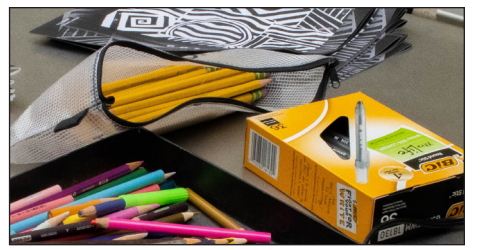




SPORTS: LIAM THE LION
LIAM SHOWS OFF AT HOMECOMING



VALLEY LIFE: ART TO WEAR
DAKOTA NOOT INSPIRES STUDENTS

Israel-Hamas war enters into next phase

Israeli forces launch their biggest incursion into Gaza amid war with Hamas.

STAR EISENBERG
ONLINE EDITOR

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said during a briefing Monday Israel will not agree to a ceasefire with Hamas, adding that Israel did not start this war, but it will win.

"Just as the United States would not agree to a ceasefire after the bombing of Pearl Harbor or after the terrorist attack of 9/11, Israel will not agree to a cessation of hostilities with Hamas after the horrific attacks of October 7," said Netanyahu.

Israeli troops and tanks raided northern Gaza, launching a probing action in preparation for a much larger ground offensive.

The raid comes after Israel dropped leaflets from the north Gaza sky October 13, 2023 ordering more than 1 million residents to move south. Gaza's 2.3 million civilians face intensifying struggles for food, water, and safety more than two weeks after Hamas militants launched a deadly attack on Israel. Hamas is currently holding a number of hostages. Humanitarian relief efforts are being delayed for now in order to buy time for hostage negotiations and urban warfare.

Palestinians evacuated the northern half of the territory. Others refused to leave. Some huddled at hospitals in the north amid blistering airstrikes. Medics in Gaza warn that thousands could die as hospitals packed with wounded people run desperately low on basic supplies.

Israel Defense Forces launched Operation Iron Swords, with Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant warning that the besieged Gaza



PROTEST- A Los Angeles Protest in Pershing Square occurred on October 21, 2023. "Stop the Genocide, End the Occupation" shouted by the crowd. SUEY HERRARTE | VALLEY STAR

Strip would be cut off from electricity, water, and gas.

"We will wipe this thing called Hamas, ISIS-Gaza, off the face of the earth," said Gallant. "It will cease to exist."

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict dates back to the early days of the state of Israel. It is primarily centered around territorial disputes regarding the Gaza, West Bank, and East Jerusalem. Israel claims that the Palestinians have no desire to achieve peace and want to completely eradicate

"We will wipe this thing called Hamas, ISIS-Gaza, off the face of the earth," said Gallant. "It will cease to exist."

- Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant

the Jewish presence from the land. The Palestinians claim that Israel's system of oppression against Palestinians is a crime of apartheid and humanity. Hamas is a Palestinian-Islamist militant group which rules the Gaza Strip.

President Joe Biden said he doubts the accuracy of the death-toll numbers being released by Palestinian authorities.

"I have no notion that the Palestinians are telling the truth about how many people are killed," Biden said during

a news conference. "I have no confidence in the number that the Palestinians are using."

The Hamas-controlled Ministry of Health reports that over 8,000 people have been killed in Gaza by Israeli strikes since the Oct. 7 attack on Israel.

Netanyahu says, "Calls for a ceasefire are a call for Israel to surrender to Hamas, to surrender to terrorism, to surrender to barbarism. That will not happen. The Bible says that there is a time for peace and a time for war. This is a time for war."

Asylum presentation sheds light on DACA

Students learn how to file for and maintain their status.

KENYA HARRIS
OPINION EDITOR

The Immigrants Defense Law Center held a presentation at Valley College on the process of filing for asylum. Hosted by the Dream Resource Center, the event was made available to students in the Unity Center's computer lab.

Students from Guatemala, Ukraine, Mexico and other countries gathered together to receive information about filing for asylum.

Attorneys Yixuan Liu and Nicholas Bokowski led the presentation and lecture. The team of two offered details about the asylum process advising students about the immigration process and dealing with the long wait times to hear back from various government agencies.

"One take-away for DACA students is to please avoid any criminal activities including DUI," said attorney Yixuan Liu. "The most important thing is to not be involved in any criminal issues. That is important for immigrants."

Judge Hanen delivered the latest ruling in September 2023, stating that the DACA program was illegally established but renewals are still being processed on an annual basis. The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program is at a standstill as new applications are no longer accepted. Many who are seeking asylum now entered the United States as children.

Attorney Nicholas Bokowski lectured on youth focused policies. Bokowski advised that Special Immigrant Juvenile status is given to those under

21 years of age, who can demonstrate neglect, abuse or abandonment by a parent, and that return to their home country is not possible.



ASYLUM- Yixuan Liu, attorney for the Immigrants Defense Law Center, listens to questions asked by nursing major Iryna Gavrylyak during the asylum presentation. JEREMY RUIZ | VALLEY STAR

These juveniles can then potentially receive a green card.

Liu explained that there are two different types of asylum categories: affirmative and defensive. Affirmative Asylum refers to those who are within one year of their arrival in the United States, and those who fall outside of the one year are defensive asylum seekers.

Liu presented a powerpoint that described the ins and outs of applying for asylum, explaining the kinds of documentation that a person will need to seek protection. In addition to the cover letter, an asylum seeker will need supporting documents, like a Country Conditions report, which is a government-made report focusing on the condition in the foreign country the applicant is seeking asylum from.

"A lot of students aren't aware of the resources we have here," said counselor and DRC coordinator Javier Carbajal. "With these types of workshops, you can save a person thousands of dollars. It serves as a draw that gets people to come in for one-on-one consultations. Valley students have access to consultations. We even had a student here who didn't know they were eligible for a visa."

The Dream Resource Center offers a \$500 grant for students that can be used to get a consultation with a lawyer and is one of many campus resources open to undocumented students. For assistance with a specific case, DRC counselors are available most weekdays at the Unity Center.

Misinformation runs rampant

KENYA HARRIS
OPINION EDITOR

Misinformation is cropping up on social media platforms across the board and efforts to combat this disinformation crisis is looking to catch up.

A Facebook study from January 2023 by USC, indicates that information sharing on social-media plays a significant role in the spread of misinformation. Only 15 percent of news sharers were found to be responsible for spreading about 30-40 percent of the fake news according to the study's research.

"Beyond the physical and psychological consequences of misinformation, confusion can trigger actions based on fear. Fear has been a palpable sensation throughout this pandemic, and is often amplified when trusted authorities promote inconsistent opinions," said the Journal of the Missouri State Medical Association.

Misinformation does the most damage in the categories of disaster, health, and politics, where negative consequences are most evident. In 2020, Donald Trump spread disinformation about the efficacy of hydroxychloroquine, a drug he claimed prevented the Corona virus. For people that followed his advice, this resulted in an increased risk of death for patients suffering from COVID-19.

Recently several images misattributed to the Israel Palestine war made viral rounds via social media giants like X (formerly twitter), TikTok, Youtube, and WhatsApp. The footage that was alleged to be from the ongoing war in Gaza was in fact from the video game "Arma 3." Another video of an attack from 2015 in Guatemala was incorrectly accredited to Gaza 2023.

This year alone AI has advanced dramatically and so has its ability to intensify misinformation. Whether it is a deepfake of an event that never happened or an AI-constructed image, it is difficult to identify false reports from reality before sharing. Conservative commentator Ben Shapiro recently shared an image of what he believed to be a burned Israeli baby on X. When individual users ran the image through AI detectors, a consensus could not be reached on if the image was real. Different users got conflicting results but Shapiro removed the image after the outcry though it is still unclear if the images are real or AI.

"Right now, many people naively believe what they read on social media," said Irene Wu, Professor of Communication, Culture and Technology at Georgetown University. "When the television became popular, people also believed everything on TV was true. It is how people choose to access and react to information and news that's important, not the mechanisms that distribute them."

The conclusion of academic discourse suggests misinformation is either the user's responsibility or the responsibility of social media platforms, though it is an ever-changing issue that may require a more comprehensive solution.

"Misinformation is not like a plumbing problem you fix. It is a social condition, you must constantly monitor and adjust to," said Tom Rosenstiel former director of the American Press Institute.

Media Arts students show off new films

Filmmakers flaunt their skills at Media Arts 2023 Fall Showcase in Valley's Music Recital

BY MIKE DIAZ
STAFF WRITER

In a packed house at Valley College's Music Recital Hall, students in the Media Arts Department presented over 30 films depicting comedy, horror and psychedelic scenes.

"I want to show the audience that there is a better life out there,"

**- Kendrick Trejo,
director of 'Hello
Katie'**

The Media Arts 2023 Fall Showcase, held Friday night, made its second return to campus after the event was held online the previous few semesters.

"We are incredibly proud to show our student films in front of a live audience," said Media Arts Department Chair Eric Swelstad. "We know that the support from the audience means a lot to our students and our faculty."

Students from Valley's Cinema 101 (a beginning film production workshop), and the Anti-Racism Film Project, put their films on the big screen for friends, family, fellow students, faculty and President Barry Gribbons.

Gribbons took the stage to congratulate the filmmakers and recalled his time as an undergrad at USC when



SUEY HERRARTE | VALLEY STAR

AWARD WINNERS- Kendrick Trejo (far left), Koloa Tonga (center), and Tiana Boyd (right) were a few award winners from the Fall showcase.

he watched student films.

After the welcoming words, the student films started to roll.

Student filmmakers explored a variety of themes, which included prostitution, loss of loved ones, menstrual cycles, parodies of spaghetti westerns, Samurai inspired films and Kung Fu films.

Lighting for the student films ranged from natural light to digital effects. Score styles varied from the use of barrowed soundtracks to other media, video games and pop songs.

The students tried their hands in acting, with a range of some success.

As part of the Anti-Racism Film Project the student showcase also addressed racism in society with the film "Pinky Promise," which was put on display at the Cannes Film Festival.

The event culminated in awards presented to the student filmmakers.

The Best Story category was awarded to "If Only" by Kathy Santillan. Best Cinematography was awarded to "Hello Katie" by Kendrick Trejo. Best Editing was awarded to "Finding Me" by Koloa Tonga. Best Sound Design was awarded to "Ill" by Natalee Merino. Best Visual Effects was awarded to

"Grim" by Tiana Boyd.

"I had to wing everything at the last minute," said Boyd who directed "Grim." The film was a story about a woman suffering a near death experience.

The highly anticipated Audience Choice Award was given, a few days later, to "Ensiger" by Curtis White. The delay was due to problems with the network, but the student was happy to receive the award.



California sues big oil, how will the claim fare?

Attorney General office says oil and gas producers are liable for climate change.



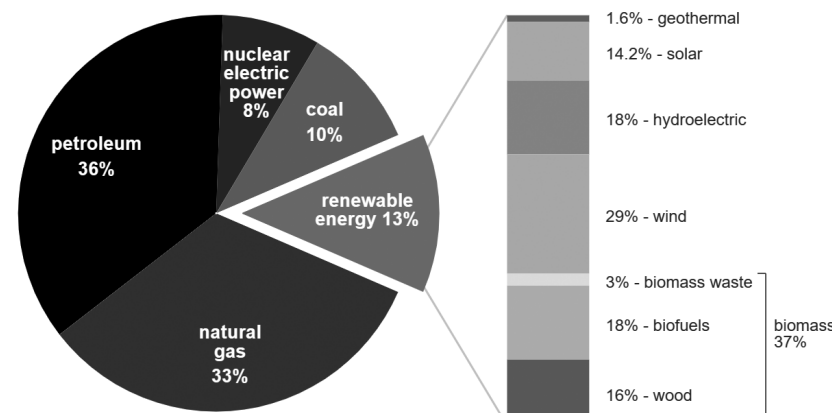
ANDREW GONZALEZ | THE VALLEY STAR

OIL HORSE OFF THE 14 FREEWAY IN SANTA CLARITA, CALIFORNIA ON OCTOBER 20TH

U.S. primary energy consumption by energy source, 2022

total = 100.41 quadrillion
British thermal units (Btu)

total = 13.18 quadrillion Btu



Data source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, *Monthly Energy Review*, Table 1.3 and 10.1, April 2023, preliminary data

Note: Sum of components may not equal 100% because of independent rounding.

KATHERINE OBRIEN
COPY EDITOR

California has filed a complaint against the oil industry, claiming they caused climate change, knew their products were harmful and denied climate science, thus committing fraud upon the public.

Filed in San Francisco Superior Court, the suit names six defendants: Exxon, Shell, Chevron, B.P., Phillips Conoco and trade industry group American Petroleum Institute.

"For more than 50 years, Big Oil has been lying to us - covering up the fact that they've long known how dangerous the fossil fuels they produce are for our planet," said a press release from the governor's office. "It has been decades of damage and deception. Wildfires wiping out entire communities, toxic smoke clogging our air, deadly heat waves, record-breaking droughts parching our wells. California taxpayers shouldn't have to foot the bill. California is taking action to hold big polluters accountable."

The state asserts the oil defendants caused and accelerated climate change, alleging their oil and gas products release carbon dioxide (CO2) into the earth's atmosphere, which causes a greenhouse gas effect, which significantly elevates the earth's temperature.

California alleges Big Oil knew about the harm they were causing but sought to hide the science and allowed the problem to grow worse. The damage from global warming includes rising sea levels, diminishing ice caps and oceanic acidification, all of which have been accelerated in the past five years, the state warns. Defendants allegedly mounted a disinformation campaign for decades to dispute climate science, to cast doubt in the minds of the public and by so doing, delayed change in transitioning to a lower carbon environment.

Climate change has allegedly resulted in specific harms to human life includ-

ing extreme heat, drought, extreme wildfire, public health, extreme storms and flooding, damage to agriculture and rising sea levels leading to coastal erosion.

The state says the oil producers created a public nuisance, impaired natural resources, and acted negligently for failing to warn the public of known harm.

"For more than 50 years, Big Oil has been lying to us - covering up the fact that they've long known how dangerous the fossil fuels they produce are for our planet,"

- said a press release from the governor Newsom's office

"Oil and gas companies have privately known the truth for decades - that the burning of fossil fuels leads to climate change - but have fed us lies and mistruths to further their record-breaking profits at the expense of our environment," stated Attorney General Rob Bonta. "It is time they pay to abate the harm they have caused."

In its filing, the State requests abatement for the nuisance of CO2 emissions and payment for the cost of the damage already committed, and to guard against future harm. The documents express that offending companies should abandon their campaign of denial, cease advertising their products as environmentally friendly and instead warn of known

dangers. The State says defendants should be fined for past harms and requests punitive damages to punish defendants for their actions, plus costs and attorneys' fees.

Yet, it is uncertain how the state's case will fare in court. A prior complaint was filed by the cities of San Francisco and Oakland, in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California. This earlier federal court pleading made similar arguments and also requested, among other things, an abatement fund. However, this complaint was dismissed in 2018 on the grounds that such matters were related of foreign and domestic policy.

"The problem deserves a solution on a more vast scale than can be supplied by a District Court judge or jury in a public nuisance case," said District Court Judge William Alsup.

The recent 2023 filing has been filed in San Francisco Superior Court and not in a federal court. But the state will be faced with this same argument, that the issue is of national import and should be decided by government policy, rather than through the court.

Further, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, *Monthly Energy Review*, only "13 percent of U.S. primary energy consumption is provided by renewable sources. Fossil fuels - petroleum, natural gas and coal - accounted for about 81 percent of total U.S. primary energy production in 2022."

Energy policy is a matter of national concern and presents a hurdle for a court to enjoin an activity that accounts for 81 percent of energy sources across the U.S. It is a cannon of jurisprudence that the court may not issue an unenforceable ruling.

Lights, camera, action?

KATHERINE OBRIEN
COPY EDITOR

A 25 foot long light attachment bar fell from the ceiling in Monarch Hall while the Theatre Arts Department was setting up for a show.

On Thursday Oct. 19, the first curtain lighting equipment, which traversed the entire width of the stage, dropped from the ceiling, landing on the stage. A student was in the vicinity of the mishap but was not injured. The stage was not damaged either. Administration immediately contacted the Maintenance Department, and Michael Jack, Interim Director of College Facilities, responded.

"I received a call around 4:00 p.m., and went over to Monarch Hall. There had been no prior complaints regarding the lightbar," said Jack.

He could not opine as to the value of the lost light bar, and the Theatre Arts Department will determine the next steps to take to resolve the issue.

The Valley Academic and Cultural Center (VACC) is still closed, even though the projected completion date of July 2023 has passed. In the meantime, Monarch Hall is serving as the venue for current theater productions, until the VACC is finished.

"The Theater Arts Department has their own portable stage lights and equipment that they put in place, and they are using that now instead," Jack noted. "We removed the light bar the following morning and made the area safe for Theater Arts."

The future of learning is digital

BY STAR EISENBERG
ONLINE EDITOR

The online environment offers opportunities for people who would otherwise have limited access to education. The transition to remote learning in the COVID-19 era revealed an important lesson: online courses are an invaluable asset.

Online learning allows students to pursue their educational goals without physically being present on campus.

"We currently offer many degrees online as well as in-person," said Valley College President Barry Gribbons. "Wherever there is a demand for online programs, we want to do our best to meet that demand."

In 2020, 98 percent of universities moved a majority of classes online. Since then, 43 percent have invested in creating new online learning resources, according to a report by Higher Ed Partners.

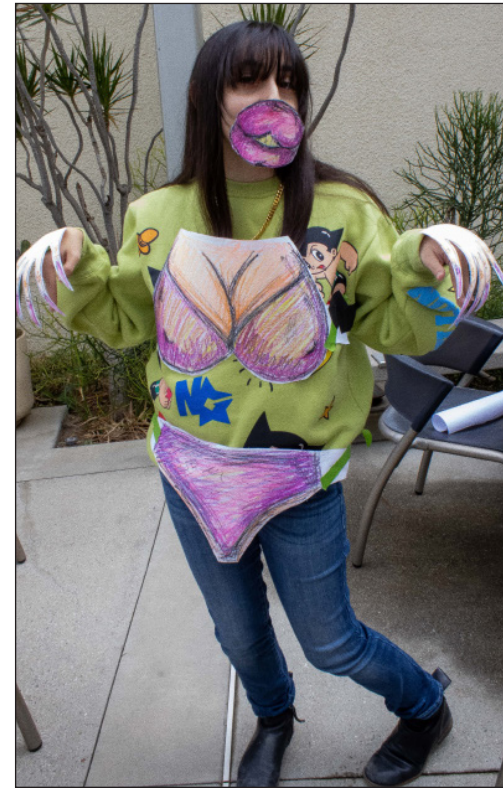
"I'm a huge proponent and fan of online education," said Dylan Altman, Valley College adjunct English professor and dual enrollment instructor. "I both take and teach them. I have been teaching online long before the COVID-19 pandemic. I have witnessed how online classes increase the access and equity for working students, busy students, parents, and non-traditional students."

Online classes enable others to keep up with industry trends in a rapidly evolving job market where higher levels of education are often linked to higher salaries.

However, eLearning requires strong self-motivation and time management skills. Some may not consider online to be as effective as in-person instruction, but the main advantage of online learning is that it breaks down common barriers like distance and schedule by allowing students to participate virtually in higher education classes.



VIOLETT DEJEAN | VALLEY STAR



VIOLETT DEJEAN | VALLEY STAR

TO THE LEFT: Student Melissa DiTommaso creates fake implants to wear. She joked about having saved lots of money.

ABOVE: DiTommaso wearing the bikini set she created along with fake lips and nails.

Creativity showcased with wearable art

Artist Dakota Noot held a workshop for students to create and wear pieces.

JASMINE ALEJANDRE
VALLEY LIFE EDITOR

Dakota Noot hosted a wearable art workshop at the LAVC Art Gallery in collaboration with the Rainbow Pride Center and Jenene Nagy, the gallery's director. This exhibition is part of a series outlining social programs on campus like Umoja and the Guardian Scholars. "Art empowers students to be creative and take risks," said Nagy. "This is a space for them to express themselves and try some stuff out, in a non-judgmental space." Noot is no stranger to Valley College. Back in 2021, he hosted an "Art Is Good For You" online workshop when the Art Gallery was still remote because of the COVID-19 pandemic. He had originally done his wearable

art through Zoom, and when he was invited back for an exhibition, Nagy thought it would be a great idea to have the same workshop, but now in person. The exhibition walk-through was on display for a full month for students to get a chance to look at the work. His artwork consisted of cutouts made on stands, along with full-body murals. "A lot of my stuff is fantasy-like. I like stuff that is spooky, funny, weird," said Noot. "That's what I want to recreate in my art and get that kind of magic." The artist draws inspiration from his upbringing around farm life and

interests in horror movies and mutations, including his personal favorite: Courage the Cowardly Dog. Growing up in a family full of farmers, his work is naturally animal-based and he creates metamorphosed cutouts of colorful farm animals. The workshop took place at the patio next to the Art Gallery where the artist's work was on display for students to view. At the workshop, Noot showed students wearable art they could craft and even created a few examples to inspire them. The wearable art was made on paper and there were many art supplies, including colored pencils and markers available for participants. Rainbow Pride Center counselor

coordinator Natalie Guerrero, created a pair of eyes and a bowtie using crayons. One student, Melissa DiTommaso, had previously attended Noot's lecture and exhibition and was inspired to create a whole bikini set with hands with long nails. She was overheard joking about having saved a lot of money. "I saw a flier and thought his work was cool," said DiTommaso, an animation major. "I went to the opening gallery and I liked it and thought it was really fun." After creating their wearable pieces, students posed for a photographer with a Polaroid and were able to keep the shot. There was coffee, fruit and other snacks available for students to enjoy while they relaxed and let their imaginations guide them.

"I like stuff that is spooky, funny, weird."
- Artist Dakota Noot

Valley Star staff hauls in awards at JACC

Former and current members receive 15 awards at the contest held at CSUN.

MAIA RICHAUD
STAFF WRITER

The Valley Star staff returned from the Journalism Association Community Colleges contest, taking home 15 awards including the "General Excellence" award for the Valley Star newspaper and The Crown magazine. Valley competed against 24 other community colleges in JACC's southern region, with colleges coming from Bakersfield to Chula Vista. "It's a big stepping stone," said Griffin O'Rourke, who won five awards at the Oct. 21 event hosted by CSUN and served as the photo editor for the Valley Star and The Crown last semester. "It shows me that I can do this kind of work." O'Rourke, current news editor for the CSUN's Daily Sundial, won three individual awards, including first place for News Photo and honorable mentions for Action Sports Photo and Photo Story-Essay. He also won two collective awards: second place with former editor-in-chief Isaac Dektor for Magazine Photo Story-Essay, and first place for Magazine Photo Story-Essay with Jeremy Ruiz, the Star's current photo editor. "I felt very proud of myself and of the people who helped me along the way," O'Rourke said. "We had a very dedicated staff. Everyone helped each other, it was very teamwork oriented." The first place award for Magazine Photo Story-Essay won by O'Rourke and Ruiz is from a story of The Crown magazine called "Going places at steady paces." The story centers on the PACES program that

sends STEM majors on outdoor expeditions to discover the ecosystems of Los Angeles, illustrated by photographs of the expeditions. Apart from this collective award, Ruiz fourth and first place for Magazine Photo. Ruiz's winning photos focused on Valley swimmer Lilliana Noriega, and they can be found in The Crown's cover story: "Breaking records with Noriega." Current Valley Star editor-in-chief Milan Rafaelov took first place and honorable mention for their Editorial Cartoon. The first-place cartoon shows Congress looking for Diane Feinstein can be found in the article "Constituents should call for Feinstein to resign," available on the newspaper's website. "Last spring, I came into this newsroom with no prior knowledge or understanding of what I was getting myself into and now this semester I still have no idea what I'm doing as editor," Rafaelov said. "Here, we're all learning something new and to challenge what we think we're capable of." Other Valley Star staffers took home awards from the contest at CSUN, including Asher Miles who took fourth place for his Critical Review. Astrid Cortez won third place for the On The Spot photo contest. Former staffers Cassandra Nava (editor-in-chief) took home an honorable mention award for Magazine News Feature and Isaac Dektor took first place for Magazine Design. "I am proud of our students and inspired by the staff that came before me," Rafaelov said. "I plan to carry on the torch they lit and guide us to more victories in the future."



JEREMY RUIZ | VALLEY STAR



GRIFFIN O'ROURKE | VALLEY STAR



MILAN RAFAELOV | VALLEY STAR

ABOVE- Jeremy Ruiz's photo of LAVC swimmer Lilliana Noriega took first place in Magazine Photo contest.

FAR LEFT- Griffin O'Rourke's photo story that won first place.

LEFT- Editorial cartoon by Milan Rafaelov of Diane Feinstein took first place.

ASU finance agenda

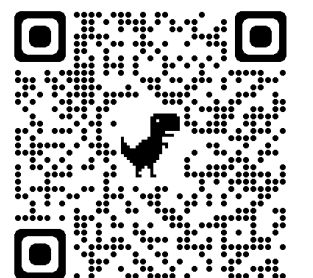
MILAN RAFAELOV
EDITOR IN CHIEF

The ASU held its bi-weekly meeting on budget amendments for upcoming events, approving about \$45,000 on the day. ASU held a meeting in hopes of filling the executive council treasurer position. ASU Members gathered in the SkyBox conference room and reviewed its \$360,229 budget. First was a request to fund a CSU trip for \$27,100 to Northern California. The trip allows those within Student Life or the Dream Resource Center to sign up and visit CSU campuses. The funds would cover the cost of travel, hotel, transportation, food, and entrance fees to different activities for each member. Members are scheduled to visit multiple colleges and universities in Northern California to learn about resources to help them pursue higher education. The ASU approved the purchase of custom-made jackets for \$4,500. The jackets will feature the names of ASU members embroidered on the back and include their titles and years of service. They continued down the list, approving \$2,872.90 to feed an estimated 200 students at The National Hunger and Homelessness Resource Fair on Nov. 15. They also approved \$310 for the upcoming STEM Internship and Research Symposium hosted by the MESA program. A donation of \$1,000 was approved to be sent to CARE 4 Kids, an organization that helps low-income families. The donation will be used to buy gifts for around 20 children for the holiday season. Other ASU-run events, like the ACC Movie Night and Dance-A-Thon, were granted a total of \$4,150. The board interviewed a student for the executive council treasurer position. The student answered questions, but failed to give basic examples of qualifying experience for the position and failed to read the bylaws required to understand the duties and responsibilities of the role. The ASU did not fill the position, and are looking for more student applicants.

ASU's awards

MAIA RICHAUD
STAFF WRITER

The ASU won first place for LACCD Associated Student Organization/Union Parliamentary Competition from the LACCD Leadership Institute Training contest held recently at Los Angeles Trade-Technical College. Student governments in the Los Angeles Community Colleges District, including Valley College, Pierce College, East Los Angeles College, Southwest College, effectively represented their respective schools. Valley College won first place, East Los Angeles College and Mission College received second place, and Harbor College was awarded third place out of nine colleges. The contest was part of the parliamentary procedure and Title IX training. Many representatives of the ASU were attending the contest, such as Valley's Melina Valle Herrera, who was in charge of answering questions as Parliamentarian.



SCAN QR CODE FOR MORE FEATURES

From college football player to visionary counselor

Elliott Coney's commitment to the African-American community is reshaping the campus.

ASHER MILES
OPINIONS EDITOR

Elliott Coney, sporting his beanie and a vibrant flannel shirt, sits erect with a jet black beard. As he sits at his desk, his office is adorned with a collection of both his academic and personal accomplishments, strategically positioned to serve as a testament to his past and present, showcasing who he was and where he stands now.

The San Diego State graduate earned his doctorate degree in education. His ongoing journey through his career has led him to create a community of inclusion that extends beyond Valley College.

After completing his studies, the L.A. native embarked on his journey at Valley as an adjunct professor in 2018. The transition marked the culmination of his six year pursuit in counseling special population groups, particularly within the African American community.

"Before I got here, three counselors of the Black Scholars left within

two months," said Coney. "A lot of that was because people didn't feel we had enough to build a culture here. The African-American cohesion here was fragmented."

After exploring the campus, he noticed black students congregating near the Behavioral Science building and began to engage with them. Over the course of a few months, he made the decision to apply for the available position as the coordinator/counselor for the Umoja Black Scholars program.

"My background and athletic history was key, and I was able to connect to the African-American



JEREMY RUIZ | VALLEY STAR

UMOJA- Elliott R. Coney, Ed.D, is counselor and coordinator for Umoja Black Scholars.

community here. Students began to talk to me regularly and it created the visibility and the traffic."

Nevertheless, as an influx of students gravitated towards the Mosaic

Center, it became evident that accommodating the Veterans Program, The Dreamers and the Umoja Black scholars led to growing pains. The Mosaic Center, originally designed to host just one program, was now strained under the weight of three.

It became apparent that these programs required additional space and resources to survive.

Through student mobilization, attending community meetings, and

President Barry Gribbons, Coney led the students to demand that their needs be met. Throughout a student and faculty orchestrated push, the Umoja Program galvanized the

community and moved into the Campus Center in Spring of 2019.

"At that time other programs demanded better space and our move set in motion the Unity Center creation," Coney said. "Once we moved into this space it was bursting out of the seams with students."

Coney's contributions to Valley are rooted in his upbringing, driven by a desire to acquire and spread needed resources. He wished he had within his own family.

"When you grow up in an area without much opportunity, you grow up with survivor's remorse," the Umoja leader reflected. "My dad dropped out of school very early and it led him to not live the life he wanted, and he died early. It was a defining moment in my preteen years."

The soon-to-be father's story at Valley can be defined by the relentless pursuit of a better future for scholars of the Umoja Program. His journey is far from over, as he continues to be a beacon of hope and inspiration.

CAMPUS PRIDE

Pride Flag raised on campus for the second time on Coming Out Day

Students and speakers unite to celebrate and support each other.

JASMINE ALEJANDRE
VALLEY LIFE EDITOR

Valley College raised the Pride Flag for the second time in its 74 year history. The Unity Center, along with the ASU, hosted Coming Out Day. Valley alumni and California State Senator Caroline Menjivar gave a speech on her queer journey and the importance of having safe spaces for the LGBTQ community.

The Pride Center commenced the ceremony by passing around mini Pride flags, stickers and pins. Once everyone settled, keynote speaker Caroline Menjivar spoke about her experience as an out and proud lesbian.

"It's a constant story of having to come out. Each and every single time it was difficult because I was not received with love," she said. "These were the spaces I

needed and wanted when I was a young girl. I'm thankful that the youth coming up and young adults, have these spaces to turn to. Because my coming out story is still unfolding as we continue."

Menjivar presented Natalie Guerrero, the counselor coordinator of the Rainbow Pride Center, with a certificate of recognition for the work she has done for the students on campus.

"The flag had not been raised since the college was founded in 1949," Guerrero said. "It was something bold that I did, but I also thought of our students and our LGBTQ+ com-

munity. I wanted it to be a symbol of solidarity and a safe space."

Guerrero began her position last year and said that a lot of the inspiration for these events comes from what she wanted to see as a college student, and is especially important to the Rainbow Pride Center, after the flag was torn down from the Unity Center.

Vice President of Academic Affairs Matt Jordan followed Menjivar, speaking about his experience coming out. Jordan talked about how his mom

was devastated when she first found out he was part of the queer community, but they have since developed an accepting and supportive relationship.

"I wanted it to be a symbol of solidarity and a safe space"

-Natalie Guerrero,
Rainbow Pride Center
Counselor Coordinator

Pride Club president Siobhan Quille and vice president Alexander Esparza talked about their experiences as queer students at Valley.

After the speakers were done, everyone gathered around the flag as it was raised while the choir sang the Beatles' "All You Need is Love." Following the flag raising, some attendees talked to Sen. Menjivar and a resource fair was set up in front of the Unity Center.

"For some of our students, Valley College may be one of the only places that they can be themselves and that they can be out," Jordan said. "I'd like to express our commitment to not only creating a safe and welcoming environment but also to creating an environment that celebrates, cherishes and loves our queer community."



ASTRID CORTEZ | VALLEY STAR

RAISING-President of the Pride+ Club Siobhan Quille, Vice President of the club Alexander Esparza, California State Senator Caroline Menjivar and Vice President of Academic Affairs Matthew Jordan raise the U.S. flag with the pride flag.

FILM REVIEW

Queer representation in film adaptation by Aitch Alberto

Alberto brings to life bestselling book Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe.



PHOTO COURTESY OF | BLUE FOX ENTERTAINMENT

ADAPTION - Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe is a film adaption of a book written by Benjamin Alire Sáenz. The film stars Max Pelayo and Reese Gonzales.

KAIA MANN
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

In a world of Heartstoppers and Red White and Royal Blues, Aitch Alberto's film Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe is not reinventing the wheel, but does serve as a profoundly sweet and introspective queer story.

Set in 1980s El Paso, Aristotle Mendoza (Max Pelayo) navigates his growing relationship with the eccentric Dante (Reese Gonzales). Aristotle struggles while coming into manhood, still in the dark about his incarcerated brother. It's a tale of finding yourself, accepting yourself, and the people who join you along that ride. Adapted from the best-

selling book of the same name, Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe has virtually everything one would want -- beautiful writing, gorgeous cinematography, and Eva Longoria.

Aristotle and Dante isn't changing the game. However, director Aitch Alberto, a Mexican trans woman, infused the story with love and care. Alberto had a hard job, doing justice to the original source material, while putting a personal spin on what could have been a word-for-word remake. She showcased the intersectionality that comes with being queer and Mexican, in Reagan-era Texas. The cinematography is beautiful, with shots full of color, and set dressings that felt real. Producer, Lin-Manuel Miranda's influence is felt in the overall

tone, and of course, the 80s-heavy soundtrack is straight out of your parents' playlist. The changing of seasons is practically felt through the screen.

While there are times when the dialogue is cheesy and the angsty attitude of the main character is frustrating, the sweet sentimentality of the film ultimately prevails.

On the technical side, it is clear that this movie was working with a small budget. The bad ADR, with obvious PG-13 substitutes, was distracting, and while seldom used, the CGI is worse. Despite this, the performances from all involved show care. There is a surprisingly gruesome, yet revealing scene, involving the committed Max Pelayo. Numerous punches and lots of blood make the hair on the back of one's neck stand up.

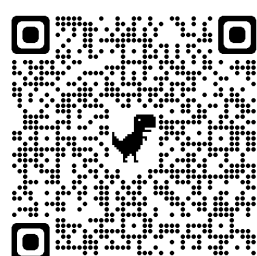
Although there could've been a few more scenes between Ari and Dante themselves, it is obvious that the film wanted to be greater than just a queer romance, and that is admirable.

While it often lies within the subtext, this movie celebrates LGBTQ identities while tapping into their fear and confusion, especially given the backdrop of the ongoing AIDS epidemic.

Despite the pain within the story, the work feels like warm rain on skin and produces a hardy fading ear-to-ear smile.

Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe is another triumph in the realm of queer representation and is the movie for you if you want a wistful escape.

WORTH A WATCH



SCAN QR CODE TO ACCESS FILM TRAILER AND DETAILS.

House finally finds their new voice or next problem

Four tedious rounds of voting results appoint Mike Johnson as the speaker of the House.



COURTESY OF GOP.GOV
POLITICS- Rep. Mike Johnson is new Speaker of the House of Representatives as of Oct. 25.

ASHER MILES
OPINIONS EDITOR

After weeks of exasperating votes, all of the right-wing's drivers have finally exited their clown car, as the House Republicans appointed Mike Johnson (R-LA) as Speaker of the House. However, Johnson's religious conservatism may continue to stake a divide within the disjointed party.

In a dramatic fourth round of votes, Mike Johnson, Trump surrogate, was crowned, but not without enduring criticism from left wing advocates for his unwavering opposition to LGBTQ+ rights, abortion privileges and his defense of the former President Trump.

Internal party dynamics caused a fluid swirl of preferences within the Republican Party since the ouster of Rep. Kevin McCarthy on Oct. 7. If anything, Johnson is a conservative's conservative, which may be able to hold the many factions of the Republican Party together.

Compared to former Speaker McCarthy, who was willing to

put on new faces to acquiesce to his Party, Johnson has been nebulous in his stances. He is a die-hard conservative, who is so wrapped up in "free market and free trade agreements" that he bothers with little else, just as his website boldly proclaims.

Hence, the ongoing tussle between social and religious conservatives persists, despite the fact that their stances on hot-button topics often don't quite match up with what American people actually want. Now, it makes one wonder, just how many fissures can appear in the Republican stronghold before Trump-y conservatives find themselves regulated to the sidelines.

On the other hand, if the conservatives wholeheartedly jump on Johnson's stark conservatism, then saying au revoir to McCarthy, while perhaps a tedious endeavor, could ultimately prove to be a winning bet.

While the sluggish Democratic Party could seize on the opportunity of a deeply divided opposition. It, would be as unrealistic as expecting Humpty Dumpty to perch comfortably on the wall. In other words, things are going to crack.

The 22 day interregnum to find a competent House Speaker is a symptom and proof of the broken House majority - a Republican party that is unwilling to coalesce for their Party's greater good.

In the end, critical issues such as a looming government shutdown and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict were on the line, and the House majority lacked the necessary judgment to make a comprehensive decision. As a result, the American people are given a House Leader that doesn't resonate with the majority of American's politics and appears to be the last person picked on the playground. It's quite lamentable..



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GOT A LETTER TO THE EDITOR?

Letters to the editor can be submitted online at www.thevalleystarnews.com. Letters must be limited to 300 words and may be edited for content. Full name and contact information must be supplied in order for letters to be printed.

Israel-Hamas war foots the bill no one can afford

Innocent civilians pay the

MILAN RAFAELOV
EDITOR IN CHIEF

It was only a few days after Israel declared war on Palestine that I found myself sitting with family members I had not spoken to in years. We came together for Shabbat dinner, a Jewish tradition I have not observed since the onset of the pandemic, and for the first time in a long time, I prayed.

We have family in Israel and loved ones who endured fearful moments while taking shelter to avoid the potential danger on Oct. 7. Since then I have religiously watched daily coverage but the situations picture was still unmade in my eyes until now.

Make no mistake that I fear for my relatives but I fear for the people of Gaza more, the death toll of Palestinians has surpassed 7,700 people with most of them being women and children while my family is relatively safe.

The history of Israel and Palestine is a nuanced one but Zionists and Hamas now use their dogma to justify untamed horrors in the name of self-determination. Both ideologies that dominate their governments were forged from the fear of eradication. For centuries the Jewish people ensured persecution, yearning for a secure homeland after the holocaust, much like the Palestinian people long for a safe place to call their own.

Jews and Palestinians have deep ties to the land, yet it is undeniable that the establishment of Israel and the influx of settlers who asserted birthright led to the displacement of millions of Palestinians. This displacement followed decades of unfilled promises, leaving a lasting impact on the region.

In the 1990s, there was a notable effort by the Israeli government, led by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat to forge a two-state resolution and lasting peace. Tragically, this optimism was shattered when Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated which derailed any plans for peace. Ironically, the blame for Rabin's assassination was attributed to the then-opposition leader, Benjamin Netanyahu, who was known for inflaming his right-wing followers and, ultimately, one of them took it upon himself to assassinate the Prime Minister on November 4, 1995.

Subsequently, Benjamin Netanyahu ascended to power, assuming the role of prime minister. With Netanyahu leading the rise of right-wing extremists the demographic of the landscape has dramatically shifted. For instance, Itamar Ben-Gvir, was barred from joining the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) at the age of 18 for his involvement in terrorist organizations, he now serves as the Minister of National Security.

Of course, Israel has a right to defend itself but it is concerning that the current Israeli government appears to be leveraging the tragic events of Oct. 7 to justify what is an unlawful acquisition and cruel collective punishment under the pretext of self-defense.

As the eyes of the world are magnetized to this brutal war, another conflict has emerged within our borders. It is important to note that critiquing the Israeli government's actions is not anti-Semitic; however, in a time where misinformation and propaganda proliferate almost instantaneously, some



PROTEST- People rally together during protests for Palestine on Oct. 21 at Pershing Square. SUEY HERRARTE | VALLEY STAR

exploit the situation to promote genuine anti-Semitic agendas. We must scrutinize information critically, ensuring that the manipulation of public sentiment does not lead to acts of violence against Jewish communities or promote the Genocide of the Palestinian people.

EDITORS NOTE

The views expressed on this page are solely those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the Valley Star, its instructors, editors, staff or those of Los Angeles Valley College, its administration, faculty, staff or students.

VALLEY VIEW | WHAT DO YOU THINK OF DACA BEING RULED ILLEGAL AND HOW DOES IT EFFECT YOU?

TEXT BY KENYA HARRIS AND PHOTOS BY ASTRID CORTEZ



"I guess it gives some people less of an advantage. It doesn't personally affect me but my heart goes out to them."

-JESSE PLASCENCIA, AEROSPACE ENGINEERING MAJOR



"I think it's just unfair and I think what they're doing should stop"

-MATTHEW MENDEZ, COMPUTER SCIENCE MAJOR



"I just don't see why it's such a big deal to let them have better access to becoming a citizen. I think they should change it so it's still applicable for them."

- MARCEL ROBINSON, NURSING MAJOR



"It's a good thing to let other people from a different country learn. I want the program to be legal."

- JOSEPH ORELLANA ACOSTA, ENGINEERING MAJOR



After a 46-28 win, Valley keeps the Victory Bell for the ninth season.



The Monarchs hosted the Brahmas in their homecoming game.



Monarchs quarterback Wesley Tshimanga makes a pass.



Arely Aguilar was crowned the first homecoming queen since 1997.



Defensive tackle Isai Perez II cheers after a play.



Defensive line coach Stanley Burrage encourages his team.

Monarchs ring bell for the ninth-straight time in rivalry match against Brahmas

Valley used a combination of a running and passing game to outscore the Brahmas in a homecoming contest.

JABES PASCUAL
SPORTS EDITOR

The Valley College Monarchs used a strong second half to defeat Pierce College Saturday 46-28 and hang onto the Victory Bell for another year.

Valley (3-4) started slow in its homecoming game as they trailed 6-3 in the first quarter. However, Pierce (3-4) did not have the lead for long. Valley went on a bullish run, outscoring the visitors 21-6 in the second quarter.

The points came on the second and goal when Monarch quarterback Wesley Tshimanga threw a 5-yard floater to wide receiver Keyshawn Parks, making the score 10-6. Tshimanga's second touchdown pass came at the 5:28 mark in the second quarter. The signal caller connected with receiver Graham Blubaugh on a 39-yard pass in the back of the endzone. The Monarchs took a 24-12 lead into the break.

Offensive Coordinator Nick Walker said, "We just have to be aggressive, put our best foot forward and make sure that we execute. This is a rivalry game; we got to give them everything we've got to tire them out."

The Brahmas returned from the half and cut Valley's lead to 24-21 by the end of the third. The first points came on a 36-yard field goal by Marcelo Asan-Ortiz. The visitors added six more points when Maqael Henderson went on a 55-yard touchdown run on a fourth and 10, cutting the Monarch's lead to 3 points.

Valley answered back in the fourth quarter, outscoring their opponent 22-7.

Running back Bryan Massengale

helped fuel the fourth-quarter blitz when he ran it in from 1-yard out, and after the extra point from kicker Daylen Ortiz, the Monarchs were up 31-21.

Valley's Graham Blubaugh added a 20-yard run for another score and the Monarchs converted on a 2-point play, increasing their lead to 39-21 with 6:42 remaining in the game. Jonathan Aguirre finished the scoring on a 1-yard touchdown. Kicker Ortiz's extra point made the final score 46-28.

Valley's Tshimanga threw for 189 yards, with his longest pass coming on a 44-yard connection to Jason Wagner Jr. The Tshimanga and Wagner Jr. duo combined for 96 yards in the air.

"When in doubt, I know I can find him downfield," Tshimanga said. "He makes the play whenever his number is called."

The Victory Bell dates back to the founding of both schools, and the rivalry has fueled the programs. The winner of the game takes the bell home, and Valley has held the prize since 2015 continuing a hot streak.

Coach Lester Towns said his team came out with some fight on Saturday.

"It was a rivalry game, and we knew we had to come out and keep fighting if we wanted to win this game," Towns said. "We knew it was going to be a battle; they have good players, just like we do."

Valley will visit Santa Monica College Saturday for a 1 p.m. kickoff and will host Pasadena City College in their last home game of the season Nov. 11 at 1 p.m.



Valley players run a lap on the tracks with the Victory Bell after their win over Pierce. Photos by Ivonne Elias



Valley College mascot Liam the Lion walks beside the Monarchs football team.



Pierce Brahmas athlete Jamari Mackey tackles Valley Monarchs running back Bryan Massengale.