



Page 4:
Padres Unidos
Celebrates
Culture



Page 7:
Team LeBron
wins 3v3
Basketball



Page 8:
“They Promised
Her the Moon”
Blasts Off



THE CASTRO VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL Olympian

VOLUME 68, ISSUE 6

APRIL 23, 2025

WEAREBORNTOSEEKTHETRUTH! WWW.CVHSOLYMPIAN.COM

CVHS defies federal anti-DEI efforts

By Hailey Young

With a new executive order restricting federally funded institutions from engaging in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) practices, CVHS and CVUSD's commitment to fostering an inclusive and equitable learning environment could be threatened.

President Donald Trump's order, "Ending Radical Indoctrination in K-12 Schooling," aims to restore a "Patriotic Education" that provides "an...ennobling characterization of America's founding and foundational principles" while cutting funding from institutions supporting the promotion of "discriminatory equity ideology." It prohibits programs suggesting systemic racism and privilege are core issues in American society.

On April 3, the United States Department of Education (ED) issued an order requiring states collect certificates from their school districts to confirm the suspension of all DEI efforts on campus. Yet, on April 11, California's Department of Education announced that it would not be complying with the certification process for its 937 school districts, citing the legality of DEI practices.

Regardless, the ED promises enforcement action after 24 days. Fearing financial impacts, many universities have already eliminated DEI programs.

At CVHS, 12.5% of the annual budget comes from federal funds. However, DEI programs and values continue to be upheld.

One such program is the new Ethnic Studies course, a requirement for all freshmen per California's mandate that public high schools teach the histories and contributions of marginalized communities.

"While this course does address tough topics, such as race as a social construct, privilege, and oppression, it does not teach students to blame anyone for the existence of race, privilege, and oppression in our society," explained Ethnic Studies teacher Britney Brown. "One common misunderstanding I have experienced is that it teaches division and animosity among people of different races. In actuality, the class seeks to teach the exact opposite."

For many, exposure to new topics and issues has been an eye-opening experience. "Ethnic studies is a good subject to learn because through it, I've just now been educated about oppression and other issues I wasn't taught much about previously," shared freshman Avani Jadhav. "The subject helped me understand and learn more about our different communities' experiences."

Afrocentric "English and

History courses for juniors which are alternatives to American Literature and U.S. History



SHARLENE GODUCO
Hispanic Achievement Night is celebrated amidst anti-DEI efforts

requirements also face DEI classification. Both focus on providing a "comprehensive awareness and appreciation" African Americans' role within American and global context.

Outside of academic offerings, CVUSD introduced the Building Leaders & Activists with Collective Knowledge (BLACK) program this year for African American students at CVHS, Canyon Middle School, and Castro Valley Elementary.

"The BLACK program and Afro offer extensive insight into parts of history that aren't discussed in most history classes," said senior Diego De La Rosa, past president of the Black Student Union. "By teaching us about perspectives, facts, concepts, and events, it helps students have a better grasp of history and

how the world and America came to be how it is today."

The Puente Program, offered as a class for participants over four years, could be threatened too. Puente bridges the gap for underrepresented students, and integrates Latino and multicultural literature into curriculum, encouraging students to make connections between identity and society.

These programs' continued presence amidst Trump's crackdowns has prompted concerns among educators and students. While it is still too early to tell how specific initiatives will be impacted by funding threats, Brown and De La Rosa see the implications of DEI rollback.

"If Ethnic Studies is considered a DEI program,

this is concerning because it is evidence that the Department of Education is misconstruing the ultimate goal of Ethnic Studies curriculum, which is for all students to feel like their lived experiences are being represented in the curriculum they are learning in school," expressed Brown.

"If these programs were taken away, they would deny a lot of students a richer education. It would be counterintuitive to do so because the whole point of school is to provide as great of an education to its students as possible," added De La Rosa.

At this time, CVHS and CVUSD administration have not responded to multiple requests to comment on how school sites would maintain programs if the Trump administration revokes federal funds.

Additionally, CVUSD has not publicly provided the certification request; however, Supt. Parvin Ahmadi released a commitment to serving students.

"Maintaining welcoming, inclusive, equitable safe spaces in our schools is not simply a motto, it is a commitment reflected in our actions grounded on humanity and justice," wrote Ahmadi.

Despite the potential challenges ahead for public K-12 schools, DEI programs and initiatives have created deep, impactful roots in the Trojan community, and school officials have announced no changes to comply with Trump's order.

Drug use survey shows worrying results

By Fanoosa Mustamandi

A recently conducted anonymous survey of 123 CVHS students sheds light on the emotional and social pressures that drive teen substance use today. Data reveals that mental health struggles, peer pressure, and boredom are among the top reasons students turn to alcohol, marijuana, and nicotine. As one student put it, "Friends that I didn't even know smoked are getting put into peer pressure where they become addicted."

The survey found that 34% of students reported being offered substances such as alcohol or marijuana, and 24% had been offered nicotine products. However, over 80% denied purchasing or possessing any of these substances. This contrast between high exposure and relatively low self-reported use suggests a more nuanced reality where peer perception and stigma may influence students' reported experiences.

When students were asked to estimate how many of their peers use substances, about 40% said

"about half" of their classmates do while 30% believed it was "a minority." This perception validates widespread reports of on-campus use.

"People throw their electric devices in the toilets, which clogs them and caused an explosion in 200 hall," noted one student. Ongoing misuse of bathrooms prompted administration to close several student restrooms earlier this semester.

An alarming finding shows nearly 50% of students were unaware of any active drug education or intervention

programs at CVHS. Only 8% found existing programs effective. Student suggestions emphasized realistic reminders, peer-led discussions, and harm-reduction strategies. "We need reminders that feel real—not just a slideshow," one student wrote.

Samuel Frank, a counselor at the CVHS Wellness Center, commented on the data. "When students say they're using to cope with mental health or stress, it's a signal that we need more than disciplinary action. We need ongoing emotional

support and education that speaks their language," he said.

The findings urge the CVHS and schools nationwide to invest in holistic programs that address the root causes of substance use. "People will do what they want when they want," one student wrote, underscoring the importance of early and compassionate intervention over punishment.

If you or someone you know is struggling, SAMHSA's National Helpline (1-800-662-HELP) offers free, confidential support 24/7 in English and Spanish.

Peace Corner: an ongoing battle for democracy

By Brenda Huynh

A battle for democracy resides on the corner of Castro Valley Boulevard and Redwood Road, also known as “Peace Corner,” every Friday from 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. Believing that President Donald Trump’s agenda impedes on the people’s right to free speech, protestors assemble to protect what they believe to be the very constitutions that make up man’s rights.

Alongside the protestors, Jackie Kurtz-Beggs and Monica Tyn Eyck, leaders of Eden Area Indivisible, are willing to do whatever it takes to impeach Trump.

In an act of resistance, Kurtz-Beggs and Tyn Eyck have both transformed the Ides of March, which refers to the assassination of Julius Caesar whose power was believed to threaten the Roman Republic, into the Ides of Trump, to demonstrate the threat they feel to their democratic norms.

Eden Area Indivisible, the same group that can be found at Peace Corner, serves Hayward, San Leandro, and the unincorporated Alameda County regions of Castro Valley, San Lorenzo, Ashland, as well as Cherryland. They are located in California's 14th congressional

district.

“Wethinkit’sreallyimportant that our free speech isn’t infringed upon — that your free speech isn’t infringed upon,” stated Tyn Eyck. “There are certain guarantees in our constitution that Abraham Lincoln said best: government for the people, by the people, and we don’t feel that is what’s happening.”

Demonstrators participate in various forms of protest. One way participants take action is by sending postcards to the White House to alert Trump of their dissatisfaction with his presidential motives. On the back of each card, it writes “you’re fired,” referencing an infamous catchphrase of his used on “The Apprentice” television show.

“When I was a single mother in Castro Valley, my son depended on [the Department of Education],” said Kurtz-Beggs. “Well, Musk and Trump are cutting funding for the Department of Education.”

As Trump and his administration quickly move to dismantle the Department of Education which oversees federal funding for K-12 schools and handles discrimination complaints, critics argue it jeopardizes thousands of teaching positions, impacts



“Indivisible” protestors demonstrate on the “Peace Corner.”

BRENDA HUYNH

the teaching and performance of students, and puts students of color at risk at experiencing prejudice without protection, as millions of Americans rely on this support.

Protestors stand unified at Peace Corner, carrying signs that bare messages of defiance. The signs range in phrases and colors yet all follow the same commonline: to challenge Trump's agenda. Phrases such as, "Nobody elected Elon," "Stop the Coup d'etat," and "Defend Democracy" can be read off

these signs.

“Trump’s presidency is the fulfillment of a promise to destroy our government completely,” said protestor Gregory Fite. “The process that is going on right now is the deliberate, intentional, and willful destruction of the government and our country.”

While the corner at Safeway may not look significant at first glance, it is a part of a much larger battle.

Indivisible as a whole is
a nationwide organization,

founded by Ezra Levin and Leah Greenberg, dedicated to resisting Trump's, as phrased, "authoritarian agenda." There are several groups all over the country in every single state.

Anyone can join the movement or even register a group for their specific area, if there is not already one, through <https://indivisible.org/>.

"Come out every Friday night if you're interested to join us," urged Kurtz-Beggs. "We need the people or things won't change."

How COVID-19 affects us five years later

By Yusef Scott

Five years ago in March 2020, the coronavirus halted the lives of many and brought difficult and unexpected changes. The lives of students were completely different than before with everybody having to isolate themselves and move to online schooling. Classes were held on Zoom and Google Meets instead of in person.

Five years later, classes are held in person again and masks are rarely seen at school. Social distancing is no longer a thing and hand sanitizer bottles collect dust in the corner. But not everything has resumed to normal. The pandemic has had long lasting effects on many things.

One of the challenges in prior years was the loss in the ability to connect with fellow students and classmates. As prior student Sofia Palau said, “The greatest loss has probably been losing the opportunity to get to know

my classmates better, and not making new friends like we usually do during the school year.” Though as time has gone on, it’s been easier for students to connect once again.

"I feel like I missed my last year of middle school because it was changed to online school. But I'm glad I was able to go through all years of high school normally," said senior Andy Wong.

Mental health also became a major concern throughout the pandemic. Due to isolation, it became harder to communicate with others and seeing friends and visiting family was less frequent.

“During COVID-19, I felt fine and I enjoyed not having to go to school but I feel like now I have a harder time talking with others,” explained senior Vesemir Pirogov.

Students are not the only ones who were impacted by coronavirus with teachers having to account for students' lost years of learning. Online schooling made it more difficult for students to connect with the class, leaving some with an unsteady foundation.

"I didn't have trouble integrating back into school but I saw some people in my classes who struggled more and fell behind, I think the

worst classes were math and history,” explained senior Ryan Yang.

Math and guitar teacher Steve Wilkinson has noticed similar problems with his students over the past few years. "Students seem to have trouble thinking on their own afterwards and have shorter attention spans," explained Wilkinson. "It seems it's harder to get the gears going for them."

**BAY AREA
DRIVING SCHOOL**



SINCE 1949

Online Driver's Ed & Virtual Classes
FREE Practice Tests with purchase

PRANA

YOGA + WELLBEING

- ADVANCED STUDIES
- DAILY YOGA CLASSES
- RETREATS
- WORKPLACE WELLNESS
- YOUTH PROGRAMS

NEW STUDENT
SPECIAL
\$39
UNLIMITED YOGA
FOR ONE MONTH

SCAN THE CODE
TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE
PRANAYOGAWELLBEING.COM

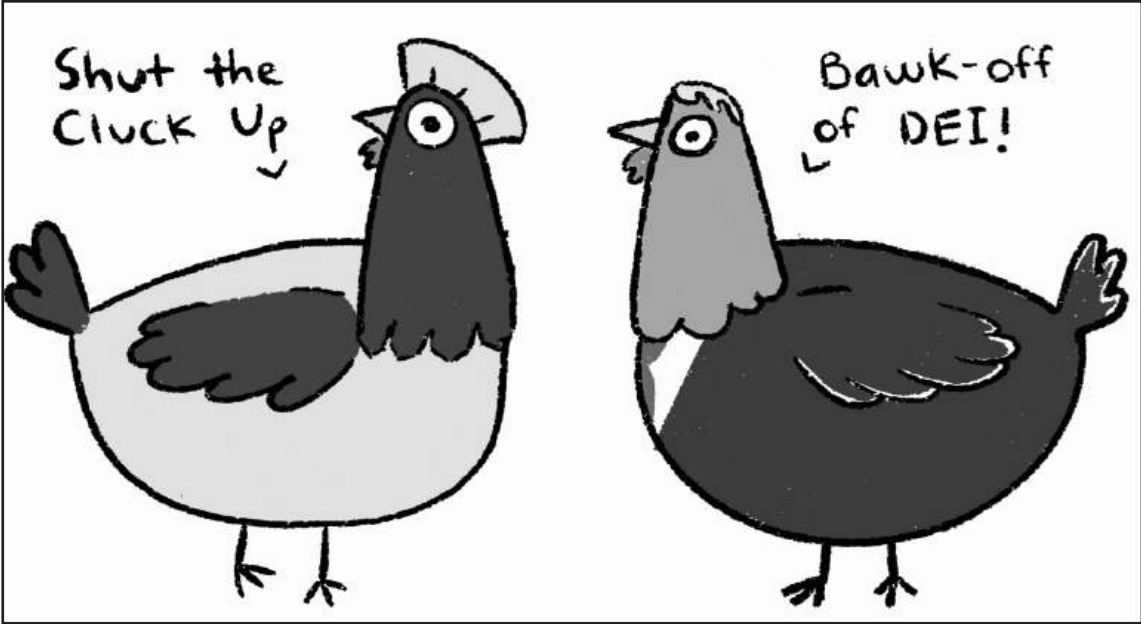
3160 CASTRO VALLEY BLVD, CASTRO VALLEY, CA 94546
510.542.9655 | INFO@PRANAYOGAWELLBEING.COM

CVHS should maintain DEI programs

Editorial:

In an effort to stop schools from promoting “radical, anti-American ideologies,” President Donald Trump issued an executive order, “Ending Radical Indoctrination in K-12 Schooling,” that cuts federal funding to schools that support “gender ideology or discriminatory equity ideology.” It is unclear whether the Trump administration can even cut such funds, and it will likely face extensive legal challenges and delays. In spite of the financial risks, *The Olympian* staff remains firm that CVHS and CVUSD should maintain their Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) programs.

Gender ideology, as defined by the Trump administration, includes the “concept of self-assessed gender identity” and the idea that gender is a spectrum. Discriminatory equity ideology, which the administration defines as an ideology that “treats individuals as members of preferred or disfavored groups,” essentially targets DEI initiatives.



ELLIOT LUCAS

To put an end to these ideas in K-12 schools, the administration plans to use the leverage from the 13.6% of K-12 federal funding. CVHS receives 12.5% of its budget from the federal government. A loss of this funding would certainly lead to program cuts.

“DEI programs benefit the people who are involved in it,

and it helps build a sense of community for them,” said an *Olympian* staff member.

CVHS has the choice to keep DEI programs and potentially lose a large portion of its budget, or it can heed the order and drop the programs to keep federal funding. Some programs include the Ethnic Studies Class,

Afrocentric History, and the Building Leaders & Activists with Collective Knowledge (BLACK) program.

“The quality of our school will drop no matter how we decide to respond to this new rule because 12.5% of the budget is a lot and DEI is an essential part of our school, so even past this rule,

we should definitely continue encouraging diversity,” said an *Olympian* member.

Not everyone believes it is worth the budget cut.

“This is money that you can’t just drop without heavily compromising on the quality of the school, and while DEI programs are valuable, they are not as valuable as 12.5% of the budget,” said one *Olympian* staff member.

DEI programs contribute to the richness and quality of our education. They promote different cultural perspectives and creating a balanced view on American history. Bowing down to the administration will only harm our community and set a dangerous precedent.

“If you do what is necessary to keep most of your budget, you prove that they can do anything,” said one *Olympian* staff member. “I don’t think that there’s really any rationality to the idea of the government dictating what we are able to learn – that is not supposed to be their business.”

Behind bright lights: why backstage work is worth it



By Elliot Lucas

The theater hums with anticipation. The house lights dim, and a hush falls over the audience. In the booth, fingers hover over buttons, ready to bring the show to life. The lights go up on stage and the first notes of the overture swell through the speakers, setting the stage for the magic to unfold. This is the moment we’ve been working toward — the culmination of weeks of programming, rehearsals, and fine-tuning every sound effect

and cue.

Being on the sound crew for our school’s productions is an often overlooked but incredibly fulfilling experience. Sound and projection play a crucial role in bringing productions to life, and while the process can be challenging, the final result is always worth it.

My journey in tech theater began last year during my sophomore year with running backstage mics for “The Little Mermaid,” then calling cues and playing sound effects for “The Outsiders.” This year, I took the role of soundboard operator for “Les Misérables,” and most recently, “They Promised Her The Moon.”

Each production has taught me something new about sound design, teamwork, and the immense effort it takes to put on a successful show. My involvement in theatre even led

me to get a job at the Center for the Arts, further deepening my appreciation and understanding of the importance of sound technicians.

The theatre community is an inviting and supportive space where I’ve met so many amazing people and I love supporting the actors the way that we do. However, being in the booth can sometimes feel isolating.

Unlike actors who constantly interact on and off stage, we work behind the scenes, away from the social hub of rehearsals, and even away from other crew members backstage. It can be easy to feel left out, but having remarkable people to work with on the sound team and witnessing a production come together makes every long night and stressful moment worth it.

There is something incredible about watching all the pieces fall

into place — actors delivering their lines, lights setting the mood, projections adding depth, and sound creating an immersive experience.

All of it is a meticulous process, but the payoff is indescribable. The audience’s laughter, gasps, or the silence in a tense moment remind me why I continue to do this. Even though the people on crew aren’t the center of attention like the actors, the reactions we help elicit make all the work meaningful.

Despite the inevitable stress and overwhelming moments, I always look back on each production with pride. It’s hard to believe that next year will be my last year in this role when it feels like I’m just getting started.

The talent within our theatre program is astounding, and being a part of its crew behind it is an amazing feeling. While the audience may not see us, they can certainly hear our work, and that is enough to make every moment behind the soundboard worth it.



THE CASTRO VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

Olympian

Castro Valley High School’s journalism class publishes *The Olympian*, an award-winning newspaper and media empire, from our world headquarters at 19400 Santa Maria Ave., Castro Valley, California 94546. © 2025

Editor-in-Chief.....Hailey Young
Editor-in-Chief.....Matthew Wong
Online Editor.....Grace Lopez
Video Editor.....Gavin Peters
Video Editor.....Maison Jordan
News Editor.....Maxim Boychuk
Opinion Editor.....Brenda Huynh
Feature EditorMadison Lee
Sports Editor.....Samuel Jarvis
Arts and Entertainment Editor.....Victor Bahng

Staff Writers: Angel Chen, Paty Escalera Carrillo, Sharlene Goduco, Aleksandra Hurka, Sarada Khanal, Liana Klausmeyer, Leia Kremer, Natalie Le, Elliot Lucas, Fanoosa Mustamandi, Angel Ni, Michael Owen, Amaya Rambel, Erika Rayo, Yusef Scott, Lucas Villegas, Rachel Zhen, Maxim Zhuze

Advisor.....Matt Johanson

TROJAN TALK

Re: Peace Corner: an ongoing battle for democracy

“I find it reassuring to see these Americans gather on a street corner to exercise their First Amendment rights.”
- Raymond de Groat

Re: Trump initiates promised immigration policy

“I don’t think you all understand the difference between immigrants and illegal immigrants.”
- Wesley Hon

Re: Girls soccer team wins NCS games

“Very well done on winning those NCS games. The article is very well done and written.”
- Dominic Bolender

Re: Editorial: proportional grading should not be implemented

“I agree with the article as well. Students should be held accountable for not doing their work and I feel like the productivity problem is bad enough and will only worsen.”
- Arthur Sims

Re: Trump targets transgender community

“I find it truly disgusting relating to Trump’s opinion and executive orders particularly going against the transgender community.”
- Brandon Hill

Re: New PE credit program gives flexibility

“I wish they did this earlier. This would’ve helped a lot of upcoming senior athletes within the last couple of years.”
- Keira Shapland

ASB President and soccer co-captain: Ian Hsu shoots to score

By Grace Lopez

He's a leader on and off the field, ASB president and co-captain of the boys varsity soccer team. Ian Hsu has just concluded his senior season as center back and team captain.

Academically, Hsu carried himself to ASB president his senior year, with a previous term as ASB vice president. Being in leadership all four years of high school, Hsu has carried these leadership qualities among himself and his classmates.

"[Being a leader] has always been something I have naturally clinged to. I have always wanted to do my best in supporting my team and achieving a certain aspect in my community," said Hsu.

Throughout all four years of leadership, Hsu has uplifted his fellow classmates and welcomed the underclassmen. This has especially shown in his mentorship of other class officers.

"Ian has been a role model for me since my first year as

a freshman in leadership, and he has always supported and been a great friend to me. I'm excited to take on his role as ASB president next year," said incoming ASB president Maggie Lei Chong.

As a dedicated soccer player, Hsu brought varsity boys soccer up to fourth in the league and led the team to NCS quarterfinals. Alongside co-captain Dominic Bolender, the duo create a motivated atmosphere among their teammates.

NCS quarterfinals was a key moment for captains Hsu and Bolender. Tied at 1-1 until the end of the game, and ultimately taking a 2-1 victory against Ygnacio Valley in overtime, Hsu and Bolender took home the win in the last crucial minutes.

"That game was my favorite memory from my senior season, just that I knew we were able to win the game. We came in determined and ended up scoring in the last minutes of overtime," said Hsu.

"It was a true honor to be alongside him [Hsu]. He was a great friend and captain to

me, my favorite moment as a captain with him was when we won the first round of NCS in double overtime and celebrating with him," said Bolender.

Hsu states that his mindset is the reason for his accomplishments and motivation for his academic

rigor, in addition to his leadership.

"My motivation to juggle my academics and sports at the same time comes from needing to be able to achieve the common goal. Whether it being a game or getting my work done and honestly just bringing people together,

maintaining positivity among my teammates and the community around me and working on anything that needs to be improved on," said Hsu.

As Hsu's senior year comes to a close, he is still undecided but plans to major in business and ultimately pursue a career in that field.



Ian Hsu and his parents celebrate his accomplishments together.

GRACE LOPEZ

CVHS showcases Hispanic & Latino academic excellence

By Sharlene Goduco

From the moment guests stepped inside the CFA, the energy was impossible to miss. The room filled with applause, warm laughter, and lively music that set the tone for a night of celebration.

At the heart of it all was Salvany Espinoza, the chief dancer of Latinos Unidos, who took the stage in a breathtaking folklórico performance. With each swirl, the bright green, violet, and gold ribbons on her delicate pink dress rippled like waves, resembling a blossoming flower. Her waist was tightened by the multicolored, fitted bodice, which then flowed into flowing ruffles. She represented a living example of Jalisco's rich heritage, sporting bold red gloves and roses in her hair. Espinoza became the dance with every elegant step.

CVHS hosted the Hispanic & Latinx Achievement event in the CFA on March 20, bringing together families and students to celebrate the academic success and hard work of Hispanic and Latino students. The excitement was palpable as the sound of applause filled the room, with families seated at round tables, eagerly



SHARLENE GODUCO

Magaly Ortiz, Nayelli Valvadinós, and Assistant Principal Pam Wolf (from left to right) thank the attendees.

anticipating the recognition ceremony.

Following a passionate performance of "La Loba," by CVHS Danza Folklórica, Samantha De Santiago took the stage to sing "Tú Solo Tú," by Selena.

Bidaury Robles-Cardona then performed an impassioned guitar piece, "Me Gustas Mucho," paying tribute to the

traditional sounds of Sinaloa.

Finally, Salvany Espinoza returned to the stage to close the performances with "El Huateque," a vibrant folk dance from Veracruz.

After the performances were over, it was time to honor the students' accomplishments. Magaly Ortiz and Nayeli Valdovinos announced the students' names as they crossed

the stage.

In appreciation of their academic achievements, which ranged from high GPAs to excellence in world languages, math, and English, each student was given a certificate and a handshake as they headed down the stage.

"This achievement is also for my parents. They sacrificed so much for me, and the best way I

can repay them is by achieving this award," said sophomore Andrea Lopez.

Senior Alexandro Perez, also reflects that his award carried personal significance towards his family.

"Hispanic/Latino achievement means a lot to me because my parents work so hard to give me the best life," Perez explained. "They didn't get to finish school, so they want me to try hard in school in exchange."

As the event came to a close, Ortiz, Valdovinos, and Assistant Principal Pam Wolf thanked all of the families who attended for their steadfast support of CVHS' Hispanic and Latino community. Families celebrated and reflected on the evening's achievements by indulging in conchas (Mexican sweet bread) and refreshing horchatas.

The event honored the diligence and accomplishments of Hispanic and Latino students at CVHS. It emphasized the need for community and cultural pride as well as academic achievement. With pride and appreciation for the accomplishments of everyone engaged, it was a night to remember.

Amidst Alps: an Austrian skiing experience

By Aleksandra Hurka

Exhilaration becomes a place, not a feeling when racing down the side of the mountain. At altitudes as high as the clouds, with views of an evergreen valley speckled with cottages down below, it's as if skiing into the pages of a fairytale. Tucked away within the mountain ranges of Europe lie the Austrian Alps, the place where the fairytale bleeds into a reality.

In the early haze of the morning, the sun glinted off the edge of the mountain, making the snowflakes sparkle when they fell, shrouding the sky in

glitter. On the ski lift, the chairs heated with grates underneath the leather seats to compensate for the freezing weather.

As soon as the chairlift lets me off, I ski over the edge of the mountain where I see the view of Dachstein, the famous glacier in the Austrian town of Schladming basking in the sunlight. Below me, on one of the plateaus, the sound of German music from a nearby cafe echoes through the valley.

Leaning my skis over the edge of the mountain, I swiftly slid down the slope, curving around the bends in the mountain and passing by a stainless steel piano to one of the mountain cafes where locals gather to dance, drink, and celebrate the leisurely

Saturday.

My lunch was the taste of the famous Austrian meal, goulash soup and apple strudel, which quickly warmed me from the chill outside. Through the window of the cafe, I saw people like an army of ants, skiing down to the bottom of the mountain, getting smaller the further they went.

I joined the little ant army after lunch and followed them down to the bottom of the mountain, where I unloaded my ski apparel and climbed into my dad's car to go climb to the top of Dachstein.

My legs ached and the bitter wind lashed across my face on the steep incline of a trail as I trudged up. Along the way, I climbed up a hill of an old abandoned ski slope with the remains of chairlifts still intact that my dad says he used to ski down as a kid.

At the top of the slope, lay only a single wooden cottage, with the cliffs of Dachstein surrounding it, sheltering it from the wind. I collapsed onto a wooden bench as a waiter brought me a sweet, pink drink (Shiwasser), to aid my dehydrated throat.

On the way down, a group of bobsledders sled down and around all 9,826 feet of the glacier. As I trudged down the path myself, I silently envied them and thought



Fireworks light the sky in bright colors.

ALEKSANDRA HURKA



Austrian Alps present a breathtaking view.

ALEKSANDRA HURKA

how much faster I'd be down this mountain if I'd sledded instead.

The sky was a shade of pink and orange by the time I got back to the pension and I immediately made my way to the dinning hall where a homemade three course meal would be served for dinner.

When night fell, I went out with my family to another mountain, this time to watch the night time skiing festivities. Local ski teams synchronize skied

down the slopes with either flamethrowers in their hands or adorned in light up ski suits. One team had fireworks attached to their backs and as they slid down, set them off, lighting up the sky in a multicolored mosaic.

With the music drowning out voices and the fireworks lighting up the sky, the moment felt almost like a dream. It was a good thing though, that this was not a dream I had to wake up from, but rather live in.

McNeill shines light on accessibility

By Paty Escalera Carrillo

When working in any kind of education, particularly special education, one must take a different point of view to accommodate students. They take things that seem like problems, and find new angles and perspectives to approach with.

"Being a vision teacher is merging creativity and science not the standard way everyone else does; find a way to teach the same concept but in a completely different way," explained Yardley McNeill, teacher of the visually impaired (VI) at CVHS.

Almost on her twentieth year working for CVUSD, McNeill teaches the VI class, as well as working at other schools in and outside of the district as an roaming teacher providing vision

services to the students on her caseload.

"I was terrified of teaching high school; I got the opportunity due to being short staffed so I had to step in and teach high schoolers after years," McNeill shared.

Before, she had experience teaching a variety of grade levels, but she had never been a main high school teacher. However, after having many years of experience with students of all age groups, she has found herself enjoying high school the most. She has been pleasantly surprised by the similarities she has found when teaching teens and younger children.

"Younger kids want independence and so do teens, the 'I can do it myself' mindset, and I always empower that. The younger kids see the world as new and interesting and they have a lot of questions. The challenge with teens is to get

them to look at the world with that same wonder," McNeill said.

McNeill also shared that she truly enjoys the deep talks she is able to have with her teenage students.

Being a teacher for the visually impaired looks different every single day. Some days are filled with paperwork and writing reports, and other days may look like doing assessments on students, but every day includes helping and teaching students.

"Multiple schools have brilliant kids who thrive in their academics that 'simply' have a vision impairment, but it's not always that simple, as it's not only making things bigger," expressed McNeill.

Some students need help with what may seem like basic tasks to others, an example being cooking. McNeill not only supports her students with their



PATY ESCALERA CARRILLO

Yardley McNeill brings imagination and invention to her job.

academics, she also brings accessibility to daily tasks in the outside world.

The privilege of constantly adapting and growing is what makes this job so interesting and unique. "You get to grow

because someone needed you, however it's important to keep in mind that you have to learn, you will never know it all, you may be good at it today, and tomorrow it's new again," she said.

CVHS' Prom 2025 promises an exciting night

By Brenda Huynh

People begin to crowd the dance floor and phone cameras flash whilst laughter surrounds the room like a smothering blanket. Students with headphones dance in tune to a variety of different beats as they choose the music they want from three different stations. This year, the leadership class is reviving silent disco, adding a unique twist to the night's festivities. The biggest social event of the year, prom, is to take place at the Exploratorium in San Francisco on April 26, from 7-11 p.m.

Students have a variety of catering options to enjoy, such as a sushi bar featuring avocado rolls, spicy tuna rolls, and California rolls; a customizable quesadilla bar; and a milk and white chocolate fountain accompanied by five varying delectable condiments.

From March 24 to 28, prom

tickets begin at \$90 for those in ASB and \$95 for regular students. From April 7 to 11, the prices go up to \$95 and \$100, then \$100 and \$105 dollars from April 14 to 18, and finally, \$110 dollars from April 21 to 23.

While ticket prices may discourage some students from attending, the prom tickets at CVHS are much cheaper compared to other schools. For example, Dougherty Valley High School is at the same venue, however, their ticket prices start at \$150.

Dances are the biggest fundraisers of the year, making up for the money invested into the dance by the leadership class. The leadership class, which is in charge of prom, only receives funding from the events they run. It may seem expensive, but it covers costs and ensures fun events/prizes for students.

There will also be a private firework show throughout the

bay for prom attendees. From 9 to 10 p.m., students can exit the Exploratorium to see Treasure Island and the Bay Bridge. At 9:50 p.m., a boat approximately 100 yards away will set off a glamorous firework show for five to ten minutes.

"Students should go to prom because it is a school event that will create long lasting memories," said ASB president Ian Hsu. "We only have this event once a year and most high school students will only have two opportunities to enjoy this iconic event. There is something for everyone, ranging from 100 plus interactive attractions to a chocolate fountain and even a firework show. I guarantee that you will not regret attending such a unique event like prom."

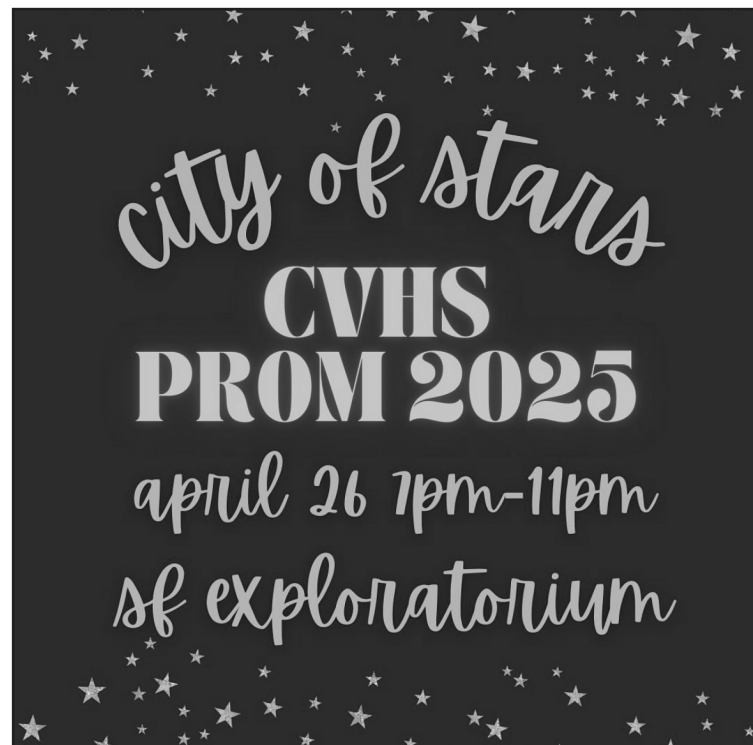
Not only do students get good food, but they also get an experienced DJ who is on the radio throughout the United States and whose job is to play music, manage the firework

show, and many other fun and unique activities.

"Prom is very much a rite of passage in America," said activities director Thomas

Maloney. "It is a quintessential moment in time."

The last day to buy prom tickets is Wednesday, April 23, by 4:00 p.m.



Filipinx Culture Club cares for children in the Philippines

By Erika Rayo

The Filipinx Culture Club (FCC) ran a Balikbayan Donation Drive for Kampo Santo Day Care Center in Pampanga, Philippines. A large white box was placed in front of the leadership room for CVHS students to donate any unneeded school supplies to the balikbayan.

In Tagalog, the prefix balik means to return. The second part of the word, bayan, comes from the word bahay, which translates to home. Together, Balikbayan means "to return home."

When Filipinx families return home to the Philippines from the United States or anywhere outside of their homeland, it

is traditional to bring multiple large Balikbayan boxes filled with gifts for their family. Junior Miguel Maliksi will return to the Philippines this summer and will bring the donation box to Kampo Santo. With donations from the drive, which ran from Feb. 1 to March 7, the balikbayan was filled with school supplies such as notebooks, pencils, crayons, colored pencils, and sharpeners from CVHS students for the children to enjoy. Students also had the opportunity to gain service hours with Red Cross, Interact, and CSF clubs for their generosity.

Geographically, the Province of Pampanga is within Central Luzon on the northern shore of

Manila Bay, bordered by Bulacan and Neuva Ecija to the north and east. Surrounded by such agriculturally rich provinces, Pampanga is a beautiful town abundant with greenery, clear lakes, and life.

"It was the community my dad grew up in so I wanted to give back," said Maliksi when asked about Kampo Santo. His generosity encouraged the collaborative donations from students of FCC and the multiple service clubs.

"The other officers and I are extremely happy with the amount of donations we collected and are glad we can help kids in the Philippines," said senior Rayann DeGuia, president of FCC.

If you ever want to create your own balikbayan or support FCC in any way, feel free to stop by during their meetings every week on Monday in room 214.



ERIKA RAYO

Miguel Maliksi distributes donations in the Philippines.

PAMPAS
EMPANADA AND COFFEE CO.

CRAFTING CUSTOM T-SHIRT QUILTS FROM YOUR CHERISHED T-SHIRTS
Now taking orders for graduation and college bound gift quilts!

Kitty Ani Kreativ
LONGARM & QUILTING SERVICES

Anita "Kit" Thompson
510-459-5357 | kittyanikreativ@gmail.com | kittyanikreativ.com

GO-GREEN DRIVING SCHOOL
GO-SAFE • GO-GREEN

FREE DRIVER'S ED

FOR ALL CASTRO VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

USE CODE: OLYMPIAN24

WHEN REGISTERING TO REDEEM!

FEEL FREE TO CALL OR VISIT OUR OFFICE IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS!
(510) 432-8873
19131 Redwood Rd Ste D
Castro Valley, CA 94546

CVHS 3V3 basketball fights to the end

By Natalie Le

CVHS students competed against each other to determine who was the greatest at the CVHS 3v3 basketball tournament from March 17 to March 21. Making it to the finals, teams LeBron and Manwhoplayball battled for victory. With the score ending 11-7, team LeBron took the win, and the three boys celebrated as they collected their trophy.

David Colon, Javon Johnson, and Jasyah Thomas teamed up to form LeBron, a team that gave their all until the very end.

“We should’ve won from the start. We came into the tournament like we should have won and exited as winners,” said Johnson.

Teams of three competed in a basketball tournament that took place at the main gym every lunch for a week starting March 17. The team to first make it to ten points would advance

the following day. Within the groups of three, they could only have at least one player from the CVHS basketball team.

The semifinals and finals began on the tournament’s final day, March 21.

Four teams took the court at the start of the lunch break because they had all won their matches previously, as the semifinals were taking place.

Playing half-court games, one team went against another. And on the other side, the remaining two teams fought to be the winner.

Once one of the teams reached 7 points, they had won that game.

As two games went on at the same time, Trojans were on the edge of their seats. Heads turned to take a peek at the other game as cheers erupted from the bleachers.

The winning team on each side of the court would decide who advanced to the finals.

Teams LeBron and Manwhoplayball defeated their opponents and moved forward to the finale not long after.

The first team that reached 11 points would determine

who won the week-long championship.

With skill on both sides of the ball, both teams played to the best of their abilities.

The game lasted for 16

minutes, and Johnson scored the winning point by shooting a layup.

“It ain’t nothin’—it’s just the usual. I feel like my team carried,” said Thomas.



Ayden Janks pulls up to shoot.

NATALIE LE

CVHS track races to success

By Angel Chen

Buzzing activity filled the San Leandro High School stadium as track and field events occurred back to back on March 15. Athletes stretched along the green grass and lined up, getting ready to race in numerous events. The crisp breeze blew into the faces of athletes as they raced along the track.

CVHS reigned triumphant, scoring victories in multiple events. Hailey Smith placed first in the 200-meter dash and third in the 100-meter dash. Taking first place, Maddeux Lim achieved a personal record of 2:01.30 in the 800-meter dash.

The girl’s varsity track team swept the 3200-meter run with Iliana Nierengarten, Mika Gomes, and Hannah Murry taking first, second, and third, respectively. Leaping over hurdles, Kiana Ayllon took second in the 100-meter hurdles. Zoie Li took second as well for the 300-meter hurdles.

The girl’s varsity 4x400 relay

team, consisting of Nia Johns, Sora Louie, Zoie Li, and Haley Perez, sprinted into third place. The girl’s varsity sprint medley relay team also took third place with Carrie Lee, Kennedy Quick, Gabrielle Rogge, and Isabella Guan.

With field events, Nathaniel Belli took first place for both shot put and discus, and Angelia Platz took first place with a triple jump.

Perez is a rising track star who competed in two track events in the past track meet. Perez has only recently started competing in track as “one of the coaches reached out to me and asked me to train for high school track, and I began training, but then I got injured so I didn’t start until this year.”

Despite Perez’s short high school track career, she took first place in the 400-meter dash with a personal record of 1:00.71.

She reflects on the most recent track meet. “My highlight was probably beating the San Leandro girl because she came so close next to me.”

In the next track meet, Perez aims to get a second faster in her 400 and do about the same in the 4x400.

DO YOUR PART TO PREVENT SEWER BLOCKAGES

Maintaining reliable wastewater pipelines and facilities is everyone’s responsibility. There are simple actions we can all take to make sure that our wastewater system works.



Only Flush the 3Ps!

Only flush the 3P’s: **P**ee, **P**oop, and **T**oilet **P**aper. Those are the only materials that should be flushed down the toilet. Items like “Flushable” wipes, disposable diapers, and personal hygiene products do not belong in the sewer system.



Never Flush Wipes!

Used flushable wipes belong in the garbage. When flushed, flushable wipes can damage expensive equipment at pump stations and the wastewater treatment plant and only increase the chances of a sanitary sewer overflow.



Put FOG Where It Belongs!

Do not pour **F**ats, **O**ils, and **G**rease, aka **FOG**, down the drain! Grease collects and hardens inside the pipes and forms a solid plug that can lead to sewer problems. Dispose of grease and fats in the green organics cart instead.

CASTRO VALLEY SANITARY DISTRICT

Effective Environmental Services since 1939
(510) 537-0757 | cvsan.org

CVSan



“They Promised Her the Moon” blasts off

By Maison Jordan

The moon has always lit up the night sky. It always will. Many long to see beyond this world, to stand on the moon. Back in the 1950s and 1960s, more and more wished to see space. Those who couldn't go to the “final frontier” longed for news on it, and to see the great American astronauts, who all were men. However, one woman sought to change that.

The CVHS spring production of “They Promised Her the Moon” was a compelling, thought-provoking drama that will leave audiences reflecting long after the final curtain call. The play, written by Laurel Ollstein, dives into the



life of Jerrie Cobb, one of the first women to undergo astronaut testing as part of the Mercury 13 program, and it brings to light the struggles and triumphs of a woman

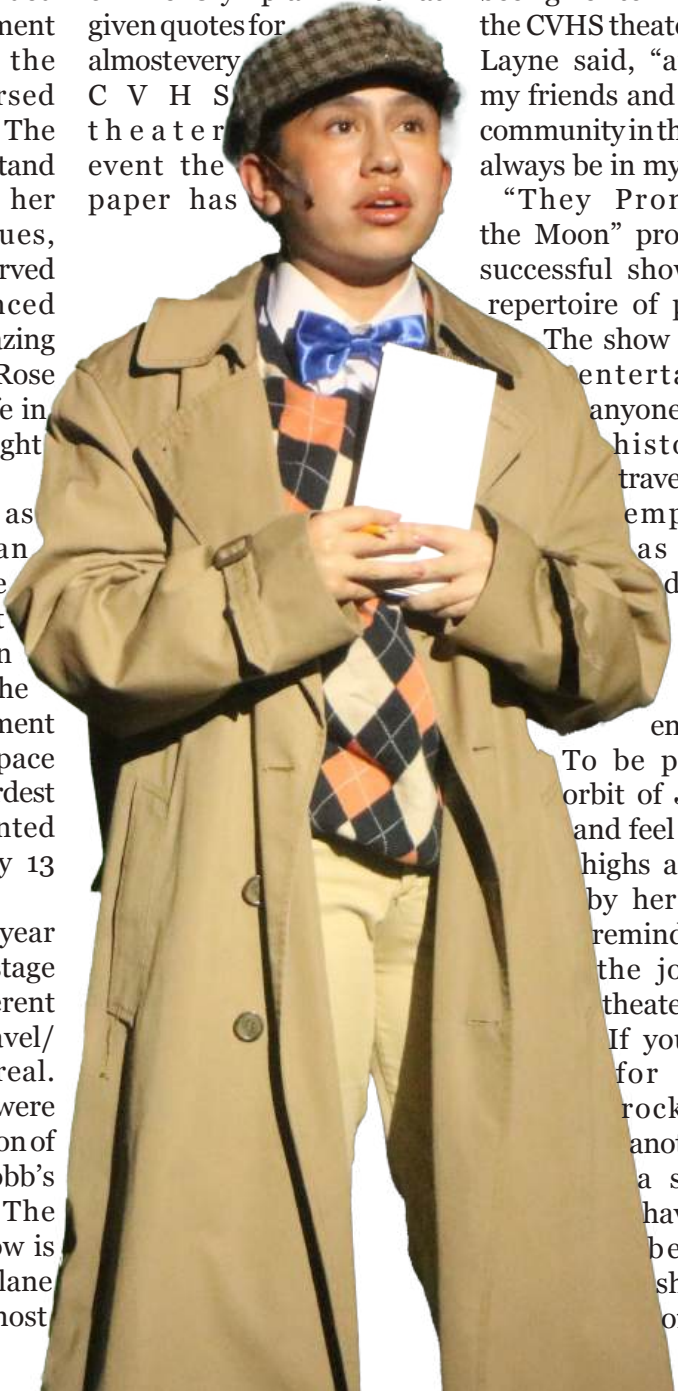
determined to break barriers in the male-dominated world of space exploration. The show cut between dreamlike memories from our protagonist, and real life events that surrounded her life. From the moment the lights come on, the audience was immersed in her subconscious. The audience came to understand the truth of her life, her motivations, her issues, and her joys. Cobb served as a strikingly nuanced protagonist, and our amazing actors Nora Layne and Rose Davis brought her to life in an impressive and thought-provoking way.

The show doubles as entertainment and an educational experience for the audience. It shed light on the often overlooked subject of the female civil rights movement in individual fields, space travel being one of the hardest to reach for the talented women of the Mercury 13 astronaut program.

The tech team this year worked overtime backstage to make the show's different aviation and space travel/training effects feel real. Two plane set pieces were constructed for the portion of the show that covers Cobb's origins in Aviation. The moments when the show is set in the middle of a plane flight are some of the most

fun and unique scenes in the history of CVHS' many live offerings, and anyone can tell that the actors have a great time doing them.

Layne, longtime friend of The Olympian who has given quotes for almost every C V H S theater event the paper has



covered in the last four years, reflected on performing her last show at the center for the performing arts.

“I appreciate all the opportunities that have been given to me throughout the CVHS theater program,” Layne said, “and I'll miss my friends and the sense of community in the CFA. It will always be in my heart.”

“They Promised Her the Moon” proved to be a successful show in CVHS' repertoire of productions.

The show is especially entertaining for anyone who enjoys history, space travel, or women's empowerment as topics of discussion in

entertainment. To be put into the orbit of Jerrie Cobb, and feel lifted by her highs and smashed by her lows, truly reminds people of the joy that live theater can bring. If you're looking for a riveting rocket ride to another time and a story many have never seen before, this show was out of this world!

MAISON JORDAN

“Hurry Up Tomorrow” transitions to perfection

By Angel Ni

“Hurry Up Tomorrow,” The Weeknd's sixth studio album, has such flawless transitions between each song that, after only one listen, you hardly notice the album has ended. The audience is captivated and left wanting more by this creative, powerful idea that cleverly ties the end of one song with the start of the next.

Abel Tesfaye released his last album under his stage name The Weeknd. Twenty-two tracks make up the album, which takes about 85 minutes to listen to in its entirety.

Abel has created a truly remarkable album, with each song delicately crafted to perfection.

Starting with one of my personal favorites from this album, is the opening song “Wake Me Up,” featuring Justice. The song starts off with a slow mysterious minor key beginning, almost as if it was a villain intro of some sort. It slowly fades into a steady catchy beat which transitions into a major key so effortlessly. Towards the end of this song, the bridge consists of such an amazing chord progression that is great to hear, which leads into an arpeggio ascend into a high note, sung by no

one other than The Weeknd himself.

The ending of “Wake Me Up” is quite different from a typical song with some sort of closure. Instead, Tesfaye makes a creative decision to make a build up rather than an ending which leads straight into the second song on the album “Cry For Me.” It's a powerful song that begins with a powerful bass beat and moving lyrics. He is skilled at luring his listeners with a captivating song.

“Timeless,” a track that was released earlier than the album itself, with Playboi Carti, debuted at number three on Billboard Hot 100. This is

yet another favorite song of mine, as it blends trap and R&B so seamlessly together.

This album explores a variety of genres. Other fan favorites include “São Paulo” which features Anitta, with a Brazilian funk element as well as experimental synth-wave incorporated, “Baptized In Fear” which is a slow R&B, “Open Hearts” which has the electro-pop element.

“Given Up On Me” is rather on the low end of popularity which shocks me as this is definitely on my top three along with “Wake Me Up” and “Timeless.” I believe that this song has to be one of his most creative masterpieces by far.

I find the song's unexpected trap beat, which followed a soft piano jazz opening, to be incredibly awesome. The way the first and second parts of the song sound so contrasting from one another which almost feels like they are two different songs is really creative. Although it feels so distinct, it does work together, which intrigues a lot of people including myself.

Overall, this album is among his best releases. Because each song is different and has such satisfying transitions, I really loved listening to them all. This album is so successful and artistic that I believe it is worth listening to any day.