevere and hopes she can be someone that



Credit: Sonja Grover
Ms. Sonja Grover posing with a student she inspired at graduation.

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Should Schools Be Able to Restrict Free Speech On Campus?

Hate Speech Damages Productivity

Juleah Rasmussen '22
Staff Writer

Schools are designed to provide an educational environment that is impartial to students based on the categories they identify with, such as race. Students are unable to learn in conditions that they do not feel safe in. A school's environment needs to prevent harassment of all kinds in order for learning and growth to be possible.

A hostile learning environment will damage students' mental and emotional development, as well as obstruct the ability for students to become healthily socialized between groups of different identities that they will be living among in society.

Schools need to keep in mind that the right to freedom of speech is important among students, while also remembering that it is a necessity to regulate vulgar speech that is harmful to the student body.

The purpose of public education is to give students a place to further their knowledge, but without the regulation of speech, schools will not fulfill their motive, and instead form an unhealthy and even abusive circumstances for students.

Before the invention of the internet, the public school system was very important to educate students, but with an abundance of information at societies fingertips, one of the most important roles of schooling is now socialization.

Students should be taught why discrimination is harmful and what the First Amendment truly protects. Students

should never be allowed to discriminate against or harass other students. Without the regulation of speech, school would do more harm than good.

Students who identify with different groups according to race, gender, or sexual orientation often self-segregate. This is caused in part by the lack of acceptance between people in society. This segregation prompts groups to discriminate against each other. Although regulating speech does not stop the self-segregation taking place in schools, it almost completely eradicates the ability for discrimination between students. Schools should be able to protect their students from destructive situations regarding speech. Hate speech is not free speech.

Many American employees can be fired for the use of hate speech because the First Amendment does not extend to private employers. If schools did not regulate hate speech, then they would be teaching students that it is acceptable to discriminate or harass other people. Nowhere in the First Amendment does it state that people have the right to verbally abuse other people.

The First Amendment gives American citizens the right to expression to avoid oppression. Allowing hate speech anywhere would defeat the whole purpose of the amendment.

Schools are not striving to limit the self-expression of students. Students can express themselves without inflicting damage upon others. Eliminating discrimination is key to the future of America, therefore, it is of utmost

urgency for schools to implement a properly balanced system that regulates hate speech. Hate speech does not belong in schools. Adolescents are preoccupied with responsibilities and new emotions and experiences. They should not have to deal with things such as harassment at school. Although there are no real governmental consequences of most speech, teaching kids about the societal consequences of speech is important. If groups in society do not accept hate speech than neither should places like schools.

Do Not Restrict Kids, Teach Them

Chloe Vande Kamp '21
Staff Writer

School campuses are environments that hold a very important role as to how adolescents will grow and develop as they reach the adult stages of their lives. This makes the issue of free speech vital and sensitive to the education system in how it applies to schools, and to what extent schools can intervene. It is not in the jurisdiction of school districts to infringe on the First Amendment rights of any student. There is another

way to prevent the harmful effects of open expression.

Regulating even the profane speech of students—especially by law—would not only be ineffective but unconstitutional. Schools do need to focus on teaching adolescents of the power of their words, but this does not have to involve legal action. Words can be an effective tool that can be used for ethically good deeds. America is the only country in the world to legally protect freedom of speech. Children growing up with this freedom have been provided the opportunity to use their words for productive expression and discussion of issues. If generations are growing up to speak hatefully, it is a problem that has been created by a lack of adequate parenting, not a lack of government jurisdiction. Schools and parents should be encouraged to teach their children good morals in their language. Schools should promote good ethics in expression. Considering that public schools are funded by the federal government, a general moral mentoring upon speech is as far as school jurisdiction can reach.

Dress coding is the perfect example of an attempt to better the environment to the unexpected bitterness and rebellion of students. It is not just that teens have the reputation for rebellion, but that they feel threatened and suppressed by restrictions on their self-expression. In an environment where they are most building their own thoughts and opinions—

many of which they most likely developed in their classes as they learned more through a government-instituted curriculum—teenagers are going to feel more inclined to show unique personalities and ideas that they will want to express.

In an ideal world, no one would intentionally say hurtful words to another person. This is not reality. There will always be people who say considerably offensive things, and “words hurt” simply is not a justifiable argument for government control over speech. It is not as if legal punishment is the only consequence that serves “justice” to the “politically incorrect.” There are social ramifications to all words and actions, good and bad, which significantly help to regulate the expression of socially unacceptable morals. Schools provide the perfect environment for students to encounter those social ramifications before they are thrown into adult life; the moment they are released from the American education system and into the world, there will not be any legal ramifications for their words—what happens then?

It cannot be expected that young adults will not want to explore the limits of their freedoms, but if they grew up with the social ramifications that actually apply to their adult lives instead of the legal consequences that do not, they will be better prepared to express themselves without the backlash and hate sometimes found in schools.



The question of whether or not schools should regulate free speech is a common topic for students regarding their First Amendment rights.

Immigrants vs. ICE: The Heartbreaking Reality of the American Dream

Vikki Thongrattana '20
Copy Editor

As a running problem in the United States, attempts to control the flux of immigrants has increasingly become an obstacle for human rights. To counter the stay of illegal immigrants, Immigrations and Customs Enforcement, or ICE, was created. Unfortunately, the United States' promises of human rights and freedom is simply a fallacy due to

ICE's actions towards immigrants.

It is evident that many people view immigrants differently, and with President Trump's presidency, the stronger emphasis on immigration policies only further polarizes these differing groups. Typically, the left side of the political spectrum supports immigrants, while the right side pushes for stricter immigration laws. Proponents sympathize with the refugees and asylum seekers who immigrate to the U.S. hoping for a better life and believe that they are

good-natured citizens and therefore bring no harm. On the other hand, opponents argue that immigrants will only worsen the economy and may bring danger to the country. Events in which public safety was threatened because of immigrants did happen, so the negative responses towards them is expected. Yet, even if the arguments against immigration are valid, it does not excuse the violations of human rights currently taking place.

Labeling people as illegal immigrants should not strip their

rights as a human. However, there are numerous of unfortunate cases where immigrants have their rights taken away from them. For example, the right to a fair hearing in court is practically nonexistent for them, since ICE solely focuses on containing illegal immigrants despite their situations. According to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), “many detainees. . . never receive the most basic element of due process: a bond hearing to determine if their detention during the pendency of their cases is even necessary.” Without a right to a fair hearing in court, their detention is prolonged, even if they posed no real threat to others' safety. What right does ICE have to strip these rights from immigrants? Even the most basic rights are denied to immigrants, and there is more disappointment when looking at the sad conditions they are detained in.

Many people are ignorant or apathetic to what goes on inside the detention facilities in which immigrants are held in, as they are not the ones at risk for such treatment. The Guardian reported “more than 52,000 immigrants. . . in jails, prisons, tents, and other forms of detention.” What is truly alarming are the reports made by immigrants about the horrid

problems going on within these facilities, all which reveal how much their rights are being violated. On the Freedom for Immigrants website, there were documented abuses for medical and nutrition issues, sexual assault, prolonged detention, and much more. Imagining what goes on in these detention centers is truly heartbreaking and disgusting—everyone is entitled to respect and dignity, no matter the circumstances.

Even if detainment does not specifically concern a person, or that person opposes the incorporation of immigrants in American society, the abuse towards this group should be addressed. Students with immigrant relatives, as well as their families, are at risk for such mistreatment; the actions ICE is taking against immigrants can leave young teens without a family. Detainment only hurts immigrant children and families; there is no freedom granted to them without difficulty. How can ICE protect the citizens from detained immigrants who pose no threat to U.S. society? Truly, the real disappointment with immigration control is the direct violation of immigrants' rights as humans—they are no different from anyone else, so they should be treated that way.



Credit: Pedro Pardo

The recent actions of Immigrants and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has threatened the core of the American Dream for immigrants.



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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 email: rleonhardi@tvusd.us

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Community Service Promotes Greed Rather than Altruism

Staff Editorial
The Platinum Press Editorial Board

The idea of offering a reward for students who want to contribute and donate their time to helping others makes the whole idea of community service seem less like helping people and more like helping yourself. Many people would then put in their time only to gain some kind of gift or reward, rather than trying to help out those who are either in need or require assistance. If the reward was large, then most students would treat donating time as more of a job and expect to gain these kinds of rewards more often, even if the job they did was minimal effort.

Teens should be given rewards for their hard work because this, in turn, will help push them to do more for their community. Just like training a job, a teen needs a reward for doing what is asked of them; if they are not given that then they will not feel a strong push to do it.

Rewards strengthen teens' desire to help others and without it, they may feel like they are not doing all that they can to help the community. Also, where else will teens get credits for helping the community, if they are not able to get them from contributing to toy drives? Teens need those hours in order to graduate from high school.

But regardless of the need for hours to graduate, students themselves should not be rewarded with community service hours without actual work to better the community. Students should be rewarded through true community service, not by buying ten toys to get one-fourth of the community service required to graduate. The toy drive, while nice in thought, only provides students with an outlet to fuel their indolence.

From the very start of a child's education, there is a price tag to community service. Out of financial necessity, elementary schools hold fundraisers that wheedle students into participation with cheap prizes above their heads to salivate over. Now adolescents are seeking out to help others, not for the sake of



Current high school students are not intrinsically motivated to give back to their community without any external reward.

giving back to their community, but gaining reward. This is not to say that the community service requirement should be removed; it gives students good experiences and opportunities.

However, there should be a more clear emphasis from parents, teachers, and administrators to students the true motive of logging hours: community service is about giving back, and the only thing students should really feel they have gained is a better sense of connection to their locale and a drive thereafter to continue selfless acts on their own free time.

Community service is a unique opportunity for students to improve the lives of others. When students buy their community service, they miss the opportunity to grow as people. People who carry out community service, learn more about their personal strengths and weaknesses because it gives them the chance to gain experiences that impact peoples' lives. Community service develops students' leadership and communication skills. By becoming involved in

their community, students can feel more connected to things like social justice. It is important for students to become exposed to the types of issues they will be while doing community service. These experiences build their problem-solving skills and help to increase empathy among students.

The idea of doing community service—to positively impact the lives of others—was twisted into a more selfish regard: hours for graduation. Students should be donating for the joy of helping others improve their quality of life; allowing extrinsic motivation (rewards such as money, grades, or reputation) to drive one's reasoning for community service to take away the humane intention behind donations.

When one is donating items, they should know that their items have the ability to put a smile on someone's face. Teens should want to donate out of their own accord, not because they need to. Requiring community service hours may encourage students to help their community,

but they do so begrudgingly.

With the enticing rewards of community service hours, it is no wonder that so many students contribute. As already established, the morality of the act is not particularly in focus; the reward is the only motivation driving students to give. To change an external motivation into an internal motivation is arduous and difficult.

However, advertisements such as commercials and posters to remind students of what giving to a program means could help with this. TVUSD should raise its voice and make the event bigger than just a simple date. These are just some of the first steps that could be taken to prevent students from donating in exchange for community service hours.

No one is saying to stop donating. Keep donating, in fact, donate whenever there is a chance. However, there needs to be a change in how the donation process on campus continues. People should just feel good when they do good things; there does not need to be a gold star for being a good person.

Taxation Without Representation Still Affects Teenagers

Megan Irwin '21
Managing Editor

The United States has 6.2 million minors working throughout the county, which means that 6.2 million citizens fall victim to the hypocritical idea that America was founded on the basis of no taxation without representation. Millions are undercut by income tax, working minimum wage jobs with long hours, paying taxes for a country, but are not being able to vote. These teenagers are finding their voice lost in the sea of excuses as to why they can fuel government greed and spending on citizens' dime, but not change the representation seen for minors. The very idea of taxing minors without equally representing them in government is ostensibly unconstitutional.

Many minors in the United States work and pay taxes, and are denied the right to representation in government. Most working minors pay an income tax that is taken directly out of their paycheck. They often work part time jobs for lower wages, meaning they hardly make enough money to support themselves, let alone have part of their income stripped away through income taxes. Some of the income tax is returned when teens file their tax return, but it is not guaranteed that teens will receive the full income tax amount, ergo depriving teens of one of the largest settling points of the Constitution. The United States Constitution states that

the right to vote will not be abridged on the basis of race, color, status of servitude, gender, or age; but these seem to only be applicable to those over eighteen years of age. This greed deprives minors who work and are taxed, as well as any other American citizen, from the opportunity to participate in a democracy of grand scale. The right to vote for representatives who share common objects in regards to

political agendas is granted to all citizens over eighteen, but not minors who are equally taxed but lack the accessibility to representation, so why is it that the United States limits minor participation in an active government?

All citizens in the United States are signatories to the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, which requires elections to maintain equal suffrage among voters. The United States falls short of this as 74 million Americans are refused the right to vote because they are younger than eighteen, this being unquestionably the largest group of people consistently omitted from representation in American government.

The opposition of legally changing the voting age to accommodate the lack of representation seen for minors is that the concept of minority rest on the assumptions that children are incapable of self-management. But if minors can work twenty-eight hours a week while maintaining their academics, why should a country that was founded on the right that taxes were only admissible with representation of the public deny the taxed equal representation in government or the ability to actively change the representatives in government? The United States needs a drastic change in regards to either collecting income tax from minors or changing the voting age for minors to have accurate representation. If nothing is done soon, teenagers will roam the streets in protest over taxation without representation in modern America.



Working minors are still taxed without representation.

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Censoring Political Ads on Twitter Will Only Keep America Polarized

Chloe Vande Kamp '21
Staff Writer

In any argument, political or otherwise, it is vital that both and all parties hear the reasoning from the opposing viewpoint(s). Without seeing the picture as a whole, it is immensely difficult not only to compromise but actually solve problems. Both sides of an argument make it complete,

and not even listening to countering arguments is like putting your favorite song on repeat and refusing to listen to anything else. It sounds good now, but there has got to be more out there.

Just as taste in music varies, so does political opinion; simply disregarding other opinions is simply arrogant and irrational. In order to have productive discussions and keep people

out of these dangerous, one-sided political song loops, there cannot be a censorship of political expression, which is exactly what the recently proposed Twitter ban on political ads will do: censor.

As good in intention as it may be, removing political ads destroys a lot of spark in controversy that gets people talking. Yes, it is a ban on all parties' ads, but that is not the point; of course someone is

going to find the ads that align with their pre-set opinions euphonic. What is important here is the lack of exposure to other opinions and affiliations. Whether or not someone disagrees with an ad, they have now seen it, are aware of it, and can discuss it. As people share and discuss the videos and posts they found on social media (Twitter, in this instance), it will not be simply their ideas that spread but other ideas that would not have otherwise been discussed, at least mainstream. Every presidential candidate has ideas and promises that they make to America's voters. Without these ads, those voters would less likely hear of their proposals, and therefore they would not be fully knowledgeable of what they were voting for. This is already relevant to some high school students who are legally eligible to vote.

Whether it be on a balanced or single-party

dominated campus, everyone's ideas matter in the context of an entire issue. This is not to say that the views of others should be accepted blindly, which would actually defeat the purpose of arguing for inclusive political discussion. Rather, this is to say that all sides of an argument should be spoken and heard; discussed and debated. At a time of life when brain development is at its peak, developing a well-rounded, knowledgeable understanding of political debates, as well as good communication and listening skills, is vital.

If there is a lack of political diversity on social media, people will not only be hearing their own opinions said back to them outside of the internet but online as well, and they will lose all connection to a diversified argument. This is politically destructive and could polarize America into two ignorant, self-agreeing sides.

Whether people like to admit it or not, anyone's mind can be changed. Respectful and open-minded discussions are often productive and are the catalysts for real solutions. If the opposing arguments are censored and immediately disregarded, especially under reasons that have to do with the person or political affiliation and not the argument itself, then the issue will go nowhere and remain stagnant. Not to mention that in a lot of cases, whether or not one side holds "indisputable" evidence is irrelevant in the context of simply understanding an entire argument. We need actively progressing discussion to solve world problems, and censorship eliminates this.

Every part of an argument is a piece to a puzzle that is America's political issues. Every political issue is a piece to a puzzle that is America's government. You can not complete these puzzles with only half the pieces.



Credit: Natalie Matthews-Ramo
Many American voters are only shown their perspective on social media, which encourages ignorance.

Limit of College-Level Courses Leaves Students at a Disadvantage

Juleah Rasmussen '22
Staff Writer

Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) programs are college-level courses that give students the opportunity to earn college credit while still in high school. Schools should offer both programs when possible because some students are better suited to one program versus another. When a school chooses to offer Advanced Placement classes but does not give students the opportunity to engage in the International Baccalaureate program, students who are better suited for a more holistic learning approach are at a disadvantage. This disadvantage for advanced students who are not as gifted in test taking can be a destructive and diminishing force against their ambition and

will to learn. In general education, public schools treat students as one unit instead of addressing individual learning styles, reinforcing the robotic-like standard students today face from society. The International Baccalaureate program gives a more versatile and challenging learning approach to combat the idea persistent throughout schooling in the United States: that every student is the same.

Although both programs help high school students to get ahead, neither program alone fits one type of student. The largest disadvantages to high schoolers who are advanced enough for college courses but only have access to Advanced Placement are the distinct differences in the programs. Advanced Placement classes are subject focused, and the method of assessment for gaining college credit for the class is strictly exam score. Therefore, the Advanced

Placement program mainly focuses on passing the end of course exam and does not build the same skills as the International Baccalaureate (IB) program. Students in IB programs are encouraged to drive their own learning and think independently. Life skills such as critical thinking, social understanding, adaptability, and resilience are gained throughout the classes, making students who engage in the International Baccalaureate program do better after high school than students in Advanced Placement classes. In International Baccalaureate classes, college credit is not the main focus, thus making it a very valuable option to advanced students looking for an opportunity to prepare themselves for the world after high school.

Advanced Placement classes are designed to let students gain college credit and help them stay

interested in school by giving them access to more challenging and interesting material. Having this program in schools is very beneficial to students, but schools should offer the International Baccalaureate program as well because it is better designed to aid in success after high school, and it breaks into programs that are overall more inclusive to the student population. The International Baccalaureate program breaks into four basic programs that contain ten different learning profiles, divided among categories such as Thinkers, Inquirers, and Communicators. This program prepares students not only in fields such as math, science, and the arts, but there are also career core classes and community service projects for more hands on experiences. Another reason International Baccalaureate classes should be offered is that

some colleges do not accept certain Advanced Placement course credits creating an unfair disadvantage for AP students who work long hours just like IB students. If both IB and AP classes were offered, then students could check the credit accepting policies of the schools of their choice before deciding what to take. This would remove the inability for students to get college credit course from these programs.

Schools that offer Advanced Placement (AP) classes should also offer International Baccalaureate (IB) classes in order to give equal opportunity to students with different learning styles. Schools already contain one standard for students of all different identities, causing many to conform or fall behind. The incorporation of the IB program furthers the stride towards fairness in the uniform school system.

“Ok Boomer”: How a Millennial Meme Exploded into a Generational War

Kiki Lilly '20
Editorials Editor

“Ok boomer” is not the new n-word. “Ok boomer” is not a slur. “Ok boomer” is a revolution against the generation that has terrorized Millennials and Generation Z. After being called soft and lazy, “snowflakes,” the younger generation has retaliated and taken back their years of insults and backlash. The debate on whether or not this phrase is considered

a slur is

absolutely absurd and honestly truly disturbs me as a black woman.

While growing up, kids were told to respect their elders, but it seems as though their elders have forgotten how to respect them in return. The youth grew tired

of hearing insult after insult, nitpicking everything they did, so they turned the tables and started a movement: “ok boomer”. This trend originated on the social media platform TikTok, as a SoundCloud song, “Ok boomer”, by Peter Kuli and Jed Will, blew up on the app. Slowly, users started making videos of them recreating the absurd situations they have encountered with baby boomers. Baby boomers are the generation following World War II in the year 1946

to 1964. The trend spread all over the internet,

encouraging the younger generation to stand up against their elders and throw their failures back in their face. Recently, news organizations have been losing their minds over this trend, shaming youth, and yet again, the boomers are trying to take down what Gen

Z and Millennials have started. At this point, it has gone too far. “Ok boomer” is not a slur, nor will it ever be. The n-word, on the other hand, a word that many are comparing to the new phrase, has to be censored, since it is an offensive slur. The audacity of those who use this as a scapegoat to avoid the bigger problem, boomers, it honestly is disturbing.

The baby boomer generation has damaged things that younger generations are now expected to fix, but at the same time, they criticize these generations for the things they did. Some call it hypocritical, but in reality, they are taking back what they deserve. It may be true that coming out like this, practically carrying pitchforks, is not the best resort, but that is the only way younger generations can get any attention. They have taken the wheel and are trying to drive this country back to what it should be, but without boomers and other generations listening, there is no hope. For anything to get done, society needs to start speaking out. Doing



Credit: Lauren Kolesinskas
The generational clash between Baby Boomers and Millennials has resulted in the “Ok boomer” meme.

things like this—making memes, having protests, getting into heated debates—is all because they care and want to speak their minds.

In all seriousness, though this meme—or trend—may be funny, it is almost like a cry

for help. There are far more important issues. The fact that society is focusing on classifying if “Ok boomer” is a slur is the least of anyone's worries. This ongoing debate on the generations is pointless; if nothing is

changing, something must be done. For now, this will be a funny meme, with some funny arguments in between, but later light will shine in the darkness and hopefully, all generations can start changing society piece by piece.

Aspiring Gamer Aljon Apilado Takes on Over Two Hundred Tournaments

Emily Pham '21
A&E/Lifestyles Editor

With a flourishing career and knowledge of video games, Junior Aljon Apilado, also known as "franz," is currently working towards his desired goals of becoming a professional Melee player. His passion for these competitive games has led him to become recognized as the first place winner of a console game called Super Smash Brothers (Bros.) Melee at High School Smash. Despite having loads

This consisted of a series of crossover fighting video games which featured characters from various Nintendo franchises. Although he was unsuccessful in winning, he used this experience as a way to improve his video game skills and abilities for future tournaments. Apilado explained, "I was super nervous and I played my first match. . .[but] I couldn't focus on the game because I was so nervous. . .[unfortunately,] I lost but that only fueled me to get better so I entered probably over two hundred local tournaments after." Apilado

winner's side of the bracket. If one lost a match from then on, they were to be eliminated from the tournament. With all the hard work and late night practices, Apilado placed first in the tournament and won a total of \$250. As of today, he is ranked eighteenth on the SoCal Melee Power Rankings and continues to improve as the year goes on.

Apilado has the desire to pursue his gaming career throughout college and has high hopes that one day he will be one of the top twenty Melee players. As of right now, he is working towards having a sponsor and plans on majoring in psychology after his high school years. Apilado added, "I've learned that mentality plays a much bigger role than people notice when competing in tournaments. It's not just about the game; rather, it's about your state of mind. The significance of this is that it helped me understand how to better improve on myself and how to keep pushing forward." Apilado's passion is what allowed him to partake in over two hundred tournaments in the past years and he continues to participate in more events in the future

At only sixteen years

old, Apilado is at the status of semi-professional and wishes to continue his journey as he works toward improvement. He believes that attending more tournaments in his high school years will allow him to gain further experience in the gaming industry. This is only the beginning of Apilado's career, and he continues to use all of his knowledge and abilities to accomplish his goals of becoming a professional Melee player.



Credit: Aljon Apilado

Apilado competes with thousands of gamers at the Genesis Five Tournament.

of school work each night and his main priority being school, this has not stopped him from pursuing his thriving passion for gaming.

Apilado began his gaming career during his middle school years being inspired by his competitive little brother. After years of practicing his video gaming skills, Apilado decided to enter his very first Super Smash Bros. Melee tournament at SoCal Games and Comics.

later entered in another Super Smash Bros. Melee tournament at High School Smash, competing against top players around the world. This major league competition was played in a very common format for fighting games, involving a double elimination bracket which composed of a winner's side and a loser's side. Participants began on the winner's side of the bracket and played in a total of three matches with the winner progressing further into the

Photographer Junior Abigail Woo Captures Heart Through Pictures

Yalena Aguirre '21
Distributional Manager

Photography is a pastime that many people enjoy partaking in. The beauty of capturing an event or an individual through a photograph is inspiring to many ambitious photographers. For Junior Abigail Woo, capturing awe-inducing photographs has sparked her passion in this particular field.

Woo's journey as a photographer began when she was a child, but this is the first year that she is doing photography professionally with the right equipment and an actual camera. Her experiences with her sister, inspired her to pursue photography and photograph ballet dancers. Woo enjoyed the pastime because of her experiences during her childhood and her experience in her photography class here on campus because she can work with different techniques that makes her photographs stand out. She expressed how the class challenges her to photograph new items and try new editing techniques in order to make her pictures stand out. Woo also enjoys the pastime because she prefers to work behind the scenes of capturing photographs. Woo's career as a rising photographer has barely begun, with her inspiration from family and her interest with capturing the world around her driving the undeniable passion.

The aspiring photographer mainly photographs ballet dancers, due to her involvement in ballet. Woo stated, "I'd see a bunch of my friends do it. . .I'd just take pictures of them doing ballet." Her ideas for

photographing items that are related to nature and ballet come spontaneously. She described that she simply wander[s] around and find[s] things." Woo also enjoys the idea of capturing raw emotion being presented in photographs, "especially in dances." During her journey of expanding her passion, one of Woo's goals regarding photography is to sell some of her photographs in the future once she has perfected her skills in the field. Her passion for the field of

photography has inspired her to spread out her skills through multiple platforms, such as her Instagram account @flares_fotograpy.

Woo has a tremendous skill in photography that has been praised by her peers and teachers alike. Although she wishes to be a teacher for her career, she hopes she can apply photography as a hobby throughout her life. But for now, she continues to pursue her passion in capturing the interesting and unique world around her.



Credit: Abigail Woo

Woo is often inspired by the beauty of nature in her photographs.



Credit: Abigail Woo

Woo's high shutter speed shot of a water balloon being popped.

Laughter on the 23rd Floor: The Drama Department's Latest Show Stopper

Jillian Flack '22
Staff Writer

Laughter on the 23rd Floor by Neil Simon, the story of comedy television writers dealing with the ups and downs of their show, was successfully depicted by the members of Chaparral Actors Troupe (CAT) on November 7 and 8 at 7PM and November 9 at 2PM and 7PM. Students and staff alike were drawn into the play's compelling storyline and acting, illuminating the efforts the actors put into making the production a show stopper.

This tale is told from the perspective of the main character, Lucas Brickman, a new writer to the staff that is struggling to succeed in his career and fit in with his peers in the midst of the stress that comes with being a part of the show. His interesting character was rendered realistically by Sophomore Brady Hill. While he was a difficult character to capture, Hill made it his mission to create the perfect persona for him. He shared, "Getting cast as [the] main character is really interesting in this role because. . .all

the other characters are going through this crazy, crazy thing while he is just. . .very different from any of the other roles in the show." Hill and the rest of the actors were successfully able to make the challenging scenes look like a walk in the park, creating a captivating performance. The audience and actors alike were obsessed with the beloved production that was put on. Hill shared, "There is no greater pleasure than doing *Laughter on the 23rd Floor* and it is one of my favorite sets I've ever done in the two years I've been in this school." This show's compelling plot and exquisite acting skills helped it to grow dramatically in quality, leaving audiences speechless.

This production did not just spring to perfection overnight. The actors had to work their hardest day and night as a team. Since they had long hours of practice and a short time frame, it was difficult for them to balance practicing for the play and memorizing their lines with their schoolwork, but they would not let that hold them back. They refused to let anything to come between them and their passion for acting and performing even though it was quite

difficult at times. Hill stated, "The hardest part about creating the show was making sure you got the lines exactly right because this is written by Neil Simon, who just passed away recently, so making sure you have his exact work is very, very important." While it was difficult, the production

was not just about the stress of getting everything done on time as it was also about the actors having an enjoyable experience growing their acting skills with their team. It helped them to build on their already strong acting abilities and form bonds with one another that can last a lifetime. Senior Alex Rosen, who played as Kenny Franks, remarked, "The people definitely [are] my favorite thing about being in the show]. . .Some of my best friends are in there so

being able to just work with them and mess around a little bit will always, like, work towards having such a great show. It's just the best." As shown through the reactions from the fans, the actors and actresses created an enjoyable show with one another.

Overall, audiences were pleased

with the passion and perseverance the actors put into *Laughter on the 23rd Floor*. While they are disappointed the show has come to an end, they are patiently awaiting the arrival of CAT's next play, *The Good Doctor*, which is showing on January 16 and 17 at 7PM and January 18 at 2PM and 7PM.



Credit: Jillian Flack

Sophomore Brady Hill and Senior Vance Johnson play as Lucas Brickman and Max Prince in the play.

Chaparral High School - The Platinum Press - December 13, 2019

Advanced Dance Teams Travel to Disneyland to Perform and Bond as a Team

Ashanti McClendon '20
Staff Writer

With the first semester coming to an end, the Advanced Dance teams are determined to make a final memorable moment before the new year begins. On December 6, both the girls and boys Advanced Dance teams, Syn[^]ergy and Agi*lity, took on a challenge at Disney California Adventure Park's annual Holiday Performing Arts Show. With new captains, team members, and teacher, the team won double the amount of awards in regards to the years prior to, winning Best Energy and Most Enthusiasm. Both teams worked their hardest in their co-ed pieces, exceeding school hours and contributing to their overall success.

In the process of preparing, Syn[^]ergy Captain Junior Vianne Cocco taught choreography accompanying the songs, "Underneath the Tree," by Kelly Clarkson and "Santa's Coming for Us," by Sia. These upbeat jams were able to both enthuse the audience and put them in the holiday spirit. Cocco said she chose these songs because "everyone knows them and the audience is sure to sing along." With such little time to practice, Cocco wanted to ensure that the team was completely

familiar with their music, so that they were all able to perform to their best potential. Senior Jake Bodilla agreed that the songs chosen "were actually pretty fun." This clearly showed in the teams' performances with their joyous smiles and uplifting energy conveyed in every move.

Not only are the teams' performances and victories a large part of this trip, but it also included the team bonding that came along with it. The teams are usually working so hard during and after school that they do not get much time to spend together. "It's just so nice that we get a chance to get closer and know each other more," Junior Jackie Tat commented. The teams pride themselves on being like a family and become even more so each day. Dance teacher and Director, Ms. Alyssa Gallegos, said that she was "so excited for the team's trip, and seeing the students have fun with their friends and family was a true moment to cherish." With the team's strong and unbreakable bond, it is no wonder that they perform so well together.

Along with the bonding, the teams typically have a great deal of fun on their Disneyland trips. Agi*lity Captain Senior Brendon Lamsong said that they "always go on the Guardian of the Galaxy ride first as a team tradition." After that, the teams

participated in a photo shoot where they got a chance to let loose and show off their personalities off stage. This is an important aspect to their overall experience, and was to be profoundly remembered. The laughter and good times they shared is what

makes their team a well-bonded one.

Though it has only been a few short months, the Advanced Dance teams have grown in both skills and at heart. The students themselves have gained close bonds and long-lasting memories that will continue to

grow with them as a team. With much to look forward to in the upcoming semester, Syn[^]ergy and Agi*lity hope to continue their winning streak and improve the teams in all areas, while displaying school spirit and putting their best foot forward.



Credit: Priscilla Muequey

After putting on their successful performance, Syn[^]ergy and Agi*lity members gather together for some team bonding at Disney.

Using Animation to Bring Art to Life

Siena Soffer '21
Copy Editor

Animators are individuals with the dedication and patience to bring their endless creativity into motion. As a person with these qualities, Senior Gabriela Howard has a bright future ahead of her. With a strong background and relevant coursework in art, she aspires to transfer her talent and passion into a career in animation.

In her early years, Howard found her inspiration from the art style seen in anime and manga. She was fascinated by the way in which artists could create a character and then "bring it to life." Although it began as a hobby, the more she practiced, the more she began to envision animation in her future. The key to her development over time is consistency. "It's

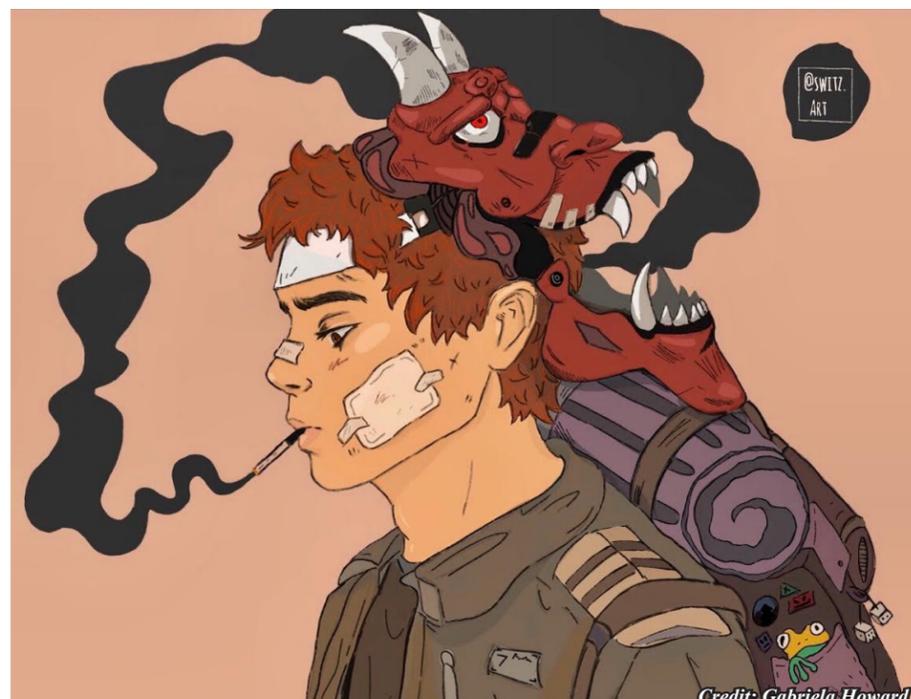
one of the most basic things, like, everyone says," claimed Howard, aware of the fact that it is a common piece of advice. Needless to say, the habit of drawing every single has improved her abilities to an extent where it is visible in each new creation. "The best thing you can do is just stick with it and eventually it will come," she said. Every new artistic obstacle she has been able to prevail over can be attributed to her work habits and determination to improve.

Currently, she uses her Advanced Placement (AP) Art and Design class to focus on the challenges found in the technicalities of art, and practices animation outside of school. Though she is very experienced in her field, she knows that she still has a long way to go. Howard will continue after high school, where she hopes to get accepted to Laguna College

of Art and Design (LCAD), majoring in animation. One of her dreams is to work for Cartoon Network and even create her own show, as the television channel had a huge influence on her childhood.

Howard, in addition, parts with a message to other aspiring artists in any field. Recognizing that many reject careers of this category due to the misconception that it will not provide a stable income, she assured that "in the end... happiness is the most important thing" and has stuck by this assertion, helping her progress in this field. She hopes that others apply it their passions—whatever they may be.

Howard continues to challenge and improve her artistic abilities. Hoping to make animation into a career, Howard has a long road ahead of her, and is dedicated to staying on track.



Credit: Gabriela Howard

An untitled piece of digital artwork made to practice technical skills by Senior Gabriela Howard.

Campus Writers Take NaNoWriMo

Yalena Aguirre '21
Distributional Manager

There is no doubt that this campus is filled with creative writers and aspiring novelists. Literature has inspired a multitude of young authors to explore different types of writing style and literature, from poetry to short stories. During the month of November, many writers participated in this year's annual National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo) challenge to expand their talents and creativity.

Launched on July 1, 1999 by Freelance Writer Chris Baty, NaNoWriMo is an annual internet-based creative writing challenge that takes place throughout the month of November. Additionally, the website it runs on is a non-profit organization that provides writers tools, structure, community, and encouragement for their work on and off the page. NaNoWriMo allows participants to create an entire novel with their desired genre and their own characters in the span of a month. Vice President

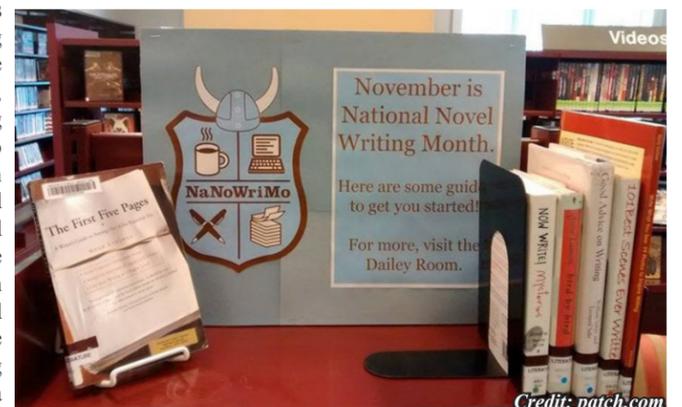
of the campus Creative Writing Club, Sophomore Katherine Passage, started participating in NaNoWriMo during her freshman year. She believed that her skill obtained through creative writing helped with writing her desired novel because "we [creative writing members] do a lot of seeing what

other people are working on and so, if one gives out ideas and... [others] can offer feedback, then they'll provide feedback on yours [novel]." Passage elaborated on how each of the members support each other on their journey. For her writing journey, Passage planned on writing her novel in the medieval-fantasy genre, in which she reached the word count of 4,470 out of the goal she set to reach 10,000 words by the end of challenge. Writers on campus worked diligently on their novels to complete the required word count and found enjoyment in expressing creativity.

Since the month of November is the only time an event is showcased for writers, there were high expectations for NaNoWriMo and much preparation for the event. It held great importance to Passage and creative writing members because "it offers a goal. When you're writing, you don't have a goal except for 'hey, I want to do this,' so [this challenge] is like a[n] 'I need to do this' goal." The event also challenged writers to be consistent with their work and stay motivated throughout the month. In

preparation for the work and commitment ahead, many writers storyboarded their ideas and plotted out the main points of their story so they had a better idea on what their story would be. Many participants will plan out how many words they will write per day since the official word count has traditionally been 50,000 words by the end of November, but writers can have different individual writing goals to meet their personal plans as well. "In the month or so before, I refresh myself on 'alright, where am I at with the book? What am I trying to write down?' And I'll plot it out," she explained. "I'll plan out the main idea and figure out what are some things I can add, and presenting options." In the midst of writing a novel and bringing their stories to life, writers had to plan ahead of time and prepare themselves for the commitment to their story.

Writing is not as easy as some might think, especially writing a novel. The writing challenge NaNoWriMo gave writers such as Passage the opportunity to expand their creativity and challenge their writing skills in the span of a month.



Credit: patch.com

National Novel Writing Month is promoted in libraries across the world.

New Series Continue the Mythological Universe of Rick Riordan's Creation

Emma Horwood '22
Staff Writer

The *New York Times* Best-Selling Author Rick Riordan has captivated kids and young adults with his thrilling and hilarious adaptations of various mythologies. His first series released in 2005, *Percy Jackson and The Olympians*, follows a young boy named Percy Jackson and his adventures after discovering he is the son of the Greek sea god, Poseidon, through six engaging books. Since the end of his first series, he has expanded the universe within his stories to include Roman, Norse, and Egyptian mythological elements as well as new characters and further character development. His books feature overlapping characters and plot themes from

other sagas which adds depth and establishes a relationship between his various stories. The universe Riordan has created can be enjoyed by both a younger demographic and teenagers.

His newest release, *The Tyrant's Tomb*, is the fourth installment in *The Trials of Apollo* series. *The Trials of Apollo* centers around the egotistical Greek god of the sun, poetry, and music, Apollo, who has been banished from Olympus for putting his faith in an untrustworthy villain who almost destroyed the gods. Now trapped in the body of a gawky teen, Lester Papadopoulos, Apollo is forced to regain control of the five oracles before he is able to gain back his godly form. Sophomore Carly Salazar said, ". . . I would recommend the books [*Trials of Apollo Series*] because they have good representation. Also, those who have read the Percy Jackson

books will see another side to the characters they already know and love." The newest addition includes new and returning characters, new takes on old legends, and more hilarious, harrowing adventures.

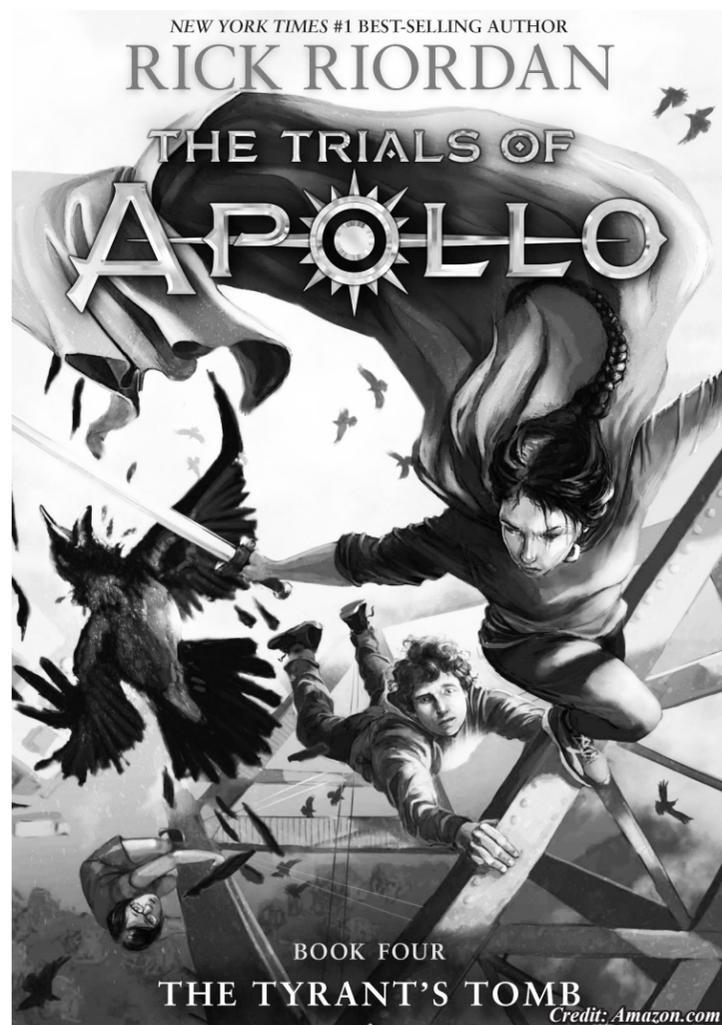
Another recent masterpiece that hit the shelves in October and was published under the Rick Riordan Presents imprint series is *Tristan Strong Punches a Hole in the Sky* by Kwame Mbalia. The book, a first installment in the Tristan Strong Series, follows the narrative of a thirteen-year-old, up-and-coming boxer who mistakenly opens a passage to another world. Strong discovers the world, the Midpass, as a realm where ancient African gods clash with African-American legends. Strong finds himself in the midst of this battle and, with the help of friends and allies he makes along the way, must convince the god, Anaci the Weaver, to send him home. This developing story line further expands Riordan's universe by incorporating Mbalia's intriguing characters and themes.

While some of his books are marketed as an easy read, the elements of diversity and relatability makes them just as entertaining for stronger readers. In his later series such as *Magnus Chase and the Gods of Asgard* and *The Heroes of Olympus*, Riordan ensures that every reader can see themselves in the characters by writing in characters with a diverse range of race, culture, religion, disabilities, sexualities, and gender identities. One such example of this is Samirah Al-Abbass from *Magnus Chase and the Gods of Asgard*, a teenage observant muslim, who spends her freetime leading the souls of heroes to Valhalla as a Valkyrie. Another diverse character featured in *The Heroes of Olympus* is Nico DiAngelo, an Italian immigrant son of the Greek god of death, Hades, who later in the series is revealed to be gay. Riordan even went above and beyond to represent those with learning disabilities by making dyslexia a common struggle faced by all children of the gods and expressing how the characters struggle with it in school. By including these characters, he gives younger readers a chance to gain a better understanding of those from different backgrounds than

themselves. Riordan's characters, aside from grappling with morally gray gods and vicious beasts, struggle with the problems of others their age face. Going past the usual complications in relationships and school that some authors portray, Riordan also explores issues such as homelessness and struggling with learning disabilities. The ways the characters handle these conflicts not only sets a good example to readers with similar dilemmas, but it also makes them more real and believable in the eyes of fans. Riordan

relates to the issues teenagers and young adults face without coming off as if he is generalizing or condescending to his audience.

These new additions add to the complex inter-workings of the mythological world that Riordan and other authors have worked years to create. Fortunately for fans, the thrilling titles that have engaged this generation of readers are nowhere near ending. Fans of Riordan can look forward to continuous installments that will further the wild, heroic storyline.



The Tyrant's Tomb is the most recent extension of Rick Riordan's mythological series.

The Force will be with the Saga Always: Fans Excitedly Await Episode IX

Katie Flack '20
Editor-in-Chief

Nearly forty-three years in the making, the beloved Skywalker saga is set to meet its end on December 20 with the release of the ninth installment, *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker*. Across the globe, hardcore fans and casual followers alike are counting down the days leading up to its long-awaited release.

With an extensive fanbase, the film will continue the stories of classic characters such as Leia Organa, Chewbacca and even Emperor Palpatine while also adding chapters to the stories of new characters such as Rey, Kylo Ren and Finn. Because of *Star Wars: The Last Jedi* ending with the loss of important characters and a severely-weakened Resistance, fans are anxious to see whether the First Order will reign triumphant, the Resistance will seize the day or if an unexpected outcome will be the end result. Furthermore, questions are swirling in people's heads regarding ideas such as whether a romance

will spark between Rey and Kylo Ren, what the Emperor's plans are as he returns to the saga, whether the Disney+ series *The Mandalorian* will tie in and how old friends will be bid farewell. Sophomore Manaya Andaro said, "I hope the balance between the light and the dark side is finally resolved." With fans sharing different hopes for the saga's close, *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker* is expected to reach a final worldwide gross in the billion dollar range after the successes of its predecessors, likely dominating the Box Office for several weeks upon its release.

However, the film's release is also the dismay of its followers. The end of the saga means the end of an era and fans do not take that lightly. Junior Raul Salazar Schaefer expressed, "I love it, so it kind of hurts [to see the saga end], but at the same time, I'm happy that it's gonna get an ending." For many, *Star Wars* has been more than just a film series; it has been a place where they belong. Whether they relate most to Anakin Skywalker's growth from a boy to a hero to a villain and back to a

hero or Han Solo's snarky, arrogant nature contrasting with his courage and bravery or Rey's mysterious background, but bright future ahead as a powerful Jedi, the saga gives them the opportunity to be a part of something. Not only is it a beloved story, it is the chance to escape reality for a time. It is the chance to inhabit the foggy swamps of Dagobah or the rolling plains of Naboo. It is the chance to start out as a young moisture farmer on Tatooine and evolve into a powerful Jedi knight. With movies, video games, book series and more to its name, *Star Wars* offers each member of its immense fanbase both activities to partake in and others to connect with. Andaro explained, "The *Star Wars* community is really big, people are really into it, you know, and, like, the different connections you have, like, you have the *Star Wars* Celebration. . . There's, like, a website for it, TV shows, I mean, the community is just really cool." But alas, that community

will soon thrive only on past memories as the saga it worships ends forever.

For the next week, fans will continue anxiously awaiting the film's release. Once it has been viewed and cemented forever into the history of film, they can look forward

to the release of future material such as new episodes of the Disney+ series *The Mandalorian* along with various other expected films and series. However, upon Episode IX's release, the Skywalker family's story will never grace the silver screen again.



Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker, will be released in a week, ending the Skywalker Saga.

Orange County Roleabout Theater Festival Finalists

On November 2, Advanced Drama members traveled to Irvine High School to compete in a theater festival with the goal of teaching students character development.

Photos and Information Gathered by
Katie Flack '20
Editor-in-Chief

Brady Hill '22

Comedic Film Monologue (First Place), IMPROV (Second Place), Comedic Film Scene (Third Place)



Alex Rosen '20
IMPROV (Second Place)



Olivia Snodgrass '21
IMPROV (Second Place)



Julian Cabugas '20
IMPROV (Second Place)



Kai Shaffer '21
Comedic Film Scene (Third Place)

Keeping a Budget for a Successful Holiday

Jillian Flack '22
Staff Writer

It is once again that magical time of the year where stores are filled from top to bottom with bright twinkling lights and the faint scent of pine needles seems to lurk around every corner. From gift giving to unity, the Christmas season is a cheerful and fulfilling time for many, but can be pricey for those on a budget.

By keeping a holiday budget, students can buy meaningful gifts for their loved ones while ensuring that they still have enough money for themselves to purchase necessary items. Economics Teacher Mr. Robert Clause explained, "I think first you need to start with a number that is realistic and that fits within your means and then, you need to

make sure that you stick with it and so I think that you have to have a plan." It is recommended for students to create a budget that is a little lower than they believe to be necessary as it ensures they will still have a positive balance in their bank accounts if they accidentally go over their budget. Clause remarked, "I think it's very important [to keep a budget] because people get very excited and very enthusiastic [about shopping] and there's a big shopping culture and it's very easy to overextend yourself." Especially during the holiday season, many stores attempt to market their most expensive products by placing them at eye level to make shoppers see the items more often. To avoid purchasing overly-expensive gifts, it is recommended to begin holiday shopping as early as possible, ensuring that students will have plenty

**"I THINK IT'S VERY IMPORTANT [TO KEEP A BUDGET] BECAUSE... IT'S VERY EASY TO OVEREXTEND YOURSELF."
- MR. CLAUSE**

of time to find the perfect present before stores jack up their prices to punish the last-minute shoppers. While students often buy gifts from a store, those from the heart can usually mean more to people. Clause shared, "Sometimes you can do other things that show you really care, like, for example, bake someone some gingerbread cookies or do something like that and those types of things can be every bit as or more meaningful than a Jamba Juice gift card or... some new earrings." Expressing how much one cares for a loved one can be a more valuable gift than any present bought from a store as it can help a relationship to strengthen and grow. Presents do not have to be the most expensive items on the shelves to be worth something to people. Finding ways to buy inexpensive gifts can help students maintain their budgets throughout the year. People often get sucked into the trappings of the holidays as they believe they have to purchase the most expensive gifts to make others happy, but gifts that come from the heart are often the ones that mean the most to people rather than the costly ones.



MANDICH'S MESSAGE OF THE MONTH

Depression. We've all heard of it, many have experienced it, but WHAT is it? Depression is more than just feeling sad; it lasts longer and feels much heavier than normal sadness. Symptoms include: Feeling like a failure, forgetfulness, frequent crying, self-harm, feeling helpless and worthless, a lack of motivation to partake in things that used to make them happy, missing class, thoughts of suicide, etc. Some people ask, "Why am I depressed?" What caused this? The answer is... GRAY. The cause of depression can be different for each person and is

typically a combination of different variables. The good news is, depression is one of the most treatable mental health challenges. Some people manage their depression by having a strong support system of people that love and care for them, some utilize therapy and mental health services to talk with a therapist or begin taking medication. Separate from receiving mental health treatment, here are a few tips that can potentially help you cope and manage your depression: Talk to somebody, give somebody an eight-second hug, challenge your negative thoughts

and try to replace them with positive ones, and practice gratitude. Just like people experience depression differently, coping and managing is different for everyone. If you or somebody you know is struggling with depression, there is help. Reach out to a counselor, your family, a hotline, etc. There are resources listed on the back of your student ID cards, including the suicide prevention hotline: 1.800.273.8255 and the Crisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741741. YOU are NOT your negative thoughts. YOU are worthy. YOU matter.

Celebrate the Holidays with Winter Activities for the Whole Family in Town

Alexa Neal '22
Copy Editor

As winter break comes inching closer, students may be having a difficult time deciding how they want to spend their precious two weeks off. Staying at home may not be appealing to everyone. Luckily, it appears that Temecula will not fall short of providing a bounty of thrilling endeavors for students and their families to enjoy.

For those searching for an exciting, new way to jumpstart the Christmas season, students may want to consider admiring the festive decorations all around. One of the most famous places that people flock to gaze at the sparkling

lights is Bainbridge Circle. Titled the Bainbridge Circle Holiday Extravaganza, the cul-de-sac displays wondrous light shows that are unlike anything seen before. Starting after Thanksgiving, the entire street decorates each house from top to bottom, synchronizing the lights to move with holiday music. "I like how it syncs up... the lights sync up, the radio. It's just a great way to spend time with family," said Sophomore Aubrey Wilson. Students can enjoy the decorations from the warmth of their car, as the street has its own satellite station that plays the music used. One can also walk the loop in order to receive an up-close view of everything. Another location that offers Christmas celebrations for everyone is Peltzer Winery. More

commonly known for their pumpkin patch, Peltzer Winery also hosts a Christmas celebration. Families and friends can enjoy an ice skating rink, local food trucks, and live music, with a few appearances from Santa himself. Galway Downs also provides similar attractions, as well as movie screening, retail, and holiday activities for all ages.

However, not everything during the last few months of the year has to be about Christmas. There are a myriad of options for those who simply wish to celebrate the coming of cooler weather, one of which being ice skating. There are many places where students can go ice skating, the closest location being Old Town. This rink opened yesterday and will continue to provide fun until January

5, allowing visitors to experience their own Rockefeller Plaza ice skating fantasy. "My favorite part about ice skating in Old Town was the environment. Everyone was happy and in the Christmas spirit," described Junior Allison Parra. "It's a great place to hang out with your friends and have fun." Ice skating allows for people to experience one of the many stereotypical ideas of winter without having to go far from where they live. Simpler ways to enjoy the beginning of winter can be grabbing a warm drink from a nearby coffee shop or shopping for the perfect gifts for friends and family.

Students may be searching for a place to participate in the New Year festivities, and Old Town is one of the many places for just this. Old Town

has their own variant of the famous Times Square Ball Drop—the Grape Drop. While waiting for the beginning of 2020, one can enjoy many of the free activities, such as face painting, carnival games, and a giant slide. There will be two countdowns until the new year, one at 9PM and another at 12AM, so that those who do not wish to stay up late can experience the highly anticipated countdown.

Other ideas to consider can be supporting local theater companies by seeing productions of A Christmas Carol or the Nutcracker, or simply going caroling around one's neighborhood to spread the cheer to everyone. With so many winter events to participate in, students will likely have no difficulty deciding what they will want to partake in.

The Recently Resurrected Struggle of Nicotine Addiction and How to Stop

Emma Horwood '22
Staff Writer

The recent comeback of smoking among teens and young adults, whether through e-cigarettes or the classic tobacco cigarettes, has resurrected what should have been an obsolete problem: nicotine addiction. New ways of consuming nicotine have infiltrated a younger demographic and have unfortunately even become a part of current teenage culture. The road to recovery from addiction to nicotine is rocky, but ultimately a necessary struggle for those seeking to right themselves.

Nicotine is a chemical found in certain adult products that acts as both a stimulant and a depressant and is insanely addicting. The first place to start is to ask oneself why they want to quit. Some start by writing down their reasons in a journal to serve as a reminder in times when one begins to doubt their capacity to quit. "I wanted to quit when smoking was my 'initial solution' to any source of stress or turmoil," said a student and former smoker who wished to remain anonymous. "I would go to far lengths to get it and eventually, I realized that it was taking a further toll on me." Another important step is to set a quit date. For some, quitting cold turkey is almost impossible. Setting a definitive date

to quit completely, while consuming less and less nicotine on the days leading up to it, adds extra motivation and can make the transition easier. It is also essential to remember that mistakes happen and that, during recovery, it is common to relapse. Having a clear cause for quitting is a necessary tool for getting back on the wagon and following through on one's goals. Quitting nicotine requires willpower and determination to change, things often hard to come by, but achievable with motivation.

Those who give up this addictive influence experience withdrawal. Withdrawal is the body's reaction to being weaned off of a drug or substance it has become dependent on. Nausea, irritability, sore throat, and intense cravings for nicotine are a few symptoms specific to nicotine withdrawal. Enduring this is the biggest obstacle smokers face, but seeing as the result is becoming healthier overall, it seems the ends justify the means. Though options are limited for those under the age of eighteen, there are ways to ease the symptoms and make a smoother recovery. Cravings come and go, lasting for a few minutes, but after one to three months of abstaining from nicotine, they will virtually disappear. The trick to avoiding giving in is to stay strong during those short periods. Small activities that will keep one busy such as doodling,

knitting, chewing gum, or calling a friend can help one make it through the few minutes of craving. Another practical way to relieve discomfort is to stay hydrated. Drinking water has been shown to soothe dry mouth, constipation, increased appetite, and nicotine craving by flushing residual nicotine out of the body. The battle with withdrawal

is often what decides whether or not one is able to successfully quit nicotine, but it can become more manageable with the right strategy.

While quitting nicotine is especially difficult for those under the age of eighteen, seeing as they do not have access to aids such as nicotine patches and gum, it is still possible. Simple things such as

exercising and eating a healthier diet will go a long way when dealing with the repercussions of overcoming an addiction. Quitting will both save money and improve mental and physical health. It may be a challenge to quit, but the reward far outweighs the struggle. Quitting nicotine is a positive step towards a more fulfilling life.



Vaping is detrimental to one's lifestyle, with both physical and mental health repercussions along with a burden on one's wallet. Credit: Kitsap Sun

Athletic Injuries: Various Causes and Ways to Prevent Them from Occurring

Mason Dearie '23
Staff Writer

In any sport played, whether it be football or golf, anyone can suffer from injuries at some point or another. However, the full effect of these injuries is not always recognized by athletes. Various injuries can lead to difficult experiences throughout an athlete's high school career. If severe enough, athletic injuries can even end a student's sports journey. Furthermore, these injuries can also ruin scholarship opportunities in one's future.

Athletic injuries have major effects, not just on one's physical state but on their surroundings as

well. Depending on the injury, athletes can have their entire sports career ended, miss scholarships, and could even damage their academic experience. While some scholarship opportunities may be missed, colleges are usually consistent and reliable with already signed scholarships. Football Head Coach Mr. Andrew Ramer elaborated, "If you're already committed or if they've already offered you [a scholarship] and are serious to take you, in football at least, they will stick with it." Furthermore, injuries can affect a player's academic experience. The injury may potentially cause the player to miss some classes for a doctor's appointment or physical therapy. It could also affect the

player on a mental level. Students could be put into a negative mindset, leading to them only focusing on the negative thoughts swirling in their heads. Athletes' injuries can affect many aspects of their life such as scholarships missed, sports careers ended, and academic disturbance.

Obviously, no athlete has a desire to be hurt and there are many ways that can help prevent injuries. Stretching to increase flexibility is a great way to prevent an injury such as pulling a muscle. Also, breaking bad habits that may have existed and improving form prevents muscle injuries. Furthermore, playing safe and not playing through the pain are major prevention options. Playing through pain is only going to make the injury

worse. While playing safe may not be the way to win the game, it could just be the difference to end an athlete's career. Athletes can take many precautions to prevent future injuries that could be detrimental to them.

While these injuries have very severe consequences, a main combatant is compassion from those around an athlete. If a student is supported by their family, friends, and teammates, their mindset will likely be set positive. Ramer explained, "It all just depends on the injury and their support system and if they allow them to get into a negative mindset of 'this is ruined' or if they have a strong support system with their friends and coaches and family members." Athlete injuries are just

one obstacle throughout life. When athletes understand this, they will be able to break down the mental wall that is blocking them from being the best that they can be. Although athletic injuries can cause a great deal of hurt, a strong coping and support system will make all the difference.

Injuries are a very common factor that comes with playing sports and how severe that injury may be can have major effects. The injury could cause the athlete to miss scholarship opportunities, physical pain, limitations on what they can do on and off-campus, and affect the player mentally. However, if the injured player has a good support system, they will make it through the hard road ahead.

Boys Soccer Setting Goals for the Season

Mason Dearie '23
Staff Writer

The Varsity Boys Soccer team is starting their season strong, winning the first to games of league, first against Yucaipa High School 3-1 and then against Paloma Valley High School 5-0. This success is due to the incredible coaching from Coach AJ Covarrubias along with the exceptional skill that the boys have. Not only do they have incredible skill, but exemplary chemistry. This year's Varsity Boys Soccer team has a terrific chance at their goal for CIF.

The team has great chemistry as the boys have been playing together for so long. The boys are all able to relate with one another in their own type of way and are always comfortable around each other. Center Attacking Mid Senior Aboubacar Cisse explained, "I feel like I am able to connect with everyone in the team in some type of way. Everyone on the team is very easy to talk to because they are comfortable around the team which makes our team even better because it shows we have trust in each other." The

boys have had many years of practicing and playing together to improve their friendship to be the best it can be. This year's Varsity Boys Soccer team has one main strength and advantage over their competition with their strong bond and chemistry.

Many of the boys soccer players have a good amount of confidence in this year's varsity team. Although the seniors left last year, the team is still filled with great amounts of skill and talent. Coach Covarrubias also has confidence in his team, saying, "I think we have a very good shot at definitely being a really tough competitor in our league and potentially moving on into the playoffs." Furthermore, Cisse believes his team has also improved a great deal physically from last year. He explained, "I believe that we are more talented compared to last year." Varsity Boys Soccer has one of its best seasons ahead of them and they are just getting started.

The soccer team has a very good mindset towards the game this season. Although the boys have high expectations for the year, they are always sure of the fact that they are going to try

harder and harder. "The younger players such as the sophomores and juniors have the mindset of improving and winning," Cisse explained, "Everyone on the team is expecting big things this season, but we always make sure that we understand that it is going to be a process." While the team is shooting for the stars, they are always in the right headspace. Furthermore, Coach Covarrubias believes the team's attitude is one of the main improvements from last year. He said, "[Another improvement is] the moral or just the attitude of all the kids. They're happy, they want to do well, you know, having fun, pushing each other." This year's Varsity Boys Soccer team has an all-time high of morale along with incredible mindsets that will push them into the running for CIF.

Varsity Boys Soccer already has great chemistry among the players, impressive talent, and great attitudes toward the game. This year's team fares well against the rest of their league and has also made some major improvements from last year. The boy's next game is at 5PM this Tuesday, December 17 against Citrus Valley High School.

Meet Johnson, Basketball Star



Credit: Jackie Schmitt

Johnson prepares for his next move to the basket in a game against Monte Vista High School.

Devin Hernandez '20
Staff Writer

It is no doubt that sports have been a big part of Senior Jady (J.J.) Johnson's life. As a freshman, Johnson was the quarterback for the freshmen football team as well as a player on the basketball team in the winter. He stopped playing football after noticing how often he got hit in his back, due to the fact that being quarterback comes with a lot of injuries. Johnson has been playing basketball since he was just five years old when his parents signed him up to play, so he decided to continue on with the sport.

Johnson loves to win and will do whatever it takes to succeed. Along with his desire for victory, competing and playing basketball is what motivates Johnson to do his best every day every day. "A team goal is to win league and get revenge on everyone. . . Just the competition itself motivates me. I play hungrily and simply want to win and beat these other schools," said Johnson. Winning

league is obviously every team's goal, but Johnson believes that this year, the team has what it takes to win and defeat the teams they had previously lost to.

In his sophomore year, Johnson was playing in a basketball game for the Pumas when he injured his back, which was already an issue, resulting in a season-ending injury. "During basketball season, I went to save a loose ball, diving into a metal ball cage that got left out. . . which seriously hurt it [his back], then I kept playing on it and it finally broke," explained Johnson. The injury left Johnson out of basketball for over ten months and to this day, he still has back problems as a result. Now, as a senior, Johnson is driven by his injury to take advantage of the time he has left playing basketball here for the Pumas. "I'm also motivated by knowing my days are numbered. Having broken my back and losing my sophomore year reminds me that nothing's guaranteed," explained Johnson. This season, to make sure that Johnson does not re-

injure his back, he and his coaches are making sure to limit how much he is playing in both games and practices. "I have back spasms every few weeks too, it's just about pain tolerance at this point," said Johnson. However, despite the challenges he has faced, Johnson has not been stopped from moving forward and looking toward his future.

Johnson values his education and after high school, he wants to attend college, but still be able to keep basketball in his life. "Education comes first so I plan on prioritizing my major over basketball when it comes to picking a college," Johnson said. Working and being around things that one enjoys is always important, which is why Johnson has considered the idea of being a basketball coach in the future.

Johnson's injury made him realize that nothing should be taken for granted. With the damage done to his back, he gained more motivation and passion to accomplish more for the basketball team this year, while also keeping his physical health in mind.



Credit: @chspumaboysoccer

Senior Ryan Collins, the Varsity Boys Soccer team's goalie, blocks a goal from the opposing team in a game.

Boys Wrestling Team is Returning to the Mats



Credit: CHS Wrestling

Junior Jacob Krachmer pins his opponent in a match against the Ontario High School Jaguars. Bella Quintanilla '22 Staff Writer

Determined to do well this season, the Boys Wrestling team is preparing to bounce back from their offseason with no hesitation. Their coach, Mr. Jacob Paino, is leading the team into the season with hopes that their hard work will pay off in their future competitions. With the team having more experience in comparison to last year's, they are expected to have a great season. Last year, they had a record of 1-4 and with this season just barely starting, the team aspires to have a strong recovery using the experience they have gained from last season and the offseason.

A shared goal for the team this season is to create better chemistry within the team. According to Senior Devon Craig, the team is focusing on incorporating "brotherhood, like, we all want to create a closer bond like a family," thus making a stronger team. At the moment, the team seems distant from each other with a lot of wrestlers having different goals. Coach Paino claimed that the team should be able to "get a culture going in the room" and work with one another more cohesively than last season if they learn more about discipline and sacrifice. Recently, the team has been making obvious improvements. Craig explained that this year's team has grown a lot since

last year in skills and techniques. He stated that "a lot of the wrestlers from last year have gotten a lot better now," seeing as last year's team had consisted of many wrestlers that were new to the sport. Individual wrestlers can be seen during practice with more skill and better techniques that are sure to help them during matches. Wrestlers that had been introduced to the sport last year are upping their tactics and are becoming "smarter wrestlers" according to Coach Paino. With their techniques and experience improving and increasing, this season is expected to be a great deal better, with many of the wrestlers hoping to qualify for state. Team Captain, Senior Alex Perez, claimed

that the team will continue to follow their patterns with practice to keep up good strategies and get ahead in the very competitive league. One of the teams that this school has a bit of rivalry with is Temecula Valley High School (TVHS), one of the top wrestling teams in the valley. The goal this year, according to Perez, is "to be known as the school that beats TVHS." Wanting the team to not only improve on the mats but also be able to gain more life-skills, Coach Paino adds that the boys will "learn some life lessons, learn about hard work and discipline, sacrifice and really learn what that means and how it pays off." Hopefully, the team is able to win more and celebrate their accomplishments with what they have learned.

Overall this season is expected to be full of heart. The team will be working their very hardest and use all the skills they have learned and trained to perfect in order to show their competitors that they came to win. Having a lot of confidence and determination to win more matches and accumulate more points will set the standard for this season. Wrestling can allow student-athletes to learn how to manage their time and understand what it means to truly work as hard as they can. With all these goals in mind, we can expect the team to strive throughout the season and make great achievements in their individual matches and in their team as a whole.

JAW-DROPPING JUNIORS

Photos & Information by Nicole Gonzalez '21 Sports Editor

MICHAELA



JUSTINIANI

Beginning her third year playing on the Varsity Girls Soccer team, Michaela Justiniani started this year playing as a forward. Her soccer career started when she played recreational soccer at nine, and then moved to Legends Soccer Club at eleven. She has received an All Scholastic Team award and the Varsity Midfield Most Valuable Player award. Justiniani has been offered a scholarship to play Division One (D1) soccer at Boise State University.

JACOB



BUSTAMANTE

As a co-captain of the Varsity Boys Cross Country team, Jacob Bustamante started his third varsity season this year. He has been running since eighth grade when he was on the middle school cross country team. He won multiple cross country races in the past three years. When the team qualified for California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) finals this year, Bustamante placed twenty-second overall and placed first amongst Puma runners.



Athlete Spotlights



Photos & Spotlights by

Bella Quintanilla '22 Staff Writer & Nicole Gonzalez '21 Sports Editor

Hunter Simon '22

Varsity Girls Basketball



Playing Varsity Girls Basketball, Sophomore Hunter Simon made the team her first year. Recently transferring to this school, Simon shared that her first year here has been very busy, balancing harder classes and two sports all at once. However, that has yet to stop her from doing what she loves. She has known basketball since she was just two years old, growing up in a household where her mother had played and coached the sport and her brothers played as well. Since she has been

surrounded by the sport her whole life, she fell in love with it instantly. Her mother and her older brother are her biggest role models, Simon says that she "always take[s] account for what they say" so she can further improve her skills. Simon explains that her team is "very energetic and fast moving [and] when we're all together, we just laugh and have a good time." As she is very competitive and appreciates that her team has her back and she has theirs, she loves to be on the court winning with them. When feeling discouraged, Simon is able to reflect and know "it won't stay for long and it will pass." She suggests "not to listen to others' negative comments and engorge yourself in what you love." With her spirits and energy high, Simon is ready to get on the court and work her hardest every day to play the sport that she loves.

Alex Perez '20

Varsity Boys Wrestling



Varsity Boys Wrestling captain, Senior Alex Perez, has been wrestling since he was eight-years-old. He was introduced to this sport after meeting friends that were involved in it, initially participating in Jiu Jitsu. This year is his fourth year on varsity and his second year as Captain. Perez shares that the role of being a captain is to "lead by example" to be able to push his teammates to their limits and ensure that they are always doing their very best. He loves to watch his teammates compete, seeing

them win and get excited to wrestle competitively because, as Perez stated, they are a family that supports each other. In his freshman year, he felt the biggest struggle was transitioning from "wrestling kids [who were his] age to kids who were older and knew more about the sport." In comparison, his biggest struggle right now "is the injuries [he] gets" while competing "since it is such a rough sport." Through all of these struggles, he is still able to practice and improve his skills. When it comes to handling school and wrestling, Perez says that "wrestling taught [him] how to manage [his] time," avoiding the difficulty he encountered freshman year. With his sport and academics handled, he also has time to consider where he would like to go to wrestle collegiately but he is still searching for the right college for him.

Zoey Sapida '20

Varsity Girls Soccer



Varsity Girls Soccer Captain, Zoey Sapida, began her senior season excited and prepared for a challenging but successful last season of soccer. As it is her last year playing at the school, this season is bound to be both sentimental and memorable after all of her years of dedication towards soccer. Originally, her love of the sport started when she played indoor recreational soccer at the age of five and moved over to club soccer at eight. Since then, she has found the joy in "having a

healthy lifestyle" as well as "creating relationships with people who have seen you at your weakest, strongest, proudest, and ugliest," said Sapida. Not only that, but playing on multiple teams throughout the years and meeting new teammates has taught her lessons that will carry on into future stages in life. "I think just being part of a team was really impactful because it just shows you can't do everything yourself," Sapida stated. Stepping into the new position of captain of the team, she faces difficulties when adjusting to the role of a leader. Sapida believes, "I'm not really the kind of person that can like verbally lead people." Instead, she is willing to make a change and step up to the challenge by working with her teammates and leading by example. With this in mind, she is ready to have a fun and competitive final season.

A Look into Athletic Trainer John Rentar's Twenty-Two Years on Campus

Nicole Gonzalez '21
Sports Editor

Since 1997, when the school first opened, Athletic Trainer Mr. John Rentar has truly contributed a large part to make the school what it is today. By aiding injured athletes and teaching a variety of medical classes for almost twenty-two years, his hard work has not gone unnoticed—especially since his typical workday includes multiple hours of supporting sporting events and always being on full alert for any mishaps.

Throughout his many years working on campus, Rentar has witnessed multiple changes that have impacted his life as a devoted staff member. From teaching classes including the Career Technical Education (CTE) pathway courses, medical core and kinesiology, as well as being the school's devoted athletic trainer, he has witnessed a variety of changes in all aspects of the school. As one of the most aware spectators at sporting events, seeing multiple sports win the California Interscholastic Federation-Southern Section (CIF) and working with different coaches and athletes has shaped his years of experience as both a sports-lover and a teacher. Not only that, but both the

teams and the skill levels of sports have improved immensely. "That is just insane when you think about it, like, how many sports there are compared to back then," described Rentar, after calculating the sixty different teams that he and his sports medicine students help all throughout the year. Now, he said it has gotten tougher because "spring [season] used to be real easy. . . now we have night games, boys and girls, and it just adds to the day." Because of the increase in sports and more athletes in demand, while also being a teacher on campus, his responsibilities add up and balancing time can be difficult.

A normal workday for Rentar consists of working from 8AM to 8PM, which means he sacrifices much of his own personal and family time for the sake of athletic training. Although working as an athletic trainer may come with its difficulties, Rentar stated, "I gotta hand it to my family. They have the biggest sacrifice because they don't see me very often." And to him, his time spent at home is 100 percent devoted to his family, while his time spent at school is all about academics and athletic training. Thankfully, more resources and money have become available to the athletic training program throughout the last twenty

years. Mainly, this has been through the athletic training facility that was implemented last year, which includes more space leading to more treatment and taping tables. Now, with the new center, Rentar believes it has made his job both easier and more difficult at the same time, since now, athletes can get treated better and faster—the only drawback being that he needs more help. However, he believes "it's not about [him], it's more about the school and what the athletes can get out of it," which is the same mindset he has kept throughout his twenty-two years on campus.

Originally, Rentar began school with the idea of going into medicine, before he had even heard of athletic training. Past work experiences such as physical therapy in clinics during college helped shape his idea of this perfect job. Before completely deciding on athletic training, he stated how he "looked into it, [he] took some classes and it kinda got [him] rejuvenated and excited about the career." This led him to receive a bachelor's degree at San Diego State University, as well as getting his teaching credentials. As a result, this alternate route landed him the start of his career at Granite Hills High School as both a student-teacher and athletic trainer. He then worked at



Credit: Erin Lancaster

Mr. John Rentar has been the campus' head athletic trainer since it opened in 1997.

Temecula Valley High School for five years, which later led him to transfer to this school when it opened in 1997.

So even while balancing the classes that he teaches throughout the day and looking out for the athletes at night, Rentar shows incredible dedication and commitment to

this campus and the athletes on it through consistent hard work and sacrifices. He can always be found out on the field, the court, or even the pool deck, ready to help any athlete that may need it, just like he has been doing for twenty-two years, leaving a lasting legacy at the school.

Boys Cross Country Makes it to CIF Finals, Finishes Out their Season

Alexa Neal '22
Copy Editor

On Saturday, November 23, Varsity Boys Cross Country competed in the California

Interscholastic Federation (CIF) finals. While they ultimately came in eighteenth place out of the twenty-five teams that were there, their incredible work this season to reach this milestone is hard to ignore. Out of everyone who competed

at the meet, three finished in the top one hundred people. Junior Jacob Bustamante, one of the captains, placed twenty-second overall and was the school's top runner. "I was very surprised. . . and I was just proud of the team [for making it to finals]," recalled Bustamante. In order to achieve their placement, the boys trained nearly every day starting in July, working on their speed, endurance, and technique. Head Coach Mr. Martin Dinsbacher gave the team multiple variations of workouts to work on just that. "Basically, we just kind of kept doing the same stuff that we've been doing up to that point [CIF finals]," Dinsbacher explained. "We have our set of workouts that we do. . . we did some track workouts to work on speed." He also ensured that the team was mentally prepared for

whatever the CIF finals would bring. At the races that the boys are more accustomed to, the starts are usually more relaxed compared to CIF races. However, according to Dinsbacher, "It's much more intense [at CIF] and everybody's kind of going for it so the race starts a lot faster. . . If you're not expecting it, you can kind of get yourself so far in [the] back that it's hard to win at the end. So we talked about things like that, like mentally, how to prepare for the race." Ultimately, it was up to the team themselves to provide themselves with the drive to reach CIF finals.

Cross country is a sport of mindset—one has to have a good work ethic in order to go anywhere both figuratively and literally. This proved no different for the Varsity Boys Cross Country team. After coming fifth in League Finals last year, an undesirable result for the team, the boys figured that they would need to work even harder the next season to become better. "A lot of it [going to CIF finals] just came from them themselves," Dinsbacher

claimed. "I think after last year they kind of got together and just decided, 'hey, we're really going to make the effort this year to be at practices all the time and show up consistently and really work hard because we don't want to have that feeling of finishing fifth place again, we want to be more competitive.'" As a coach, Dinsbacher can only do so much in providing his athletes with the tools they need to succeed—they need to be able to show up to practices and want to put in the effort it takes to win.

With next season in mind, Dinsbacher wants his athletes to continue to lift each other up in practice and at meets. "I thought they did a really good job of pushing each other. . . I'd like to keep that going," he said. The team will continue to focus on improving in all areas of the sport. "We just need to keep working on our endurance and our strength," stated Bustamante.

After an exciting end to their season, the Varsity Boys Cross Country team looks forward to another year filled with success and improvement.



Credit: Val Vargas

Sophomore Austin Olivarez races against hundreds at CIF finals on Saturday, November 23.

Girls Basketball Starts off its Season with New Talents and Optimism

Devin Hernandez '20
Staff Writer

It is a new season for the Varsity Girls Basketball team, and these girls are looking to improve from where they left off last year. So far, they have played in four tournaments and shown much optimism. Last year, the team finished with a record of 17-12, with the departure of two starters; their point guard, Zia Rapada, who was on the varsity team her first three years of high school, along with graduated Puma Julia Schauwecker. With some new faces to this season's new team, Freshmen Laisha Lazu, Sophomore Alyssa Chavez, Sophomore Jazmine Gibson, and others look to contribute to the team and have a successful season.

The team has done lots of work in the off-season in preparation for this upcoming season. Guard Senior Gabby Diaz explained that they have

practiced often and had tournament games to help them when it comes to their season starting. "We've been practicing in many offseason tournaments. [We've been] playing against girls that challenge our chemistry and to better prepare us for the season," said Diaz. "Practices consist of conditioning drills, shooting, and perfecting our offensive and defensive plays." Practicing is important to any sport; not only does it help individuals get better, but the team as a whole, and it builds chemistry between all players.

As of December 1, they have played a total of four games for a record of two wins and two losses. Diaz believes that the team is learning from their losses and will get better from them. "We have been pretty successful in preseason and tournaments, for every loss we've taken, has been analyzed and we learn from it," said Diaz. Luckily, it is early in the season,

with time to improve and get better.

Chemistry has become a very important key in the team's success, and seems to be bringing the team closer together. Diaz believes that her team has good team chemistry and being able to bond with the team is easy. "Team bonding is not difficult for us Lady Pumas. I would say it is pretty important within the team environment and on the court—for some people, it [good teammate chemistry] affects their motivation and determination," explained Diaz. With all the work that has already been put into everything and with the season off to a good start, Diaz feels that this season is heading towards a good outcome for both her and the basketball team. "I think this season is looking very bright for us, and through our hard work, we'll make it to CIF [California Interscholastic Federation]," said Diaz. "Our number one goal is to win CIF and have fun." Going to CIF is an attainable goal

for the team, and Diaz believes that having fun is another part of what makes playing worthwhile.

With the new season already underway, the team looks to improve from last season and with the hard work put in during the offseason, the team is in for a successful season. The Pumas' next game will take place on December 19 against Tahquitz High School in Hemet, and the team's first league matchup will be against Murrieta Valley on January 7 at Murrieta Valley High School.



Credit: Jerry Blanco

Sophomore Dorothy Elemento plays game against University.



Holiday Season Highlights

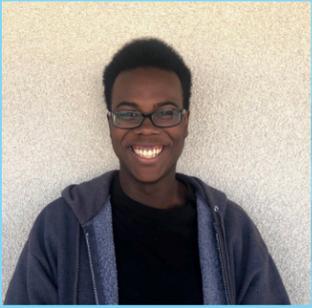


What holiday traditions do you have?

What is your best holiday memory?

What is the best or worst gift you have ever received?

What is your favorite part of the season?



"We watch movies on Christmas and cook ham and coconut cake."

-Anthonye Scott '20



"I remember when my baby niece vomited on my older brother. It was so funny, the entire family laughed at him."

-Jamie Manivong '20



"The worst gift I received was when my grandpa gave me an anatomy book for Christmas when I was little."

-Gio Novelo '20



"My favorite part about the holiday season is going around to look at Christmas lights."

-Ashleigh Page '20



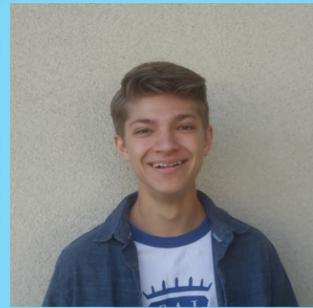
"We celebrate Hannukah because of our background, but celebrate Christmas because of our beliefs."

-Sam Benedict '21



"My best holiday memory is when my family all got together for Christmas dinner and everyone had a good time."

-Sierra Hennessey '21



"Worst gift was a rock. My parents pranked me into making me think I got a phone."

-Kai Shaffer '21



"The thematic appearance of it all. Whether it's decorations or outfits, seeing everyone enjoy each holiday together is the best."

-Victor Farias '21



"I go see the Christmas Carol play with my family every year since I was five months old."

-Hunter Lindow '22



"My family went to Colorado and went on a snowboarding trip."

-Jace Hackler '22



"My best gift was probably my record player."

-Aniyah Kidwell '22



"I like getting into my comfy clothes and drinking hot cocoa while binge watching Netflix."

-Laylah Higinio '22



"We will go around Bainbridge Circle... every chance we get."

-Anissa Neri '23



"My best holiday memory was when my dad came back from deployment and surprised us."

-Madison Stafford '23



"The worst gift was broken boy sunglasses [from my grandma]."

-Kyla Aldrete '23



"My favorite part of the holiday season is how happy the general mood is."

-Jason Baltazar '23



"On Christmas Day, my family and I go to the movies."

-Mrs. Brady



"Last Christmas Eve when my oldest son and I prepared crab legs for the whole family."

-Mrs. Mueller



"The best gift, my first iPod touch, and that was in high school so that was, like, a big deal."

- Mr. Morel



"Apple pie."

-Mr. Slojowski