

## POPP Goes Off

Star Eisenberg, Editor-in-Chief

The Police Orientation Preparation Program (POPP) offers a two-year associate degree in administration of justice. POPP serves as a key program in LAPD's Magnet Schools network and is supported by the Los Angeles Police Department, the Los Angeles Unified School District, and the Los Angeles Community College District. The program is designed for high school graduates aspiring to launch careers in first response and public service. POPP has two campuses, one at the Ahmanson Recruit Training Center (ARTC) and one at Valley College. Many POPP graduates continue their education by matriculating to Cal State-LA, where it supports a summer enrichment program in forensics. POPP graduates are frequently sought after for roles in law enforcement, security, and related fields.

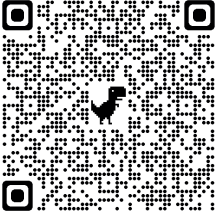
POPP participants (L-R) Ida Duron, Andrea Enciso, Alexis Echeverria, Andrea Benkovic run the bleachers at Monarch Stadium. The junior classmen are part of the two-year program a Valley College that prepares students for careers in law enforcement. (Victoria Saxxon | Valley Star)



## Nurses Needed

Star Eisenberg, Editor-in-Chief

California legislators are considering Senate Bill 895, which proposes a pilot program authorizing community colleges to grant students bachelor's degrees in nursing. The bill, introduced by Sen. Richard Roth on Jan. 3, changes nursing education in the state, opening the door for community colleges to offer 4-year degrees. "For decades, California has suffered from a shortage of registered nurses, exacerbated by the pandemic and anticipated RN retirements," said Roth in a press release. "While this shortage is a national issue, it's particularly acute here, ranking 40th out of 50 states." California faces a shortage of approximately 36,000 licensed nurses, according to the UC San Francisco Health Workforce Research Center on Long-Term Care. Projections indicate that shortages will increase to over 44,000 by 2030.



# FAFSA's Rollout Leaves Families in Limbo

Concerns persist that the chaos of this year's FAFSA application process may discourage students from seeking financial aid.

Milan Rafaelov, Editor-in-Chief

After a significant three-month delay, the Department of Education's eagerly anticipated release of the 2024-2025 FAFSA is a relief for students, but many still face uncertainty about their financial aid status. The setback was partially due in accordance with the FAFSA Simplification Act which was adopted for the 2024-2025 award year and aimed to make applying for financial aid more accessible. However, crucial adjustments to account for years of record-high inflation were neglected, causing a \$1.8 billion loss in student aid. This prompted the department to rectify the issue but at the expense of further delays. Once FAFSA submissions are processed, applicants become eligible for various types of tuition assistance including the Pell Grant, state grants,

and scholarships based on fiscal challenges, merit, and institutional funding. Still, the slowed processing of student applications leaves many families in limbo about how much aid they are eligible to receive. "Any delays in financial aid processing will impact students that need aid the most," wrote Senate Democrats in a letter to the Secretary of Education, Miguel Cardona. "For institutions to support students' ability to make informed decisions about their future, they need clear guidance and resources from the Department immediately on any and all next steps." Currently, there are 14 unresolved issues on the FAFSA website, with five lacking



Illustration by Milan Rafaelov, Editor-in-Chief

block students with parents lacking Social Security numbers from applying, and creates issues that are unprecedented in its 44-year history. While Valley's Financial Aid Department declined to provide insights on navigating this year's FAFSA process, numerous experts advise completing the forms quickly for the best possible result. Applicants can also print and mail submissions despite technical obstacles. Since December, nearly four million FAFSA applications have been successfully submitted. However, concerns persist

that the chaos surrounding this year's application process may discourage students from seeking financial help. Federal data analyzed by the National College Attainment Network reveals an 18 percent decrease in application rates among high school seniors compared to last year. "The first time, I got lucky; I got a grant for like \$4,000 extra for taking over 14 units," said Will Flores, a first-year Valley College business major. "It allowed me to not work for maybe two months and chill... When I was working it was hard to keep up with stuff." Students can submit their FAFSA applications until June 30, 2025, with federal deadlines extending until Sept. 14, 2025, for corrections or updates. For state financial aid programs, applications and school-certified GPA must be submitted by April 2, 2024. For community college Cal Grants, applicants must submit their forms by Sept. 2, 2024.

## Community Casts Votes at Valley

The campus serves as one of the busiest voting centers.

Star Eisenberg, Editor-in-Chief

Valley College has launched an 11-day voting center for the 2024 presidential primary, extending access for students and community members to engage in the democratic process. "We are thrilled to host the Voting Center at Valley College," said Valley President Barry Gribbons. "Voting is central to our democracy and it is not possible to overstate the importance of supporting the voting process. We are also thrilled by the impact of having the Voting Center at Valley, with it being one of the busiest voting centers in the county."

College student voter turnout has been on the rise, with a national voting rate of 66 percent according to researchers at Tufts University in 2020. Colleges are implementing various strategies, such as on-campus voter registration drives and partnerships with student-focused organizations, to further boost student participation in upcoming elections. All active registered voters in California will receive a vote-by-mail ballot for the March 5, presidential primary election, with county elections offices having initiated mailing on Feb. 7. The registration deadline was Feb. 20, however, California residents who failed to meet that deadline can still register up until election day by going into a county elections office or polling place. Los Angeles County voters now have the option to use Poll Pass, also known as the Interactive Sample Ballot. This digital tool allows voters to make their selections in advance, generate a QR code for scanning at the polls, and review their choices on a ballot marking device. "With the Poll Pass, I've seen somebody get out of there in a minute and a half," said Chelsea Pickens, election poll clerk. "If you want to vote in person, but are also not sure how long it's going to take, you basically have a

fast pass to put through there, and that gets it done."

For those preferring to drop off their ballots, a mail-in-vote drop box will be available at Valley's Parking Lot G on Burbank Boulevard throughout the voting period. Valley's voting center is located in the cafeteria, and will be open for early voting from February 24 to March 4, between 10 am and 7 pm, and on Election Day, March 5, from 7 am to 8 pm. Recent polls indicate a potential rematch between the 2020 contenders, Joe Biden and Donald Trump. Over 60 national elections are scheduled this year, including the United States presidential election on November 5. The ongoing primary elections have yet to determine the official Republican and Democratic candidates. Jobs, tax reform, and infrastructure investment are key concerns for U.S. voters. Rising living costs have left many Americans struggling, leading to debates over taxes and government spending. Republicans favor cuts to programs like social security, while Democrats lean toward taxing the wealthy to address deficits. "It's called the presidential primary, but that's just because elections are named after the top race on the ballot," said Amy Mendelsohn, election poll worker. "Every presidential primary has state, city, and county elections. There are many, many elections on this 'presidential primary.'" Registered voters seeking information on voting locations and procedures can visit the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk official website, lavote.gov.



Residents cast their votes at Valley College. (Taylor Cowhey/ The Valley Star)



Volunteers wait for a stream of L.A. voters who may have questions about the process. (Milan/ Rafaelov, The Valley Star)



VALLEY LIFE

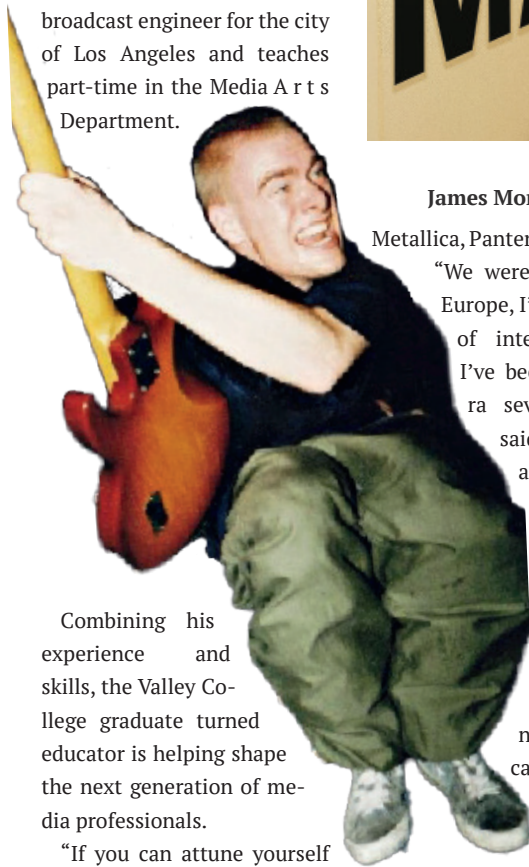
Morris Plays a New Tune

This instructor’s well-rounded career gives his students real-world experiences.

Star Eisenberg,  
Editor-in-Chief

As students shuffle into the classroom and prepare for the day’s lecture, they are easily drawn to the passion of Professor James Morris who looks like he belongs on center stage.

The 49-year-old professor, who has had a colorful career ranging from the rock scene to teaching at Valley College to television production at KABC news, holds a full-time job as a broadcast engineer for the city of Los Angeles and teaches part-time in the Media Arts Department.



Combining his experience and skills, the Valley College graduate turned educator is helping shape the next generation of media professionals.

“If you can attune yourself to being open to opportunities because you are looking to actively participate in something that’s going to help you grow, then Valley College is dripping with opportunity,” said Morris, who is teaching digital and social media broadcasting online this spring.

In the early 90s, Morris jumped at the chance to play bass for his favorite band, Downset, during his high school years.

“I was a skateboard kid, and punk rock was an easy thing for me to fit into,” said Morris.

Downset signed with Mercury Records and toured extensively, performing at Ozzfest ‘97 and sharing stages with renowned bands such as



Astrid Cortez | The Valley Star

James Morris poses in the Business/Journalism building for his profile on Jan. 30.

Metallica, Pantera, and Slayer.

“We were on MTV in Europe, I’ve done a lot of interviews, and I’ve been on camera several times,” said Morris. “I always ended up taking a look at what the technicians were doing.”

Following nearly a decade on the road, Morris redirected his creative spark and growing thirst for knowledge after the band dissolved in the early 2000s.

Drawn to media arts as a natural extension of his music career, Morris enrolled in television production classes at Valley.

“I remember succinctly the first time I drove my car up to the parking lot at Valley College to register for classes,” Morris said. “It was a sunny day. I remember smelling the pine trees and seeing this campus laid out before me. The noise of students walking and talking, the gardener with the lawnmower, the noise of people, and the noise of school

and scholastic life - I breathed it in - and I just knew I wanted to be a part of all this energy.”

Valley provided the platform to hone his skills. This prepared him to land a job at KABC-TV, an opportunity that would mark the beginning of a new career.

“Broadcasting is what’s going on today, and the art of broadcasting is always evolving,” Morris said. “It’s always fresh. It’s always new, and I love it.”

Morris managed to amass over a decade of professional experience while balancing his education at Valley and work at KABC. Encouraged by many of his professors who recognized his talents, he began his

teaching career in 2017.

“Professor James Morris is one of our top adjunct professors in the department,” said Jason Beaton, professor of broadcasting. “It’s a pleasure to work with him as a colleague and consistently get his advice for our television side of broadcasting.”

Morris has instructed a variety of broadcasting classes since joining the Valley faculty, including radio and television advertising, television announcing and single-camera production.

“Take a moment, look around, and realize that Valley College is full of opportunities,” Morris said.



Photo courtesy of James Morris

James Morris stands by the ABC 7 new van, camera in hand ready for action.

Boutique Opens for Students

Center’s clothing exchange program helps student experiencing basic insecurities.

Maia Richaud , Valley life  
Editor

A free clothing exchange program headed by Pride Plus counselor Natalie Guerrero originally opened its doors for LGBTQ+ students but has since welcomed anyone enrolled at Valley.

“Some of our students don’t have easy access to laundry, so we want to make sure they have something clean and ready to wear,” said the counselor. “I have seen many students that just may be very cold outside, they throw on a jacket (from the boutique) and that’s what they wear for the day.”

Guerrero and Valley alumni Jamie Roisman had the idea and took steps in launching the project in spring of 2023. Students can find the Boutique in the Unity Center during its hours of operation. It provides free and freshly washed clothing, accessories, and hygiene products that students can donate or take when they are in need.

The boutique will also be present as a pop-up in collaboration with the basic needs center during the weekly food distribution on Thursdays. A

limit of three items per week is set, but if more items are needed, students can make an appointment with Natalie Guerrero.

“We also have some more miscellaneous items,” said Siobhán Quille, student worker for the Rainbow Pride Center. “We’ve got aprons, we had

a printer for a bit, we got a donation of condoms and other safe sex items and pamphlets from a SCD Screening Organization named Tarzana Treatment Centers.”

An average of two students per week are using the Rainbow Boutique. Their supply availability changes, so stu-

dents don’t always get the same thing.

“For any student that is experiencing any basic needs insecurity, we have services here at the Unity Center,” said Natalie Guerrero. “We work together to make sure that our students are supported while attending Valley College.”



Janessa Scoggins | The Valley Star

English major Siobhán Quille standing inside the Boutique located at Los Angeles Valley College in the Unity Center. Siobhán is showing off their green hoodie that they got from the boutique on Thursday February 15.

Eyes On A24

A24’s unique style catches viewer attention.

Kaia Mann, Opinion Editor

With the stars and franchises of Hollywood no longer having the same box-office pull they once did, A24 has found a way to attract moviegoers.

The film distribution and production company, A24 was founded in 2012 by Daniel Katz, David Fenkel, and John Hodges. After leaving their jobs at different indie film companies, the trio ushered in a new era for film.

A24 distributed movies like Spring Breakers, and the Bling Ring, featuring acclaimed directors and actors very early into the scene. In 2015 the company achieved critical success with the film, Ex Machina, which won an Oscar for visual effects. Since then, A24 has racked up countless nominations and wins. Everything Everywhere All At Once and Moonlight notably taking home best picture.

The A24 symbol is enough to start the conversation. When audiences know a movie is coming from a worthy distributor, interests are peaked from the first glance at that logo.

These movies explore queer identity, complex familial relationships, and life’s varying perspectives. A common characterization of an A24 film is that it is ambitious and creative, yet still grounded and personal.

With films like Lady Bird, Uncut Gems, Midsommar, X, and the Florida Project, the A24 oeuvre is vast. You can guarantee these movies are going to harness a unique voice and creative filmmaking.

A24 has seen success by giving a platform to new filmmakers. Danny and Michael Philippou, were youtubers that made their directorial debut with the movie Talk To Me,

earning over \$90 million in the box office.

This amount, well unique for a movie that size, is not unique for A24. Everything Everywhere All At Once made \$111 million in the worldwide box office, and many others have made well over \$50 million.

Telling intimate yet ambitious stories A24 came up in a landscape dominated by big budget comic book/blockbuster movies. Audiences are moving away from franchises, and looking for more independent films. Actors are still valued, yet there is a greater emphasis on the marketing and production behind the scenes.

Moviegoers might not buy a \$20 ticket to The Iron Claw because Zac Efron is in it. They would, however, buy a ticket because they feel it is a worthy investment, given the reputation of the company behind it.

A24 has curated a specific voice, acting as a guiding hand for consumers. Audiences expect quality from an A24 movie, more so than other distributors.

Although leading the pack, A24 is not the only company with eyes on it. NEON, Blumhouse, and Focus Features are just a few garnering both critical and audience acclaim, choosing movies that fit their trends.

Film corporations are committed to their brand. Audiences are able to watch a completely new story, yet know what to expect.

It’s time to start paying attention to the companies behind movies. They are the most telling of where a film is destined to go, and of where audiences will follow.



Love Lies Bleeding (2024)

(L-R) Katy O’Brian, Kristen Stewart Credit: Anna Kooris



Priscilla (2023)

(L-R) Jacob Elordi, Cailee Spaeny Credit: Sabrina Lantos



Everything Everywhere All at Once (2022)

(L-R) Stephanie Hsu, Michelle Yeoh, Ke Huy Quan Photo Credit: Allyson Riggs



OPINION

Valley Blindsides Students with New Parking Regulations

Students required to purchase parking permits for the first time since the pandemic.

Kaia Mann,  
Opinion Editor

Valley College started requiring parking permits for the first time in more than three years, attempting to make up for lost funds on the backs of their students.

No longer receiving government money from COVID-19, LACCD is instituting parking permits in the 2024 spring semester. For \$20, students can purchase a semester-long permit at the business office or acquire a one- day pass at ticket kiosks.

It seems as though requiring parking permits is something new in the spring semester across all schools. East Los Angeles, Mission, and Pierce specifically informed their students of this new policy on their websites, something Valley fails to do.

Perhaps students should be grateful, as Glendale College charges students up to \$75 for permits. Most other schools

have set prices from \$20-30, depending if students choose to park in a preferred lot.

Although Valley could be charging more, why is it up to students to remedy the college's financial issues? Given tuition and textbook prices, the average cost to attend is already about \$1,000. Faced with a rent increases and record high inflation rates, many students still struggle financially. Required parking permits after years of free parking is disappointing.

Valley did a poor job informing students about the sudden change. Just two days before the start of spring semester, the first and only email was sent out about parking. As the semester rolls out, the first time many students will hear about this new permit system

will be by receiving a \$35 ticket on their windshields. Is this an attempt for Valley to boost its revenue?

"I think if you don't send



out an email and make people aware, then it is problematic because, what if people park here and they end up getting

tickets?" said Nicholas Rivera, a first year biology major. "I can pay the \$20 (semester fee) but I'm not trying to pay no ticket. I guess that's where it becomes problematic - in not letting people know or not giving a semester (heads up) in advance."

If it is true that the lack of federal aid after the pandemic is the reason for this new requirement, Valley should have seen it coming. The money was situational, it was never going to last forever. This new policy would be more widely accepted if students were made aware of the coming change and were given more time to prepare.

One thing Valley did do right was providing an alternative solution. Students are offered a free Metro GoPass that grants access to ride the metro/rail line anyti-

me, anywhere for the entire year. However, the Metro, while cost effective and green, is not a perfect substitute for driving.

Los Angeles is a commuting city. It is simply not realistic to expect students to rely solely on public transportation to get to and from class. Not to mention the large percent of students taking night classes that may not want to ride the bus after dark.

The argument that requiring parking permits will ease full lots on campus, is misguided. The permits do not cost much. This new regulation will most likely just inconvenience Valley students. The real issue lies in the principle.

Valley College should not blindside students with the return of parking permits to make up for the money they stopped receiving from the government. Since the money was temporary, students should not now have to pick up the tab.



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GOT A LETTER TO THE EDITOR?

Letters to the editor can be submitted online at [www.valleystarnews.com](http://www.valleystarnews.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.

AFT 1521 Introduces 10-Point Platform for Social Justice

L.A. College Faculty Guild addresses systemic inequities and works to promote inclusivity.

Star Eisenberg,  
Editor-in-chief

The Los Angeles College Faculty Guild executive board passed a motion aimed at advancing racial equity and social justice within the Los Angeles Community College District. The Valley Star stands behind the union's 10-point platform.

The AFT Local 1521 will present this plan to the chancellor and the Board of Trustees of the Los Angeles Community College District for consideration.

According to a statement by the Los Angeles College Faculty Guild, "The success of our students is directly tied to the success and efforts of our faculty, campus staff, and administration. This motion supports those efforts."

One of the primary demands is the establishment of food banks at every LACCD campus to address food insecurity among students. Additionally, the platform advocates for the introduction of weekly farmers' markets accepting snap/EBT payments. It also calls for an end to budgetary constraints that hinder student success and equity initiatives, proposing specific funding allocations for foundation directors, and grant writers, at each campus.

Furthermore, the platform emphasizes the institutionalization and funding of programs like Umoja and Puente

across all campuses, with a minimum annual funding of \$400,000 per campus to promote racial equity programs. An emergency response fund of \$1.8 million (\$200,000 per

**"We demand actions with measurable outcomes. Statements, symbolic gestures, and lofty rhetoric will no longer be accepted."**

-  
L.A. Faculty Guild

campus) is proposed to address financial hardships faced by students and part-time employees. The platform also calls for equal funding for student tutors across all campuses to enhance academic support services.

In addition to these initiatives, the platform includes advocacy for parity between instructional and non-instructional faculty, triple funding for gateway housing programs to address student homelessness, pursuit of racial parity in faculty recruitment to reflect campus and community demographics, and implementation of comprehensive health and mental health services five days a week on all campuses.

The proportion of LACCD

students experiencing housing insecurity and homelessness is higher than average. 55 percent of the district's students experience housing insecurity, 18.6 percent of the district's students have experienced homelessness, and 82 percent of higher education professionals in California said housing is the biggest unmet need of their students that the campus is currently unable to provide, according to a report by Southern California Association of Non-profit Housing.

The Faculty Guild added, "We demand actions with measurable outcomes. Statements, symbolic gestures, and lofty rhetoric will no longer be accepted."

The AFT Local 1521 serves as the exclusive bargaining agent for over 4,000 full-time and adjunct faculty members across the nine community colleges within the district. With over 40 years of advocacy and representation, the guild continues to lead the charge for progress in California's community colleges. Standing behind the union's initiatives reaffirms a dedication to advancing equity, opportunity, and student success.

The path forward is clear, and it starts with embracing the principles outlined in this transformative plan.



Janessa Scoggins | The Valley Star

(L-R) Juliana Stein, Angel Chiawa, Candice Price are showcasing their half-completed canvases at the Umoja Rhythm and Paint event at LACV. Photo Taken on Thursday Feb. 15



Astrid Cortez | The Valley Star

Individuals attend the Sherman Oaks farmers market which is open every Tuesday from 2-6pm. Photo taken on February 27.

VALLEY VIEW | What are your thoughts on Valley charging students after three years of free parking?

Text by Maia Richaud

Photos by Ivonne Elias



"A lot of people here relied on the free parking, but it's not like they're charging an exorbitant amount, so it's still doable. But for people who have no other option but to drive, that's limiting them, I can understand that it's hard."

-Naomi Abergel, Psychology Major



"I'm against it. I haven't been here too long, but to me, it was strange, to be honest."

-Jenfer Pivaral, Nursing Major



"My thoughts are probably that it is tyranny. It doesn't make sense."

-Carlos Ramirez, Registered Nurse



"I don't know why we have to pay for parking. I don't know why that's a concept anywhere in the world."

-Andrew Pirouti, Business Administration Major



SPORTS

The Lady Monarchs end their season at Pasadena

Valley fails to hold onto lead and loses in the first round of SoCal regional play.



Ivonne Elias | Valley Star

Freshman Samantha Maldonado is fighting for the ball from the Lancers during the playoffs game on Wed. 28, 2024 at Pasadena City College.



Ivonne Elias | Valley Star

Freshman Madison Guerrero deflects shot against the Lancers during the playoffs game on Wed. 28.

Jabes Pascual,  
Staff Writer

Pasadena City College used a strong fourth quarter to defeat Valley College 67-61 Wednesday in the first round of SoCal Regional playoffs. Lancer guard Vanessa Epperson converted on a four-point play in the fourth quarter after she was fouled on a successful three-point shot. The basket and the free throw gave the home team a 61-57 lead for the first time since the opening quarter, and they never looked back. The Lady Monarchs (7-7 conference record) utilized fastbreaks and quick ball movement to set the pace of the game, leading the Lancers early in the first quarter 18-12. Valley's freshman Samantha Maldonado led the team in scoring with 21 points and 14 rebounds. Valley kept the pressure on as freshman Mary Corbett scored 8 out of her 16 points in the second quarter and was 4 for 10 from beyond the arc. Pasadena (6-2 conference record) came close to tying the game before the end of the half but was charged with a technical foul when Epperson launched the ball out of play. Monarch Laila Salazar made one of two free throws, increasing the lead to 34-33 before the end of the half. Valley maintained its intensity in the second half, outscoring Pasadena 15-10 points in the third quarter. Valley's Madison Guerrero was crucial on both ends of the court. The freshman drove to the paint and made consecutive layups in the third to increase the lead to 42-37 with 5:08 remaining in the period. "I'm very thankful for Coach

Hang and her coaching staff," Guerrero said after the game. "I don't think I've known so much basketball since I got here, and honestly, I've gotten better, I really owe it all to her." Pasadena changed the momentum in the fourth quarter as Lancer forward Antuanee Garrett, who collected 20 points in the game, scored on a layup to trim Valley's lead to two, 51-49. However, Valley's Samantha Maldonado helped the Lady Monarchs increase its lead to 55-51 with 7:15 remaining in the fourth with back-to-back layups. The freshman led the team in scoring with 21 points and 14 rebounds. Less than three minutes later, Lancers scored 6 points and knotted the score at 57 with 4:45 left in the game. Valley went on to score four more points, but it was not enough. Pasadena outscored Valley 24-14, ending the Lady Monarchs' playoff run. Corbett said, "We had a great season," Corbett said. "It's a sad loss, but I'm happy with our team and how we turned out." She added, "We needed to keep calm and collected to get those offensive rebounds and put them back up strong, but in the end, we got flustered." Some players said after the game that they will build on this loss. "You lose some and win some, and this is where we start learning and building for next year," said Guerrero after the game. "Luckily, our starting five and most of our team are freshmen, so we'll all be here next year, and we'll be better."

Monarchs softball picks up its first win

Valley College's bats come alive against visiting Santa Monica.

Max Ibrahim,  
Staff Writer

The Valley College Softball team crushed Santa Monica College Tuesday, collecting its first win of the season 17-3. The Monarchs hosted the game Tuesday and used a mercy rule to take down the Corsairs. Valley's fourth-inning domination is what solidified the team's win. The Monarchs collected nine hits and scored 11 runs. "We all were hitting this game," said utility player Briana Gaskill, who pitched 1.1 innings before moving to shore. "Usually we struggle at hitting, or we don't make contact. But today we did really well." Gaskill gave up one run in the first but the Monarchs responded in the bottom half of the inning, scoring three runs, taking a 2-run lead into the second frame. In the top of the second, Santa Monica's catcher Lailoni Evereteze singled to second base and collected two RBI. Pitcher Angelica Altamirano took the mound for Gaskill, limiting the Corsairs to two runs in the second. Although the Corsairs tied the game, they would not score another



Astrid Cortez | Valley Star

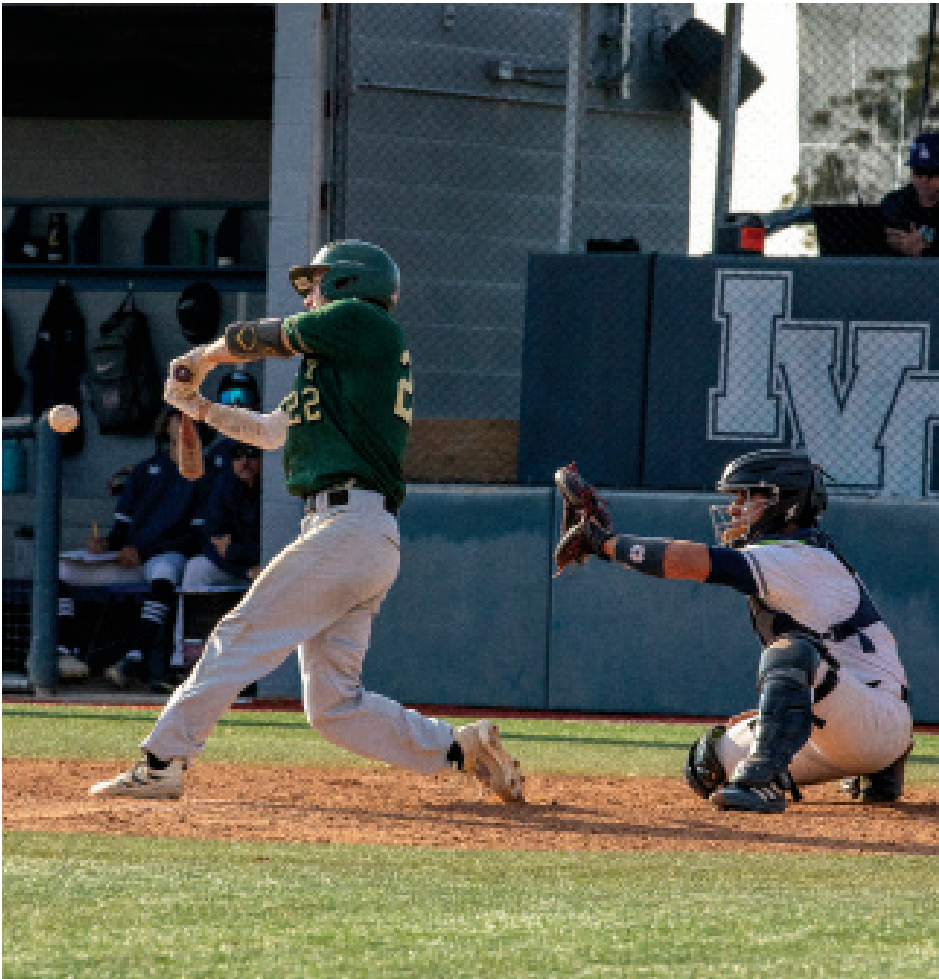
Natalie Amescua waits for an offering from a Santa Monica pitcher during a softball game on Feb. 27. Amescua was one of several players to collect a hit during an 11-run fourth inning to help the Monarchs defeat the Corsairs 17-3

run off Altamirano. For the contest, the freshman allowed one hit and struck out two. "We really came back this game," Altamirano said. "We are going to be putting in a lot more work. We want to really show them what we can do. We have a lot of talent. We just need to show it more." Catcher Danielle Hebri, who collected two hits and drove in two runs, teamed up with first baseman Marleny Cervantes to record the last out of the game. Valley travels to Santa Monica for a make-up game on March 5. First pitch starts at 2:30 p.m. "Now they got a piece of what it's like to hit the ball finally," said head coach Andrea Contreras. "So we've got to take off from here."



Astrid Cortez | Valley Star

Natalie Amescua hits the ball into center field. The Monarchs merried the Corsairs, leading more than eight runs at the end of five innings.



Taylor Cowhey | Valley Star

Vic Pico bats against Irvine Valley where the Monarchs swept the two-game series. Pico is one of the batting leaders, averaging .394 on the season.

Baseball starts conference play

Valley Baseball has momentum approaching first conference game.

Alex Diaz,  
Sports Editor

The Valley College baseball team is riding a three-game winning streak and looks to have momentum approaching their first Western State Conference game against Glendale College. The Monarchs will travel to Casey Stengel Field with first pitch at 2 p.m. "The pre-season has fully prepared them to give their best in their opening game against Glendale," said Coach Dave Mallas after a recent practice. The Monarchs faced Irvine Valley College in a two-game series and won Tuesday's

contest 5-1, and then went 11 innings to defeat the Lakers 4-3. With one out in the bottom of the 11th, Co-

**"With Conference coming, we have great team chemistry. It's gonna be a great year."**

-  
Vic Pico

Ilin Taylor singled to center field driving in Lucas Gabay for the game's winning run. On Friday, Valley defeated Orange Coast College 15-

13 at Valley's baseball field. The Monarchs are averaging eight runs a game and carry a .290 batting average. Oskar Stark leads the team with a batting .500 average and Vic Pico is averaging .394. "With Conference coming, we have great team chemistry" said Vic Pico, who is a utility player for Monarchs. "It gonna be a great year."

