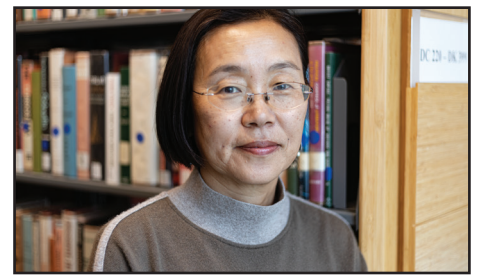




SPORTS: BREAKING RECORDS
LILIANA NORIEGA CROWNED FASTEST FREESWIMMER IN MONARCH HISTORY.



VALLEY LIFE: CHECK IT OUT
LIBRARIAN OF OVER TWO DECADES TURNS THE PAGE FOR COLLEGE PREPARATION.

Man detained after harassing students

Deputy removed man from campus who yelled vulgarities at ASU members.



JEREMY RUIZ | VALLEY STAR

CATCH-AND-RELEASE- Valley College Sheriff's Deputy Rodriguez detains a man who sexually harassed members of the ASU as they sat outside eating lunch near the Monarch Student Store. The ASU members said that the man emerged out of a nearby bathroom and had acted strangely around the group before escalating to harassment, which prompted one of the student leaders, Sarai Ortiz, to contact the Sheriff's station. A deputy arrived within roughly three minutes of the phone call.

NATALIE METCALF
VALLEY LIFE EDITOR

A man verbally abused five members of the ASU's executive council committee on Tuesday, causing the board to postpone their second meeting. The perpetrator was detained within three minutes of the incident.

"That's not something you play around with, once he said those specific words I was like, 'no that's not right,'" said Ortiz, after the incident. "I immediately called the sheriffs through the LAVC Safe App. I need to take action now, that's not something you play around with — this is very serious for me." After their first meeting —

the finance committee — ended early, the five members decided to buy lunch at the campus bookstore. In the Student Union plaza, the man was holding a laptop, albeit the screen was not visible, pointing at the student union board and laughing. The man went to the restroom, came back to the group and yelled sexually explicit comments.

"I distributed his information to my coworkers. We don't want him back on campus."

- Deputy Rodriguez

The perpetrator left to use the restroom twice during the encounter. While sitting down at the cafeteria tables, the suspect unwisely tagged along in their innocent laughter and continued to make vulgar comments.

During the suspect's second bathroom break, Ortiz called the sheriffs through the safe app. The commissioner kept an eye on him and later stated she was thankful to be in a group with her fellow peers. Shortly after the call, the sheriffs detained the man.

After the sexual verbal abuse, more than half of the executive board gave a full report to Sheriff Rodriguez.

"I distributed his information to my coworkers,"

said Rodriguez. "We don't want him back on campus."

After the man was detained, the sheriff drove him to the Metro bus station on Burbank and Fulton. Rodriguez told the harasser he was not allowed back on Valley's campus. The perpetrator was also in possession of marijuana, but was detained for "disturbing the peace." The official police report is yet to be made.

During the meeting, the incident was not discussed. Instead, the board carried on the best they could in order to pass motions related to upcoming student events.

Members of the board present in the incident were Commissioner of Fine Arts Mia Sanchez, Commissioner of Eth-

nic and Cultural Affairs Erick Portillo, ASU President Ani Ramazyan, Commissioner of Publicity, Social Media Sarai Ortiz and a member of the board who would like to remain anonymous.

The board allocated \$1,199.96 to a Denim Day event. The workshop will take place on April 26 and was created by Astghik Margaryan from the Ignite Club and Women's Empowerment Club. Denim Day was founded in 1999 and spreads sexual assault awareness.

The Valley Safe App can be used to contact the Sheriff's Department in case of an emergency. If the app is unavailable, Monarchs can reach the deputies at (818) 947-2911.

Enrollment on the road to recovery

GRIFFIN O'ROURKE
PHOTO EDITOR

Enrollment is up 15 percent at Valley College for spring 2023 with a headcount of 14,244, but the numbers are still shy of 2017's peak.

Trends show Valley recovering from low enrollment brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, though numbers started to decline shortly before 2020. A report shows enrollment for spring 2022 at 26,433, down from 2,806 enrollments from 2021. The positive trend is not exclusive to Valley — numbers are on the rise districtwide. The district recorded 221,686 enrollments for this semester, which is down 26 percent from 2017's spring semester, which saw 297,632 enrollments.

"The majority of our classes — over 50 percent — are online or hybrid," said district board of trustees Chancellor Francisco Rodriguez in the yesterday's board meeting. "That is a pretty staggering number ... and something we are going to continue to monitor. We are trying to follow and seek a balance between what students want and what we can provide for them in person. Students do better when they are in person."

Students are predominately choosing remote learning, with only 42 percent of students enrolling in face-to-face classes.

"We want to make sure that we offer classes in the modality that students want them," said Valley president Barry Gribbons. "There's more and more activity back on campus — ASU leaders are doing a terrific job getting more events back. It might be gradual over the next year or two, but we are seeing additional in person activity."

Hold-harmless agreements, a safety net that provided state funding to community colleges throughout the pandemic, were based on older and higher enrollment numbers. The policy is set to expire in 2025, but Gov. Gavin Newsom proposed a new funding net for colleges. Starting at the college's previous hold-harmless level in 2025, funding would be received based on the Student Centered Funding Formula. The formula funds colleges based on the enrollment and success of its students. Colleges receive money based on three stipulations: enrollment, number of students receiving grants and student success outcomes like earning degrees and transferring to four-year institutions.

- With contributions by Isaac Dektor

District inches forward on student housing

LACCD board members discussed the plan to assist housing insecure students.



SAVANNAH GREENLY | VALLEY STAR

HOUSING- A proposed site for student housing that is still being evaluated at Santa Monica College's Bundy Campus. State lawmakers have earmarked billions of dollars that will be allocated over the next few years to build or expand dorms, which will provide affordable housing for community college students.

CASSANDRA NAVA
MANAGING EDITOR

More than half of LACCD students reported a need for affordable housing in a new survey conducted by the district.

The survey, which asked 58,197 students, was conducted in order to assess the need for student housing. The district has made housing a priority in accordance with last November's Measure LA, a \$5.3 billion LACCD bond measure and SB 169, a \$500 million bill that establishes a Higher Education Student Housing Grant Program. The bill, which became law in 2021, allows California community colleges to submit requests for housing projects. Measure LA allocated funds for infrastructure, sustainability, athletic facilities and fields and technology. Student housing had no monetary amount attached to the bond.

LACCD trustees discussed findings from the survey, and expressed their excitement with the plans to change the landscape of community colleges.

"This work is deeply personal to me, and like a lot of other people in this room I have students whose educational trajectory has been affected by homelessness and housing insecurity," said trustee Sara Hernandez, who is also a professor at Valley. "We are so big and have this amazing

opportunity — if we do it right."

"This would give us less of a worry of having to miss class, and we could really focus on our education."

- Matthew Myers,
Valley football player

While the prospect of the student aid was well-received, the trustees expressed concerns with the sustainability of the project. Unsteady enrollment patterns, accepting part or full-time students and the prospect of the housing being mixed-use developments were questions asked to Ruben Smith, the LACCD's chief facilities executive who relayed the data and plans to the board.

"The district, at this point, is exploring all options," said Valley President Barry Gribbons. "We've had some discussion about the different opportunities and the campus community. They indicated a preference for providing off campus student housing run by a public private partnership."

District wide student housing has a proposed rent of anywhere between \$400-\$500 per month, as they found that the average

student surveyed could afford a rent price of \$367. According to apartment listing website, Apartments, the average monthly payment for a studio in Los Angeles is \$1,432, a one-bedroom averages to \$2,225 and prices continue to range upwards depending on size, room number and location.

"A lot of my teammates are three to four in an apartment, just trying to get by," said Valley football player Matthew Myers. "This would give us less of a worry of having to miss class, and we can really focus on our education without having to say, 'Oh I need to pay rent, I need to buy this, what am I going to eat today.'"

The California Community College system conducted a statewide survey across 57 colleges and almost 40,000 students in 2019. The findings revealed that 19 percent of students experienced homelessness in the previous year, while 60 percent were housing insecure.

While the LACCD conducted initial research, housing is still in early stages. The district is pinning down their objectives for the project. Key factors yet to be determined are whether the developments will be on or off campus and if they will include additional resources such as childcare, a food distribution pantry and more.

These features and more can be found in full @ www.thevalleystarnews.com

IMPORTANT INFO

April 18

ASU candidates will vie for votes in a virtual forum from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. ahead of the upcoming student government election.

National Trans HIV Awareness Day takes place at the Mosaic Village: Unity Center from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Monarchs find serenity over the rainbow

Valley College's art gallery hosted Color Connection: A Creative Mindfulness Workshop, where students could destress.

MILAN RAFAELOV
STAFF WRITER

Jennifer Montenegro leads a creative workshop that provided a therapeutic watercolor painting experience at Valley College's art gallery yesterday, leaving its attendees in a serene state.

The tables were situated so that everyone was facing each other and each table provided a watercolor palette, brush, and paper. Montenegro, an art professor with a background in therapeutic studies, guides attendees, teaching how to activate the watercolors properly and explains different brush stroke techniques.

"Imagine seeing the color blue, perhaps the sky, notice the calming effect of the color blue, your psyche and well-being," said Montenegro, at the beginning of the workshop. "Visualize violet, this is the color of imagination."

Starting off the event with a guided meditation, Jennifer Montenegro tells the 11 audience members to close their eyes and visualize different



VIOLETT DE JEAN | VALLEY STAR

ART- Valley students and faculty relax and destress during an art workshop held in the campus art gallery on Wednesday. Participants included (L-R) Alex Ojeda, Francis Hurwit, Droobie Pooh Haynes, Jennifer Montenegro and Shereen Saiyed.

colors while Over the Rainbow by Israel Kamakawiwoole plays in the background.

"It's about the process today, not the product," she says,

reminding the audience to take their time and allow the creative process to flow without judgment.

The professor's calm nature was easy to follow and the direc-

tions were simple, make a rainbow using the tools provided. Everyone began activating the first color and Montenegro led by holding her paper up for

everyone to see and follow. The next 45 minutes seemed quiet and tranquil with each person deeply focused on their work.

Stress is unlikely to disappear any time soon and while some students may turn to questionable coping mechanisms, art has served as a therapeutic strategy for adaptation to stress throughout history.

Guests had a feel for the rhythm used in each brush stroke and in how the texture

of the paint works itself onto the page. Monarchs were ready to start a new page, freely painting anything their hearts desired. The workshop went 15 minutes overtime, but only because people wanted to stay and finish their masterpieces.

Those leaving the event looked relaxed and peacefully satisfied thanks to Jenene Nagy and Jennifer Montenegro for putting on an easygoing and creative event.

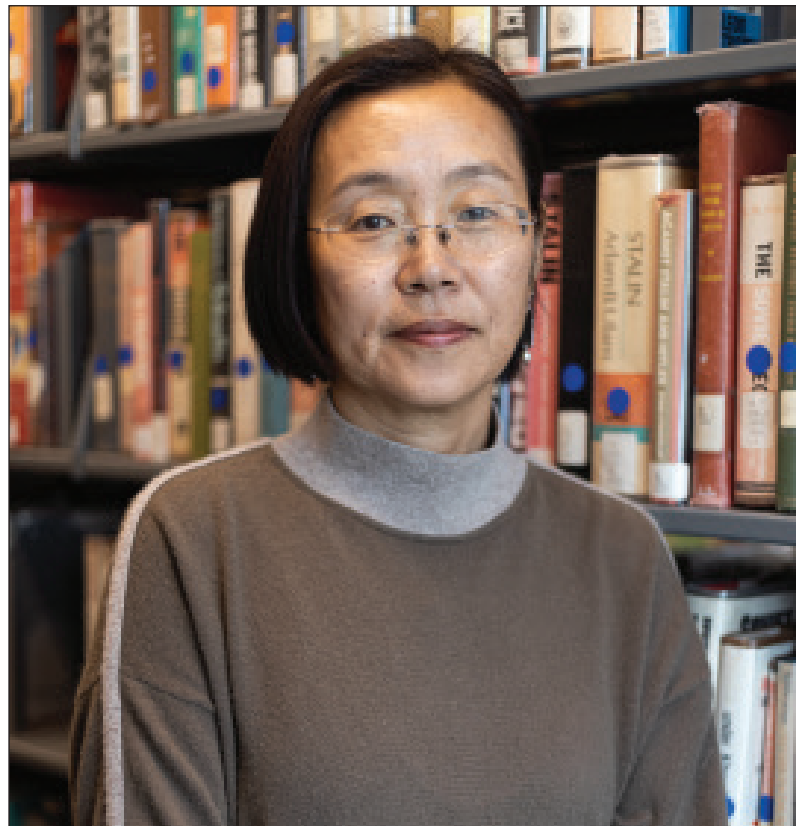


VIOLETT DE JEAN | VALLEY STAR

RAINBOW- Droobie Pooh Haynes, a kinesiology major painted a rainbow at Color Connection Wednesday, a workshop that was hosted by gallery director Jenene Nagy.

Librarian quietly makes her mark at Valley College

Xiaoyang Liu-Behlendorf demonstrates dedication to academic success for the student body.



JEREMY RUIZ | VALLEY STAR

LIBRARIAN- Xiaoyang Liu-Behlendorf is a librarian at the Valley College Library. She also takes on the role of the curator of the LAVC Historical Museum.

KATHERINE OBRIEN FIELD
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Standing roughly at 5'3', bespectacled librarian Xiaoyang Liu-Behlendorf is not an imposing figure, but she has had a big impact on Valley College.

Liu-Behlendorf practices her belief that the greatest moral good is to be of service. The direct beneficiaries of this ethos are the students, faculty, staff, and visitors at Valley. Whether speaking about the library's increased architectural stature and technological progress, the curriculum, or her committee assignments, Liu-Behlendorf makes every day count.

"I never thought in my wildest dreams that I would become a librarian," said the Harbin China native. "My life is driven by service, whether it be serving as a mother for my family, or as a daughter helping my father. As a librarian, I am serving the students, the campus, the community, and beyond."

Liu-Behlendorf obtained an undergraduate and Masters Degree at Beijing University. It was there that she met her husband who was a visiting exchange student. She began working in the library at Tulane University, began her courses in library science, and then worked at USC and Woodbury University.

She heard about Valley because everyone in her family learned to drive in the campus' parking lot. Valley happened to be looking for a full-time librarian, she applied and got the job.

When Liu-Behlendorf started in 2001, the new library had not been built; that took place in 2012.

"Everything is of high quality, with plenty of room and people are happy there," said Valley's librarian. "Before there were no computers. Now we have about forty computers, computer classrooms, other classes, and wi-fi throughout the library."

In the 2022-23 school year, the district decided to buy databases for all the colleges so that students, no mat-

ter where they are registered, can have the same access to all the databases, to information.

The Valley resident is proud of such progress, but her dedication to service goes beyond her duties as a librarian. She

"It made me more grateful for having my life, and the effort to make life better for others is so worthwhile."
- Xiaoyang Liu-Behlendorf, Valley College librarian

has been instrumental in introducing high school students to the workings of Valley, in a new course called College 101.

Additionally, Liu-Behlendorf helped create content for the course. This new course is hosted at two local high schools and is designed to provide stu-

dents with the skills needed to succeed in college. An initiative called Guided Pathway was already in place which provided the funding for College 101.

Finally, Liu-Behlendorf also shows a willingness to improve the lives of others through her volunteer college committee work.

"In 2019, the lighting was changed to LED and it made the library atmosphere very bright and harsh," said the College 101 creator. "The conditions felt more like a hospital and people complained it was hard to read."

She solved this problem by becoming chair of the very committee that dealt with working conditions - the Work Environment Committee.

The librarian had a turning point in her life in 2015.

"My husband had cancer and after eight years, he was able to overcome it," said Liu-Behlendorf. "It made me more grateful for having my life, and the effort to make life better for others is so worthwhile."

Love and inclusion does not take a rest on Sundays

Listeners can catch podcast creator Christina Cannarella show on Valley's radio station, KVCM.

KENYA HARRIS
STAFF WRITER

Christina Cannarella has a radio show that is for everybody -- no exceptions. Nobody gets left out.

"I love being able to share openly and honestly to connect with my guests, in a way that hopefully empowers them to feel better about themselves."

- Christina Cannarella, creator of "Self Love Sundays"

As the mother of a son with a disability, she has first hand experience with exclusion. Cannarella is a busy mother, radio show host, disability advo-

cate and Valley student. But in March of 2022, she decided to start a radio show where she could provide a venue for people with disabilities to speak. One year later, "Self Love Sundays" is still playing on KVCM 95.1.

"I love being able to share openly and honestly to connect with my guests, in a way that hopefully empowers them to feel better about themselves," said Cannarella.

Episodes begin with Cannarella greeting the audience and speaking on self love, before then playing a song or a meditation. The program has over 20 episodes with guests talking about the practice of self love and mental health. The 55 year old seeks out guests with unique voices, whether they are disabled or not. One episode featured a young woman with autism, Megan Mascarro, who is an opera singer. Mascarro spoke about her life, her challenges and also her joy and passions.

"Valley is an extremely diverse community. I mean this really is a snapshot of what the world should look like....And for

me I feel that the uniqueness is based on the fact that there is so much diversity. Yet we are all one community," said Cannarella.

The college radio show is not the only place Cannarella is pushing for diversity and inclusion. Back in 2018, she started Mother Road Studios, an organization that provides arts-based activities for the disabled and nondisabled alike. Cannarella was recognized by the United Nations International Labor Organization Office for her inclusivity work with the studio. She organized an all inclusive fashion show called L'Atelier in the summer of 2019, featuring disabled or differently-abled models and designers. In April 2020, she began hosting an inclusive weekly zoom meeting called "Happiest Hour." It connected people through the COVID-19 lockdowns and is still going strong.

For Cannarella, the push for inclusion is a labor of love. Her main source of inspiration is her son Johnny Hatch, who has a rare genetic makeup. As one of the only students in his high

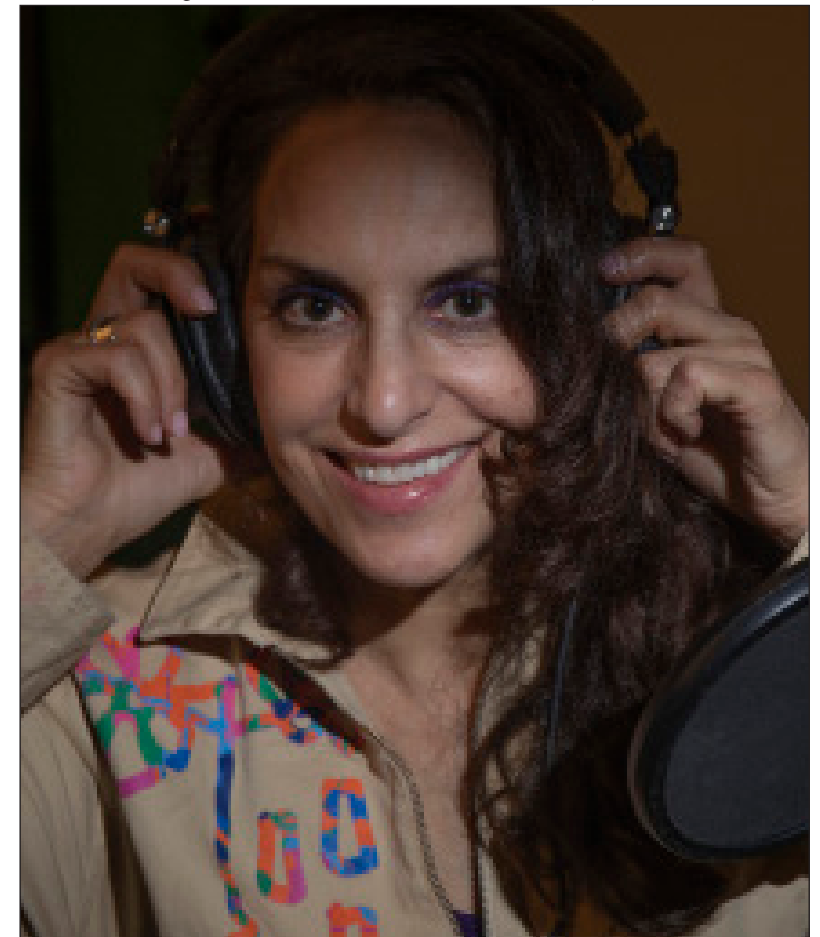
school with a disability, Hatch often found himself left out by others who did not know how to interact with him. But now, Hatch and others like him do not have to be excluded anymore. Cannarella also has a lot of love for the guests who come on and share their stories.

The radio host intends to share "tools that will empower [guests] to love themselves." She enjoys "connecting, listening to guests' stories and doing a deep dive."

When asked what inspires her, Cannarella shared this quote from author and speaker Marianne Williamson.

"And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give others permission to do the same," said Williamson, in her book "A Return to Love: Reflections on the Principles of a Course of Miracles."

She hopes to continue to inspire and include everybody for many more episodes. As Cannarella put it herself, "the more we share the more inspired we will be."



AVA ROSATE | VALLEY STAR

RADIO - Christina Cannarella rehearses her radio show, "Self Love Sundays," at Valley College. With her show, Cannarella aims to advocate for mental health awareness and increase inclusivity.

Biden slowly creeping over low bar

Low approval ratings still put the 46th president ahead of his predecessors.

ASHER MILES
STAFF WRITER

The millennial generation has not witnessed a better president than Joseph R. Biden... unfortunately. The majority of recent American presidents have had abysmal presidential runs. Bill Clinton aided in ushering a new era of mass incarceration of Black men through the passage of the 1994 Crime Bill. George W. Bush boosted American morale after 9/11, yet his subsequent ordering of the 2003 invasion of Iraq paired with his active pursuit in deregulating the financial sector culminated into the biggest financial and economic meltdown since the Great Depression. Barack Obama's presidency could have placated Americans' idealistic beliefs of hope and change. The Reporter in Chief's expansionist policies, dramatic increase of the armed drones program coupled with the ill-regard for the sovereignty of those bombarded countries, left much to be desired. According to C-SPAN and Sienna College Research Institute, Donald Trump, respectively, averages out at being ranked 44 out of 46



GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION BY MILAN RAFAELOV | VALLEY STAR

SUB-COMMANDER IN CHIEF- Biden the not so terrible. He's not great, but he's all the democrats got.

presidents. This is clear to the naked eye when a president signs a tax reform that provides 83 percent of the benefits to

expect from his ranking? Therefore, the bar is quite low for "sleepy Joe".

Detractors who believe that "Brandon" is an envoy of radical Marxist socialism are incorrect. Clearly they have microscopic hamsters perpetually running on a wheel in their skulls. In reality, the 46th president career has revealed him as a custodian for neoliberalism, that is, he continuously embarrassed an ideology that view citizens as consumers and emphasizes the free-market capitalism.

From the onset of his presidency, Biden consistently performed half measures, ranging from not providing \$2,000 stimulus checks — as he stated he would during his 2020 run— to his inability to persuade or play hardball with conservatives to pass his Build Back Better Plan. When railroad workers were on strike for paid sick leave, Biden had no problem crushing their efforts.

But, neoliberal democrats at least have a pulse on the country compared to the republican party.

The \$1.9 trillion Covid Relief Deal temporarily extended unemployment support as well as extended the Child Tax Credit, which provided major tax relief for nearly all working families. Also, his passage of the Chips Acts brought the

production of America's fourth largest import, semiconductors, back to the United States.

However, the 80-year-old president's gumption fails with his attempts in strong-arming his opposition to fulfill his desires.

He consistently takes the fall for mishaps that are out of his control such as the high rate of inflation and Silicon Valley Bank failing. Maybe he thinks that Americans would be smart enough to know that Trump's 2018 tax plan deregulated banks to the extent where they did not have to report tests that determined whether a bank held enough capital to withstand a negative economic shock. Or, maybe he trusted Americans' capability to understand that the bank's bond-heavy portfolio was a risky investment (particularly with high interest rates) as tech millionaires performed a bank run that resulted in the second biggest bank failure in American history.

Dark Brandon is not Bernie Sanders in a Joseph Biden face mask. If anything he is a puppet for conservatives to launch nonsensical jabs at, as well as a puppet for the left to constantly prod for more. Ironically, though, the puppet is doing better than his predecessors.

Safety not Valley's number one priority

The college's lack of first aid and emergency resources could be a costly mistake.

MILAN RAFAELOV
STAFF WRITER

Safety should be the top priority for all institutions but the inadequate first-aid resources and malfunctioning emergency systems on campus are alarming, to put it mildly. Valley College must address these issues to fulfill the school's legal obligation to provide a safe environment for everyone on campus.

In the mid-2010s, Valley stopped providing first aid kits in classrooms, making it challenging to find medical assistance on campus. Additionally, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the health services building shifted to illness-based care and no longer has resources for basic injuries. Last October, a student suffered a fall and badly injured his forearms. Naturally, he sought help at the Health Services Building but was turned away due to the lack of basic first aid resources.

Fortunately, the student was able to receive bandages and care from Xiaoyang Liu-Behlendorf, Valley's librarian of over 30 years. Liu-Behlendorf herself has concerns about the safety on campus like the lack of a PA system in the library, the delayed alert systems and no panic button.

"If someone dangerous comes in here, I do not know if I will be able to go into a different room and dial the sheriff's number," said the librarian.

Safety concerns plague many U.S. institutions. Recently Valley had a scare with the FBI responding to a "suspect-

ed terrorist act." Thankfully it turned out to be a false alarm.

"The lack of a panic button is an issue because that's something that has been raised several times in the past and the discussion has happened, but no progress has been made," said the library's Building Marshal, Israel Ortiz.

Ortiz is designated and trained to lead students and staff to safety in the event of an emergency.

In the last decade, there have been 348 university/college-related shootings, and while many institutions are taking preventative measures, Valley has yet to ensure that its emergency systems function.

The Los Angeles Community College District conducted a Campus Safety and Security Assessment in 2021. The document discloses that Valley's lack of an insider threat program makes it vulnerable to attacks like active assailants, mass attacks and hostage situations. It also notes poor lighting, inadequate camera coverage, incompetent security defenses and the inability of the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department office to initiate lockdowns.

While the assessment pointed out Valley's shortcomings, it also highlighted the security strengths, which include a sufficient amount of emergency phones, the implementation of a crisis action team and a detailed expertise resource planning checklist.

Recommendations from the security assessment and suggestions from the educational



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY GRIFFIN O'ROURKE | VALLEY STAR

OUCH- Valley College's safety measures are lacking in first aid and emergency safeguards. In the event of an emergency, students would be left vulnerable. The district and college must take action.

community include testing emergency response mechanisms, installing surveillance cameras and panic buttons in necessary areas, improving lighting in pedestrian paths, implementing an insider threat program and stocking first aid supplies in classrooms or in the health services building.

Valley is aware of its shortcomings in regard to the safety and security of its community members. There is a responsibility to the campus, its staff and its students to take the required measures to ensure the campus is a secure and hospitable place for everyone.

EDITORS NOTE

The views expressed on this page are solely those of the writer and do not reflect those of the Valley Star or those of Los Angeles Valley College.



EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
LAYOUT EDITOR
ISAAC DEKTOR

MANAGING EDITOR
CASSANDRA NAVA

PHOTO EDITOR
GRIFFIN O'ROURKE

VALLEY LIFE EDITOR
NATALIE METCALF

SPORTS EDITOR
NICHOLAS OROZCO

ONLINE EDITOR
JEREMY RUIZ

STAFF WRITERS
JASMINE ALEJANDRE
ANDRES SANCHEZ DELGADO
KENYA HARRIS
KEVIN KHACHATRYAN
ASHER MILES
MILAN RAFAELOV
AVA ROSATE
SAYEH SAADAT

PHOTOGRAPHERS
CHRISTIAN CRUZ
MIKE DIAZ
VIOLET DE JEAN
CHRIS DREADSON
XAVIER DUBON
BEATRIZ GARAY
SAVANNAH GREENLY
SUEY HERRARTE
KAI NIELSEN-SNELL
ARASH SHAFI
AVA ROSATE
JEREMY RUIZ

ADVISORS
BILL DAUBER
GERARD BURKHART

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.

VALLEY VIEW | HOW AWARE ARE YOU OF SAFETY PROTOCOLS ON CAMPUS?

TEXT BY KEVIN KHACHATRYAN
PHOTOS BY JEREMY RUIZ



"I'm aware. I have that self awareness that I can call the sheriff's department near the high-rise parking lot. I have their number saved. I feel quite safe here on this campus."

-JUAN GARCIA, ACCOUNTING MAJOR



"I'd say I'm pretty aware. I have the LAVC Safe app on my phone. When it's late at night, you can ask a sheriff to walk you to your car. I'm definitely more aware of it as a female student."

-ZOE NGUYEN, UNDECLARED



"There are no safety protocols that stand out. I've gotten texts about things that happen here, but I haven't gotten any proper instructions. If something were to happen while I'm here, I wouldn't really know where a first aid station would be."

-JAY HERNANDEZ, PHYSICS AND ENGINEERING MAJOR



"To be honest, I haven't really seen the whole campus, so I'm not sure of what or where those are. I know what the health center is."

-ALEJANDRA CONTRERAS, ACCOUNTING MAJOR

Freshman fastest freestyler in 43 years

With a time of 25 seconds flat, Lilliana Noriega breaks a record set in 1975.



Lilliana Noriega is a first-year student at Valley College, a swimmer for the Lady Monarchs swim team who has been swimming competitively since she was 12 years old at the Los Angeles Swim Club. Noriega fulfilled her goal of breaking a 25.10 second college record in the 50 meter freestyle that had stood since 1975, beating it by a tenth of a second.

NICHOLAS OROZCO
SPORTS EDITOR

Competing in the 50-yard freestyle, Lilliana Noriega touches the wall to finish, with her teammate racing to exclaim that she finished with a 25-second flat time, breaking a school record that has stood since 1975.

This year, Noriega beat the school record, held previously by Valley College student Cindy Schilling, by a tenth of a second. Looking to

continue to break records and become a better swimmer.

"I was just trying to go all out and sprint as fast as I could," said Noriega. "I was so excited."

Setting records is not something new for Noriega. In her high school career at John Burroughs High School, she broke four school records; the 50 Freestyle, 200 Freestyle relay, 200 Medley relay and 400 Freestyle Relay. She also won the CIF Division III with her team in her senior year.

"I am so happy that I was able to accomplish so

much during my high school career," said the 18 year old.

"Placing high at state is my goal for the end of the season."

- Freshman Swimmer
Lilliana Noriega

Swimming was not always on the Burbank native's mind. The multi-talented athlete who played multiple sports in her

youth began to swim competitively at 12 years old for the Los Angeles Swim Club.

Noriega would then attend Valley as her older sister and father, Salvador Noriega, were Monarch athletes. Her older sister, Erika Rivera, played on the 2013-14 women's basketball where they posted a 12-0 record, achieving a Western State Conference championship, with a trip to state championship making it to the "elite eight."

With the current season quickly coming to a close — and this being her first — Noriega is

making positive strides for the program. Head women's swim coach Pete Loporchio expressed that she has elevated the level of the relays and other swimmers.

"We feel very fortunate to have Lilliana as part of the program, not only with her swimming ability, but her lead-by-example attitude," said Loporchio.

Noriega will compete in the Western State Conference Championships that will be held at Valley from April 20-22.

"Placing high at state is my goal for the end of the season," said the freshman.

Football schedule flips



NICHOLAS OROZCO
SPORTS EDITOR

The Valley College football team will see new faces as conference opponents are being rotated between the colleges.

The Monarchs finished last season 3-7 with a 2-3 conference record. Valley faced conference opponents Antelope Valley, Santa Barbara, Moorpark, Santa Monica and LA Pierce. The only two conference wins came late for Valley, beating Santa Monica and Pierce in the last two games of the season.

This coming season, Valley will now face LA Southwest, Glendale and Pasadena, replacing Santa Barbara, Moorpark and Antelope Valley on the schedule. Of the three new opponents, the Monarchs will likely struggle against the Vaqueros of Glendale. Last season Glendale finished with an overall of 5-5. Glendale battled for the Metro League title against Citrus College, the Vaqueros ultimately dropped the title game, 42-21.

Southwest finished its season with a 0-10 record, with their highest scoring game occurring against the Monarchs, losing 45-32. The Cougars would be blown out in all their conference matchups, forfeiting their last game of the season. With their performance last year and dropping a game to the Monarchs, Southwest does not seem as they will be a difficult opponent.

The Lancers of Pasadena City College could be the Monarchs' most even matchup. Last season, they finished at 5-5 overall and 2-3 in conference. With their wins coming from similar opponents that the Monarchs lost against, Moorpark and Victor Valley.

With how the Monarchs performed last season, it is tough to tell how they will do next season as their new opponents will prove to be a challenge. Last season the Monarchs had seven Southern California Football Association, All-Conference players. They included Jason Wagner, Michael Clark, Vicenter Zepeda, Dennis Wallace, Andre Washington, PJ Trusty and Jamar Walker. Most notably coming out of Valley was Vernon Tucker. Tucker was a linebacker for the Monarchs who could play inside or out and will be transferring into University of Michigan in the fall.

Valley will struggle as their luck of the draw was not the greatest with their new opponents.

SCHEDULE

Sept. 2 vs Chaffey
Sept. 9 @ Compton
Sept. 16 @ Victor Valley
Sept. 23 vs West LA
Sept. 30 @ Santa Ana
Oct. 14 @ LA Southwest
Oct. 21 vs Glendale
Oct. 28 vs Pierce
Nov. 4 @ Santa Monica
Nov. 11 vs Pasadena

Mission accomplished: Veloz clips Eagles

Sophomore pitcher holds the Eagles to one run in seven inning start in conference.

NICHOLAS OROZCO
SPORTS EDITOR

Going for seven innings, Monarch baseball player Danny Veloz allowed one run and struck out three, while being backed by his offense that would put up eight runs, beating the Eagles, 8-1 at home.

"We know we have a chance to win when he's [Veloz] on the mound."

- Head Coach
Dave Mallas

In a conference division matchup, Valley College (19-13, 10-3 WSC) hosted crosstown opponent Mission College (10-21, 5-8 WSC). The Monarch's offense was electric as they would achieve 14 hits over the eight innings, with six of the starters having a two-hit game.

"He's [Veloz] got three starts left minimum, two of them being at home," said Mallas. "We know we have a chance to win every single game that he's on the mound."

Sophomore Danny Veloz made his 12 start of the season against Mission, where he went for seven innings with one run coming across to score and strike out three.



PHOTOS BY NICHOLAS OROZCO | VALLEY STAR

(Above) PITCH- Sophomore pitcher Danny Veloz, throws a pitch towards sophomore infielder Aiden Sandoval in the top of the first inning. Sandoval swung and popped-up in the infield for the third out of the inning.

(Right) SACRIFICE- In the bottom of the third inning, freshman shortstop Tino Valdez, lays down a sacrifice bunt that rolled back to the pitcher. The bunt allowed freshman Luis Torres to move over to third base and eventually score after a single from sophomore Tyler Olivas.

