



THE DIGITAL SIDE OF DEPORTATION

*How Silicon Valley
technology impacts
undocumented immigrants*
pg. 24



COMPASS

Creating Opportunities and Finding Solutions

The Bay Area real estate market is fast paced and high pressure, but the reSolve Group knows how to separate the signal from the noise. By focusing on their clients' needs and relying on their experience, their clients proact more than react in order to succeed. Working with the reSolve Group goes well beyond a transaction; they strive to build lifelong partnerships with clients as their trusted real estate advisors.

theresolvegroup.co/listings



THE RESOLVE GROUP

Adam Touni
DRE 01880106
650.336.8530
adam@theresolvegroup.co

Wendy Kandasamy 范文棣
DRE 01425837
650.380.0220
wendy@theresolvegroup.co

Katharine Carroll
DRE 01909507
415.300.7122
kat@theresolvegroup.co



VERDE MAGAZINE

December 2019 *Volume 21 Issue 2*



ON THE COVER pg. 24

The monarch butterfly was first introduced as a major symbol of the recent United States immigration crisis in the documentary series "Migration is Beautiful," aimed at reforming immigration policy. Technology has been the heart of Silicon Valley's growth, but some companies blur the line between technological advancements and abuse of power. Photo and Design Editor Zoë Wong-VanHaren distorts the monarchs as they fly away, representing the disruption that these digital developments have had on immigrants' dreams for a better future.

Publication Policy

Verde Magazine, a feature magazine published by the students in Palo Alto High School's Magazine Journalism class, is a designated open forum for student expression and discussion of issues of concern to its readership. Verde is distributed to its readers and the student body at no cost.

Letters to the Editors

The staff welcomes letters to the editors but reserves the right to edit all submissions for length, grammar, potential libel, invasion of privacy and obscenity. Send all letters to verde.eics@gmail.com or 50 Embarcadero Road Palo Alto, CA 94301. All Verde stories are online and available for commenting at verdemagazine.com

Advertising

The staff publishes advertisements with signed contracts providing they are not deemed by the staff inappropriate for the magazine's audience. For more information about advertising with Verde, please contact business managers Michelle Kim and Ryan Seto at verdebusiness5@gmail.com.

Printing & Distribution

Verde is printed five times a year in October, December, February, April and May by Folger Graphics in Hayward, California. The Palý Parent Teacher Student Association mails Verde to every student's home. All Verde work is available at verdemagazine.com

Editors-in-Chief

Emma Donelly-Higgins
Alex Feng
Rachel Lit

Social Media Manager

Antonia Mou

Art Director

Samantha Ho

Managing Editors

Kate Milne
Abe Tow
Jasmine Venet (Digital)

Graphic Designer

Zachary Donaker

Features Editor

Sasha Poor

Profiles Editor

Prahalad Mitra

Culture Editor

Kobi Johnsson

Perspectives Editor

Ben Cohen

Editorials Editor

Rohin Ghosh

News Editor

Myra Xu

Launch Editor

Katherine Cheng

Photo and Design Editor

Zoë Wong-VanHaren

Business Managers

Michelle Kim
Ryan Seto

Adviser

Paul Kandell

STEM Columnist and Statistician

Kayla Brand

In this issue



Foreword

- 6 Editorials
- 8 Launch
- 11 News

Features

- 14 CAASPP results spark action
- 16 Reflecting on Verde's 100 issues
- 20 Exploring Paly after dark
- 22 Doctors stand against gun violence
- 24 The digital side of deportation

Profiles

- 28 Dancing to Bollywood tracks
- 30 Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom
- 32 Zareen Khan cares
- 34 Glassblowing at Paly
- 36 Charlotte Versavel sails to win
- 37 Attention Deficit music
- 40 Phela: the future of scootering

Culture

- 42 A reflection of the 2010s
- 44 King Princess
- 46 Escape rooms
- 48 Telefèric Barcelona
- 50 Jordan Casteel: Returning the Gaze
- 52 Tea or coffee?
- 54 Joker's mirror to society
- 56 The black savior of fashion

Perspectives

- 58 Acne scars: skin deep
- 60 The place for debate
- 61 The bay needs you
- 62 Double trouble
- 63 Quizzical Kayla: Sweetness levels



FROM THE EDITORS

An ode to a hundred

This printing marks a hundred issues of Verde Magazine by 21 different staffs of dedicated student journalists.

While the number "100" is a proud ribbon on a substantial body of work, this milestone is also a reminder of the commitment to finding and reporting the truth — and making it look good — that generations of Palo Alto High School journalists have reaffirmed during their years on staff.

"Verde's 100th issue," by Prahalad Mitra, Myra Xu and Naomi Boneh, reflects on Verde's impact over the years through a set of whimsical statistics and brief vignettes on stories that have created substantial change in the community and beyond.

In addition to producing hard-hitting content, Verde continuously strives to produce stories that give a voice to the marginalized and broaden the perspectives of our readers. Our cover story, "The digital side of deportation," by Avery Hanna and Ryan Seto, brings the journalistic spotlight to a global discussion through a local lens. Their reporting on the role of rising Silicon Valley companies like Palantir in the exploitation of vulnerable communities challenges us to consider the collateral effects of innovation alongside its benefits.

Reaching and covering members of our community, both in the greater Bay Area and on the Paly campus, is essential to upholding Verde's mission of inspiring and educating our readers. Through the

profiles "Zareen," by Ben Cohen and Mia Baldonado, and "Phela the phenom," by Jasmine Venet and Kylie Mies, adults and students alike have been able to share their passions, hopes and dreams in print.

Verde has long been a platform to elevate student voices, and "Acne scars: Skin deep" by Allison Chang exemplifies this ideal with a powerful personal story that reminds us to look beyond the superficial. Perspectives like this serve a greater purpose in fostering a collective of empathetic and accepting students, which opens up the stage for valuable opinions that allow us to learn from one another.

As students who have been a part of the exceptional media arts program here at Paly, we have had the opportunity to experience journalism beyond school sports scores; we have seen, and explored its tremendous ability to effect change. As succinctly put by humorist and writer Finley Peter Dunne, "Stories are meant to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable." We hope we live up to this sentiment.

For the next hundred issues to come, we believe Verde will stay true to its journalistic integrity by continuing to produce articles that are reported with diligence, written with devotion and edited with care. We aim to remain a publication that, at heart, serves as a platform for student journalists to advocate for themselves and their community.

—ALEX, RACHEL, EMMA

Provide safe-sex products to students

ONE OF PALO ALTO UNIFIED School District's key goals is to ensure and promote the safety and health of the student body. A key part of achieving that goal is the promotion of sexual health and safe sexual practices among students. In keeping with the objective of promoting sexual health among students, the Palo Alto High School Wellness Center should provide condoms and other safe sex products free of charge to students.

According to Paly-specific data from the California Healthy Kids Survey, 18% of juniors have had sex. Alarming, over 61% of Paly students who engaged in sexual activity did not use any form of barrier protection such as a condom or dental dam. Many forms of sexual activity can carry inherent risks of unplanned pregnancies or sexually transmitted infection but proper use of protection methods can significantly mitigate these risks.

A 2017 report in the Journal of Adolescent Health found that students at schools where condoms are readily available experience

lower rates of unplanned pregnancies and STIs with no significant increase in sexual activity. Students provided condoms at their school were able to access them without the awkwardness or cost of buying them at a store or the inconvenience of having to obtain them from a medical professional.

Several school districts in the region, including San Francisco and Oakland Unified School Districts, already provide condoms to students and have seen positive results. Many districts are going even further in the promotion of students' health, both sexual and otherwise. Berkeley High School has an on-campus health center which, in addition to providing contraceptives, also offers students basic primary care and referrals for health needs including for sexual health.

Safeguarding the health of students is a paramount responsibility of any school. This responsibility applies to students' sexual health as well. Both PAUSD high schools should take the basic but impactful step of providing safe-sex products to students. v

Later CA school start times are a positive change

THE RECENTLY PASSED California state legislation requiring secondary schools to commence classes later each day is a positive step towards student health and wellness.

Senate Bill No. 328, which was approved by Gov. Gavin Newsom on Oct. 13, mandates most California high schools to start no earlier than 8:30 a.m. The changes must be made by July 1, 2022, with some exceptions.

Currently, Palo Alto Unified School District's high schools commence at 8:20 a.m. and 8:25 a.m. each day. PAUSD Supt. Don Austin says he does not anticipate revised high school start times to be later than 8:30 a.m. Although this will mean only five- and 10-minute changes at Henry M. Gunn and Palo Alto High Schools, the legislation will greatly benefit other students across the state.

SB 328 will benefit both the students and the staff of California high schools because it will allow students to sleep more in the mornings and wake up ready for school. In turn, teachers will be met with happier, more alert students with better attendance rates.

A 2014 study by the University of Minnesota found that a later start time resulted in higher attendance, improved academic outcomes and improved health among students.

Verde conducted a survey in September 2019 of 187 Paly students in randomly selected English classrooms across all four grades. According to the survey, 70.8% of Paly students claim that they do not get enough sleep on an average school night. This is due to a multitude of factors but an early school start time plays a large role in this startling statistic.

A 2004 report by the American Academy of Pediatrics concluded that "getting enough sleep each night can be hard for teens whose natural sleep cycles make it difficult for them to fall asleep before 11 p.m."

A later start time can help students get the necessary sleep they need to be healthy and successful at school. v



Art by Reese Ford

Keep news scenes open to reporters SPLC RIGHTLY BACKS VERDE AFTER INCIDENT

ON NOV. 4, VERDE MAGAZINE published a digital news article about an incident that day involving a Palo Alto police officer injured on campus while chasing a robbery suspect. Although campus security and the administration handled this situation professionally given the extraordinary circumstances — armed cops chasing a robbery suspect across campus is an atypical start to fifth period — there is one aspect of their response that requires attention.

During fifth period, when the Verde class meets, three of our staffers attempted to report on the situation following an all-clear announcement over the loudspeaker from Principal Adam Paulson. From a distance of more than 50 feet — well behind the barriers campus security had erected — they took photos of the injured officer as paramedics treated him. Several members of campus security, an assistant principal and a teacher approached them during this time, all telling them to stop taking photos and return to class. The reporters had a large press badge attached to their camera and repeatedly explained their rights to be there as members of the student press, but the staff members continued to tell them to stop — one even placed his hand in front of the camera for a few seconds to block the frame.

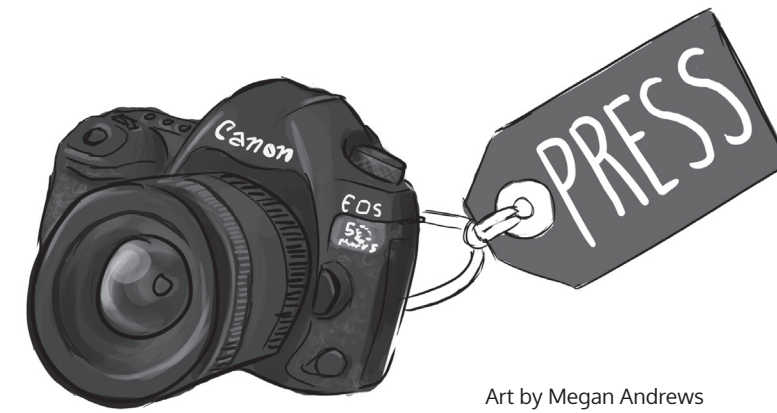
In an email to Verde, Paulson agreed — as did a police officer on the scene — that student journalists had every right to take photographs as they did, but also defended his staff at the scene for their actions. But this does not hold, as there was no safety threat for the staff to protect students from.

"The school's potentially strongest argument — student safety — was ... nullified by the principal's 'all clear' announcement and the establishment of a barricade PRIOR to your staff showing up to do their jobs," Student Press Law Center consulting attorney Mike Hiestand stated in an email regarding the incident.

According to California Education Code 48907, student journalists have the right to choose what to report and publish and administrators may only interfere if they can specifically show why it will likely involve libel, obscenity or a threat to the orderly operation of the school.

"The right to publish news is closely tied to the right to gather the news in the first place," Hiestand stated. "For example, the U.S. Supreme Court said in *Branzburg v. Hayes* (1972) that the right to free press 'could be eviscerated' if there were no corollary right to gather news."

It is not the job of campus supervisors or administrators to determine what photos we take. We are equipped with ethical and



Art by Megan Andrews

legal training, and the law supports our right to take photographs of public places.

Furthermore, staff members treated our reporters with more respect when our adviser was present, which should not be the case.

"If you are a student at the school you are covering and are already on campus, you do not need special permission to speak with fellow students or teachers or to take photos of school areas where students are normally allowed to engage in such activities," an SPLC guide for student media news gathering states.

According to the SPLC, there is also no right to not be photographed when the area is visible to public foot traffic, as the injured officer was.

"There was no privacy interest. It was a public space — at least for [journalism] students — and it was very much a newsworthy incident, both of which overcome any privacy concerns," Hiestand stated.

The way student press were treated was extremely disappointing. Paly is known for its exceptional journalism program, but when our rights were put to the test in a stressful situation, the school attempted to deny them.

We support the actions Paulson is taking to educate staff about student press rights.

"I met with our journalism teachers and we are working on a document [about student press laws] to share with staff," he stated.

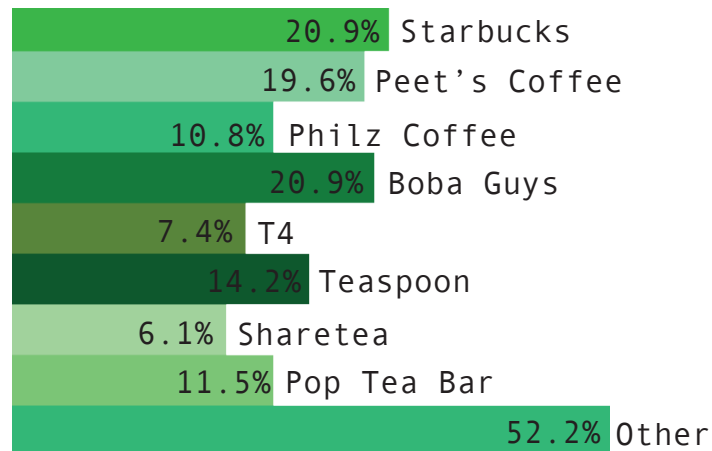
We understand that this was a complicated situation for everyone involved, and staff telling our reporters to stop taking photos were doing so with good intentions.

However, if left unaddressed, this denial of a simple right could normalize the suppression of the freedoms of both students and journalists.

In the future, we hope staff will honor student press laws and reevaluate their attitudes towards student media. v

When our rights were put to the test in a stressful situation, the school attempted to deny them.

Which coffee shop do you go to most often?
 Which coffee shop do you go to most often?



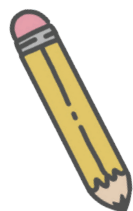
With Town and Country Village, downtown Palo Alto and California Avenue within walking distance of Palo Alto High School, there are a wide array of shops where students can grab a drink. Here are some of Paly students' favorites.

Source: The data presented here comes from a Verde Magazine survey of 157 Palo Alto High School students in nine randomly selected English classes (English 9A, English 10A, Escape Literature and Advanced Placement English Language). Verde conducted the survey from late October to early November through a digital form. Responses were anonymous and Verde provided students with the option to opt out for any reason.

VERBATIM: WHAT ARE YOUR BEST FINALS STUDY TIPS?

"Start **early**... and **be calm** once you're taking the final regardless of what [grade] you might need to get."

— Trisha Razdan, junior



"**Sleep** is important. I always try to feel rested and sleep helps me be **more prepared**."

— Thomas Mcgall, junior

Reporting by **KATHERINE CHENG**
 Art by **SAMANTHA HO**

ASB ANSWERS



WITH ASB SECRETARY KIMI LILLIOS

What is ASB currently working on?

[We are] focused on debriefing the exciting, yet hectic, Spirit Week and reviewing what went well and what could be improved on. We are also working on amending the ASB Constitution after encountering some areas in need of clarification.

As the semester comes to a close, what has been your favorite ASB event so far?

[One of] my favorite events this year has been the surprise Cookies on the Quad. I love seeing hundreds of students come to enjoy something so simple and yet so exciting.

What challenges have you had to overcome this year?

This year, ASB had an issue with scoring one of the Spirit Week games, Wrap Your VP. We received letters from various classes with questions and concerns about the results and had in-class discussions on how to proceed. In the end, we came to a consensus and proceeded with a successful Spirit Week.

Reporting and photo by **KATHERINE CHENG**

LAUNCH

WINTER CONCERT CALENDAR

The Winter Concert is a great opportunity for students to showcase their talents and enjoy a night of music. The concert will be held on December 12th at the Oakland Arena. Tickets are available for purchase at the school store.



Compiled by **KYLIE MIES** and
KATHERINE CHENG
 Art by **SAMANTHA HO**

VERDE REVIEWS: STARBUCKS HOLIDAY MENU

Starbucks's annual holiday menu consists of six holiday drink flavors. The Verde staff reviews and ranks four of these winter favorites.



TOASTED WHITE CHOCOLATE MOCHA FRAPPUCCINO

Although topped with red sprinkles for a festive look, the name is misleading. There was not much flavor to the drink besides milk and sugar, while we expected a crisp white chocolate taste.



EGGNOG LATTE

The eggnog latte had an unpleasant smell. However, the taste of the drink was a perfect balance between the sweetness of the eggnog and the bitterness of the espresso.



CARAMEL BRÛLÉE LATTE

Unlike the frappuccino, the Caramel Brûlée Latte was true to its name, bursting with caramel flavor. The whipped cream topped with toffee bits brought the drink home.



PEPPERMINT HOT CHOCOLATE

With its pronounced minty flavor, this Starbucks holiday favorite is great for peppermint lovers looking for a non caffeinated, cozy holiday drink.



Text by **KATHERINE CHENG** and **KYLIE MIES**
 Art by **KATHERINE CHENG** and **SAMANTHA HO**

Real Estates. Real Services. Real Results.



Sophie Tsang
HOME SELLING TEAM



蘇菲·曾, MBA
Broker Associate
President's Club
Relocation Specialist

650.687.7388

License # 01399145

sophie@compass.com

sophietsang.com



Paul Harris
Fellow

COMPASS

Previously Alain Pinel Realtors

**WANT TO
ADVERTISE
WITH
VERDE?**

visit

**verde
magazine.com**

**for more
information**

news

Churchill Avenue changes loom COUNCIL EVALUATES APPROACHES TO TRAFFIC CONGESTION

THE PALO ALTO CITY Council is expected to decide on impending rail grade separations in May 2020, but many of the plans are receiving backlash from the community.

As more diesel locomotives are being replaced by electric ones, concerns have been raised over the resulting congestion on Churchill Avenue. According to the Expanded Community Advisory Panel, the intersection of Churchill and Alma Street is crossed by 9,000 commuters every day.

One option to relieve Churchill traffic is a viaduct: a bridge made up of arches that would simultaneously allow trains to cross and cars to pass underneath it.

"I feel it is going to be invasive," Marianella Núñez, a resident living next to the proposed viaduct, said. "I'm sure there are other options to solve the issue that don't compromise the privacy and home value of the trails' neighbors."

Junior Heidi McIntosh drives to Paly every day, sometimes taking Churchill. She is aware of the traffic resulting from the train and said that it will only get worse with these changes.

"Rerouting traffic or adding a bridge would make traffic even worse," McIntosh said. "Especially with the long construction times."

Councilmember Greg Tanaka explained how electric trains cause more traffic.

"We are replacing vehicle diesel locomotives with electric ones," Tanaka said. "Diesel takes a long time for the train to get started and stop. But in electric cars, all the wheels



VIADUCT VIEW A digitally rendered street view of the potential Churchill viaduct shows one of the options under consideration to alleviate congestion. "Living next to the crossing the construction will be a very long process," Palo Alto High School junior Will Thomas said. "It might also decrease my neighborhood's home values." Image courtesy of AECOM

are turning at the same time. They can start to softball faster. So they are going to increase the frequency of the trains."

With a budget of \$300-\$400 million, a viaduct would cost less than half as much as the alternative of trenching and is environmentally safer. However, temporary tracks would have to be put in place during construction and would force the city to reduce Alma to two lanes — one lane in each direction — for approximately two years.

Rail noise and vibrations would be mitigated with separate-grade crossing. However, some Palo Alto families have expressed concern over the

potentially unsightly view — the viaduct would be 20 feet above ground and would tower over the fences of some homes.



CHURCHILL CROSSING To address increased congestion at Churchill, the Palo Alto city council is considering construction plans. "If this process was occurring now it would complicate the way I get to school," said Palo Alto High School junior Will Thomas. Photo by Myra Xu

Alternatively, a closure for vehicles at the Churchill crossing would cost \$50-\$65 million and could be implemented in two ways: an underpass for pedestrians and bikes under the rail corridor, or an underpass under the rail corridor and Alma.

A vehicle closure of Churchill would not require temporary tracks, but would result in the removal of Alma's center left turn lane.

The closure would reduce danger for bikers and pedestrians who take Churchill, but would force commuters who drive to find an alternative route. To lessen the amount of traffic that would get rerouted to other streets, mainly Embarcadero Road, XCAP has proposed many changes to surrounding streets to mitigate traffic. According to a traffic study by XCAP, this would be enough to mitigate the traffic.

by **RYAN SETO** and **TIMOTHY HUNG**

Instagram experiments with private “like” counts

INSTAGRAM IS EXPERIMENTING with removing public “like” counts in an effort to encourage focus on the content of the social media site rather than popularity.

While in the past the total number of “likes” and views appeared at the bottom of a post, Instagram, a popular social media application, is experimenting with hiding the number. The total number of “likes” is still available to the creator of the post.

“We want your followers to focus on what you share, not how many ‘likes’ your

posts get,” Instagram wrote in a message to users on Nov. 14 through the app.

The change was initially tested in other countries and resulted in positive feedback, according to Instagram’s Twitter page. However, Palo Alto High School students have mixed reactions.

“People aren’t going to be focused on having a higher ‘like’ count than other people,” junior Kimi Lillios said. “But I think they’re going to be more concentrated on the follower count ... They want that numerical power on Instagram.”

Still, there are those that think the change is for the better.

“The concept of social media was to bring people together, and the aspect of ‘likes’ makes it a competition for some,” sophomore Cynthia Zhang said.

Others share a similar opinion.

“By removing the count for ‘likes,’ it removes something we use to compare ourselves, which can benefit our mental health,” junior Faustine Wang said.

by **AVERY HANNA**

New Paly social-emotional learning curriculum to debut

ADMINISTRATORS and students at Palo Alto High School will work with educational empowerment program REALyou to implement new social-emotional learning practices in response to sexual harassment incidents.

The curriculum will better educate students on consent through more personal activities, according to REALyou founder Anea Bogue.

RISE Student Task Force, a club committed to creating a culture of consent at Paly, was largely responsible for the change.

On Oct. 16, teachers and representatives from RISE and One Love Club, which promotes healthy relationships among youth, met with Bogue to discuss the best ways to combat the issue.

Some RISE and One Love Club members said Bogue’s presentations at Paly were missing information.

In response, the RISE and One Love clubs are working alongside teachers and Bogue to craft a new curriculum to effectively convey the information.

“I hope to shift the emphasis of our education from solely consent to one which encompasses all facets of a healthy relationship,” Paly senior and RISE co-founder Alexa Aalami said.

by **MILES BREEN**



ATTENDANCE FROM AFAR Palo Alto High School junior Charlyze Nguyen fills out the attendance survey for her Advanced Placement English Language and Composition Blended class. “I think it [the change] defeats the purpose,” Nguyen said. Photo by Myra Xu

Blended class students now required to stay on school grounds

STUDENTS ARE FRUSTRATED by the change in Blended classes that requires them to stay within designated supervised areas on campus.

Some do not see this change, announced earlier this semester, as an improvement. Junior Emma Cudahy, who takes Blended classes, said that the amount of freedom gave her incentive to take Blended classes in the first place.

“It’s just frustrating because we all signed up for this with a certain idea of what it was going to be in mind,” Cudahy said. “And then we showed up and they were like, ‘No, your mind is completely different.’”

Blended english teacher Kindel Launer attributed the change to an update in Infinite Campus that sparked a larger conversation about Blended periods. The designation was initially “Do Not Meet” and was

changed in the update to “E-Learning Period,” which implied that students had some supervised autonomy, Launer said.

“Everyone thought ‘Oh, what’s that designation? It’s not actually capturing what students and teachers are doing during that Blended period, so what designation would capture that?’” Launer said.

Emily Garrison, education technology and libraries coordinator at Palo Alto Unified School District, explained that students will be required to fill out a Google form as a means of remote attendance.

“There hasn’t really been that big of a change,” Garrison said. “You still have that flexibility. We’re just asking students to remain on campus for now.”

by **AVERY HANNA** and **MYRA XU**

Chick-fil-A halts donations to anti-LGBTQ organizations

CHICK-FIL-A ANNOUNCED on Nov. 18 that the company foundation stopped its donations to controversial organizations after years of backlash from LGBTQ activists.

The popular chicken sandwich chain published a list of organizations that its foundation has donated to this past year.

In the past, the company donated to the Salvation Army and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, both of which have publicly discussed their controversial views against homosexuality and same-sex marriage.

However, neither of these organizations appeared in this year’s report.

The foundation announced through an online statement that it will work exclusively with a smaller number of organizations and focus on issues relating closely to education, homelessness and hunger.

The controversy surrounding Chick-fil-A has deterred many Palo Alto High School students from going to the fast food chain, which is closed on Sundays for employees’ rest and religious worship.

“I had eaten there [Chick-fil-A] before and went with my friends a couple times,” junior Lulu Gaither said. “One

time I told my mom I was going to Chick-fil-A ... and she was like, ‘They support and donate to anti-LGBTQ organizations,’ and I thought, ‘Oh, that’s not cool,’ and I just stopped eating there.”

Some Paly students, however, still regularly ate at Chick-fil-A before the recent announcement.

“I am very happy about it [Chick-fil-A’s decision] because when I go there I won’t feel as guilty when I’m eating it,” junior Alli Miller said. “It’s always in the back of my mind like, ‘This isn’t the best organization to be supporting.’”

Chick-fil-A’s decision has changed some students’ opinions of the establishment and the company may begin to see more business within the Bay Area.

“The food is really good,” Gaither said. “I would definitely go back [to Chick-fil-A] as long as they are accepting of everyone.”

by **MYRA XU** and **ANTONIA MOU**

Midtown youth mental health clinic to open early 2020

A PILOT YOUTH mental health clinic will open in midtown Palo Alto in early 2020 with the goal of reimagining mental health, according to the Palo Alto Online.

Allcove, a non-profit organization, will provide accessible integrated healthcare services at the site to youth ages 12–25.

“A mental health center like Allcove could be hugely beneficial to teens in the area, especially with the stressful reputation of our local high schools,” Palo Alto High School junior Kimi Lillios said.

Paly senior Ellie Fitton, a member of the Allcove Youth Advisory Group, emphasizes the importance of having such a group.

“The ‘By youth, for youth’ idea has really been essential throughout this entire process,” Fitton said.

by **ISHANI RAHA**

Local responses to college admissions scandal

SOME DEFENDANTS, coaches and university officials involved in the college admissions scandal are facing new charges as of Oct. 22, resparking discussion of the event.

According to National Public Radio, 11 defendants now face charges of “conspiring to commit federal program bribery.” Seven university coaches and officials also face new charges of “conspiring to commit mail and wire fraud,” “honest services mail and wire fraud” and “committing federal program bribery.”

Palo Alto High School College and Career Center adviser Sandra Cernobori said she supports punishing those involved, as it has upset many — especially those without the resources to “play the game” of the college admissions process.

“There are people in positions of privilege who have money to hire independent folks ... and people think that they can do things that are not ethical to get an advantage,” Cernobori said.

Stanford University freshman Emma Williamson argues that these penalties may just lead to more careful violators.

“I think it [the charges] will be more effective at scaring the people that are not very good at gaming the system, but I think that it will make the people that already are confident at gaming

the system more subtle,” Williamson said.

Now, students and community members are analyzing how a similar situation might be prevented in the future. Class of 2019 Paly alumna Soumya Jhaveri, who currently attends Northwestern University, said Paly should create more discussion and awareness to help shift mindsets revolving around college admissions.

“I think that one of the main things we can do is really just encourage having more open dialogue and having more conversation around why we feel this need to go to a certain school to succeed,” Jhaveri said.

Parents who still have yet to plead guilty will face even more severe charges than before, if convicted. Cernobori views this as a crucial learning experience for the Paly community.

“For 15 years I’ve been [advocating] about finding a fit — that the name brand is not the only thing,” Cernobori said. “You need to dive deep into your individual research and really evaluate how it [the college] fits.”

by **MIA BALDONADO**

CAASPP RESULTS SPARK ACTION DEMAND TO RESTRUCTURE MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Text by **AUDREY KERNICK, JAY RENAKER** and **KOBI JOHNSON**

PALO ALTO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT Supt. Don Austin is calling for a redesign of middle school teaching styles in PAUSD following the 2018-19 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress results, which further reveals a stark achievement gap.

According to the CAASPP results, 26.67% of Hispanic and Latino middle school students do not meet grade-level standards for English Language Arts, whereas only 5.16% of White students do not meet standards. Similar trends appear in Mathematics, as 28.74% of Hispanic or Latino students do not meet grade level standards, while only 5.20% of White students do not.

An additional cause for concern is the decrease in academic performance during the transition from elementary school to middle school. Hispanic and Latino students performed above standards in ELA and Mathematics in fifth grade, but when the same students are in eighth grade in 2019, they scored 13 and 20 points below standards, respectively.

These results were presented during the Oct. 15 Board of Education meeting, after which Austin proposed immediate action.

"What I'm going to suggest, pretty publicly, is a complete reboot of our middle schools," Austin said. By Dec. 10, the middle schools in the PAUSD are expected to present ideas on how to effectively restructure their systems to address the achievement gap.

School Board Member Ken Dauber said he wants to focus on reform of the foundational aspects of PAUSD middle schools.

"You'll need to go to those hard to go places," Dauber said during the Oct. 15 school board meeting. "Those are at the core of what we're doing." ▽

Paly sophomore

This student preferred to remain anonymous

A PALY SOPHOMORE reflects on experiences with racial stereotyping and achievement. Art by Samantha Ho



"The school district is not that diverse, so when you're in a classroom, you don't see much of yourself, and that transmits anxiety. You have to show others that you're worthy of being in that class. ... And not have them look at you just based off your ethnicity. I feel like that's a factor too with the test scores. Aside from also having to do good in school, we also have to worry about what others think about us. ... It's not like the SAT where you actually have to try. No one's going to see it besides the State people but they don't care, like not necessarily. ... So you're like 'I don't care, I'm not trying.'"

Wendy Stratton

Palo Alto High School Assistant Principal

WENDY STRATTON speaks on the reaction to the CAASPP testing results. Photo by Jay Renaker



"I think the outcry should have been happening — if the gaps have not been addressed in prior years ... I'm not saying that people didn't care about it or didn't recognize it, I'm just saying that we haven't had our leadership really call it out. That really puts high beams on these gaps and holds us all accountable for them and that is exactly what should be happening."

Judy Argumedo

Director of Academic Supports in PAUSD

JUDY ARGUMEDO discusses equity in the district. Photo by Kobi Johnson



"When I first came to the district with my own two daughters, I think the climate was really different ... There weren't programs for students who were first generation. There weren't a lot of supports. But now we have the Rise Up program that's been around for five years. We've expanded our definition of equity to include LGBTQ. We're looking at inclusion all around."

Letitia Burton

Palo Alto High School teacher

LETITIA BURTON discusses the minority achievement gap at Palo Alto High School. Photo by Jay Renaker



"I think that in a district like this there shouldn't be as much disparity as there is. This district has all the resources, all the capabilities for all students to achieve at the same level. I think it would be great if every student had one AP [Advanced Placement] class. ... Students seeing themselves as AP students is beneficial to achievement."

neighbors abroad
PALO ALTO SISTER CITIES

Be an ambassador for Palo Alto to the world!

Visit neighborsabroad.org for more information and updates

Ada's Cafe

Discount and community service opportunities for ALL students!

Elevating the lives of people with disabilities through delicious food and beverages.

(650) 327-2327
3700 Middlefield Rd Palo Alto, CA 94303

td
tektive design

CA licensed architect
New houses
Major remodels

212 High St. #102
Palo Alto, CA 94301
415.250.6052

www.tektivedesign.com

GET INVOLVED FOUNDATION

For every teen, a cause and sense of purpose

Pursue your interests!
Internships - Service Hours
Presidential Volunteer Service Award

For more information: getinvolvedfoundation.org

100 ISSUES OF VERDE

REFLECTING ON OUR LEGACY

7,463 PAGES, 2,583 STORIES, 100 ISSUES. Myriad stories crafted and compiled by dedicated student journalists year after year. Verde Magazine was founded by Palo Alto High School journalism adviser Esther Wojcicki in 1999 and taken over by adviser Paul Kandell after the first volume. Ever since, the magazine has made substantial impacts on our local community in addition to being recognized nationwide with cover packages discussing topics ranging from rape culture to the internment of Japanese-Americans. Rachel Kellerman, former librarian and founder of the Paly Journalism Archives, has seen Verde's impact over the years.

“What binds these stories together is the cultural relevance, but also the heartbeat of the stories is here at Paly,” she says. “It resonates out to the world and that’s why they have staying power. I’ve always respected, and will continue to respect, the work it [Verde] does.”

On its 100th issue, Verde reflects on three of its most well-known cover packages and displays over 20 years of accomplishments and milestones with a series of infographics. v

Text by MYRA XU, PRAHALAD MITRA and NAOMI BONEH

Infographics and design by ZACH DONAKER


8

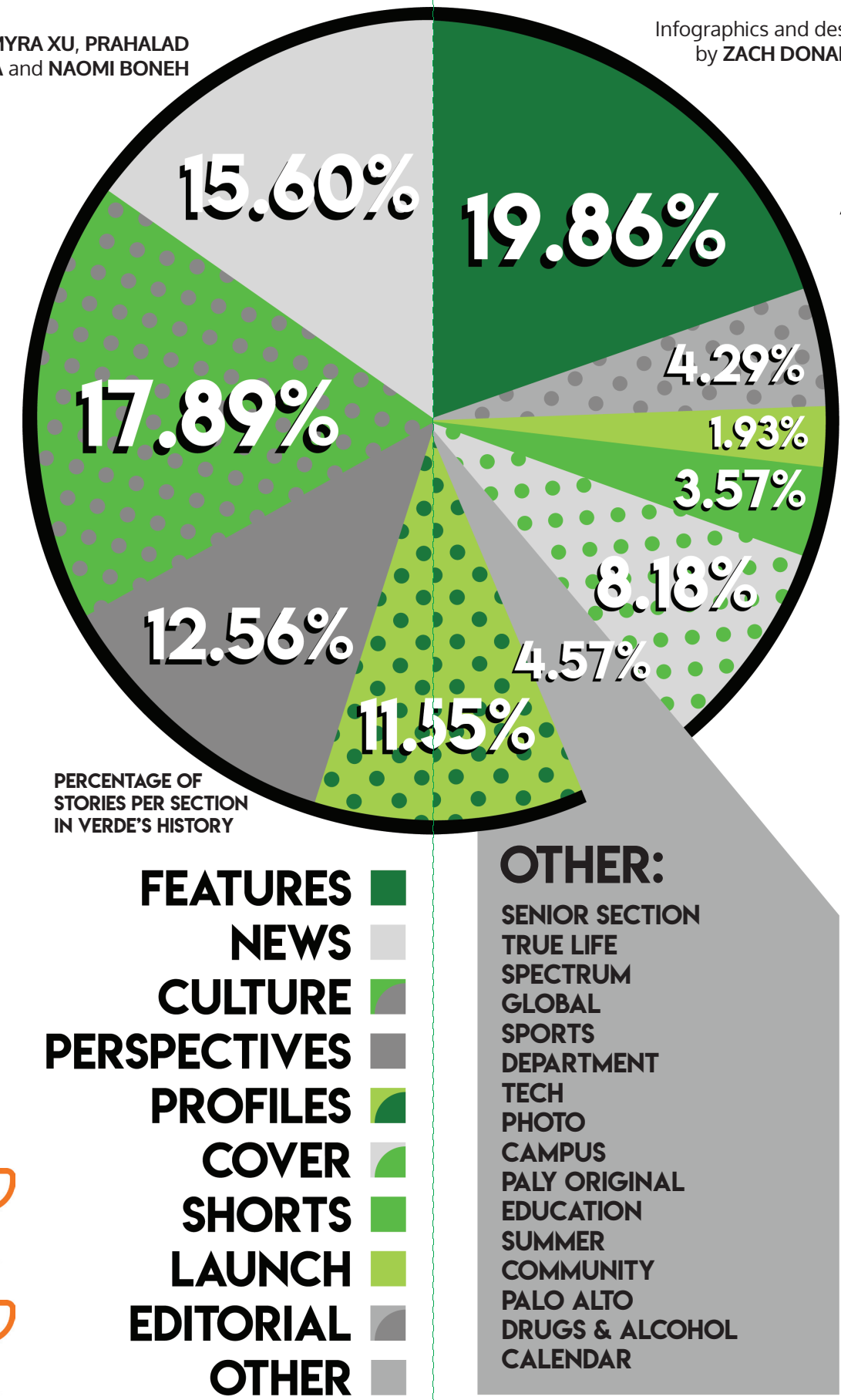
NATIONAL SCHOLASTIC PRESS ASSOCIATION
PACEMAKERS



10

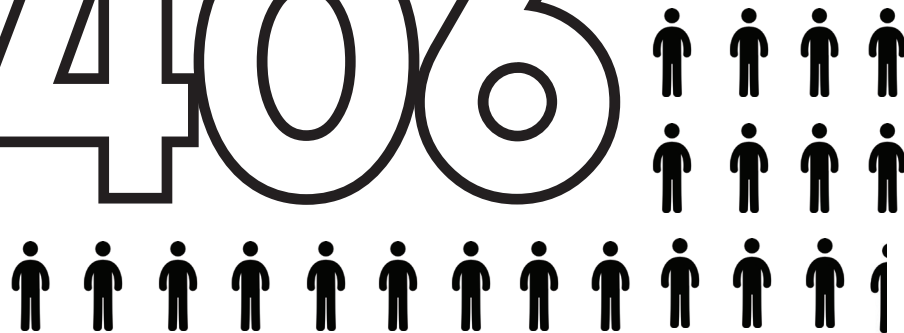
COLUMBIA SCHOLASTIC PRESS ASSOCIATION
GOLD CROWNS





406

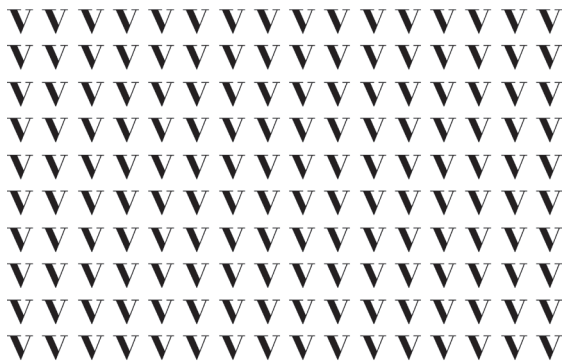
TOTAL STAFF MEMBERS



= 20 PEOPLE

159,683

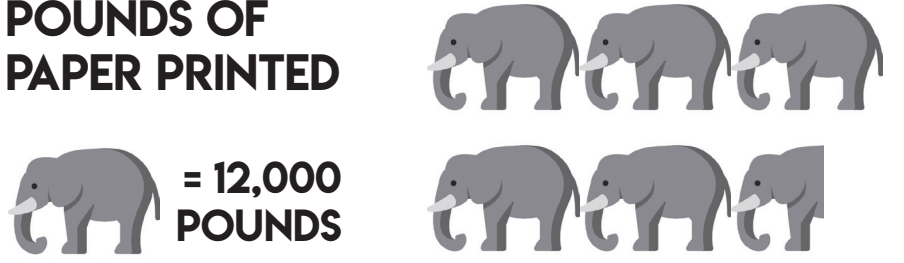
TOTAL NUMBER OF Vs PRINTED



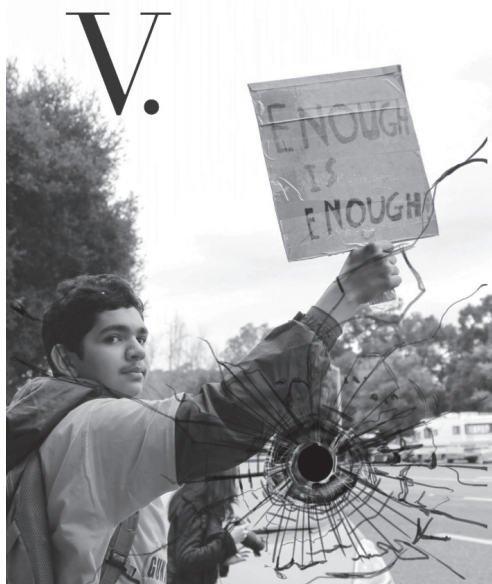
V = 1,000 LETTER Vs

66,856

POUNDS OF PAPER PRINTED



= 12,000 POUNDS



Gun violence (V19.4)

Many current readers will recall Verde's famous "Enough is enough" issue published in 2018, marked by a "bullet hole" punched through the magazine. All stories and many advertisements throughout the 92nd issue were impacted by the hole punch, accentuating their message about the widespread effects of mass shootings.

After production had already ended, Paly received a hoax gun threat through the phone, leading to a school-wide lockdown during Verde's class period. The staff captured the tension in the classroom at the time. The staff had already planned and designed the cover story, but decided last minute to largely reassemble the pages and add a new story to the magazine because of the breaking news event.

The lockdown occurred late in the production cycle, which left the staff scrambling to assemble a cohesive cover package, according to Asia Gardias (Class of 2019), the digital media editor at the time.

"In doing so, however, we solidified how we would present the message of the story and realized we wanted to keep the bullet hole cover symbol throughout the pages for consistency," Gardias says.

The issue was the first to be recognized nationally by CNN, and writers of the cover stories were interviewed by local newspapers and media stations.

Japanese-American internment (V17.3)

In the 86th issue cover story "Interned," staff writers Anna Nakai and Gabriela Rossner traced the internment of Japanese-Americans, incorporating a number of Japanese-American former Paly students who were forced out of the school in the 1940s. After the Pearl Harbor bombing, Japanese-American families in the community were relocated to internment camps all over California — an event that is often overlooked, according to Rossner.

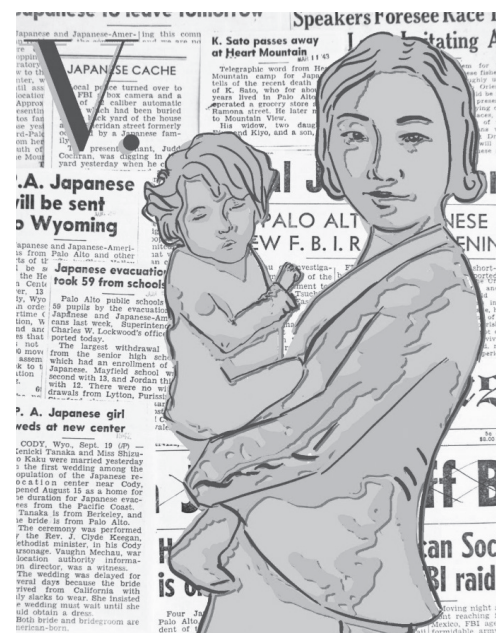
"My teacher barely mentioned it [the internment]," Rossner says of the inspiration for the 2016 issue. "The loudest voices in the class tried to claim that the internment of the Japanese-American citizens was a valid action. This story was a response to the ignorance at Paly, especially since Paly was directly affected by the internment."

Rachel Kellerman, the founder of Paly's Journalism Archives, provided sources for the story with her archive collection in hopes of keeping the diverse perspectives alive.

"I was able to connect them [the journalists and the sources]," Kellerman says. "They [the journalists] did a powerful job of getting primary source information."

The article drew attention from the Paly community, and it was even cited by an anthropology research book.

"Just everything about it [the story] is a lot of work, but you get something entirely unique," Kellerman says. "No one else is writing about this in the whole world."



Rape culture (V14.5)

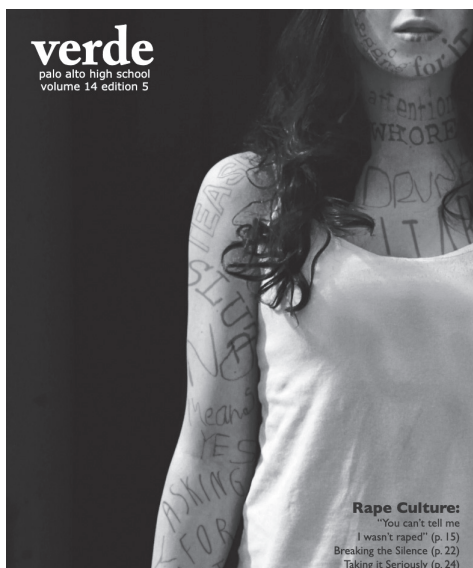
In the 67th issue cover package "Rape culture" published in 2012, staff writers Lisie Sabbag, Will Queen and Savannah Cordova compose three stories that examine the flawed Paly perception of sexual assault.

One cover story, "You can't tell me I wasn't raped," unfolds the experiences of two rape victims ostracized by their community and also incorporates jarring statistics related to sexual assault.

"Breaking the silence," another part of the rape culture cover package, discusses how the mentality that "rape is inevitable" prevents society from ending the epidemic.

"Taking it seriously" holds internalized misogyny responsible for perpetuating rape culture. Along with the two other stories incorporated into the package, the story stunned the broader Palo Alto community with its compelling message.

The issue was acknowledged by local media and created dialogue among the Palo Alto community on this sensitive topic. Ultimately, it helped propel Paly into a multi-year Office of Civil Rights investigation, resulting in the court-ordered lessons on sexual assault and harassment that students and staff receive today.



Rape Culture:
"You can't tell me I wasn't raped" (p. 15)
Breaking the Silence (p. 22)
Taking it Seriously (p. 24)

happy holidays

from Teaspoon Palo Alto

present this ad to the cashier for **free boba** in any drink!

valid through 12/31/19

TEASPOON®

Jefunira Camp

Summer Fun Since '91



FULL MOON The moon shines bright over Paly's Tower Building. Once the administration leaves, custodians begin their work. Photo by Grace Lindstrom



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW The Paly campus stays lit long after sunset, busy with night school students and custodians. Photo by Ethan Chen



ALL SMILES DreamCatchers tutor Sui and her student Sophia work on math together. Each student is paired with a Stanford University tutor or Paly student. Photo by Zoë Wong-VanHaren



EMPTY HALLS The inside of the Tower Building remains illuminated until late. As the Paly office staff leaves, the Palo Alto Adult School office staff moves in for the night. Photo by Grace Lindstrom

PALY AFTER DARK

WHAT HAPPENS ON CAMPUS ONCE THE SUN SETS?

Text by **GRACE LINDSTROM, JAY RENAKER** and **LAURA MALAGRINO**

BY 4 P.M., the Palo Alto High School campus seems largely deserted. It is mid-November, meaning that the temperature has dropped below 60 degrees — scarf weather in Palo Alto. Most students are leaving the school, or have already left. But for some, the day is just beginning. ▽

4 P.M.

Paly custodians begin their first shift after school ends. Albert Hidalgo has been on the team for three years and has been instrumental to the campus's behind-the-scenes work.

“On a typical evening, we do anything from setting up functions, or meetings ... or helping the staff where we can because we’re that extra hand,” Hidalgo says.

6 P.M.

The second round of DreamCatchers, a middle school tutoring program, begins at 6 p.m. The program works to help close the achievement gap. During each session, a middle school student is paired with a high school or Stanford University student. Together, the pair work on developing good study habits for high school and eventually college.

“It’s having a tremendous impact on our students already,” Program Manager Pedro Rivas says. “For example, we have a former student who is now a Stanford student and is a tutor here.”

The effects of DreamCatchers are also felt by the tutors, who often form close bonds with their students. Paly Senior Katherine Buecheler spent part of her summer working with a fellow math enthusiast, ultimately helping him overcome intimidation over joining the advanced math lane.

“I think a big part of DreamCatchers is that it goes beyond just tutoring someone,” Buecheler says. “You’re kind of like a mentor to them.”

8 P.M.

English Through Movies, a Palo Alto Adult School class, ends at 8 p.m. Other offerings include Computer Skills, Home & Environment and Upholstery.

During the class, the students watch films designed to introduce them to American culture, such as “Seabiscuit” and “Mr. Holland’s Opus.”

“It doesn’t feel like a classroom.” ETM teacher Mitra Bahrami says. “It’s more like a kind of a discussion.”

Her students compare what they see in the films to their own lives outside the U.S., creating a melting pot for cultural exploration.

The Palo Alto Adult School, established in 1921 has an annual population of approximately 8,000 and has over 50 instructors, some of whom double as Paly teachers during the day.

According to Bahrami, different classes attract different individuals. From foreign students looking to get another degree, to adults looking to expand their skills and knowledge, the school offers a community for anyone.

9 P.M.

Along with regularly planned activities, unscheduled visitors can also be seen on campus once the sun has set.

With nearby stores closing around nine, locals will cut through campus to pick up last-minute snacks and needs from Town and Country Village.

“We get everyone from transients to locals just walking past getting to Trader Joe’s picking up their ice cream or eggs and then heading back down through Paly to their house,” Hidalgo says.

10 P.M.

The latest Night School class, Taiko, ends at 10 p.m. Taiko is the art of Japanese drumming where students develop musical creativity, self-expression and the stamina to hit drums for two hours.

While some night classes come to an end at 9 p.m., other classes and groups continue on until 10 p.m. In Paly’s own band room, the Master Sinfonia Chamber Orchestra rehearses classics from composers such as Mozart and Beethoven.

12 A.M.

Though people experiencing homelessness may not have an impact on the average Paly student, night security will sometimes find them in unexpected locations.

“We found transients on top of the roof,” Hidalgo says. “He [Night Security] does his checks and every now and then he will find a transient just huddled up in the corner, making hotel right there.”

7:15 A.M.

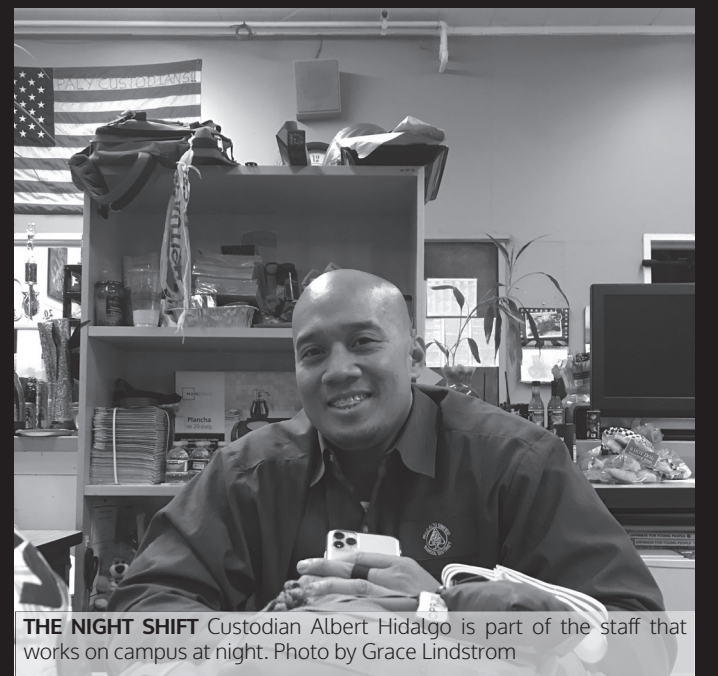
Travis Fenech opens the Student Center at 7:15 a.m. for students who arrive early.

“People trickle in,” Fenech says. “It will continue getting packed right up until 8:15 [a.m.]”

The center provides students with pastries from Mayfield Bakery and a warm place to wait out the rest of the morning.



QUIET CAMPUS The Paly campus is relatively empty once school gets out. Only a few hours later, Palo Alto Adult School students start filling in the desks. Photo by Jay Renaker



THE NIGHT SHIFT Custodian Albert Hidalgo is part of the staff that works on campus at night. Photo by Grace Lindstrom



BUSY CAMPUS The door to the Tower Building stays open. Inside, the adult school administration works while classes fill with students. Photo by Grace Lindstrom

THIS IS THEIR LANE

STANFORD DOCTORS ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF GUN VIOLENCE



Art by Samantha Ho

Text by **AVERY HANNA** and **MILES BREEN**

ON NOV. 7, 2018, the National Rifle Association official Twitter account posted a statement: “Someone should tell self-important anti-gun doctors to stay in their lane.”

That one line sparked a firestorm of argument on Twitter between doctors explaining their connection to the epidemic that gun violence has become and those insisting it was not their place.

“Tell one mother her child is dead with me, then we can talk,” Doctor Marianne Haughey replied on Twitter.

Across the country, people denounced the NRA for this statement, which many deemed insensitive. The tweet and subsequent scandal brought doctors into the conversation of gun violence and allowed them to voice their perspectives on the issue. An organization called Scrubs Addressing the Firearm Epidemic has been, and continues to be, one of the leading organizations in this field.

Dean Winslow, a Stanford University professor of medicine, and then-Stanford medical student Sarabeth Spitzer co-founded SAFE in 2018. The organization has now expanded to 49 medical schools across the country as gun violence remains a major issue and more people are looking for solutions.

SAFE is primarily focused on two goals: education and research. David Spain, a member of the SAFE advisory board and Stanford chief of acute care surgery, explained how further research about gun violence would better inform a course of action to address it.

“Federal funding agencies won’t fund research,” Spain said. “If you don’t understand how it happens, how do you prevent it?”

Since its passing in 1996, the Dickey Amendment has required that funds allocated for research by the Center for Disease Control cannot be used for research on gun violence, essentially blocking the path for

doctors and researchers to gather data on this topic.

Although there is a demand for research, Winslow also feels the need to take political action in order to truly confront the issue.

“Unfortunately, research by itself helps get you down the road, but it only informs you in terms of what interventions really need to take place,” Winslow said.

A major obstacle in the way of further reform is political division over the topic, something Winslow has personal experience with.

Winslow was nominated to be the assistant secretary of defense for health affairs on Sept. 5, 2017 by President Donald Trump. When responding to a question on the issue of gun violence in his Senate confirmation hearing, Winslow commented that it was “insane” that people had access to semiautomatic weapons like the AR-15.

Sen. John McCain immediately cut in and said, “Dr. Winslow, I don’t think that

is within your area of responsibility or expertise.”

At that point, Winslow said he knew the hearing was over despite his extensive credentials, which included 35 years of experience in the Air Force and six combat deployments as a military doctor in Iraq and Afghanistan.

“I saw really firsthand the devastating effects of guns and assault weapons on human beings,” Winslow said.

In the end, Winslow chose to withdraw his nomination.

“My appointment had been put on indefinite hold by the Senate Armed Services Committee, and I felt the Defense Department needed to fill the position without undue delay,” Winslow wrote in an article published in the Washington Post.

It was this experience that inspired him to start SAFE and push for change. According to Spain, the political division that led to the founding of SAFE is still an issue today.

“I think we have to find that common ground that hopefully isn’t too controversial,” Spain said. “Something gun advocates and gun control people can agree on.”

Spain pointed to universal background checks and red flag laws as examples of measures that are more widely seen in a positive light.

On Oct. 14, MacLean and SAFE worked with Assemblymember Marc Bertran to pass Assembly Bill 521. The bill’s purpose was to fund the University of California, Davis Firearm Research Violence Center.

MacLean is currently working with Sen. Dianne Feinstein’s chief of staff to pass further legislation. Many politicians working in Sacramento are grateful that

doctors are backing their legislation.

“In the Capitol right now, people aren’t trusting the messengers, but they still trust doctors,” MacLean said.

Currently, SAFE is working to develop and implement a curriculum that better prepares doctors for the conversations they have with their patients about guns.

In the pediatrics department, doctors are encouraged to discuss gun security in the home with

families.

“If you are a pediatrician, and you’re seeing a child, you should be asking the parents, ‘Do you have a gun at home and, if you do, is it secure? Do you make a kid wear a helmet?’” Spain said. “It’s just the same issue. We’re not saying don’t have a gun. We’re saying if you have one in the house, make sure it’s secure.”

Spain explains that this is an important step in limiting the damage done by guns.

“The thing that people sometimes fail to appreciate is that for every person that dies from gun violence, there are two people that commit suicide with a gun,” Spain said. “So when you look at the cumulative effect of firearm death and injury, it is huge.”

According to the CDC, almost 40,000 people in the U.S. died from gun-related

injuries in 2017.

“This idea of talking about it as a public health issue has changed things,” he said. “If there’s a measles outbreak, people stop and see what caused it. We are basically having an epidemic of gun violence and you need to understand how this hap-

Research by itself helps get you down the road, but it only informs you in terms of what interventions really need to take place.”

—DEAN WINSLOW,
SAFE co-founder and Stanford University professor of medicine

We are basically having an epidemic of gun violence and you need to understand how this happened and if you understand, maybe you can control it.”

—DAVID SPAIN,
SAFE advisory board member and chief of acute care surgery at Stanford

pened, and if you understand, maybe you can control it.”

Deniz Cataltepe, a medical student at the University of Massachusetts, works as the SAFE Director of National Medical School Chapters.

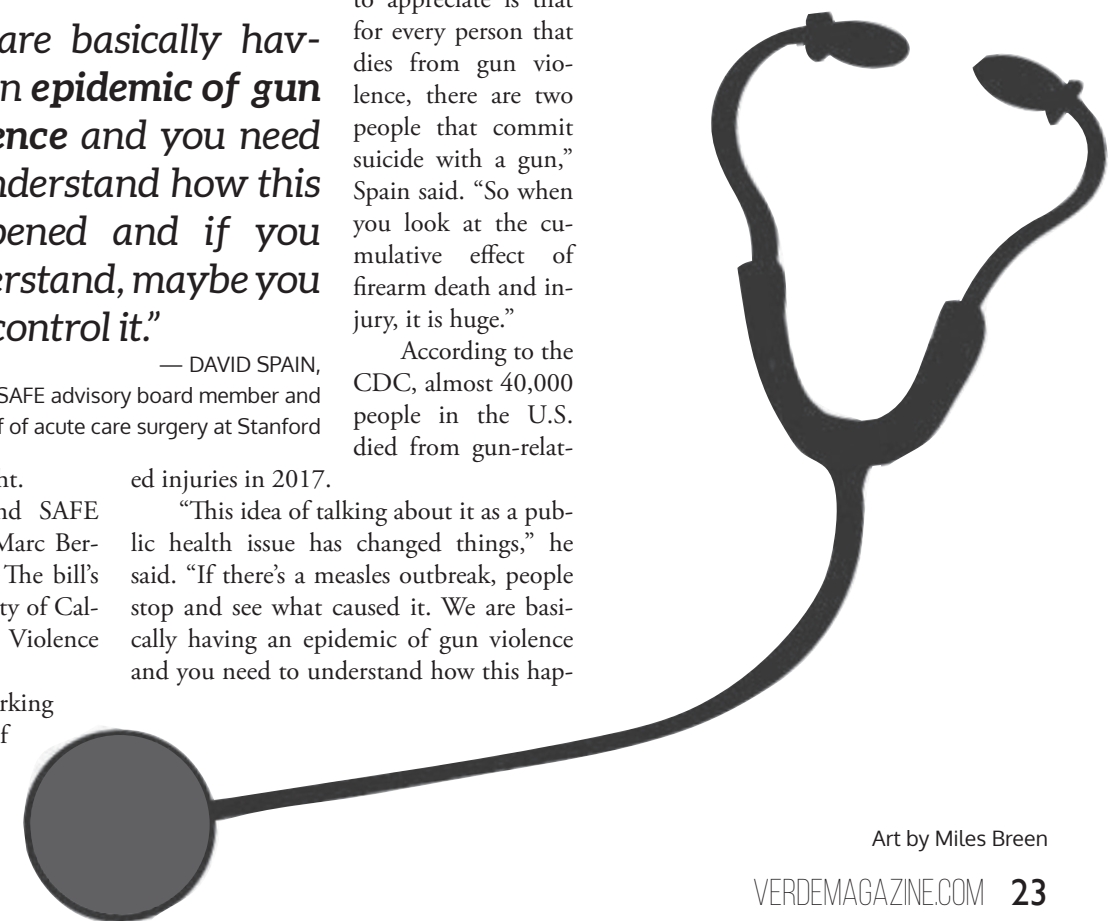
“It [the curriculum] is going to give healthcare providers some basic tools that will help them screen their patients to understand who is at high risk for firearm violence and who might not be,” Cataltepe said. “And you know what steps should be taken once you’ve determined their level of risk.”

Currently, medical school courses across the country addressing this topic are offered as electives outside of regular classes, if they are offered at all.

“To have this built into the basic doctoring and clinical skills course that’s offered at every medical school in the country would be wonderful,” Cataltepe said.

This is just one of the many goals SAFE hopes to achieve in the coming years. While they have accomplished many milestones, their fight is far from over.

“I don’t think that SAFE is going to become obsolete, although I wish it would,” Winslow said. “I think this is going to be a long process in the United States.” v



Art by Miles Breen

Text by AVERY HANNA and RYAN SETO

Art by SAMANTHA HO

THE DIGITAL SIDE OF DEPORTATION

THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT

MARIA WALKS through the door, ushering in her two youngest children, ages 7 and 2, who cling to her hands. She is followed by her niece and eldest son, who diligently carry a stroller.

Maria, her husband Eric and her oldest son are three of over 2 million undocumented immigrants living in California, according to the Pew Research Center.

In April of 2018, President Donald Trump implemented the zero tolerance policy, resulting in an increase in child separations and criminal prosecutions against undocumented immigrants.

Whether or not Maria and Eric, whose names have been changed to protect their identities, were aware, technology companies were using Department of Motor Vehicles information and online searches and purchases to create a mold that would fit many undocumented immigrants. This mold could then be used to identify and deport them, a fear that was a constant presence in Maria and her family's lives from the moment they crossed the border.

Since they first moved to America, they were cautious about the jobs they took and their daily decisions because there was always the hidden threat of technology that could make this fear a reality.

California is tied to the immigration debate not only because of its large population of undocumented immigrants, but also through Silicon Valley tech companies. By using data mining — a tool that enables companies or government agencies to examine large sets of data and create new information — these companies assist Immigration and Customs Enforcement in finding and detaining undocumented immigrants.

For undocumented immigrants in California and even here in Palo Alto, this new role of technology as an agent of immigration enforcement makes the fear of deportation even more real.

The role of tech

To the rest of the country, Silicon Valley is often perceived as the birthplace of successful technology corporations and a pillar of academic success.

Yet, as these tech companies grow in power, some question their integrity and whether their influence is being wielded appropriately.

Hana Morita, a 2018 Palo Alto High School alumna, is one such critic. She is a member of a student-led group at the University of Puget Sound called Advocates for Detained Voices, who work to protect the

rights of immigrants. She said that the image Palo Alto projects does not exactly align with the reality of the community.

"We portray ourselves as this sort of utopia with liberal values," Morita said. "We want to protect our immigrants and stand with people of color and people of different genders. But I think it is important to really ask about what our cities are doing and what the companies in our cities are doing, because underneath, that is not so good-looking, and it kind of goes against those values."

Morita points to the Palo Alto based data-mining company Palantir as one of the corporations that has contributed to the detainment of undocumented immigrants. The tech company has faced opposition from the public and even from its employees over the renewal of a \$49 million contract with ICE in 2019.

The Information and Classifications Management system Palantir sells to ICE provides data from law enforcement agencies such as the Federal Bureau of Investigations. In addition, it collects data on the subject's criminal record and work history in order to find and deport them.

Facebook employee Bruce Arthur thinks people have a right to protest Palantir's decisions but that there is nothing inherently wrong in the choice Palantir made to renew its contract with ICE.

"Technology is always evolving and providing some tools for, let's call it scary government security forces," Arthur said. "And then sometimes taking things away too."

Arthur says that the role of tech companies is simply to push the boundaries of technology; whether that technology is more harmful than beneficial is up for interpretation.

"It [technology] can also help immigration," Arthur said. "I'd love a system where we use tech to actually identify people who want to come here that are likely to be great citizens. That would be a great use of it — evaluating potential people that apply."

Technology is constantly evolving and, in turn, changing the world around it. Data that was once unfathomably large can now be processed in a matter of minutes. Arthur points out that this new ability allows for the exploration of scientific frontiers while also allowing advertisers to target individuals and their preferences on social media.

"It [technology] also allows scary surveillance stuff, which seems less exciting," Arthur said. "I wish the federal government was a little more proactive about addressing that. It's always going to be after the fact."

However, with no such laws preventing Palantir from carrying on with data mining, they continue to help ICE bring to life the fears many undocumented immigrants hold.

Immigrants in Silicon Valley

As undocumented immigrants living in Silicon Valley, Maria, Eric and their oldest son — who were all born in Mexico — have faced many challenges in the U.S.

Leaving behind their lives and their families was not an easy decision, but Maria and Eric hoped to find better opportunities for their son, who suffered from hearing issues. They walked for two days to cross the border and worked day and night to support their family.

With her husband working at stores, car washes and construction companies where he could get by without documentation, Maria spent her days cleaning houses. From early in the morning to five in the afternoon and then again from 6 p.m. to 1 a.m. she worked. Even when pregnant, she toiled away.

"I spent the nine months working," Maria said in Spanish. "I started to work in order to earn a little more money. He [Eric] alone could have worked, but it was

not sufficient. So I said, 'I have to work' and I kept working. And like I told you, on Wednesday I cleaned two houses and that night he [my son] was born."

In addition to economic challenges, they lived with the constant fear that they could be caught — a fear that, with the work of companies like Palantir, becomes more and more possible every day.

Even though some of Maria and Eric's younger children are American-born, there is the constant fear in the back of her mind that they will be caught and her family will be split apart.

"It does scare me in that when you leave the house, you go to work and the kids are in school sometimes — I have seen it happen to three families — that they go to work and unfortunately they are found by immigration and are arrested," Maria said. "And sometimes they put your kids in the care of another person."

They said that they were never completely comfortable living in the United States, not only because of the economic struggles they first had to deal with, but also the constant fear of getting caught.

"Here, one is not legal," Eric said in Spanish. "One is not 100% safe in this country."

Headed home

For Maria and Eric, this sense of insecurity is part of the reason that they have decided to return to Mexico. Life for them in the U.S. was never easy; they had to deal with the stress of being away from their family, were constantly working and always afraid.

"If someone doesn't have papers, from the moment they enter this country they come with fear that the police will find them or there will be a raid," Eric said. "One always has fear." v

Here, one is not legal. One is not 100 percent safe in this country."

— ERIC, undocumented immigrant

It's important to really ask ... what the companies in our cities are doing, because underneath, that is not so good-looking."

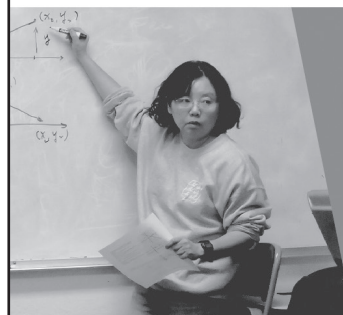
— HANA MORITA, University of Puget Sound student

BAY CITIES DRIVING SCHOOL

Driver Education Courses
Private Behind The Wheel Lessons
Seven Days a Week

BayCitiesDrivingSchool.com
(650) 368-6565

ShareWorld Learning Center 408.446.1956 shareworld.org
21601 Stevens Creek Blvd, Cupertino CA 95014



Why take AMC? (American Math Competition)

A top score will help you to

- stand out on college apps
- get accepted into college engineering programs

Test Dates: 1/30 and 2/5

AMC 10 Test Prep Class

Saturdays | 10:30 am - 12:30 pm

Register Now!



Holiday Boost



Enrich your winter break with intensive learning!

SAT I English 10 - 12 pm 12/26/19 - 1/4/20 (6 classes)

Trigonometry 1 - 4 pm 12/26/19 - 12/30/19 (5 classes)

class registration is at www.shareworld.org/register

Solving Environmental

**PALY
ECO**

Problems

Rm: 310
Every Friday at Lunch

palyeco@googlegroups.com

Pediatric Dentistry
of Los Altos
including orthodontics

**Nick Gorgani,
D.D.S., M.S.**

731 Altos Oaks Dr. •
Los Altos, CA • 94024

Phone: (650) 948-6884 •
Fax: (650) 948-7244

www.pediatricdentistryoflosaltos.com

PRECISION SPORT SCIENCE

"Where athletes train"

www.PrecisionSportScience.com

**Tasty
Chai**

The world's best tasting chai,
made with tea from Assam
and Darjeeling, and spices
from the Nilgiri Hills of India

www.tastychai.com

**WANT TO ADVERTISE WITH
VERDE?**

check out

Verdemagazine.com

for more information

The Authentic Flavor

**IZZY'S
BROOKLYN
BAGELS**

Kosher - Bakery - Catering
477 S. California Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94306
PH: (650) 329-0700
www.izzysbb.com

Text by **ALLISON CHANG** and **OWEN LONGSTRETH**

Photos by **ZOË WONG-VANHAREN**

DANCING TO BOLLYWOOD TRACKS

AKHIL JOONDEPH'S TIME AS A COMPANY DANCER

“PEOPLE OFTEN ASSOCIATE Bollywood dancing as people shaking their hips and doing moves like screwing in light bulbs or picking cherries from trees,” Palo Alto High School sophomore Akhil Joondeph says. “But it is definitely more than that.”

For the last 12 years, Joondeph, a company dancer, has performed in numerous Bollywood productions with Mona Khan Co., a dance school located in Milpitas responsible for producing the Bay Area's largest

Bollywood resident shows. These resident shows feature classic Bollywood dance: acts with high energy steps, over-the-top expressions and modernized versions of traditional Indian attire.

“I would just say that many people

outside the Indian community don't actually know what true Bollywood dancing is,” Joondeph says. “Because it [Bollywood] is not something that exists in Western dance, people either don't open their minds to it or naturally assume it is inferior because they don't know any better.”

Joondeph says that people are too eager to categorize dance into distinct styles, and they fail to capture the essence of Bollywood dancing. As a collection of styles, each Bollywood piece is created with purpose. It is an art form that communicates a story, whether it be giving tribute to important figures or providing commentary on social issues.

“What Bollywood dancing was 10 years ago is nothing like what it is now, and it's probably nothing like what it's going to be like in 10 years,” Joondeph says.

Unlike how many dancers specialize in certain techniques, Joondeph does not concentrate on a dance style. Instead, he strives for versatility when learning, performing or

choreographing.

“My goal is to be competent in all different styles and to be able to do everything,” Joondeph says. “Bollywood dancing is not just one style of dance. It is a blend of Western and Eastern culture. We [Mona Khan Co.] train and perform in all styles, whether it be contemporary, hip hop, jazz, Latin or different Indian styles.”

Joondeph's journey as a Bollywood dancer began with a flyer from an Indian community center in Milpitas. After noticing their three-year-old son's love of dancing around the house, Joondeph's parents spontaneously signed him up.

“His dad and him showed up on the first day of class and said, ‘Hey, we know he is not five yet, but we are really interested in trying Bollywood,’” Joondeph's first instructor Shobana Shankar recalls. “I looked at him [Joondeph] and I saw this huge smile and enthusiasm in his face — his smile just lit up the whole room. I said, ‘Well, you know what, why don't we give it a shot? If everything goes well, we can make an exception.’”

Shankar's exception for Joondeph sparked a 12-year journey. Despite being younger than the rest of the class, Joondeph exhibited a level of control and coordination unusual in children that old. His sense of rhythm, his attention to detail and his ability to learn and execute quickly paved his foundation as a dancer.

“I think that [dancing from a young age] is what solidified my training, because we trained so hard,” Joondeph says. “We did so many shows and so many styles. From such a young age, I think a lot of things just kind of came into my body as a dancer.”

His talent as a dancer and performer did not go unnoticed.

“Even though he was five or six, we put him on stage to be the emcee for the show,” Shankar says. “He did fantastic. It became the highlight of the show. There was this little kid walking in, just talking about Bolly-

MOVEMENT ON STAGE (left) Bollywood dance does not have defined moves in the same way that other forms of dance do, but each dance can still be very complex.

ATTENTION IN THE STUDIO (right) The details for each dance can be very minute, with dancers often working on correcting very specific things like the direction of their head.

wood through the years or various topics in such a clear way. He would pause for claps and do things you wouldn't expect a very tiny kid to be doing.”

Now, Joondeph is dancing full time as a company dancer. He works tirelessly on perfecting his techniques and spends, by his own estimates, “upwards of 20 hours a week” in rehearsal.

Because Joondeph often appears in three or more acts in a single performance, he needs to be able to recall and execute upward of 15 minutes of complex choreography, formations and details for every show. In the months leading up to the performance, Joondeph focuses on details down to the placement of the fingertips. On the day of the performance, however, Joondeph's goal is to not think about the piece and instead focus on his expressions and his energy — intangibles that he considers just as important as the precision of his routine.

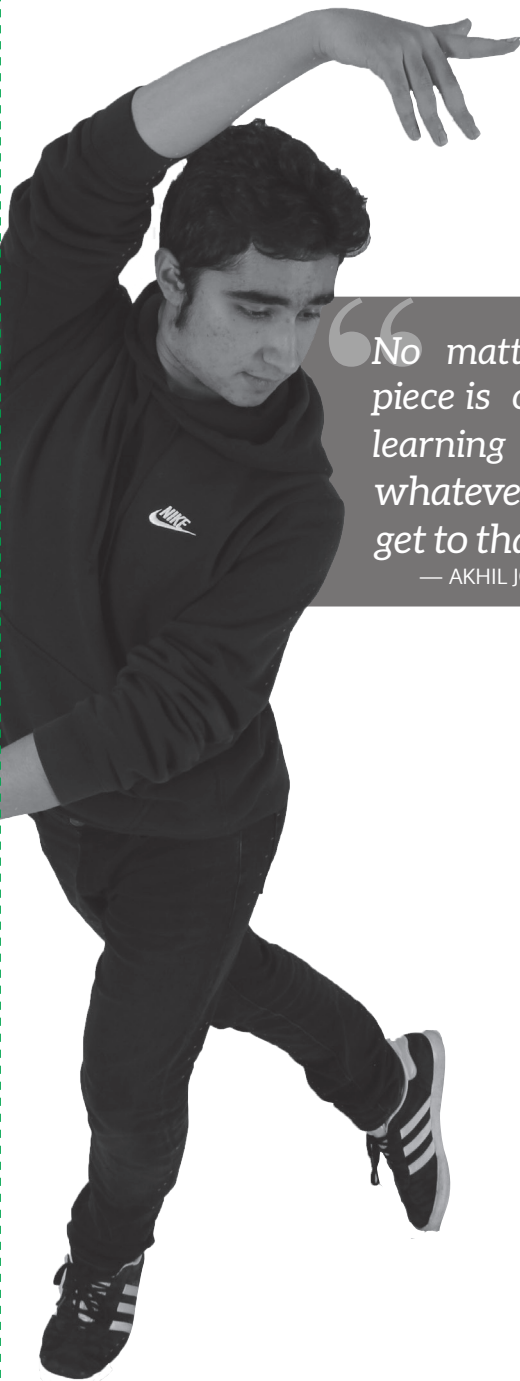
“Thinking about the sequence is not something I want to do,” Joondeph said. “No matter what the piece is or when we're learning it, I will do whatever it takes to get to that [my goal], whether it be like listening to the tracks while I'm biking or rehearsing it in my mind before I go to bed.”

Joondeph's preparedness, attention to detail and work ethic have prepared him for success both in dancing and in his life outside of it. To accommodate the 20-plus hours he spends dancing each week, Joondeph works hard to do his work ahead of time to prevent late nights.

“I can't really wait till the last minute,” Joondeph says. “I have to plan better and know which days of the week have less stuff and try to focus on my work at that time.”

Despite his positive takeaways from dance, Joondeph said that dance is a career notorious for its elusive professional success. He is, however, sure that he will continue his passion for Bollywood dancing regardless of whether he can make it a career.

“I don't think I want to stop,” Joondeph says. “I don't see myself ever stopping.” v



“No matter what the piece is or when we're learning it, I will do whatever it takes to get to that [my goal].”

— AKHIL JOONDEPH, sophomore



Sisterhood of

Salaam Shalom

Text by KATE MILNE
Design by ABE TOW

SIMILARITIES MAKE A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

EYES SQUINTING ABOVE SMILING CHEEKS, Lama Rimawi's laugh fills Coupa Cafe as she listens to her sister Ellen Stromberg crack a joke. The two women are not sisters in a biological sense — Rimawi is Palestinian and Muslim while Stromberg is American and Jewish. But, in spite of these differences, they have formed a close bond through a common community. Both are leaders of the Palo Alto chapter of Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom, an organization that strives to build trust and positive relationships between Jewish and Muslim women.

In a country that has become increasingly divided and polarized, members of the Sisterhood, who call themselves "sisters," recognize the importance of listening to each other. Their main goal is to create a broader understanding of each other's culture and religion and work toward eliminating Islamophobia and anti-Semitism.

Embracing sisterhood

In 2010, Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom was founded in New Jersey with the goal of Jewish and Muslim women connecting through open dialogue. Now, with chapters throughout the United States and Canada, the Sisterhood's mission remains unchanged.

In the nine years since the sisters' first meeting, over 2,500 Jewish and Muslim women have participated in chapters of the program, meeting in each other's homes.

Stromberg has always been an advocate for creating and maintaining peace across cultures regardless of religious differences, and in 2017 she decided to start the first Northern California chapter of the Sisterhood in Palo Alto.

"I'd lived in a Palo Alto bubble, a Jewish bubble, and I knew I needed to get out of that," Stromberg said. "I didn't realize how positive and how expansive it was going to be for me."

The Palo Alto Sisterhood chapter has been a powerful force in Stromberg's, and other members' lives since its inception.

"Creating peace, putting people together, being part of listening to people's stories," Stromberg said. "Sometimes it's the only thing that keeps me going."

New perspectives

During their monthly meetings, sisters discuss topics such as religious holidays and their interpretations of holy texts.

"The Muslim sisters will talk about Eid [and] the background behind it," Rimawi said.

Not only do the women learn about cultural aspects of another religion, but they also form tight bonds with each other, which

Stromberg says has strengthened the group dynamic over time.

"A Jewish sister was in the hospital, and we got a picture of a Muslim sister who went and found her to visit ... we just take care of each other," Stromberg said.

Teen chapters

Recently, chapters designed for teenagers have emerged across the country. Stromberg and Rimawi agree that this is important: they believe that learning how to be empathetic is key to forming friendships in high school that will positively impact teens throughout their lives.

"The way it's impacted our lives and helped us see each other's perspectives on things is something [that] would be really valuable for a teenager," Rimawi said. "When you become a teenager you want to look at what other possibilities are out there. Being able to get that information directly would be really exciting and interesting."

Rimawi also finds that learning about someone else's truth can create new understanding in a person and help to forge new friendships.

"We try to understand each other's perspectives and that's very valuable because understanding each other's perspectives helps you understand the world," she said.

Recently, the impact of the Sisterhood has been recognized by the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and BMW Group: it was named one of ten international finalists for the 2019 Intercultural Innovation Award. The award had over 1,200 applicants from more than 120 countries and looks to

highlight groups with a commitment to promoting intercultural diversity, peace and understanding.

But the greatest recognition of the organization's impact can be seen in the testimonies from members themselves. Being in the group has had immense, positive impacts on Rimawi, who has both learned about the Jewish faith and taught others about Islam during meetings.

"Having my sisters understand where I'm coming from and how I perceive things has been really powerful," Rimawi said.

Rimawi understands the significant impact the group has had on herself, and deeply values the act of understanding others.

"The most important part is you create relationships with people you otherwise wouldn't necessarily have the opportunity to, and they're very deep relationships," Rimawi said. "I find that, within those deep relationships, sometimes the religion comes out but friendship allows you to deal with it in a different way, and I think that's really valuable." v

"... understanding each other's perspectives helps you understand the world."

— LAMA RIMAWI, Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom member

SISTERS BY CHOICE Lama Rimawi (left) and Ellen Stromberg (right) embrace and chat about their experiences in the Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom. "Hearing the story of the person who you've heard demonized for reasons that you don't know ... has been really expansive," Stromberg said. Photo by Zoë Wong-VanHaren

Art by FAUSTINE WANG

ZAREEN.

CUISINE FOR COMMUNITY

Text by **MIA BALDONADO** and **BEN COHEN**

Art by **SAMANTHA HO**

“I WAS SITTING HERE working, and I saw an older Indian-Pakistani lady with no English and her daughter-in-law, they were eating some really authentic gola kabab and sheermal,” Zareen Khan, owner of Zareen’s, fondly recalls. “And I saw this Caucasian Stanford [University] professor sitting eating chicken tikka masala. Then I saw that they started sharing food across the table and they were talking, even though they didn’t understand each other’s language. It was so cool, right? Like this 75-year-old grandma trying to explain to her how she could try the gola kabab and the sheermal. And then she’s trying it, and enjoying it, and they’re like talking in sign language or a little bit of broken English.”

Khan owns the Pakistani-Indian restaurant Zareen’s, located in Mountain View and Palo Alto. Zareen’s is one of Palo Alto’s hottest eateries, with its line permanently extended past the outdoor seating. Zareen’s has been recognized as a Michelin Guide Restaurant in 2017, 2018 and 2019 for its “well-spiced” samosas and “juicy and caramelized” chicken shami kababs.

Behind the awards Zareen’s has accumulated is Khan: a genuine restaurant owner who, through her food and passion, has managed to bring many groups of people together. This includes the community of customers that visit the restaurant, the tight-knit community among her own staff and the broader international community

where her food connects people with Pakistani-Indian culture.

Khan grew up in Pakistan, where she studied business before moving to America. However, she said she had been pigeonholed into the business career path and found no satisfaction from it, so she decided to start from scratch.

Khan began by picking up odd jobs that interested her, such as teaching cooking classes and catering for restaurants.

“Happy workers make good, happy food.”

— ZAREEN KHAN, owner of Zareen’s

“There have been times when I felt like, ‘What the hell am I doing making \$5 an hour from cooking classes?’” Khan said. “But then I figured that this is what I want to do and I’ll continue to do it.”

In 2014, Khan was able to open her own restaurant. At Zareen’s, Khan shares the same joy of authentic Pakistani-Indian cuisine that she cooked in those past classes, only now to a larger audience.

“I think what makes this place unique is that you won’t see just one kind of people here,” Khan said. “That kind of gives it that melting pot feel.”

This welcoming attitude percolates beyond the restaurant’s atmosphere. To Khan, not only is the well-being of her employees a priority, but their happiness and satisfaction as well: “Happy workers make good, happy food” is a mantra she often tells herself.

In 2017, Khan purchased a Menlo Park house which she uses to provide discounted housing for many members of her staff — an arrangement that shows her

commitment to her staff and the food that leaves her kitchen.

“I figured that I can help them by giving subsidized rent, and they can help me by being consistent and showing up to work and not being late,” Khan said. “It’s a nice place they share together so they become like family.”

With her unique management style and wide range of strong beliefs and experiences, Khan has certainly left a lasting impression upon her staff.



COOKING WITH KHAN Zareen Khan, owner of Zareen’s, sits in front of her Pakistani-Indian restaurant at its California Avenue location. “This job is so rewarding because people come up to you and they’re so happy and they love the food,” Khan says. Photo by Zoë Wong-VanHaren

“She’s a person with a lot of vision, a vision different than anybody else’s,” Zareen’s employee Maria Mendez said. “I notice that the way she gets involved in her business is totally different to any other business person I’ve dealt with before.”

Perhaps one of Khan’s most defining characteristics is her drive to give back to the community and to support what she believes to be right. For example, each year on Mother’s Day, Khan works hard to recognize every woman in the community.

“I personally make some small dessert to give to all the women who come here,” Khan said. “They like it, you know, they appreciate being appreciated.”

Along the walls of the Palo Alto Zareen’s are messages of female empowerment expressed through art such as poetry, comics, quotes and, on one wall, a vibrant mural. The mural depicts a woman, Qandeel Baloch, who was a victim of honor killing — a murder that occurs when a male family member kills a female family member who

they believe has tarnished their family’s reputation. “It really affected me because on her death anniversary they made this mural in Karachi, Pakistan and the next day the religious police came and whitewashed it,” Khan said. “So when I found out about it, I go, ‘Ok, she’s gonna live on my wall.’”

From her genuine relationships with her employees to her activism regarding women’s rights, Khan brings together several communities through an influential Pakistani-Indian restaurant: Zareen’s. v

Text by KATHERINE CHENG and
ISHANI RAHA
Photos by ZOË WONG-VANHAREN

2021 DEGREES FAHRENHEIT

FORGING ART WITH FRIENDS AND FIRE

PALO ALTO HIGH SCHOOL junior Andrew Guillet sculpts his glass vision by deftly rolling the molten substance at the end of a metal, rod-like blowpipe against a metal table by alternating hands on the blowpipe at a steady pace: a method known as marvering. He diligently keeps the glass in constant movement in pursuit of a perfectly symmetrical shape, at times inserting the glass into the forge's glory hole to reheat it. To many, the intense heat is overwhelming, but Guillet is energized by the flames which create his spectacular pieces.

Outside room 105, he is surrounded by other Palo Alto High School students and staff making their own pieces. Periodically, his Advanced Ceramics and Sculpture classmates will help him with his piece, torching sections of it to keep them warm or adding pieces of glass. By the end of the period, a two-foot-deep black vase — the result of an hour of focused marvering, heating and torching — emerges from a burning furnace.

Behind it all is Martin Ehrensvar, Paly's resident glass master, who runs the glass studio. Ehrensvar acts as a mentor to students like Guillet, and is a constant presence in the studio. From guiding beginner glassblowers to providing technical pointers to more advanced students, Ehrensvar dedicates his hours to mentoring and assisting them. His mentorship instills inspiration in his most passionate glassblowers, who may go to pursue the craft later in life.

Guillet is one of a handful of students who was inspired by Ehrensvar and jumped at the chance to partake in Paly's coveted glassblowing program. Paly is one of only five high schools in the United States to have glassblowing equipment and a developed program. Steve Ferrera, the current ceramics and sculpture teacher, credits former art teacher David Camner for introducing glassblowing to Paly twenty years ago, which was also made possible by support from the community. The department has since grown into a community of over 100 students per year.

Camner's influence has not left Paly completely. His passion has been carried

through the years by Ferrera and Ehrensvar.

"A big part of it was because David Camner was super passionate about it [glassblowing]," Ferrera says. "So he made it happen through just hard work and sheer will and perseverance."

Glass-room teachers

Ferrera currently teaches Ceramics and Sculpture and Advanced Sculpture at Paly, and his influence extends much farther than the classroom. In his own time, Ferrera enjoys working on his own personal pieces which he displays to his 40,000 followers on Instagram and sells on his eponymous online store.

Though he currently focuses on silicone and resin art pieces, Ferrera shares a love for glassblowing as he works alongside many of his students.

"It's very relaxing while you're heating something up," Ferrera says. "It's also really cool to see the students work and make pieces. You have to invest a lot into glass pieces, both physically and emotionally."

With 30 students in each of his art classes, it is almost impossible for Ferrera to work with all of them at once, in both the classroom and outside with the glassblowing equipment. This is Martin Ehrensvar's territory as manager and overseer of the glass studio.

Ehrensvar, who graduated from Paly in 2014, discovered the school's glassblowing program during his sophomore year and dedicated his time to perfecting his glass-working techniques, staying late on school nights and coming in on weekends to work. After graduating, he spent the next few years traveling around Europe and apprenticing in some of the world's most successful glassblowing studios, including Mohl & Drivsholm Glass in Denmark and Berengo Studio in Italy.

"I saw the whole process from start to finish, including how they built the boxes ... [and] how they ship them away," Ehrensvar says. "As long as you're in the presence of someone who is successful and you pay attention, you can learn a lot."

After working for professional glass-

"You have to invest a lot into glass pieces, both physically and emotionally."

— STEVE FERRERA, ceramics teacher

"It's a fun thing when you're talking about something passionately with someone else, and you're smiling and they're smiling."

— MARTIN EHRENSVAR, glass instructor



TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK (ABOVE) Martin Ehrensvar helps a glassblowing student smooth out the rough edges of his piece. "You have to trust your team to get a good end result," junior and Advanced Ceramics student Andrew Guillet says.

LASER FOCUS (RIGHT) Glassblowing instructor Martin Ehrensvar helps a student shape their most recent project. "I hope I can be the teacher that cared about me when I was here," Ehrensvar says.



CREATIVE COLORS (RIGHT) Students use a variety of colored glass pieces to create their different sculptures, from glass pumpkins to goblet-shaped cups. "The creative aspect allows me to be myself and control what I make," junior Jack Compton says.



FORGED IN FIRE (ABOVE) Martin Ehrensvar heats glass in the furnace. He teaches students the necessary skills for glassblowing, while also creating and selling his own pieces. "Glass is a very hands-on thing," Ehrensvar said.



blowers, Ehrensvar gained knowledge of both new techniques and the business of art shows. As he continued to dedicate himself to his internship, he began to take on bigger responsibilities, handling top-of-the-line pieces worth tens of thousands of dollars.

"That's what I craved the most right out of high school, because people have told you what to do for so long, but they didn't trust you with something really important like that," Ehrensvar says. "So I would try hard to get those missions."

Ehrensvar helps Ferrera's students bring their own glass pieces to life, teaches them valuable techniques and uses Paly's equipment to create his own work for his online store.

In 2018, his pieces garnered the attention of a Canadian glassblowing competition featured on Netflix's "Blown Away," who encouraged Ehrensvar to apply. Though appreciative and excited upon receiving the invite, he ultimately declined.

"[If I got in], I would be competing against people that have been glass blowing for over 30 years," Ehrensvar says. "They were also filming the show between September and November, and that's when Paly would need me the most."

From teacher to student

Glassblowing techniques don't just require time and energy to perfect. They also need a guiding hand from someone who is able to pass down knowledge and technical skills. As Ehrensvar helps students with their glass pieces, he introduces them to the techniques and skills that he has learned through his experiences.

"He's a great influence because he's a great glassblower, but he's also encouraging and tries to help everyone to get as good as they can at glass," junior Eli Crystal says.

Glassblowing students look up to Ehrensvar not only because of his talent with glass, but also his motivational attitude that allows students to persevere through the challenges of working with hot glass.

"He pushes me to do more difficult techniques and perfect the things that I

do," junior Jack Compton says.

Whereas some may be conservative with what they know, Ehrensvar values the discussions he has with his students who share the same passion as he does.

"It's a fun thing when you're talking about something passionately with someone else, and you're smiling and they're smiling," Ehrensvar says. "It's a positive cycle."

Ehrensvar believes the universality of glassblowing and art attracts many of the most dedicated artists.

"Art makes people smile, and we fulfill an important role in society because we make people's everyday lives more colorful," Ehrensvar says. "[I tell] my students to figure out what matters to them and how to communicate it, and find people who can teach them to do that." v

Text by **ANTONIA MOU** and **TARA KOTHARI**

Art by **ZOË WONG-VANHAREN**

SMOOTH SAILING

THE SHAPING OF A STUDENT SAILOR'S SUCCESS

CHARLOTTE VERSAVEL recalls her first time trying to sail; struggling under the weight of a small overturned sailboat, she bobs up and down in the cold French waters while the sound of a motorboat engine rings loudly in her ears.

Versavel, a junior at Palo Alto High School, currently holds the title of No. 1 in the United States for the Nacra 15, a youth semi-foiling sailboat with a hull partially in the water used for performance racing. She received this title by winning two qualifying events last year.

Despite a traumatic incident involving a capsized boat when she was five, her father, a former sailor, convinced her to continue sailing by falsely claiming that the head coach of the program had specifically recruited her after she attended a summer camp, according to Versavel.

"I was really driven by being competitive and, especially in the beginning, it was about beating all the boys," Versavel says. "When I started sailing faster boats with bigger sails, that's when it really hit me like, 'Oh my god, I can go so fast ... it's so technical and it's so fun,' and that's when I really started to enjoy it."

Versavel competes with her sailing partner, Jack Sutter, a junior who attends a high school in Vallejo,

in co-ed competitions around the world. Sutter steers the boat as the skipper, and Versavel's job is to trim the sails and make sure the boat moves as fast as possible. Over time, Versavel and Sutter have learned how to work together under pressure.

"My favorite part of sailing with Charlotte is how funny she is and just being around her; she's really a caring person," Sutter says. "They call us the married couple, because I'm like the other half of her. Everything that she's bad at, I'm good at and everything I'm bad at, she's good at."

Almost every weekend, Versavel drives to either of her home yacht clubs — Richmond Yacht Club in the East Bay or St. Francis Yacht Club, north of San Francisco — to sail with Sutter. The pair generally meet at 10:30 a.m. to rig their boat, then put on their wetsuits and start sailing, occasionally accompanied by a coach or training partners.

"Every time I'm in the [San Francisco] Bay, I just feel so lucky," Versavel says. "I've also been able to travel to many places all over the country like North Carolina, Florida and L.A. [Los Angeles]. But honestly, no view beats the Golden Gate Bridge ... I think it's absolutely beautiful."

At practice, Versavel says they always try to do at least 10 maneuvers a day, including tacking and jibing, which allows them to keep moving in the correct direction depending on the wind. When she is away from her boat, Versavel works out at least three to four days a week to stay fit.

Not only has sailing helped Versavel become physically stronger, but it has also helped her build character.

"Sailing has taught me a lot of grit and determination, that you need to persist even when things are hard," Versavel says.



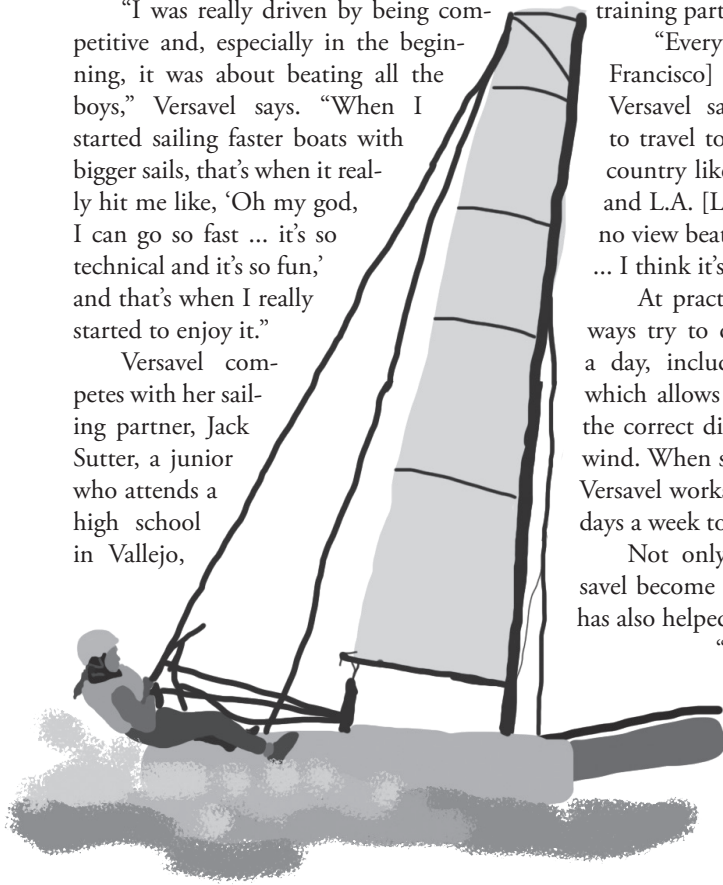
ON THE WATER Junior Charlotte Versavel has created many valuable connections through sailing. "It's really a sport about community and you meet a lot of friends through sailing," she says. Photo by Zoë Wong-VanHaren

For Versavel, her greatest accomplishment was during a particularly cold and wet competition, the first qualifier for Youth Worlds, where her boat had flipped because of a careless mistake. Although they were behind, the pair got the boat back up, put their heads down, and ended up passing several boats that had not flipped.

"Staying positive and staying calm, even level-headed, during that experience has shown me what an incredible person I could be when I'm competing," Versavel says.

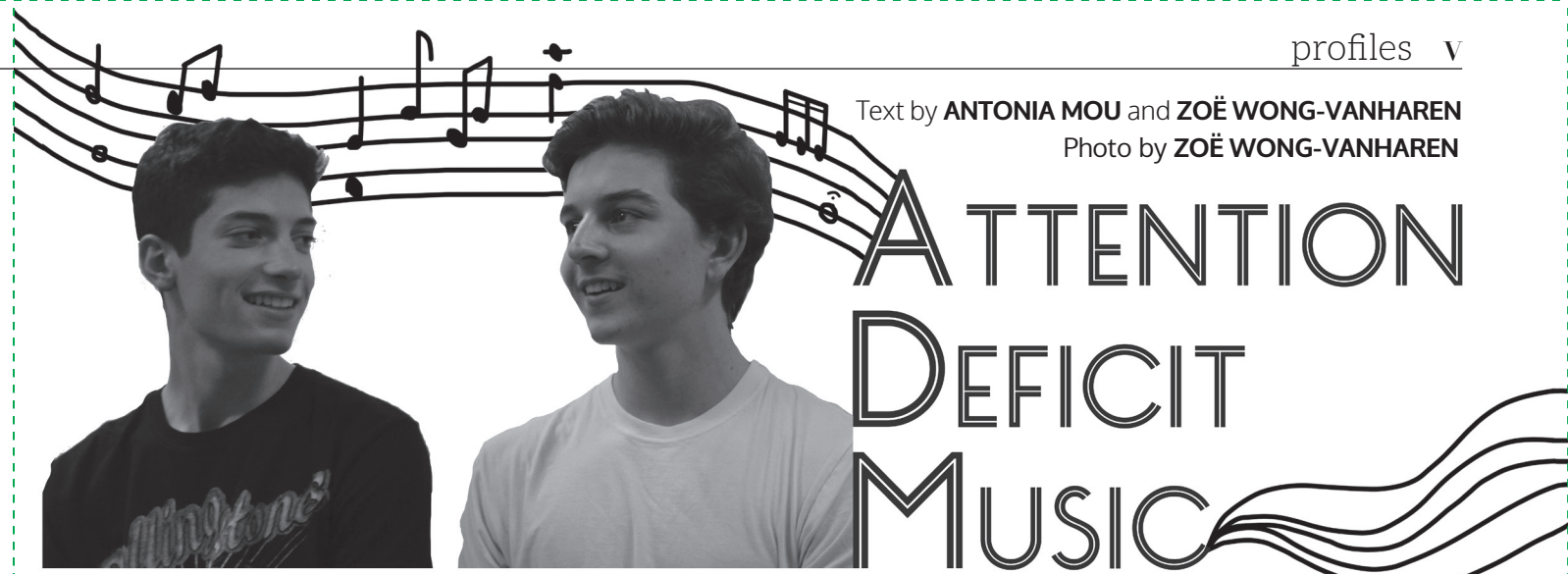
After high school, Sutter and Versavel plan to continue sailing during college and beyond. One of their main goals is to switch to the Nacra 17, the fully foiling, out-of-the-water Olympic sailboat, to compete in the Olympics in the near future.

"I'm really a much stronger, healthier, smarter and better person because I sail," Versavel says. "Being on a team in such a competitive environment in sailing, it really tests you. It has given me a lot of confidence. If I didn't sail, I think I would be completely different." v



Text by **ANTONIA MOU** and **ZOË WONG-VANHAREN**

Photo by **ZOË WONG-VANHAREN**



ATTENTION DEFICIT MUSIC

SENIOR DUO PRODUCES NEW POP SONGS

FOR ALAN MOSS and Tyler Furrier, both seniors at Palo Alto High School, music has always been something innately rooted in their identities. During their junior year, the two formed a musical duo called Attention Deficit and have been producing songs together ever since.

Moss and Furrier have been close friends since they met in choir class during freshman year. Both into music, the two bonded over arranging songs for their a cappella group, the Heartbreakers.

"We started with arranging a cappella songs together," Moss says. "It just worked well, and we decided to just make a song."

With that goal in mind, Moss and Furrier created Attention Deficit and began working on their first song, titled "Break Away." Their goal is for the song to be released in December.

The pair began brainstorming, writing and composing the song in the summer of 2019 using the software Ableton Live, finally finishing it approximately three months later.

"Sometimes you have to sleep on it," Furrier says. "I always say, 'You can't work for creativity, you have to let creativity work for you.'"

Uniquely, Moss and Furrier rarely disagree when working together on music, creating a collaborative dynamic between the two. Moss and Furrier's previously existing

friendship and musical chemistry allows them to create music they are both passionate about while being able to bounce ideas off each other with ease.

"I think the best part [of our partnership] is communication," Moss says. "It was cool because we were friends before and it wasn't like, 'Hey, I don't really know you, let's make music.'"

The duo's spontaneous air is reflected in their name, Attention Deficit, which is representative of their music-making process.

"We're always coming up with new ideas, sometimes it's hard to just focus on one certain idea ... which is a strength, but also can distract us sometimes," Moss says.

Even as children, music had always been a part of Moss and Furrier's creative processes.

Both constantly surrounded themselves with instruments and song lyrics from an early age. Furrier began taking private guitar lessons in elementary school and eventually joined the Frank S. Greene Jr. Middle School Mixed Choir at age 12, which further developed his passion for singing. Like Furrier, Moss has been singing for as long as he can remember.

"I was belting crappy Katy Perry pop songs around my house," Moss says. "My parents were like, 'This kid sucks right now, we need to get him some lessons.'"

Through music and voice lessons, Moss continued developing his love for music, growing more serious about creating songs in high school. Furrier was the one to introduce Moss to the world of producing, since he had been making music since middle school.

"I started to produce because I wanted to do something else besides just guitar," Furrier says. "I would make a lot of EDM [Electronic Dance Music] stuff, but then as I got more into singing, I started to do more solo stuff."

In third grade, Furrier took a short break from guitar lessons to focus more on lacrosse, but shortly after found himself drawn back into the world of music.

"I think that's how you know when you truly love something," Furrier says. "It's when you come back to it."

Although Attention Deficit's debut song release has been delayed because of college applications, the pair hope to carve out more time for music in their schedules during second semester. While both Moss and Furrier plan to attend college, the duo hopes to continue the band after high school.

"Ideally, I'd want to do music but then also be doing something more profitable," Furrier says, laughing. "It's hard to live as an artist."

Moss echoes Furrier's sentiment.

"I want to integrate my passion for music and work, but not as a performer," Moss says. "I could see myself working in the music business or working at a place like Spotify." v

"I always say, 'You can't work for creativity, you have to let creativity work for you.'"

— TYLER FURRIER, senior

THE NOYMAN BROTHERS

SETTING A HIGH BAR FOR INTENSE ATHLETES



SWINGING SIBLINGS Jared Noyman practices his high bar routine while his brother Erik spots him. The two brothers are constantly working together to improve.

Text by **MIA BALDONADO** and
GRACE LINDSTROM
Photos by **ZOË WONG-VANHAREN**

“**C**OME ON ERIK, load it up!” “Let’s get it, Jared!” Other gymnasts at the gym cheer on teammates

Erik and Jared Noyman, brothers practicing their high bar routines. The gym is alive with boys of all ages perfecting their own routines and exercises in groups. Upbeat pop music plays in the background, and the sound of chatter and encouraging words fill the space with a fun and collaborative atmosphere. After applying chalk to their hands, the brothers take turns swinging and flipping on the high bar, receiving feedback from their coach and then repeating the process.

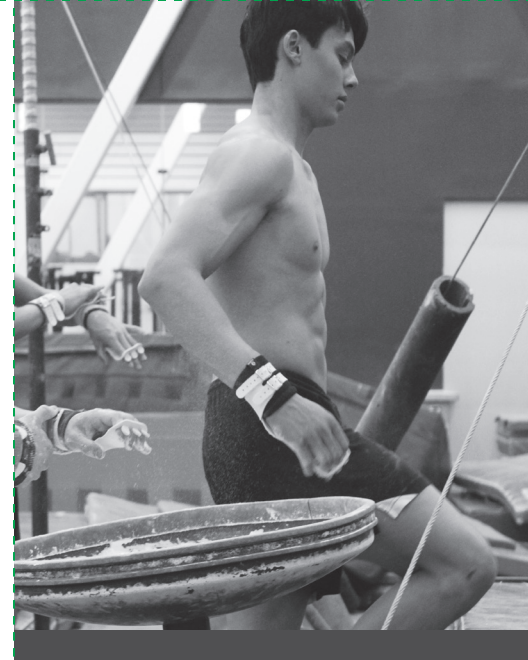
“The reason that I like it [the high bar event] is it’s really challenging and there’s always an adrenaline rush when you do it,” Erik said.

Erik Noyman, a Palo Alto High School junior, and Jared Noyman, a Paly freshman, are brothers and competitive gymnasts at the Stanford Boys Gymnastics club. The brothers take part in men’s artistic gymnastics, a type of gymnastics in which athletes perform short routines including vault, floor exercise, pommel horse, still rings, parallel bars and high bar. Similar to other club sports leagues, gymnasts participate in tournaments and compete in state, regional and then national championships.

Both Erik and Jared started gymnastics at a young age. Jared started at around five or six years old, encouraging Erik to start about a month later. The two of them took up the sport when their mom noticed that they both had a lot of energy.

“I was always climbing up the door frames in my house and my mom was like ‘That’s it, you’re going to gymnastics,’” Erik said.

Despite the sport’s individual focus, the team’s positive and collaborative atmo-



FLIPPING FUN Erik Noyman approaches the high bar after receiving feedback from his coach. Jared and Erik repeat this process many times to perfect their routines. “They [coaches] are really supportive of you and they try to push you to do as best you can,” Erik said.

CHALK IT UP Erik Noyman chalks up his hands in preparation for practicing on the high bar: his favorite event. He has had to put hours upon hours of work into the event. “Gymnastics definitely makes you really disciplined,” Erik said.

sphere has kept the pair hooked since they started.

“Everyone respects the work that you put in, and everyone’s really supportive of each other,” Erik said. “It’s not really like people booing against you — you want everyone to do as best as they can.”

This spirit is emblematic of the gymnastics culture as a whole. According to Jared, most athletes cheer each other on at tournaments, despite the fact that they are all technically competing against one another.

“Even people on other teams cheer each other on,” Jared said. “Maybe we’ll cheer if someone has a good routine.”

Erik and Jared began training at the Stanford collegiate gym because of its close distance to their home. From there, the brothers have worked hard to perform well each season, and both of them have made it onto an All-Star team — a group composed of the top five gymnasts at regional championships who represent the region at state championships.

“I was able to represent Northern California at regionals [and] I got second in the state,” Jared said. “I was pretty excited about that and it was a really good experience.”

Not all of their accomplishments, however, have necessarily been awards or medals. Like many other sports, gymnastics can help encourage a strong work ethic.

“I feel like I’ve improved myself as a person — I’ve become a hard worker and that has helped me with my other commitments,” Erik said.

Despite the positive experiences that Erik and Jared have had, a rewarding sport is not without its challenges. Gymnastics is

not an easy activity to just pick up or participate in as an extracurricular. It demands an extensive time commitment, and the Noyman brothers typically practice for three to four hours a day, six days a week.

“You get home, have a 10 minute break, and just go straight to work,” Erik said. “You can’t slack off at all. And then oftentimes you have to stay up late at night because of gym, doing the work that you didn’t finish before, so it’s definitely a commitment.”

Another challenge the brothers face is the stigma that comes with being a male gymnast. According to Erik, many people



who show interest in his gymnastics career tend to visualize the sport as nothing more than leotards and flips. While both Erik and Jared do wear leotards during competition and can do flips, they also want people to understand the commitment and hard work that go into the sport.

Injuries, although common among gymnasts, usually prove to be setbacks as well. Erik has learned to deal with them though, as he has had to handle injuries for the past couple of years. Often, these injuries have left him unable to practice certain skills or compete in tournaments.

“Everyone at one time or another is going to get injured, but I guess it’s something you have to deal with and just push forward,” Erik said. “I feel like I’ve improved a lot even though it’s been on-and-off in that I’ve learned how to rebound from major injuries.”

In the future, the Noymans both hope to continue their gymnastics careers in college and beyond. The idea of competing in college pushes them to continue working hard, keeping in mind that one day they could represent not only a team, but also a school.

“Collegiate gymnastics — that’s the goal for me,” Erik said. v

There is always an adrenaline rush when you do it [the high bar].

— ERIK NOYMAN, junior

Even people on the other teams will cheer each other on.

— JARED NOYMAN, freshman

Text by KYLIE MIES and JASMINE VENET

Photos by ZOË WONG-VANHAREN

Phela the Phenom

THE FUTURE OF SCOOTERING

STANDING AT THE TOP of a flight of stairs, Palo Alto High School freshman Phela Durosini looks down and considers his next trick. He takes a deep breath, his grip tightening on the handlebars of his scooter, and takes off, his sneakers pushing off the ground. Then he is in the air flying over the stairs while twisting his scooter beneath him in one swift motion before landing, wheels down on the hard cement once more.

At only 14, Durosini demonstrates the same kind of skill and energy as many pro scooter riders. This raw talent is what has allowed him to make a name for himself in the world of scooting, catching the eye of a company called Aztek Scooters, which decided to sponsor him.

To Durosini, however, scooting means more than sponsorships and recognition. Through the sport, he was able to find a group of scooter riders that he connected with, creating friendships that surpassed a shared passion for scooting.

His start to scooting

When he was eight years old, Durosini was gifted his first scooter for Christmas. Since then, he has immersed himself in scooting, constantly trying out new tricks and expanding on his skill set.

"A lot of times I'll be messing around doing old tricks, or I'll see a certain obstacle and think of something I want to do on it, thinking I can do this and change that," Durosini says.

At the time, he had no idea that the sport would be the spark for his future friendships and successes over the course of the next six years.

Durosini is seen by many as an exceptional and hard-working scooter rider. Reed Schulman, a Paly freshman and fellow scooter rider, thinks Durosini's skills are a product of both raw talent and hard work.

SCOOTER SENSATION (LEFT) Freshman Phela Durosini poses for a picture with his scooter. "What makes him so good is his creativity, in addition to the many hours that he has spent on his scooter," freshman Reed Schulman says.

"I think that what makes him so good is his creativity in addition to the many hours that he has spent on his scooter," Schulman says.

Durosini is a master at thinking creatively — new tricks come naturally to him.

"It's like improvising," Durosini says. "It's not like you have to do something [specific], you can just do whatever you want."

"Phela is the future"

"A-1 trick selection." "Great style." "Take your notes kids." "Real scooting." "Phela is the future." These are some of the many comments on a video Aztek Scooters posted in December 2018. The video features Durosini doing daring tricks off of obstacles like stairs and railings, his scooter consisting of Aztek Scooters parts.

Dom Marconi, the owner of Aztek Scooters, explains what he believes makes Durosini so exceptional.

"Phela is one of the best riders of his age — he is riding at the same level of some of the guys on our team who are 24 years old," Marconi says. "This is what really was amazing about him. We saw a lot of potential in him, and he's only getting better."

Besides being sponsored, Durosini is also part of a scooting crew called the Bling Boys, the members of which he met in Menlo Park. He created it with Alex Washburn, a Paly junior, and his brother Lucas Washburn, a Brown University student and Paly alumnus.

Although the majority of the Bling Boys do not scooter together anymore, scooting has helped form Durosini's current friendships in high school.

"I still remember absolutely losing my mind watching Phela do some of the tricks he did — he was definitely at some point better than a great portion of professional scooter riders," Alex Washburn says.

Durosini has had a raw talent for scooting since he started, but with the extra stresses of high school, it has become hard for him to find time to do it. Yet, his



ONE OF A KIND Durosini jumps over a flight of stairs, performing a trick on his scooter. "At the age of eight he was already better than any of my friends who were two to three years older than him, purely because of his natural talent," junior Alex Washburn says.

undying creativity, fearlessness and hard work is what has gotten him so far in the world of scooting.

"He has really become more of an inspiration to the younger generation in the sport," Schulman says.

To Durosini, however, scooting has been, and always will be, a way for him to simply let go, relax and just have fun.

"[Scooting is] just fun, it is a way for me to gather all my energy and do something I like," Durosini says. "It is really relaxing." v

2010s decade



A REFLECTION ON THE TRENDS OF THE 2010s

FOR THE PAST 10 YEARS, the students of Palo Alto High School have experienced trends that came with the decade that defined their childhood. From elementary school wrists stacked with Silly Bandz to Hydroflasks adorned with friendship bracelets, a lot has changed throughout the 2010s. On the eve of a new decade, Verde decided to take a trip down memory lane and revisit some of the biggest trends in television, music and fashion that emerged between 2010 and today.

Show-stoppers

Almost every child growing up in the 2010s remembers waking up early on a Saturday morning to watch the most popular TV shows. Nickelodeon's "Spongebob Squarepants" captivated us with the adventures of a sponge and his starfish best friend. "Phineas and Ferb," the Disney Channel favorite, made their fans want a platypus as a pet and, more importantly, 104 days of summer vacation.

Other Nickelodeon series "iCarly," "Victorious" and "Big Time Rush," as well as the Disney Channel classics "Hannah Montana," "Wizards of Waverly Place" and "The Suite Life on Deck" provided us with high expectations for love, friendship and fun in our teenage years. These children's TV shows have also helped break boundaries for equal representation in media. For example, "Steven Universe" on Cartoon Network is about a young boy who lives with strong female superheroes. The program shows queerness, female empowerment and journeys of self-love. It is encouraging that more television programs and producers are using their influence on children in a positive way by educating them on topics that were not addressed progressively in earlier popular television shows for kids.

Although television was a huge part of many Paly students' childhoods, younger generations are not as invested in children's show networks like Disney Channel and Nickelodeon. Social media apps, such as YouTube and Instagram, provide today's youth with a plethora of entertainment for free, while online streaming video services like Netflix and Hulu have dominated the Saturday movie nights for American families, decreasing cable ownership.

According to Business Insider, a spike in cable ownership was seen in 2012 but has been declining since. Recently, Disney has launched their own streaming video service called Disney+, further hinting at the movement away from cable TV.

It's no question that 2010s TV has a special place in Generation Z's heart, but the recent decline of cable membership has reduced the role of television in younger generations' lives.

Memory lane music

From DJ Snake and Lil Jon's chaotic "Turn Down for What" to Adele's melodramatic "Rolling in the Deep," the music videos of the 2010s reflect the decade's emphasis on visuals associated with music.

Some of the most iconic songs of the 2010s, such as "Stereotype" by Gym Class Heroes and "Teenage Dream" by Katy Perry, have been the soundtrack of our childhood. We have seen a drastic change in the range of music this decade, from Bruno Mars's heartfelt "Just The Way You Are" to Robin Thicke and T.I.'s raunchy "Blurred Lines," which both hit number one on the Billboard Hot 100 about three years apart.

The 2010s also saw a rise in digital streaming services — most notably, Spotify, Apple Music and Soundcloud. Music, which used to be purchased in stores, is now paid for as a whole through the streaming service the consumer has selected.

These services have introduced the ability for individuals to venture into unfamiliar genres of music without having to pay for each song. Spotify even suggests specific playlists that correspond to a genre or mood, eliminating much of the time and effort it took to create playlists before. For example, the "Are & Be" playlist consists of the most popular rhythm and blues songs today, whereas the "Down in the Dumps" playlist contains strictly sad songs.

The streaming services' ability to offer new music to consumers at the click of a button has decreased the demand for the radio DJ, who did the job for years before. With unlimited song selection, users no longer have to put up with the regularity of Top 40 radio music stations: many former radio listeners are tired of the same songs.

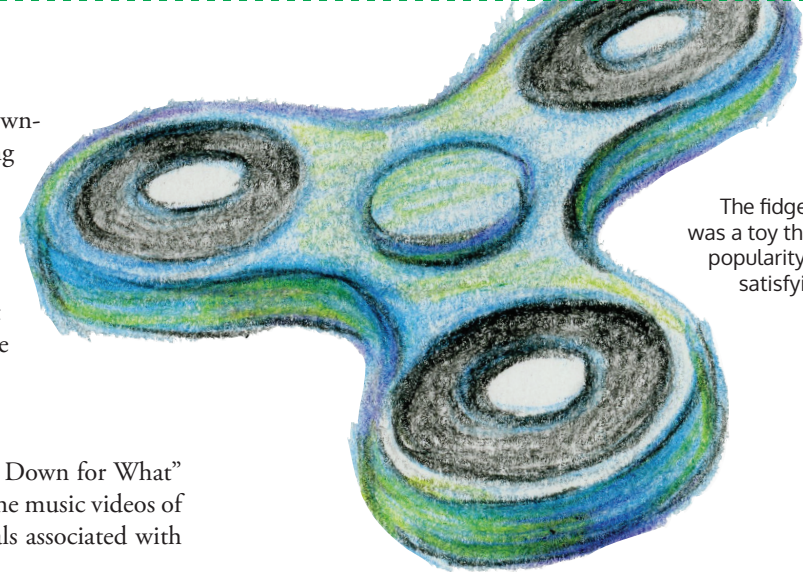
"I don't listen to the radio because I got a Spotify [Premium] membership," Palo Alto High School junior Jace Purcell said. "I think radio music quality has declined over the years."

The music industry has evolved with technology's integration into our lives. Car rides with the radio blaring are fading to fond memories while our consumption of music through streaming services creates new ones.

Trend throwbacks

The early 2010s had the mall as the centerpiece of teen clothing trends, usually including Abercrombie & Fitch, Hollister, Forever 21 and H&M as the most popular brands. Now, teen trends have shifted to thrift stores where affordable, vintage-looking items that differ from mainstream corporate designs can be found.

The change in clothing trends seen in the 2010s has been drastic: teens went from feathers in their hair, patterned leggings and intentionally-ripped skinny jeans to scrunchies, Lululemon leg-



FIDGET SPINNER

The fidget spinner was a toy that gained popularity from the satisfying way it spins.

gings and thrifted mom jeans.

The rise of the social media app TikTok has popularized many fashion trends such as e-boys, e-girls and VSCO girls, named after the photo editing app, VSCO. Although over-exaggerated, the fashion trends seen on TikTok have prompted schools to create their own Spirit Days associated with these trends. From Silly Bandz to Hydroflasks, the fashion trends of the 2010s have turned many household items into a point of cultural conversation.

Recently, we have seen teens boycotting fast fashion brands like Forever 21 for the unsustainability of their clothing. Sustainable fashion and "resurgence outfits" are in the spotlight now, but we have no idea what the next decade will bring in fashion.

High schoolers will never forget the hundreds of TV shows, music videos and clothes that made the 2010s such a memorable time to grow up in. As we head into the next decade, all we can say is "Good luck, Charlie." v



104 DAYS OF SUMMER VACATION Phineas (bottom right) and Ferb (top left) star in the show "Phineas and Ferb," which aired on Disney Channel from 2007-2015.

Text by **ANDIE TETZLAFF** AND **AUDREY KERNICK**
 Art by **SAMANTHA HO**

King Princess

OUR "CHEAP QUEEN" IS FINALLY CENTER STAGE

EVER SINCE THE RELEASE OF HER DEBUT single "1950" in 2018, pop artist Mikaela Mullaney Straus, popularly known as King Princess, has continued to make a name for herself as a queer voice in the music industry leading up to the release of her debut album "Cheap Queen."

Straus, a 20-year-old Brooklyn native who identifies as genderqueer and gay, grew up playing various instruments in a musically-engaged family. Beginning her career making music in her dad's studio, Mission Sound, Straus was offered her first record deal at the age of 11.

While her relationship with music has been lifelong, Straus has only been pursuing music professionally since 2015. She launched her career on Soundcloud, a music platform where anyone can post their music publicly, and was able to build a following with the release of songs "Send Pix" and "Sunburn" in 2017. Soon after, Straus became the first artist to sign to established musician Mark Ronson's label, Zelig records.

Straus found critical acclaim following the release of her debut single "1950," a tender and beautiful song about rejected love in the eyes of a gay woman, in February of 2018. She wrote the song as a tribute to members of the LGBTQ community who may be facing obstacles and boundaries when it comes to expressing their queerness to the world.

Since "1950," Straus put out a five-song EP, followed by four individual singles, five album singles, and finally, her debut album "Cheap Queen."

"Cheap Queen" is a 13-track ode to love and heartbreak, sticky with strife and dripping with sultry confidence.

The first track, "Tough On Myself," is chokingly sorrowful. The tale of a failed relationship ripe with self-deprecation over a slow and vicious beat is perfect to sway to by oneself. Following "Useless Phrases," a short and sweet taste of a song at a run time of 1:16, is the title track "Cheap Queen."

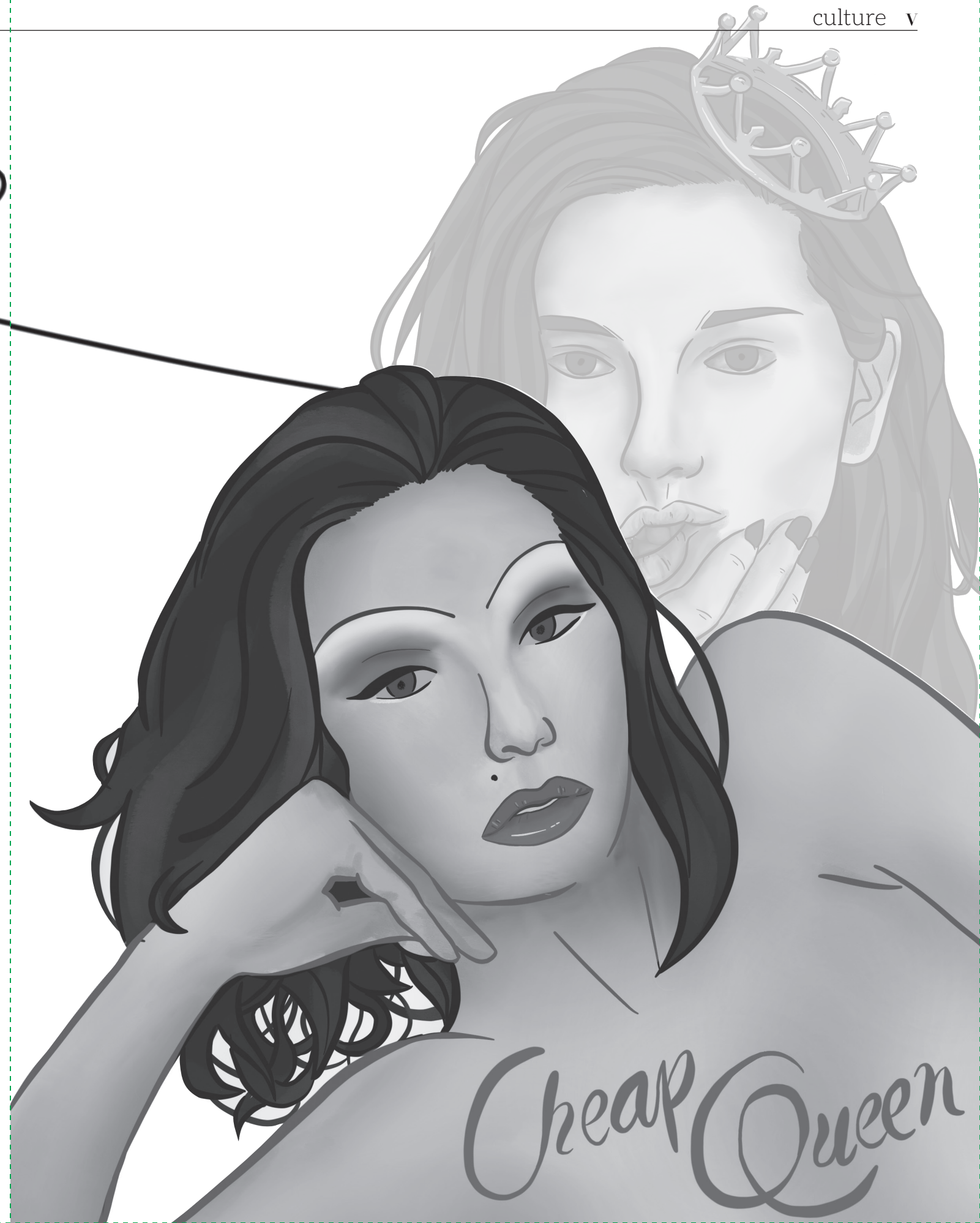
"Cheap Queen," which was released as a single in May of 2019, is subtle pop at its best. With slinky, tired-smile cheekiness, "Cheap Queen" feels like the end of a good night out. Straus covers strengths, shortcomings, good friends and the reality of her experience as a young queer person.

On "Ain't Together," Straus croons about the difficulty of a causal relationship, and the song as a whole feels like one big sad smile. "Prophet" is a fervorous and alluring song with a tantalizingly slow beat married to craving lyrics, altogether creating a potentially seductive soundtrack.

The most popular track on the album, "Hit the Back," is, as Straus states in a tweet, "the anthem for bottoms everywhere." "Hit the Back" stands out as one of the higher energy tracks on the album. It is a bumping, playful song about submission and control with a sprinkle of Straus's signature self-doubt.

Capping off the album is "If You Think It's Love," a raw reflection on relationships, power dynamics and change. It is stripped of frills and presents a simple melancholy end.

While broadly homogenous as an album, each song is still distinctly its own. "Cheap Queen" is versatile and has songs for breakups, makeups, hookups, sad days, great days and all the days in between: it is an account of life as a young queer person, with Straus's experience acting as validation for so many others. v



Text by **KOBI JOHNSON, ISHANI RAHA** and **GIAN-PAOLO VON RUDEN**

Art by **SELENA CAO**

Cracking the code

ESCAPE ROOMS: A TEST OF TEAMWORK

THE STEADY rhythmic ticking of the clock breaks the silence of the room, as people scramble around, overturning every piece of furniture in an effort to find clues. They have just one hour to solve all the puzzles laid out before them in order to escape the Mad Hatter's tea party. Succeed, and they will be allowed to leave. Fail, and they will be stuck at his party forever.

"Escape the Mad Hatter" is created by Rypitic Room Escape, a company which creates games and team-building exercises. This experience is Rypitic's innovative take on the newest type of puzzle game: the escape room. Locked in a room with various clues on how to open the door, participants are faced with real-life physical and mental challenges. They then have to decipher the clues and solve puzzles to find their way out of the room before their time limit expires. Escape rooms bring a unique adventure to eager audiences.

A legacy of unlocking

Escape rooms are inspired by adventure video games in which players maneuver a space by interacting with objects and solving puzzles. According to the Digital Game Museum, the original games were entirely text based, and they used basic commands in order to solve complex



adventures and puzzles. With the advent of computer graphics, studios like LucasArts and Sierra popularized the adventure game genre, transforming it from typing to pointing and clicking.

As the genre grew in popularity, so did the push to have a real-life version of these adventure games. According to Lock Academy, in 2007, the Japanese company SCRAP introduced a live escape room, finally bringing the genre beyond the screen. These puzzle games exploded in popularity when the first escape room chain, Hint Hunt, opened in Hungary. Their popularity continued to rise to rise when escape rooms established themselves across Europe, Canada and the United States by 2013.

With escape rooms popping up locally, many students at Palo Alto High School have tried to channel their inner Houdini and break out of various different labs, cells and cages. Junior Kimi Lillios went on a team bonding trip with her volleyball team to an Egyptian-themed room during a tournament in 2018.

"I loved the escape room," Lillios said in a text. "I've grown up loving various puzzles and problems that incite critical thinking so the escape room was the perfect manifestation of these games on a larger scale."

In addition to creating a bond between teammates, the heat-of-the-moment adrenaline combined with spontaneous cooperation builds team-work skills. An experience like this is able to connect people who may not have been initially familiar with each other in a fun and low-stakes setting.

Escape rooms require people to cooperate with other participants by being on the same page and sharing clues. This can lead to conflicts, as people jockey to solve the puzzles first and be the "leader" of the escaping group.

Arguments between participants make

both the escape itself and future collaboration more difficult.

Rypitic's fixes

"Escape the Mad Hatter," located at 1931 Old Middlefield Way in Mountain View, is not a conventional escape room: instead of grouping all the participants together, four participating groups rotate between four different rooms every five minutes. If a team is able to solve all four rooms, they unlock the final puzzle. If the final puzzle is solved, the group manages to escape the Mad Hatter. While the teams go at it, the game master walks around, providing the occasional hint to those who are struggling. Each room is self-contained, requiring nothing from other rooms to solve each room's respective puzzle. It is not recommended for beginners, with a completion rate of only 25%, according to Rypitic.

This system was an interesting way to mix up the common escape room experience, and it definitely added a unique twist. The tight time limit in each room meant that there was no time to waste bickering, forcing us to work quickly and leave the extra comments for later. The room switching also meant that we had to be able to quickly switch gears to focus on new settings and different challenges. Any time spent thinking about previous rooms would eat into the five minutes in the next.

Despite this, the room rotation was not without flaws. Switching meant we had to frantically examine each new room to try to make the most out of our time. Because of that, we ended up missing many clues. This also meant that once we were behind in clue-solving, it was difficult to make up for lost time and solve what we needed to.

The most problematic part of the design was the possibility that we couldn't solve the first room. If a team didn't solve the first room in their rotation, their last

fifteen minutes would be spent rotating through the three final rooms without actually being able to escape. Despite this, we still thoroughly enjoyed ourselves and managed to solve the other three rooms.

"Escape the Mad Hatter" is an ambitious take on a thrilling form of entertainment that is still developing, but it stays true to the principles that make escape rooms so popular. With intricate room designs and plenty of puzzles combined with a fresh take on the method to escape, it makes for an entertaining hour. And although we're still technically stuck at the Mad Hatter's tea party, we would definitely recommend it for escape room enthusiasts and newcomers alike. v

Have you done an
escape room before?



**Source: The data presented here comes from a Verde Magazine survey of 157 Palo Alto High School students in nine randomly selected English classes (English 9A, English 10A, Escape Literature and Advanced Placement English Language). Verde conducted the survey from late October to early November through a digital form. Responses were anonymous and Verde provided students with the option to opt out for any reason.*

telefèric BARCELONA

AUTHENTIC SPANISH CUISINE
MAKES ITS WAY TO PALO ALTO

THOUGH EATERIES in Palo Alto already represent a rich mix of international cultures, authentic Spanish cuisine has only recently made a breakthrough on the local food scene this October.

At Town & Country Village, Telefèric Barcelona is the newest addition to the diverse lineup of available restaurants. Run by siblings Xavi and Maria Padrosa, the business has drawn diners from all over the Bay Area after its launch on Oct. 8 by remaining true to its unique Barcelonian origins.

The small family business began under a different name 25 years ago in Sant Cugat, Spain. A toy cable car, or *telefèric* in Catalan, going from one side to the other at this first restaurant led to regular customers calling it the telefèric restaurant. The name has since stuck and all five locations across Spain and the United States are called Telefèric Barcelona.

As the winter season comes into full swing in Palo Alto, Spanish music, warm lights and lively diners welcome guests to experience an authentic immersion in Barcelonian culture. Inside the restaurant are good-natured waiters who approach with an “Hola” to every guest, switching fluidly between English and Spanish.

Closely mimicking Spanish nightlife, Telefèric Barcelona remains busy late into

the night and takes reservations until 10 p.m. Though crowds peaked at around 7 p.m. on the Friday night of our visit, the restaurant hosts a fair amount of customers throughout its lunch and dinner hours.

“The experience ... is not brought to the table by good service or good food. It is [brought] by ... authenticity.”

— XAVI PADROSA, Co-owner of Telefèric Barcelona

After their meal, guests are free to explore the small Spanish market on the side of the restaurant, where they can purchase goods such as Spanish cookbooks, olives and gazpacho.

In an extra effort to stay true to authentic Barcelonian culture, the Palo Alto site also plans to host Flamenco Nights beginning around January with professional dancers from Caminos Flamencos — authentic Spanish performers who have already proved popular at the Walnut Creek location.

“Not many restaurants give an authentic experience to guests,” says Xavi Padrosa, co-owner of Telefèric Barcelona. “And I always say that the experience ... is not brought to the table by good service or good food. It is [brought] by an experience you generate with authenticity, like the flamenco show of dancers.”

Spanish and American food cultures may seem vastly different, from eating times to ingredients and the norms around

sharing food, yet Telefèric Barcelona easily opens a window for its customers into an authentic Barcelonian lifestyle.

“I try to share the message of how Spaniards like to eat when [they’re] not at home,” Oscar Cabezas, executive chef of Telefèric Barcelona, says.

To help spread Spanish culture as far as possible, the menu at Telefèric Barcelona is set to change every three to four weeks as part of an effort to keep the restaurant dynamic.

According to Cabezas, the three most important things that characterize Spanish food are local ingredients, taste and flavor; hence, these are the restaurant’s core values in serving its patrons.

Telefèric Barcelona has proven its success with the opening of five locations in Spain and the United States; the Padrosa family has no plans to stop expanding and intends to share its culinary expertise with more cities in the near future.

“We are planning to open [another location] in Los Angeles next year,” Padrosa says. “Whatever good opportunities come to the table, we’ll take them.”

no plans to stop expanding and intends to share its culinary expertise with more cities in the near future.

“We are planning to open [another location] in Los Angeles next year,” Padrosa says. “Whatever good opportunities come to the table, we’ll take them.”



CULTURAL CONNOISSEUR Xavi Padrosa, co-owner of Telefèric Barcelona, is passionate about sharing Barcelonian culture. “My dream was always to make a chain in the United States of authentic Spanish food,” Padrosa says. Photo by Zoë Wong-VanHaren

La Burrata (\$12)

This salad is made with arugula, oranges, sun-dried tomatoes and figs with a mound of soft burrata cheese. The sweet and savory dish is topped with balsamic vinegar and crushed pistachios for added texture, with fig jam on the bottom layer.

Patatas Bravas (\$9)

Crispy potatoes are served in a yellow ceramic bowl and covered in a delicious bise-cayne sauce with aioli. The taste of garlic is not overpowering and the combined flavors create a delightful dish which has proved popular among customers.

Churros con Chocolate (\$8)

This straightforward dessert is served warm with a small bowl of chocolate sauce and mint leaves. A crispy exterior hides soft dough on the inside and the churros are neither overwhelmingly large nor sweet.



PAELLA DE VERDURAS (TOP) This well-known Spanish dish is fresh and not too hot with a crispy bottom layer. Cooked vegetables such as asparagus and bell peppers enhance the flavor, while a savory white sauce tops off the dish. Photo by Zoë Wong-VanHaren

A TASTE OF SPAIN (BOTTOM LEFT) In El Merkat, Telefèric Barcelona invites customers to experience the atmosphere of a Spanish market. The space is complete with authentic recipe books, Barcelonian pottery and a large selection of wines. Photo by Zoë Wong-VanHaren

PINTXOS (RIGHT) The Padrosa family was among the first to serve these small-bite skewers in Barcelona nearly 25 years ago. Typically made with meat, cheese or vegetables, pintxos are eaten as finger foods at Spanish restaurants. Photo by Zoë Wong-VanHaren

Text by **SASHA POOR**Photos by **JASMINE VENET**

RETURNING THE GAZE

ENCOURAGING CONNECTION TO COMMUNITY

HARLEM-BASED artist Jordan Casteel's first solo show at the Iris & B. Gerald Cantor Center for Visual Arts at Stanford University illustrates her development through four years of her art career, from 2013 to 2017. The exhibit is free to attend and is open until Feb. 2, 2020. The art is arranged in chronological order, showing her evolution from painting important figures in her own life to strangers.

Casteel is an artist and assistant professor at Rutgers University. She paints large-scale, figurative realism portraits of everyday scenes from her community.

Entering the exhibition at the Cantor Arts Center, Casteel's first portraits greet the viewer. Continuing through her paintings, the subjects' eyes stare back, calling the viewer toward them.

"I think that the thing that really grabs you in these paintings is the way that these viewers look back at you," said Aleesa Pitchmarn Alexander, Cantor Arts Center assistant curator of American art.

Breaking stereotypes

Even Casteel's choice of subjects defies stereotypes. Each of her series focuses on people not usually featured in fine art, but become compelling subjects.

Her earlier collections, "Visible Man" and "Brothers," portray black men who

Casteel had close relationships with, including family members and friends.

They render these men through Casteel's eyes, showing a humanity that is often lost to the pervasive racism and toxic masculinity of the outside world.

"The intent of the paintings from my early works is to expose my vision of black men as a sister, daughter, friend and lover," Casteel said in an interview with the Cantor Arts Center in June. "That perspective is one full of empathy and love. I see the humanity and,

in turn, I want audiences to engage with them as fathers, sons, brothers, cousins — as individuals with their own unique stories to share."

Casteel focuses on interpreting her own experiences and her own reality, which is appreciated by people attending the show at the Cantor Arts Center.

"I think her work is very powerful," exhibit attendee Liz Jessee said. "It's really a reflection of a time and a place."

Community engagement

Casteel's more recent paintings depict members of her society that she sees

throughout her day, not only those she has a connection to.

"Nights in Harlem," her 2017 series, details the area at night, while other subjects include women, cityscapes and local business owners.

To paint these portraits, Casteel approaches strangers on the street, asks to take their photo and bases her art on those photos.

"We felt her message about emphasizing stopping and getting to know folks around you," Alexander said.

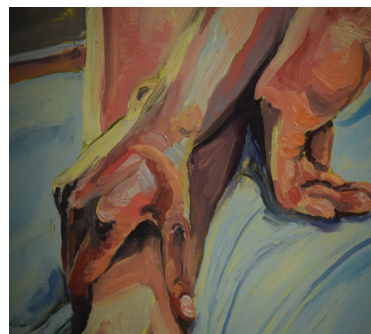
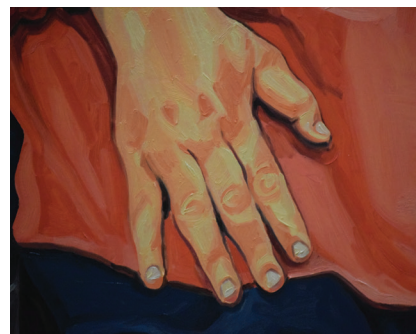
"Really paying attention to the importance of everyday life and the people that you will encounter in everyday life, and how we often take those encounters for granted."

Casteel's approach to engaging with her neighbors is something that all viewers can take from the exhibition and incorporate into their own lives.

"I could go into a store and say 'Well, hello, I live here. Do you live here?'" Rocky Blumhagen, a Stanford Fellowship Program student, said. "I think that's really valuable ... that anybody can take away. Are you really seeing the people in your community? Do you really see them?" v

I see the humanity and, in turn, I want audiences to engage with them ... as individuals with their own unique stories to share.

— JORDAN CASTEEL, artist



A GAZE RETURNED Jordan Casteel's portraits are rough, with each brush stroke prominently featured when viewed up close. The unnatural colors that Casteel sometimes chooses to paint her subjects in adds to the striking effect of her paintings. Casteel's portraits are designed to show her subjects' humanity, incorporating small elements to accentuate their personalities. "She reflects her time and place; it's very powerful," said Liz Jessee, an attendee at the exhibition on Nov. 7. "It shows the good in people, not the stereotype."

BAGS OR BEANS?

COMPARING THE SF TEA AND COFFEE FESTIVALS

Text by **AUDREY KERNICK** and **TIM HUNG**

ONE CITY, two different convention halls, two different drinks and two different demographics. The San Francisco International Tea Festival and the San Francisco International Coffee Festival both provided a space for people to come together, sample different products and rejoice in their respective drinks.

When we think about the people who drink tea and the people who drink coffee, usually there is a notion of each. Tea drinkers are stereotyped as meek, introverted individuals who prefer to live tamer, more subtle lives. On the other hand, coffee drinkers are typecast as loud, opinionated extroverts who are assertive and confident. Palo Alto High School junior Trisha Razdan, an avid coffee drinker, explained that tea drinking carries a connotation.

“In my opinion, tea is a much more timid drink than coffee,” Razdan said. “When people drink tea I assume they’re more shy.”

Thomas Mcgall, another junior, perceives coffee drinkers as more successful than tea drinkers.

“Coffee people are definitely a lot more successful and goal oriented than tea people,” Mcgall said.

Amelia Gibbs, a senior, sees the value in both.

“Tea and coffee serve the same purpose, and the people that consume tea and coffee are both trying to get the same thing: caffeine,” she said.

Because of these personas, the San Francisco Tea Festival and the San Francisco International Coffee Festival are more

than your average vendor market: the events turns stereotypes of beverage drinkers on their heads.

The tea festival, which was held at the Palace of Fine Arts, took place on Oct. 19 and 20 and has been held annually since 2011. The small exposition hall was lined with vendor booths, each offering samples of their own products, both hot and cold.

“When people drink tea I assume they’re more shy.”

— TRISHA RAZDAN, junior

The chatter reverberating through the space was accompanied by soft, mellow music or, at times, no music at all.

It gave the festival a mild, peaceful feel that contradicted the openness and enthusiastic conversation swelling around every booth.

The crowd was where our assumptions fell apart. What we assumed would be a light smattering of older men and women was, in reality, a group diverse in every way. Attendees varied widely in age and race, and the crowd was composed of just as many millennials as baby boomers. The tea festival was a riveting congregation of many different people who all enjoy the same beverage.

Noah Bleich, co-creator of the TeaBook, explained that tea is an embodiment of this diversity.

“All tea comes from the same plant: Camellia sinensis,” Bleich said. “So black, green, oolong, you name it — they all come from the same species. The different varieties of tea are the result of the plant being grown in different regions and environments, and processed using different meth-

ods. So just as how we are distinguishable or stereotyped by where we’re from and how we are brought up, we have to remember that, despite our differences, we all come from the same species — just like tea.”

When asked about the tea versus coffee debate, Bleich took a stance similar to Razdan’s.

“Look at their marketing, just Google coffee T-shirts; it’s always ‘Don’t talk to me until I’m angry’, right?” he said. “They’re very aggressive and violent. And tea is like, ‘Life is beautiful, stay calm. It’s all good.’”

The coffee festival, held in the Fort Mason festival pavilion from Nov. 1 through Nov. 2, was close to a sensory overload. Led Zeppelin boomed through speakers and coffee beans roasted their way into nostrils. The coffee festival, held in a much bigger venue, offered more vendors and attracted a larger crowd. The environment of the festival certainly aligned with our stereotypes of coffee drinkers — boisterous, aggressive and loud.

“Coffee people are definitely a lot more successful and goal oriented than tea people.”

— THOMAS MCGALL, junior

Our preconceptions about coffee drinkers had led us to expect a noticeably younger and more male demographic at the coffee festival than at the tea festival. Instead, the crowd was made up of people of all ages and genders, and of

all decibels, too. This raised the question: had the hosts of both festivals formed the same stereotypes that we did?

Buffy Maguire, owner of Lady Falcon Coffee Club, seemed to fuel the suspicion. When asked about her opinion on which caffeinated drink is better, the owner defied our expectations of the headstrong and

opinionated coffee drinker by taking an understanding stance.

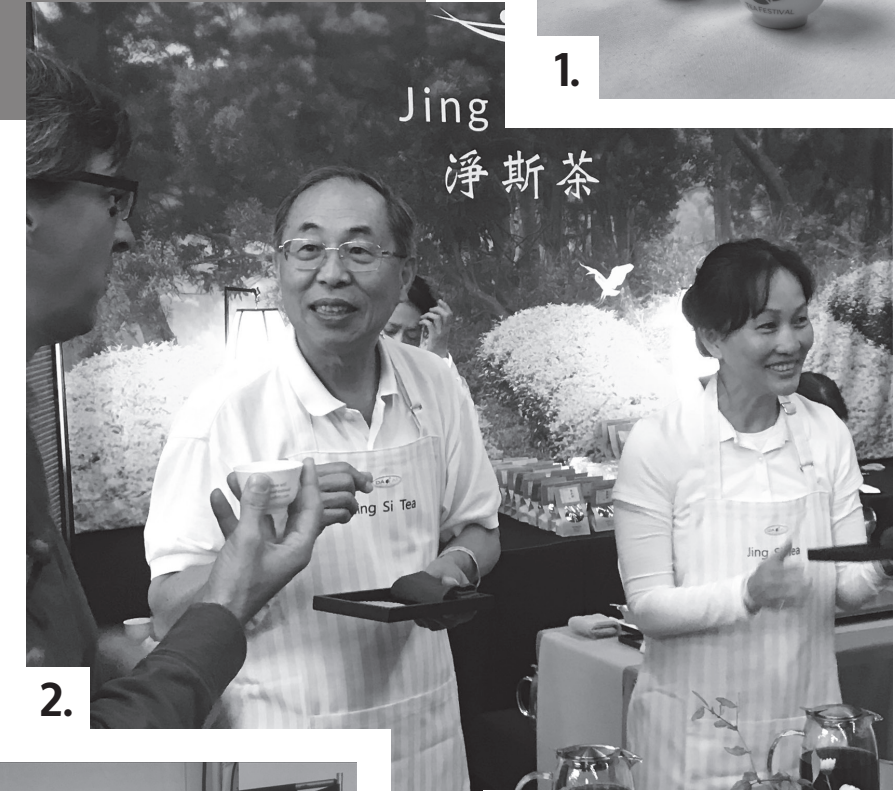
“I don’t compare the two,” she said. “Each has their reasons for being so popular.”

Our assumptions of what behaviors and personalities correlate to tea and coffee are based off of a mixture of stereotypes and truth, and navigating that can be tricky. The festivals served as a searing — and delicious — reality check for us, and a welcome reminder that not everything is what it seems.

“I think there’s a place for both tea and coffee in everyone’s lives,” said Gibbs. v



1.



2.



3.



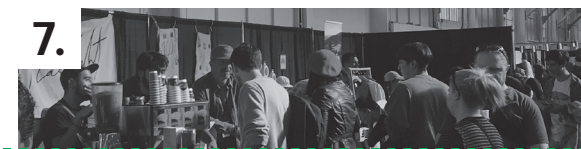
4.



5.



6.



7.

1. TEA CUPS The San Francisco International Tea Festival provides porcelain tasting cups branded with their logo. Photo by Audrey Kernick

2. JING SI TEA Vendors of the family-owned shop showcase their newest flavor, Jasmine Rose Tea. Photo by Timothy Hung

3. COFFEE CANVAS An artist paints portraits with crushed coffee beans. Photo by Timothy Hung

4. RÉVEILLE COFFEE San Francisco International Coffee Festival-goers wait in line to sample the California-based company’s latest products. Photo by Audrey Kernick

5. MAITAKE MUSHROOM San Francisco International Tea Festival attendees watch vendors make tea infused with the medicinal mushroom. Photo by Audrey Kernick

6. KENYAN PURPLE TEA A vendor brews an exotic tea in front of an audience. Photo by Timothy Hung

7. CAFFEINE CALLS A line forms in front of a booth as they finish the next batch. Photo by Audrey Kernick

Text by **TIM HUNG** and **NAOMI BONEH**

Art by **SAMANTHA HO**

JOKER'S

HOW A COMIC BOOK VILLAIN HAS BEEN

DC'S NEWEST COMIC book movie is dead serious — and about a clown. The release of director Todd Phillips's "Joker" has thrust one of the most iconic villains of all time into a world of cutthroat controversy and polarizing critical reception almost as manic as the Joker's own mind.

Set in a pre-Batman Gotham City choked by crime and corruption, "Joker" tells the story of Arthur Fleck — played by Joaquin Phoenix — a professional clown and aspiring comedian who suffers from pathological laughter and hallucinations. Fleck longs for attention and acceptance, but is continually shunned and abused by those around him.

As vicious muggings, budget cuts to mental health services and public humiliations cause Fleck to feel more and more victimized by so-

ciety, he begins to lose faith in humanity — fatefully giving rise to Arthur's new identity as the Joker. Nihilistic, murderous and feral, this version of the Clown Prince of Crime is the grittiest and most broken one yet to play on the big screen.

On Oct. 25, 2019, "Joker" became the highest-grossing R-rated film of all time, thanks to the intriguing reversal of critical reception and firestorm of media outrage that erupted not long after its release.

The film debuted at the Venice Film Festival on Aug. 28 where it took home the prestigious Golden Lion Award for Best Film, generating a great deal of buzz around the movie. Combined with brilliant advertising campaigns and a wave of highly positive reception from the public (some critics who saw a pre-release exclusive showing even called it a "perfect" movie), "Joker" seemed too good to be true.

And, as it turns out, this infant phase of "Joker" was simply the calm before the storm.

As captivated Joker fans and critics swarmed to theaters on Oct. 4 for the movie's general audience debut, excitement turned into appallment, and a 93% Rotten Tomatoes rating on Sept. 26 plunged to 69% as of Oct. 17.

Why? "Joker" jarred unprepared audiences with its gruesome violence and, especially, its twisted perspective — one achieved in tandem through acting, camerawork and editing. Phoenix's nuanced and poignant performance is a large part of what makes the movie so compel-

ling, but just as artful is Phillips's control of the cinematics. The movie repeatedly uses low-angle closeups and manipulations of color temperature, which foreground Fleck's vulnerability in an attempt to evoke sympathy for the serial killer clown.

This intention to draw audiences into rooting for Fleck has led to controversy from individuals claiming the film glorifies extremist groups and encourages violence as a way to relieve negative emotions. Many also condemn "Joker" for stigmatizing mental illness and perpetuating the stereotype that those who suffer from such conditions are deranged and dangerous. The United States Army has even issued warnings to be on the lookout for "incel violence" at screenings.

While "Joker" may not have been the "perfect" film some made it out to be, it does solidify one thing: the Joker's role as a reliable mirror to society.

Every new generation has brought about a new actor who redefines the iconic DC villain: Cesar Romero in the 60s, Jack Nicholson in the 80s, Heath Ledger in 2008 and now Phoenix in 2019. While the amount of social commentary in each film varies — with none more packed than 2019's "Joker" — each performance reflects the social and political settings of their respective eras.

Cesar Romero's performance in the classic television show "Batman", which ran from 1966-1968, emphasized camp buffoonery and pop-art. The show produced our merriest Joker to date — a

ON YOU

HA HA HA

USED AS A RELIABLE MIRROR TO SOCIETY

product of a mainstream entertainment reluctant to face the harsh realities of the Vietnam War and a television industry competing with a drug-fueled hippie counterculture for the American youth.

Jack Nicholson's Joker in the 1989 film "Batman" emerged from the acid vat of Reagan-era materialism. Unlike the subsequent nihilistic, money-burning iterations of the character, Nicholson's Joker is primarily a looks-obsessed, money-grubbing prankster, making him more desperate and deprived than truly terrifying.

After starving himself of food, sleep and human interaction for six weeks by locking himself in a hotel room to prepare for his role, Heath Ledger emerged in "The Dark Knight" with a chilling new laugh and a portrayal of the Joker as a terrorist with no attachment to life and nothing to lose. "The Dark Knight," directed by Christopher Nolan in 2008, is a reflection of Bush-era attempts to grapple with terrorism.

While "The Dark Knight" is about a city being torn apart, "Joker" is about a man being torn apart. Interestingly, this narrowing of scope is accompanied by a broadening of societal commentary.

Many of the Jokers who came before Fleck snapped into madness after just "one bad day," exemplified in a brilliant monologue written by Alan Moore in the 1988 comic book "Batman: The Killing Joke."

However, Phillips's reimagination of the character's origin story depicts Fleck's transformation as a culmination

of the gradual degenerative effects of living in a toxic society.

Alluding to Hillary Clinton's 2016 presidential campaign in which she labeled then-presidential candidate Donald Trump's supporters "deplorables," "Joker" contains a scene in which Thomas Wayne, Batman's billionaire father running for mayor, calls the working class of Gotham "clowns." Just like Trump's supporters who donned "deplorables" T-shirts celebrating the moniker, the Gothamites put on clown masks.

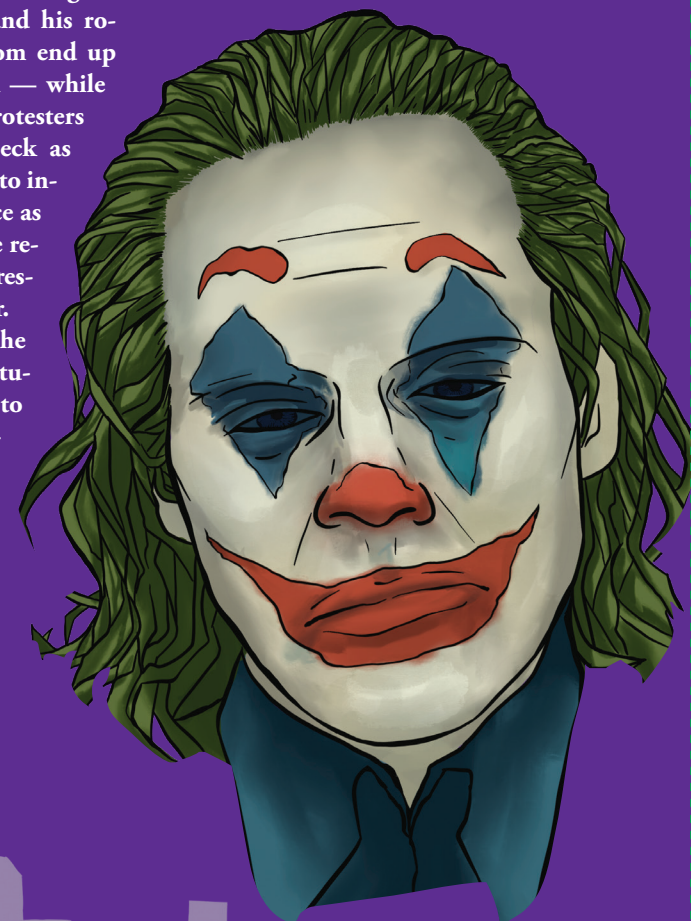
The similarities don't end there. Phillips's choice to cast most of Fleck's incidental encounters with the Gotham "poor" as people of color, including all three of his social workers and his romantic interest — all of whom end up hurting or humiliating Fleck — while casting most of the clown protesters who support and protect Fleck as white males has caused critics to interpret Phillips's casting choice as a validation of the white-male resentment that helped bring President Donald Trump to power.

Beyond political issues, the film also captures the 21st century trend of bringing attention to social issues that have previously flown under the radar, such as mental health. Other recent attempts to explore the topic of mental health, such as "Euphoria" and "13 Reasons Why," have encountered controversy and reactions similar to "Joker."

A line scribbled in Fleck's diary embodies the theme of mental health in "Joker:"

"The worst part about having a mental illness is people expect you to behave as if you don't."

Just as the Jokers who preceded Fleck reflected a society barely willing to face a costly and controversial war, an era marked by fervent materialism and a country struggling to grapple with terrorism, 2019's "Joker" holds up a mirror to today's society. It reveals the faces behind Donald Trump's presidency and a society learning to explore challenging social issues despite the risk of inciting dangerous controversy and negative reception. v



Jonathan Ferrel

Eric Garner

Kenneth Chamber

Trayvon Martin

Oscar Grant

Kimani Grey

Ramarley Graham

Michael Brown

Akari Gurley

Amadou Diallo

Tamir Rice

Timothy Stansbury

Marlon Brown

Text by LAURA MALAGRINO Art by SAMANTHA HO

THE
BLACK
SAVIOR OF
FASHION

PYER MOSS IS
ROCKING THE FASHION
WORLD AND BEYOND

THESE ARE 13 UNARMED BLACK MEN KILLED by police brutality, each of their names listed on the “They Have Names” piece by Brooklyn-based clothing label Pyer Moss. According to an article published by Complex, Kerby Jean-Raymond, founder and creative director of Pyer Moss, created the shirts with the intention of conveying his opinion on the matter.

Pyer Moss has made its mark in the fashion community as the brand that is reclaiming black history and its impact on American culture.

In a community of activism and expression, Pyer Moss offers itself as an example for young artists. Palo Alto High School junior Amanda McVey is an example of their impact, having found Pyer Moss through online subscriptions and social media. McVey soon became intrigued and started researching Jean-Raymond’s work with Pyer Moss.

Under the layers
In this past New York Fashion Week, Pyer Moss revealed its final collection, “Sister.” The show tells the story of Sister Rosetta Tharpe, a queer black woman who invented the legendary music genre of rock and roll. Through Tharpe, Jean-Raymond strove to portray the importance of black women to American culture.

“What I aim to do is to make disenfranchised people, black people, and minorities and women, know and understand how important they are to this thing called America right now,” Jean-Raymond said in an interview with the Associated Press.

Jean-Raymond worked with artist Richard Phillips, an exonerated black man who spent 45 years in prison due to a wrongful conviction. In the prison cell, Phillips made photorealistic landscapes and portraits that are now featured in the “Sister” collection.

Outlines bearing the semblance of a guitar, black and white tabs depicting piano keys and allusions to Phillips’ artwork were only a few of the motifs seen throughout the show.

Pyer Moss uses the runway as a performance that draws the viewer past just simple fabrics and brings them into the story. The “Sister” collection began with an ensemble of band members accompanied by singer and record producer Brent Faiyaz. The musical number was followed by author and speaker Casey Gerald, who spoke about the 400th anniversary of the first slaves arriving in North America. The runway concluded with a tribute to both Tharpe and guitar legend Jimi Hendrix.

According to Jean-Raymond, this form of multi-dimensional show is rare within the fashion community.

“I look at this as an art project, and I think the success of it is bringing people closer to me rather than trying to assimilate into whatever else people are doing,” Jean-Raymond told AP.

Pyer Moss has not only made a statement among popular fashion brands, but it has also given a new inspiration to anyone piecing together an outfit.

“He [Kerby Jean-Raymond] inspires me to work hard and be the best version of myself so I can make a better world through my art,” McVey says.



It's the creative process of any level of fashion that makes it art.

— AMANDA MCVEY, junior

Fashion for Paly students
For many Paly students, fashion can offer an alternative form of self-expression. As high school coincides with the formative years of adolescence, teens yearn for a way to stand out and express themselves. For junior Marina Buendia, clothing serves as a connection to her inner self.

“I’ve gone through many stages of fashion, and throughout all those stages clothing has been a very personal thing for me,” Buendia says.

Though many consider the runways filled with haute-couture and frivolous, undecipherable clothes to be the only example of fashion as an art, others would disagree. McVey has designed clothes ranging from runway pieces to simple school outfits. For her, fashion is an art no matter how and when one wears it.

“It’s the creative process of any level of fashion that makes it art,” McVey says.

Michaela Seah, Paly junior and editor of Anthro, the school’s social activism magazine, finds that clothing has long been used as form of activism, whether purposeful or not.

“All art, including fashion, can help spread awareness,” Seah says. “I also think that fashion can be used to break certain gender roles and stereotypes, especially for the LGBT community.”

Jean-Raymond has also worked with the LGBT community. In the 2019 Met Gala, Jean-Raymond took on the runway alongside queer actress and producer Lena Waithe, wearing matching Pyer Moss tuxedos with the writing “Black Drag Queens Invented Camp.”

Using his own clothing as a form of activism on one of the most widely-watched fashion events of the year, Pyer Moss communicates to the LGBT community the importance of activism on the red carpet.

According to Seah, this unapologetic outward expression of both activism and identity can inspire curious teens.

“It [fashion] can allow you to experiment with what you’re comfortable with the public seeing,” Seah says. “You can try out these new identities, try out these different types of aesthetics and see if they really fit you as a person and if you’re okay with people seeing that.”

Stanford University Professor of Art Nancy Troy, says that clothing has been the patchwork of identity throughout history. Even prior to the creation of the fashion industry, clothing was a symbol of status. Who wore what clothes and the way they wore them was a signifier of class.

According to Troy, this concept of clothes as a form of representation is both modern and universal among all cultures and dimensions of identity.

“I think that clothes have a lot to do with the creation of gendered identities and ethnic identities, but many other kinds as well,” Troy says. “We think about fashion there and I think clothes maybe are used to accentuate those aspects and the performance of identity.” v

ACNE SCARS: “CORRECTING” THE

Text by **ALLISON CHANG**

GLARING DOWN from the locker room ceiling, the flickering incandescent lights revealed the bumps and discoloration on my skin.

“Why is your face so dirty? It’s so blotchy and red.”

An ignorant question about my complexion from a harmless classmate shattered my self-esteem. Grappling to comprehend the feelings of shame, I left the room reevaluating my self-image.

This was my first encounter with others’ perception of my skin and my first introduction to the negative stigma around acne. Six years later, I can still recall the vulnerability I felt that day. At the early age of 11, I realized that a face baked in concealer was perceived “cleaner” than my natural skin — a revelation that continues to damage the self-worth of those struggling with acne.

Acne is a skin condition that affects 50 million Americans every year. It is caused by blocked pores from the oils produced by the sebaceous glands from an imbalance of hormones. Cystic acne, on the other hand, is a more severe form of acne, one that I have grappled with for the last six years.

Although acne is the most common skin condition in the United States, people continue to harbor misconceptions surrounding it. According to a 2016 study by the American Academy of Dermatology, 55.4% of participants believe that

acne was due to poor hygiene, and 80% believed that acne was due to poor diets. The negative stigma that has risen from these misconceptions has created a society where 67.9% of participants said they would be ashamed if they had acne and would similarly find someone with acne unattractive.

The lack of empathy from misinformed people has a damaging effect on the self-worth of those affected by acne.

The lack of empathy from misinformed people has a damaging effect on the self-worth of those affected by acne. Whether we admit it or not, our self-confidence is greatly influenced by our complexion.

“I really struggled with acne last year and it really contributed to the increasing list of insecurities,” Palo Alto High School junior Mia Rotblatt says. “Even if my breakouts are not perceivable by others, I can’t help but to feel that others are staring at me.”

On days when my cystic acne was really noticeable, I would stand in front of the bathroom mirror for hours painfully popping every one of my pimples. I remember thinking I would rather it bleed and run the risk of scarring than have people stare at the mountain of breakouts on my forehead.

The predisposed notion equating acne with dirt is not only scarring to my skin but also my confidence. Unlike other physical flaws, I can not hide my acne. It is the first thing I see in the mirror and the first thing that others see when they meet me.

SKIN DEEP MISCONCEPTIONS

Art by **SAMANTHA HO**

Some people assume I neglect my skin, or fail to care for my image, but in reality, it’s quite the opposite. I have tried everything from creams to serums to pills: nothing worked. When acne products and medications did not work, I ended up blaming myself for bad skin, just as the rest of society does.

I feel an overwhelming shame over skin problems that I can’t control. Even more so, being submersed in the Asian culture where porcelain skin is the norm, I have been singled out by skincare stores at malls. The \$135 billion beauty industry is

barded with an onslaught of beauty products that have created more craters than repairs.

“Even if my breakouts are not perceivable by others, I can’t help but to feel that others are staring at me.”

— MIA ROTBLATT,

tation instead of letting it naturally subside.

When acne products and medications didn’t work, I ended up blaming myself for bad skin, just as the rest of society does.

When natural products did not work, I opted for stronger ones with harmful chemicals such as benzoyl peroxide, salicylic acid and sulfur.

While experimenting with all these products, my skin has deteriorated, becoming dehydrated from chemicals and thinned out from burns.

I have inflamed my skin from lathering on creams that were too strong. I have cracked it from using too much acne spot corrector. I have been bom-

Acne is just like any other skin condition. Like Michael Jackson’s vitiligo, acne should not be subjected to public scrutiny. We live in a society where the negative stigma surrounding acne is disturbingly prominent — those with acne are shamed because of a condition that is out of their control. We are pressured to scar our skin for short-term presentation instead of letting it naturally subside.

That classmate never anticipated the permanent damage her comment had on me, yet for six years, I continued to live by her definition of my stained, blotchy complexion. I hope to empower those with acne just as much as we do with those who are blessed with flawless skin.

We can’t change the acne on our skin, so we have no choice but to correct the way others perceive these blemishes — only then, can we truly clear our misconceptions. v



Text by OWEN LONGSTRETH

Art by XIAOHAN LI

THE PLACE FOR DEBATE

IT IS TIME TO ARGUE IN THE CLASSROOM

IN OUR POLARIZED WORLD, where politics have been more divisive than ever before, debate is the cornerstone of order and progress. Yet students are not getting the practice they need at arguing face to face.

I know this firsthand from observing students who are not yet prepared to have a debate with me. Often, when I want to disagree or prove my point, I am met with anger and frustration from people who take my desire to argue personally.

This is an issue that stems from our English and Social Studies curricula not placing enough emphasis on verbal argumentation, and the solution is simple: including Lincoln-Douglas debate in the curricula.

Lincoln-Douglas debate, or LD, is a one-on-one debate format that originated from the 1858 Senatorial debates between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas, centering on broad philosophical questions about society.

This meta-thinking is, in many ways, similar to the type of analysis present in Social Studies and English classes.

Were debate not just an extra-curricular, but a central tenet of these classes, students would be able to comfortably assert their opinions in conversations with others — a skill crucial for the world that lies ahead.

I can attest from my own experience that participating in formal, structured debate has given me the confidence not to be afraid of argumentation and to embrace it instead.

An October and November Verde Magazine

survey of 157 students across Palo Alto High School English classes showed that only 52% of students said that they have been taught to debate face-to-face with others in a classroom setting.

This leads to less-than-optimal confidence. When asked to rate their confidence arguing academically, with one being the worst and five being the best, only 30% rated themselves a four or five: this number should be much higher.

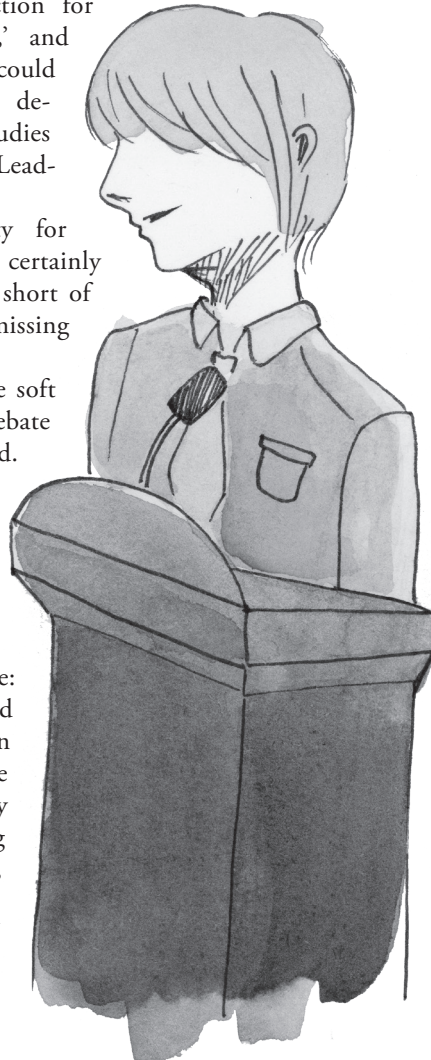
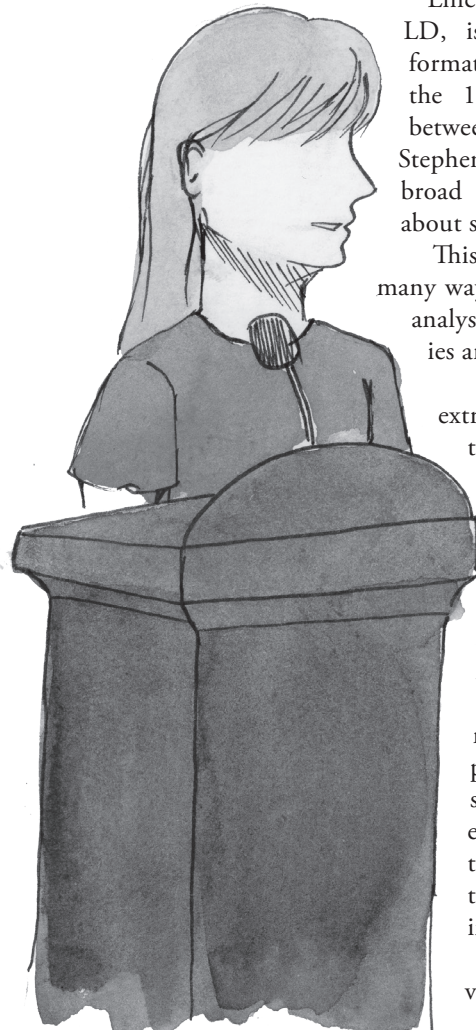
California Common Core Standards do not explicitly include debate, but they do mention argumentation in a more abstract way.

“According to the Common Core standards, there is a section for ‘Speaking and Listening,’ and this is an area a teacher could have students practicing debate skills,” Paly Social Studies teacher and Instructional Leader Jaclyn Edwards said.

While the possibility for more practice with LD certainly exists, the reality falls far short of this, leading to students missing out on many skills.

“It [LD] teaches more soft skills,” Paly Speech and Debate Director Jennie Savage said. “How to work as a team, how to win humbly, how to lose gracefully, how to get kicked around and not have your self-esteem suffer.”

The reality is simple: Debate is under taught. And students are missing out on the skills learned and the real-world benefit that they would get from learning it. LD delivers these skills, and because of that must be given a larger share of time in English and Social Studies classes. v



**Source: The data presented here comes from a Verde Magazine survey of 157 Palo Alto High School students in nine randomly selected English classes (English 9A, English 10A, Escape Literature and Advanced Placement English Language). Verde conducted the survey from late October to early November through a digital form. Responses were anonymous and Verde provided students with the option to opt out for any reason.*

THE BAY NEEDS YOU

OUR REGION'S ECOSYSTEMS ARE DEPENDING ON US

Text by ROHIN GHOSH

Photo by ROHIN GHOSH

THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY region is one of the richest natural environments in the world. Our ancient redwood forests, bountiful marshlands and rolling grass-covered hills harbor rare species seldom seen in such close proximity to cities as large as San Francisco or San Jose, and the blending of ecosystems supports a unique level of biodiversity.

These ecosystems also hold immense cultural value to the indigenous people of the region and to those who use them to experience nature whether by fishing, birdwatching, hiking or just taking a run after work. People like me, who treasure the escape from the stressful grind of school or work, enjoy the peace and solitude our open spaces provide.

The fact that these natural spaces continue to survive to this day despite the numerous pressures placed upon them is thanks to the hard work and activism of concerned citizens who fought to protect their bay, their redwoods and their wildlife. Now, with the ecosystems of the Bay Area facing new threats to their survival, further public involvement in the conservation of the region's natural environment is needed to ensure that our bay, our redwoods and our hills are thriving for decades to come.

The 20th century's rapid development saw much of the bay's marshlands filled in to build houses or infrastructure. The old-growth coastal redwood forests were decimated by logging to supply wood to build the growing cities of the West, and the fisheries of the bay and the Pacific Ocean were heavily depleted to feed the growing American population.

In the midst of the onslaught of the growing cities threatening to destroy the bay, its surroundings and its native species, three women — Esther Gulick, Sylvia McLaughlin and Catherine Kerr

— formed the Save San Francisco Bay Association to demand protection for what remained of the bay and its surrounding ecosystems. Gulick, McLaughlin and Kerr eventually involved thousands of activists in a successful push to establish protections for California's coastal ecosystems and limit the further filling of the bay.

Today, the bay no longer faces the threat of being filled in and the redwood forests are no longer intensively logged, but our region's natural heritage still faces myriad threats and challenges to its long-term survival.

As cities such as San Jose expand, vital wildlife corridors essential to species such as mountain lions and tule elk are placed at risk of becoming unusable to large animal species. As the San Francisco Bay Area's population rises, so does the potential for water pollution that poses a significant risk to sensitive aquatic species.

All of the threats the bay and its surrounding ecosystems face are compounded by the increasing danger of climate change which brings drought, fire and rising sea levels and makes the protection of the region's natural spaces from human threats even more important.

The San Francisco Bay region's natural environments have been brought back from the brink of destruction before when concerned citizens stood up to protect their backyard.

Now, with new and increasing stresses placed on the continued viability of these ecosystems, public support and appreciation for our lands and waters is needed more than ever.

Whether our marshlands, forests and hills can continue to sustain their native species in the midst of a rapidly growing and dynamic urban area is up to us. It is up to the residents of the Bay Area to ensure that our open spaces remain protected and conserved for future generations. v

It is up to the residents of the Bay Area to ensure that our open spaces remain protected and conserved for future generations.



Double Trouble

MY LIFE WITH A TWIN SISTER

TO START, I'LL ANSWER A question that everyone is wondering: "Can twins read each other's minds?" As much as I would love to answer yes, I am sad to say that no, we cannot.

There have been countless nights where my fraternal twin sister, Jenna, and I stayed up late in an attempt to find a way to read each other's minds. We would practice thinking of a number between 1 and ten or an object and, on rare occasions, we would say the same answer and geek out over it. Truthfully, though, it was just luck. There are many other strange phenomena similar to mental telepathy that others believe to be true for twins, but I can tell you firsthand that if you punch me in the arm, Jenna will certainly not be able to feel it.

Growing up with a twin is the same as having a built-in best friend — you practically have a duplicate of yourself! It is a remarkable experience and there are tons of

crazy memories that my sister and I have created in the past 17 years, some of which include dressing in matching outfits, throwing tantrums over who gets which toy, and moving to France and being known as "Les jumelles Americaines." We even switched advisories once in eighth grade and completely fooled my math teacher — my sister's PE teacher was not amused. In between pranks, we also shared countless long nights of gossip in each other's rooms.

While being a twin has its perks, it does come with a couple of cons: namely the "competitive aura." People will ask if Jenna and I ever fight, and like any other pair of siblings, my answer is yes. Twins are bound to fight all the time, but being in a fight with my sister is hard. I depend on her for a multitude of things, like homework help and figuring out what to wear the next day so we don't accidentally "twin" by wearing the same outfit. So when we're mad at each other, I feel like I'm losing a source of support, which always leads to me crawling back to hang out with her late at night in one of our rooms — most likely Jenna's because she has the comfy couch.

So while we do fight a lot, it is virtually impossible to remain mad at her for long. It's actually pretty funny how my twin sister will be angry with me for wearing her jacket one minute and will be asking me to get boba with her the next. In all honesty, it is kind of hard to not be happy around her. We grew up sharing practically everything, from clothes to rooms to friends, and of course, the womb for nine

months. It is inevitable that twins will get along with each other.

My sister and I are fraternal twins. Twins are either identical or fraternal—there's no inbetween. If a set of twins are identical, it means that the mother's fertilized egg split into two, creating two babies with the same genetic information. Fraternal twins, on the other hand, are produced

when two different sperm fertilize two different eggs. This can help explain why one set of twin boys seem to be the same exact person while a pair of twin sisters may have completely different appearances: the identical boys share the same genetic information while the fraternal sisters have a different set of genes.

On most occasions, I will have to point out my sister to people because of the differences in our appearances: I am more tan, while my sister is paler. Jenna has a rounder facial structure while mine is more oval. I have hazel-ish green eyes while Jenna has sparkly blue eyes like my dad. Because of our fraternal identities, it is pretty easy to tell us apart, and when people first find out that we're related — let alone twins — a response is generated, usually along the lines of "YOU GUYS ARE TWINS?!"

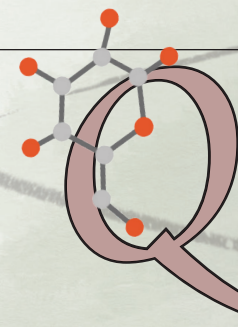
Going through the multiple stages of life with my three-minutes-younger partner-in-crime might seem like a crazy and mysterious experience to some, but for twins, it's really not a big deal. It is practically the same as having any other brother or sister, but you just happen to be the same age. Just because two kids are twins does not mean that they are the same person. Everyone has their own desires and hobbies in life, twins included.

In the future, if you ever meet a pair of twins, do us all a favor and please refrain from asking: "Can you read each other's minds?" v

In all honesty, it is kind of hard to not be happy around her.



CHEESE! My fraternal twin sister, Jenna Tetzlaff, and I pose for a photo together. While we may not look alike to some, there have been many incidents in which one twin was mistaken for the other.



Quizzical Kayla

EXPLORING THE HIDDEN SUGARS IN BUBBLE TEA

Column by KAYLA BRAND

Art by SAMANTHA HO

“WHAT SWEETNESS level would you like?” With that simple question, boba buyers weigh a series of questions. What will taste good? Will other people think I am weird if I order too little sugar? Or too much? What about health? According to a Verde Magazine survey of 157 Paly students, the most common choice is 50% sweetness. However, this choice is missing one piece of crucial evidence that would answer many of the questions above: What amount of sugar is actually in each level of sweetness?

Boba Guys, located at Town and Country Village across the road from Paly, took a step in the right direction when they shared an estimated nutrition chart in a 2017 blog post. According to their chart, each additional 25% of sweetness contains 15 grams of added sugar. Assuming other boba locations have similar sugar contents, that would mean students who drink boba are adding 30 grams to their sugar intake through the liquid of their drink alone. The Food and Drug Administration recommends a daily limit of 50 grams of added sugar. Therefore, students

who drink boba consume over half their recommended daily limit in just one cup, and that doesn't even include the sugars in most toppings.

These numbers, however, are only estimates. Since food retailers are not required by the FDA to display nutritional information until they have 20

locations, very few boba places provide any nutritional information at all. When they do, nutrition facts sheets are often printed too small to see at first glance or don't always display added sugar amounts.

The amount of sugar present in boba contributes to the largest health epidemic faced by Americans today: diabetes. According to the Public Library of Science journal, a 150 calorie increase in availability of sugar per capita is associated with a 1.1% increase in the prevalence of diabetes.

Many people may not realize when they are consuming added sugars because packaging isn't clear. According to the Diabetics Council, Americans consume 126.40 grams of sugar a day on average: This is 2.5 times the FDA recommended limit. The Nemours Foundation states that over time, high blood sugar levels can damage blood vessels and vital organs, increasing the risk of cardiac, vision and kidney difficulties.

According to the U.S. National Institute for Health, this diet of sugar in place of fiber has also contributed to the thinning of the gut mucus layer, which can cause inflammation or infection.

Americans consume more sugar per capita than any other nation in the world, according to the World Atlas. We

have adjusted to this unusually sweet diet with dire consequences. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development states that Americans also spend more than any other nation on obesity healthcare. This problem could be allayed by explicit and upfront labeling of the sugar content in our food.

Despite the mountain of evidence explaining the adverse health effects of excessive sugar consumption, many boba companies continue to peddle misleading claims in

their advertisements. T4, a prominent Bay Area boba chain, wrote "Cheers to Your Health! Our boba teas TASTE GOOD and are GOOD FOR YOU!" on their website in 2016. As evidence, the company highlighted their use of "all-natural" sugarcane.

According to Harvard Health, there is little variation in the impact of different kinds of added sugars on health. Gram for gram, agave nectar, sugarcane and high fructose corn syrup are about the same. Boba companies should not be promoting their products as healthy — I've never heard anyone call sodas healthy.

Americans need to know what they are consuming, or not consume it at all. People, especially growing teens, have a right to know what they are putting in their bodies. All boba places should provide clear labeling of the sugar content of their drinks. v

Boba companies should not be promoting their products as healthy — I've never heard anyone call sodas healthy.

Americans consume more sugar per capita than any other nation in the world.

*The data presented here comes from a Verde Magazine survey of 157 Palo Alto High School students in nine randomly selected English classes (English 9A, English 10A, Escape Literature and Advanced Placement English Language). Verde conducted the survey from late October to early November through a digital form. Responses were anonymous and Verde provided students with the option to opt out for any reason.

Palo Alto Unified School District
Palo Alto High School
50 Embarcadero Road
Palo Alto, CA 94301

Non-profit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Palo Alto, California
Permit #44



verdemagazine.com

LYDIAN



ACADEMY

Take the stress out of academic success.

Professional Tutoring • UC-Approved Classes • Summer School

Call or visit us on the web to signup



815 El Camino Real, Menlo Park, CA 94025 • 650.321.0550 • www.lydianacademy.com