



VALLEY LIFE: YOGA
RACQUEL WEINSTEIN HOSTED A YOGA CLASS FOR VALLEY'S FIT FRIDAY.



GALLERY: JAZZ CONCERT
A JAZZ CONCERT WAS HOSTED ON MARCH 9, FEATURING THE MATT CORY QUARTET.

Feminists rally for reproductive rights



VALLEY STAR | AVA ROSATE

WOMEN'S MARCH- Organizers asked protestors to come to the front of the march and hold signs of women who had passed away due to unsafe and illegal abortions over the past decades. Protestors chanted continuously while the rally truck stopped to demonstrate in the middle of Broadway and Spring Street. Halfway into the march, organizers called out to the people on the street to join the rally.

see 'March' on page 2

District opts to settle

CASSANDRA NAVA
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Legal teams for Payan v. LACCD met on Monday to negotiate agreement in a mediated discussion following a March 2 conference at which the district voted not to file a petition to the U.S. Supreme Court. LA City College students Roy Payan and Portia Mason argued that the LACCD did not provide sufficient educational resources to students with disabilities in a timely manner. The disabled plaintiffs filed a lawsuit in 2017, which they won in 2019, forcing the LACCD to meet their accessibility requests. The LACCD appealed to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, claiming that the plaintiffs could not use the Americans with Disabilities Act or Section 504 to illustrate "disparate impact" — or unintentional discrimination. "This removes the LACCD from being terrible hypocrites by educating these students but taking away their rights," said Paul Grossman, executive counsel for the Association on Higher Education and Disability. "Now they're going to educate these students and they'll keep their rights." Earlier this month, the district unanimously voted not to petition the U.S. Supreme Court, while both sides have agreed to continue "good-faith communications."

If both parties come to a settlement agreement, it will be presented at the Board's Districtwide Budget Committee meeting on April 13. In settling, the District must remedy the plaintiffs' claim of discrimination by providing inclusive educational resources. In the event that Payan v. LACCD is not settled, the case will go to the Supreme Court. As previously stated by the Star, disability advocates fear this outcome because the district can stand on the argument of "disparate impact." "We remain firmly committed to reaching a settlement that will enable us to provide even more inclusive and responsive educational services for reasonable accommodations under the provisions of the ADA," said district Chancellor Francisco Rodriguez in a news release.

Campus Center likely to reopen this summer

Plans to reopen Campus Center are underway after flooding and asbestos kept the 50-year-old building closed for over 18 months.

ISAAC DEKTOR
MANAGING EDITOR

The long-shuttered Campus Center may reopen this summer after suffering from a series of asbestos issues that left the building vacant for nearly two years, during which it was targeted by vandals and thieves. According to Valley College President Barry Gribbons, a three-step plan to resurrect the abandoned building will likely be completed by summer. Gribbons anticipates that the entire building will have to be cleaned, after which an asbestos survey will be conducted and the basement restored — which was demolished after severe flooding. "The whole building is being cleaned regardless of where asbestos was detected," said Gribbons. "Once they finish cleaning the entire building, we will then be retesting the building for asbestos to confirm that there are no longer any problematic surfaces." While most equipment in the building is probably unaffected and still usable, Gribbons noted that surplus items being stored in the basement will likely be thrown away. Equipment containing porous fibers may absorb asbestos and need to be disposed of. The building has been out of commission ever since a six-inch pipe burst in fall 2020, pouring out an estimated 250,000 gallons of water and flooding the basement. During an initial restoration attempt the following spring semester, maintenance workers found traces of asbestos between the tiling of the basement floor. While Campus Center remained empty, opportunis-

tic criminals took advantage of the situation. A vandal broke in last December, smashing windows and damaging tarps that were set up in the abatement process. The building was further vandalized in January and copper piping that connected it to an external air conditioning unit was stolen a few days later. Campus Center was built in 1971 as part of the fourth phase of a decades-long construction plan that erected gymnasiums, Behavioral Science, Humanities and Business-Journalism buildings. Monarch Hall, located within Campus Center was originally intended to be a music hall and features flat floor seating that makes the space versatile. "We do not want to lose Monarch Hall because it is a community center," said Media Arts Chair Eric Swelstad. "They do blood drives there, they do art shows, they have community meetings, candidate forums, not just for the college, but for the entire Valley Glen." Acquiring funds to build something like Monarch Hall is tricky due to construction costs being determined by assignable square feet, which earmarks money based on the specific programmatic uses a particular space. The second floor of Campus Center was renovated in 2007. Classrooms were repainted and had LED lights and white boards installed, while bathrooms were refurbished. The building's roof was replaced and classrooms in the basement were repainted and furnished in 2009. A project completed in 2013 upgraded data collection infrastructure as well as adding offices for the information technology department. In 2020, a multicultural



VALLEY STAR | JOSE CALLEJAS

BUILDING- The Campus Center sits directly across from the Student Union building with its recognizable and modern bright yellow skybox. Campus Center has been closed for nearly two years.

center replaced the old bookstore within Campus Center. The multicultural center opened months before Campus Center was flooded. It was meant to house the Dream Resource Center, as well as LGBTQ+ and Puente programs. A report that includes an estimated restoration cost will soon be made available as companies begin to bid for the contract.



VALLEY STAR | GRIFFIN O'ROURKE

LOCKED- The doors to the Campus Center remain closed and locked tight following a discovery of asbestos.

IMPORTANT DATES

March 17

The ASU will host a Solidarity Vigil with Ukraine on Thursday at 7:00 p.m. at the Student Union Plaza.

March 23

Valley's Music Department will host a faculty concert on March 23 at 1:30 p.m. in the Recital Hall M106.

Follow up-to-date campus news and events on Twitter @ValleyStarNews
These features and more can be found in full @ www.thevalleystarnews.com

March sparked by court challenges to abortion rights

On International Women's Day, Los Angeles residents gathered in support for women's bodily autonomy and in defense of Roe v. Wade.

AVA ROSATE
PHOTO EDITOR

Armed with handmade signs, green bandanas and clothes hangers, over 100 reproductive rights supporters took to the streets of downtown Los Angeles kicking off Women's History Month.

A lively crowd gathered to the side of a parked truck across the street from City Hall displaying a banner stating, "We Refuse To Let The Supreme Court Deny Women's Humanity And Their Rights." Throughout the afternoon, the truck acted as a stage for speakers and performances. A music performance and guest speakers kicked off the event while counter-protestors heckled the group from the sidelines, shouting through a megaphone "abortions kill more minorities than guns."

"It's great to see those who have come out and the diversity is beautiful"

- Noche Diaz, spokesperson of The Revolution Club

Abortion On Demand And Without Apology, the march hosted on March 8 by activist groups Rise Up 4 Abortion Rights and The Revolutionary Communists, was organized just weeks before to protest and inform community members of the possible overturn of Roe v. Wade.

The Supreme Court decision, ruled in 1973, states that the U.S. Constitution protects a woman's ability to choose to have an abortion without excessive government restriction. The landmark ruling is in danger of being overturned by the end of June due to Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization — a new case that has been presented to the court, which



VALLEY STAR | AVA ROSATE

CHANT- (L-R) Skyler Soloman of Rise Up 4 Abortion Rights and Luna of The Revolution Club lead the March 8 rally in a cargo truck.

could overrule Roe v. Wade.

Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization, which was argued on Dec. 1 of last year, states that Roe v. Wade haunts the country and holds no basis in the constitution. The case between the state's health director and the last remaining abortion clinic concerns the constitutionality of a Mississippi law that prohibits abortions after the 15th week of pregnancy. The fate of the case will be determined this summer.

"It's great to see those who have come out and the diversity is beautiful," said Noche Diaz, spokesperson of the Revolution Club. "It's great to see everyone come together, it is very important and inspiring. Most people have no idea what will come in the Supreme Court and the people who do know are being told to accept it."

The Revolution Club is a communist activist group in LA whose mission is to "fight the power and transform the people for revolution." They co-hosted the event with Rise Up 4 Abortion Rights, a reproductive rights activist group.

The crowd marched their way through a mile long stretch



VALLEY STAR | AVA ROSATE

RIGHTS- Noche Diaz, national spokesperson of The Revolution Club, speaks to the crowd.

using Broadway Street as its main route, holding signs and photos of women who have died due to unsafe abortions. Activists chanted, "Abortion on demand

and without apology, without this basic right women cant be free" and, "Back alleys no more, abortion rights for rich and poor."

Supporters were asked to

show solidarity with the movement by wearing and waving green scarves passed out by volunteers. The color green is a symbol of the fight to protect

abortion rights. It began in Argentina when more than a million activists took to the streets with green scarves in support of a legislation that would decriminalize abortion. The movement became known as the Marea Verde — the green wave — and made its way throughout Latin America. Now the United States is taking part in the movement, with Rise Up 4 Abortion Rights marches in California and New York.

"This is the approach that works. Organizing communities and taking to the streets works."

- Skyler Soloman, leader of Rise Up 4 Abortion Rights

Making its way to Pershing Square by dusk, the peaceful protest ended with event coordinators asking the crowd to organize and exchange contact information so future events could be organized within communities.

"This is the approach that works" said Skyler Soloman, leader of Rise Up 4 Abortion Rights. "Organizing communities and taking to the streets works."

THE FACTS

International Women's Day was first organized by the Socialist Party of America in New York City on Feb. 28, 1909 and was made a mainstream global holiday by the United Nations in 1977.

Valley offers emergency funds for students

The program called Edquity, may have failed some students who claim to need it most.

EDWARD SEGAL
VALLEY LIFE EDITOR

Valley College students in dire financial straits may qualify for funds provided by Edquity, a company dedicated to providing cash grants to those in need.

"We do still have free emergency-based needs and funds available for students. Students do, of course, have to be currently registered."

- Barry Gribbons, president of Valley College

Edquity has offered support to community college students all semester, while Valley promotes it in their weekly newsletters. Edquity advertises its mission to help students with financial difficulties to graduate college and support their families. Financial support is even available to students taking non-credit courses. There is no limit to how many semesters people can apply, as they can qualify even if they received money last semester.

"We still have free emergency-based needs and funds available for students," said Valley President Barry Gribbons during a town hall meeting on Monday. "Students do, of course, have to be currently registered."

During the meeting, Gribbons told students to look at



GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION | MATTHEW ROYER

FUNDS- Edquity, in association with Valley, is offering grants to students who qualify as needing them the most.

the COVID-19 updates on the Valley Weekly newsletter. The newsletter, which is emailed to all students, provides more information on applying for Edquity financial support.

Edquity has increased the number of funds it offers throughout the nation since the start of the pandemic due to rising rates of financial hardship. The company's financial assistance increased further after Congress passed a bill in April 2021 giving it \$40 billion for higher education.

According to Michelson 20MM, a foundation supporting "education and higher learning," \$5 billion went to California, with community colleges receiving a portion of the money and \$2.5 billion given directly to students in the form of emergency grants.

However, some students in need have had difficulties in qualifying for these funds.

An attendee at Monday's town hall by the username of Alex Farve Entezami said they did

not qualify for emergency funds despite their living situation.

"Living on a friend's couch and not having an income is not enough to qualify?" they asked in the comment section.

Gribbons did not know of any issues with Edquity but directed students to be patient while staff began the process of reaching out to them directly.

"Our staff will get in contact with [students] to find out what challenges they had," said Gribbons. "We will find out what happened to the students who didn't get their applications approved."

Gribbons suggested other resources that provide more information.

"For everyone's benefit, we have a lot of resources available for homeless students, as well as food-insecure students," said Gribbons. "A great way to find out more information is to connect with Helping Hands or the student services welcome center."

Three Board of Trustee candidates up for reelection

Members of the district board will begin campaigning to secure their seats in this year's election.

EMILY FAITH GRODIN
STAFF WRITER

Of the seven seats on the Los Angeles Community College District's Board of Trustees, three are up for reelection this year. Gabriel Buelna, Steven Veres and Ernest H. Moreno will campaign this year in hopes of remaining on the board.

The election will be held in November. Elections for the board are held every two years. Four members are chosen at one election, three members at the other. According to the board policies, "terms of trustees are staggered so that, as nearly as practical, one-half of the Trustees shall be elected at each Board Member election." Trustees are typically elected for a four year term, while the president and vice president serve a year long term.

"Elections are about spending time having discussions about what you have done or what you plan to do," said Buelna when asked about his feelings regarding the upcoming election. "With time, things always evolve."

Trustees work together to face issues that the nine community colleges in the district have. The board typically meets twice a month to discuss resolutions and how to make the schools run more efficiently. Some of the topics they are currently working through include declining enrollment, poor student outcomes and student basic needs which have been severely impacted due to the pandemic. Other responsibilities include making campuses safe and accessible for all, finding ways to upgrade technology and ensuring curriculums serve students of all walks of life.

Buelna has been the board president since 2020 and a trustee since 2017. When the election was held in March of 2017, he

won with 60.37 percent of the votes against incumbent Nancy Pearlman. Buelna received his bachelor's degree from CSUN before moving on to San Diego State University to complete a master's degree in social work. He then received his Ph.D from the School of Politics and Economics at the Claremont Graduate University. The board member still teaches history and politics in Chicana/o Studies at CSUN where he has been a faculty member since 1999.

Veres has a lengthy record serving on the board. He was first a Trustee from 2011 to 2015 before taking a two year break. In July of 2017, Veres returned to the board to begin a new five year term. In that election he won with 45.89 percent of the votes, defeating three other candidates running for the same seat. Since 2017, he has served as both president and vice president and has served as the chair of the board's Institutional Effectiveness Committee as well as the Facilities Management Committee. Aside from serving on the board, Veres has been the Deputy Chief of Staff to State Senate Leader Kevin de Leon for 11 years.

Moreno has served on the board since 2013 after a 42 year run as a District employee. Last up for reelection in 2017, he secured his seat with 55.21 percent of the votes against candidate Dallas Fowler. Moreno served as president of both East Los Angeles College and Los Angeles Mission College after holding positions such as Director of Labor Relations and District's Chief Negotiations, Dean of Academic Affairs, and Senior Director of Educational Services. Moreno earned his bachelor's degree in political science from California State University, Los Angeles before receiving his master's in public administration from California

State University, Long Beach.

Members up for reelection and competing candidates have a myriad of strategies when it comes to campaigning. Many can benefit from having a social media presence, allowing them to connect with voters and broadcast what they might do as a trustee. Seeking endorsements from public figures or groups such as the Los Angeles College Faculty Guild — the union representing community college faculty members — can help candidates gain popularity among voters. Strategies like political mailing and phone calls are still used as well.



PHOTO COURTESY OF LACCD BOARD OF TRUSTEES

ELECTION- Steven Veres has served 11 years on the Board of Trustees and is up for reelection in 2022.

Valley students focus their mind, body and spirit to manage stress

Students turn to yoga for an hour of stress relief, meditation and fitness guided by instructor Racquel Weinstein.

ISABELLA VODOS
STAFF WRITER

On a sunny afternoon, nine students attended Valley's Fit Friday for an hour of stretching and yoga led by instructor Racquel Weinstein.

“What I like about yoga is it combines physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well being. You get your meditation, you get some movement, and you get your breathing.”

- Racquel Weinstein

A certified instructor at Core Power Yoga, Weinstein spread a moment of peace to students by guiding the group through a series of exercises and breathing techniques. Friday's event was held at 2 p.m. on the North Mall Lawn in front of the Student Union building. The one-hour class taught participants about the advantages students can gain through meditation.



Valley Star | Jose Callejas
Yoga - CSUN student and community member Veronica Lopez and Los Angeles Valley College nursing student Shelly Vodoss give a final Namaste at the end of mindful yoga.

combines physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well being,” said Weinstein. “You get your meditation, you get some movement and you get your breathing.”

The philosophy of this practice is to affix the mind, body and soul. Benefits of yoga include increased flexibility, maintaining a balanced metabolism and circulatory health.

A recent study by The Good Body found that 36 million Americans practice yoga.

Weinstein's yoga class is part of Fit Fridays, a series of events run by student health education coordinator Evelyn Pichardo.

The series was created to keep the campus and students active, with a yoga class and a campus walk trading off every Friday.

“We came up with Valley Fit Fridays because we are thinking of students' health and the benefits of yoga,” said Pichardo. “This workshop was made to help with mental health and provide exercise. We did it to build a sense of community.”

Weinstein demonstrated various Vinyasa flow poses that help to warm up the body. Vinyasa is a type of flow yoga where people move through different poses using their breath as a



Valley Star | Jose Callejas
Yoga - Raquel Weinstein leads the group in warrior pose as part of her mindful yoga flow during Valley Fit Fridays.

guide. The instructor focused on Sun Salutation A which is a set of poses that begin to coordinate breath with movement.

Christina Cannarella, a disabilities inclusion consultant and student in broadcasting at Valley, brought her son Johnny Hatch for yoga. Hatch is mute but can hear and understand. According to his mother, the class made him feel welcome.

“I think it's important for our mental health and well-being to have an opportunity to

be outside,” said Cannarella. “I like that it is community based, so anyone can join. I think this is also important for self-love and self-care.”

Balancing work and school may be stressful for students amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the National Center of Complementary and Integrative Health, yoga can help minimize health concerns such as general wellness, chronic diseases and pain management.

The practice goes beyond

flexibility, and has even been proven to reduce anxiety. Some also believe that, through yoga, people can connect with their spirituality.

Veronica Lopez, a Biochemistry graduate student from CSUN found out about Valley Fit Fridays through a local newsletter.

“I saw this workshop online actually and I want to take advantage of the free class,” said Lopez. “I love that it is outdoors and near my home.”

Valley's urban forest soon to be renovated with new horticulture

Many hazardous trees will be taken down at Valley College in favor of new ones that pose less risk to keep Valley a “Tree Campus.”

EDWARD SEGAL
Valley Life Editor

Valley College may soon see the removal of many trees around campus, most of which are dead, to make room for the planting of new ones.

“It looks to me that the planetarium is going to be surrounded by trees again and it is going to make a mess out of our observing program.”

- David Falk, astronomy professor

The directive, called the Urban Forest Master Plan, attempts to help the college stick to its roots as a forest by planting many varieties of trees and other plants, while removing those that have already died. Initiated

in 2010, the plan has resulted in Valley being named a Tree Campus USA from 2011-2018 by the Arbor Day foundation. According to the master plan, there are currently over 1,600 trees and other plants on campus.

At a Facilities Planning Committee on March 2, faculty spoke out about the new plan, both in support of and against trees being taken down and new ones being planted.

Athletic director Dave Mallas has no problem with the trees around the baseball and softball stadiums being taken down, as he believes those are hazards as well.

“The trees out there are dead and can be cut down,” said Mallas. “They are all brown and some are sagging and can fall on something or someone if the timing is right.”

Others believe that, despite the fact that the plan facilitates the removal of hazardous trees around Valley, the new flora may cause problems of its own.

“It looks to me that the planetarium is going to be surrounded by trees again and it is



Valley Star | Jeremy Ruiz
Tree - A little tree planted stands close to Valley's planetarium, not knowing one day it might tower over the observatory and cause problems for astronomy students.

going to make a mess out of our observing program,” said astronomy professor David Falk, who prefers temporary shrubs be planted instead. “My concern is that we have two different plans, landscaping and the tree plan. I don't want to have someone come in and say that we did not see your concerns and here's a tree that's blocking your telescope.”

Some of the trees set to be removed are leaning, causing hazards to passersby. Two of them are by the South Gym and the Allied Health and Sciences building on Ethel Avenue, and another is located by the Math and Sciences building.

Outside of being a falling hazard themselves, the trees have already injured someone.

A fig from the tree by Campus Center fell on a Valley employee, forcing them to take time off. According to Vice President of Administrative Services Sarah Song, this staff member is now on worker's compensation.

Others in the FPC meeting agreed that the fig tree should be replaced.

“It's not just the fruit causing an injury, but a new fruit tree will feed the rodent problem, which will feed the cat problem, which will feed the coyote problem, and so on,” said theater arts professor Jennifer Read.

This is in reference to local wildlife not having enough to eat, which leads the campus coyotes to feed off of Valley's cat population.

In addition to feeding the animals on campus, Valley's trees are also a resource for students majoring in biology, giving them flowers to bring to class for experiments. With many trees dying, this has made it difficult for students to find the plants they need.

According to biology professor Enrique Aniceto, the problem

has gotten to the point where the professors have to bring their own flowers, or ask students to bring them from home.

“Students dissect and study the different flowers,” said Aniceto. “Traditionally, we went out on campus and collected these materials for them, but it is harder now since there are not many flowers on campus.”

Valley President Barry Gribbons is trying to balance the college being a tree campus with ensuring the safety of those who attend classes.

“I think that the trees add a lot to the campus,” said Gribbons. “We have become known as the tree campus and we have a beautiful park-like setting. We want to make sure that we maintain that. For trees that are unhealthy, that sometimes means that we have to replace them — and we want to make sure that we do that in accordance with the Urban Forest Master plan.”

College Road North construction to be completed later this

Located on Fulton Avenue, construction on College Road North is weeks away from completion, while College Road South has just begun.

CASSANDRA NAVA
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The construction that has been obscuring the front view of Valley College is set to be completed on March 28, featuring new sustainability and safety efforts.

The road includes two separate parking lots for students and faculty: a thin lot in front of the Library and Academic Resource Center on Fulton Avenue and Parking Lot B for students on Oxnard Street. Once sealant is applied to the asphalt and the parking stripes are painted, the lot will be available for parking. Valley is working off of its Stormwater Master Plan, which outlines a strategy to redirect stormwater runoff into the soil rather than the sewer system. Runoff stormwater can damage ecosystems and impair the integrity of water quality by picking up fertiliz-



Valley Star | Adrian Ramirez
Construction - Two construction workers carry bags to Valley College's road on Fulton Avenue, preparing to finish work on the north end of the road and start on the south end.

ers, dirt, and oils that eventually make their way into the ocean.

Valley's construction and renovation projects webpage states that “vegetated bioretention swales” will be installed along the west edge of the road. Vegetated swales are shallow,

sloped pieces of landscape designed to absorb runoff water, preventing it from landing in the city's drainage system. When it rains, the rainwater will penetrate the soil and in turn prevent pollutants from seeping into local waterways.

“In Los Angeles, stormwater runoff has been a problem for a very long time,” said George Leddy, Valley adjunct professor of environmental science. “Filtering stormwater drains is critical to conserve coastal aquatic systems. The dog waste creates a lot of coliform bacteria that makes surfers and beachgoers sick. The other pollutants take a long time to break down.”

“Construction costs will increase but should be offset by rebates, incentives and long-term savings through conservation of energy and water.”

- Valley website

The project is part of Valley's

larger plan to increase sustainability efforts. Buildings surpassing 7,500 square feet must incorporate “green standards” and be certified by the Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design program. The program certifies buildings that meet environmental standards which benefit students and community members. At least 11 Valley buildings are LEED certified.

“Construction costs will increase but should be offset by rebates, incentives, and long-term savings through conservation of energy and water,” states the college's Revitalizing Valley Bond Program website.

Along with the environmental solutions, the revamped College Road North will include “provisions for security camera surveillance and emergency blue phones.” Emergency blue phones, located in parking lots throughout campus, alert a dispatch center to connect

to local police and fire departments. Usually, the phones will emit a flashing light when in use in order to help passersby and first responders locate the individual in need.

With the completion of the stormwater project on the North end of the road, Valley will move on to its next construction project, College Road South. Located on the same street, this project will include similar measures. The construction will span from March 14 to approximately May 15.

The North and South portions of the road will be closed from March 14 to March 28. Alternative parking for students includes parking Lot A, Lot B and the parking structure on Ethel Avenue. The college's circular driveway on Fulton Avenue will remain open throughout the construction process.

Equal funding needed for adequate accessibility

After the events of Payan v. LACCD, it is clear the district is not doing enough to support disabled students.

NATALIE METCALF
STAFF WRITER

The district needs to provide disabled students with more access to learning resources, as their failed petition to take Payan v. LACCD to the Supreme Court proves their lack of support. The Payan v. LACCD case is crucial to disability rights, as the district wanted the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 to prohibit “disparate impact,” or unintentional discrimination. The case was filed in 2017 by two blind students against the district for not receiving access to textbooks, handouts, websites and other technology needed for disabled students. On Nov. 17, 2017 the district’s lawyers told the federal court to delay the case because the district planned to ask the Supreme Court to take the case. From the beginning, one can assume the district planned to put the ADA on trial. On March 2, the board of trustees voted against the district’s petition to go to the Supreme Court. Many cases of discrima-

tion against disabled students are unintentional which would make it difficult for a disabled student to prove the prejudice was intended. Discrimination can fall under disparate impact if an institution fails to provide ramps and elevators, along with modified class work and resources that are accessible for blind and deaf students. Payan v. LACCD is an important topic for first year student Christina Cannarella, as her son Johnny Hatch – who is a disabled student – attends Valley College. Hatch and Cannarella spoke about a student with disabilities who, before the pandemic, dropped out of Valley. He was not provided with support from one of his professors. Less than 25 percent of college students claim to have a disability. But the number may vary, because it is illegal to ask a student if they have a disability. The Payan v. LACCD verdict was inevitable, as students are reluctant to apply to college because of a lack of resources. In LACCD’s final budget of the academic year, the district will spend \$9 million for all nine colleges on Disabled



VALLEY STAR | ANNETTE M. LESURE
PAYAN- Plaintiffs Portia Mason and Roy Payan attend a Board of Trustees meeting on March 2.

Student Programs and Services. East Los Angeles College and Valley each received \$1.6 million, while West Los Angeles College received \$520,973 and Los Angeles Southwest College received \$568,618. The amount of funding depends on what disability a student has and how many disabled students attend the school. Deaf students report-

edly receive the most money. From 2019 to 2021, the Disabled Student Programs and Services budget has decreased by half a million dollars – from \$8.5 million to \$8 million. The district must provide an equal amount of funding to each campus. This would allow students to gain access to resources they need for their courses and to obtain their degree. Both the disabled community and the district will benefit from this, as they need students enrolled in the nine campuses. Despite the disabilities a student might have, everyone learns and grows at their own pace. Making classes accessible for students with disabilities would ensure inclusivity.

One Way or Another: One question, two opposing viewpoints

The Academy Awards are still significant in our evolving society

Since 1929, film has developed into an evolutionary art as the Oscars are a remarkable part of cultural change.

NATALIE METCALF
STAFF WRITER

The Oscars celebrate the culture of filmmaking today, further shaping the storytelling of tomorrow through highlighting the work of individual artists, encouraging diversity and motivating future generations. For almost 100 years, Hollywood has been celebrating the art of film. The Academy Awards are a tradition in Hollywood and like most traditions, they blossom and evolve. While critics claim that diversity among nominees is lackluster, recent awards have included cultural representation, such as women directors and people of color. At the 2010 Oscars, Kathryn Bigelow became the first woman to win best director for her film, “The Hurt Locker” (2008). This win set the precedent for Chloe Zaho’s win in 2021 for “Nomadland” (2020). “[The Oscars are flawed] but it is still an event designed to celebrate the art and talent of the diverse industry of Hollywood,” said cinema professor and Media Arts Chair Eric Swelstad. This year the remake of “West Side Story” (2021) is nominated for seven Oscars, including best picture, actress in a supporting role, and directing. The films’ casting offers a more accurate portrayal than the original with Rachel Zegler,

a Colombian-American actress, starring as Maria. In the original “West Side Story” (1961), Natalie Wood wasn’t latino and could not accurately portray the main character. With the Oscars long standing tradition, specific casting in Hollywood has evolved. “[The Academy Awards] can be more representative of all the creative cinematic work regardless of the breadth of any piece’s exposure,” said cinema professor Chad Sustin. “This may give us a more accurate depiction of each year’s artistic work.” “Parasite” (2019) became the first foreign language film to win best picture when it took home the coveted award in 2020. In 2021, Youn Yuh-jung became the first Korean to win best supporting actress for her performance in “Minari” (2020). Along with bringing home an Oscar, these artists show that the film world is diverse. The Oscars are not solely about seeing one’s favorite actors and actresses dressed up, it’s about celebrating art in its entirety. Directors, cinematographers, screenwriters, actors, actresses, costume designers, composers and many more artists play an important part in movie magic. One of the main points of watching the Oscars is acknowledging these talents who have collaborated to make something special. Past Academy Awards led to the creation of popular movies today, altering the future of film history. “The Godfather” (1972) inspired future gangster films,

such as “Scarface,” (1983) and “Donnie Brasco” (1997). Without the Oscar’s recognition of “The Godfather” we wouldn’t know of Al Pacino, who is arguably one of the greatest actors of all time. Movies are an important part of human culture, “the big five” – best picture, best director, best actor, best actress and best adapted screenplay – proves the award shows’ relevance. In total three films have won the top five awards, “It Happened One Night” (1934), “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest” (1975) and “Silence of the Lambs” (1991). These films in its release broke boundaries and were loved because of their great artistry. If the Academy Awards did not exist, people wouldn’t recognize these influential pieces of art. “The Oscars are relevant because film is an art,” said Swelstad. “The industry holds up the Oscars as examples of what cinema can achieve.”

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.

It is time to draw the curtain on the Oscars

The award show is an unnecessary mess.

CASSANDRA NAVA
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

What once symbolized a celebration of art and culture has fizzled out into an insignificant event ignored by many. The annual Academy Awards ceremony aims to honor the best films of the previous year through its 24 categories. While some enjoy the grand spectacle, latest statistics have shown a decline in viewership. According to Variety, the 2021 Oscars had the lowest ratings in history at a mere 9.23 million viewers, which was a 51 percent decline from the 2020 ceremony. To combat the issue this year, the academy will not televise eight categories. Even a shortened version of the Oscars will not ease the unbearable pain of watching a room full of self-absorbed celebrities wallow in their wealth at the entertainment industry’s biggest party. The COVID-19 pandemic showed celebrities’ lack of relevance to the culture when the public reflected on what was important in their lives, showcasing stark differences in lifestyles. Celebrities posted on social media while stuck in their mansions as average Americans kept working amidst the chaos, with some industries not privileged enough to work from home. It makes perfect sense as to why the ratings for the gaudy ceremony have lowered each year. Why continue to celebrate a group of people lacking awareness? Similarly, the Oscars remain irrelevant due to their poor in-

clusivity attempts, especially with non-white and female nominees across the board. When nominations were released in 2015, people took to social media to call attention to the lack of diversity with the hashtag #OscarsSoWhite. That year and the following, the categories for “Best Actor” and “Best Actress” were all white nominees. According to Insider, “89 percent of nominations in the past decade went to white people.” It seems as though changes were only made after national outcry, showing that the academy will only succumb to the pressure of righting wrongs if it means higher viewership. Even so, not many changes have been made. Six years after the hashtag came into fruition, Yuh-Jung Youn became the first Korean woman to win an Oscar for best supporting actress for “Minari.” This year, the nominations reveal four actors of color contending for “Best Actress” or “Best Actor.” Audiences should not have to count the actors of color (usually only enough to count on one hand) to make sure each year’s award show is inclusive enough. It should be the norm to have for nominations to include anyone regardless of any other factor other than their performance. All of these issues have shown the irrelevance of the Oscars to the general public. The lack of enthusiasm cannot be attributed to one particular reason, but rather a million little ones, leaving the award show nearly viewerless.

VALLEY VIEW | ARE YOU PLANNING ON WATCHING THE OSCARS THIS YEAR?

TEXT BY NATALIE METCALF
PHOTOS BY JOSE CALLEJAS



“I think when Jimmy Kimmel hosted two years in a row, that killed it for me. I’m not an annual Oscar watcher. Having no host didn’t make any difference. I’ll just get it from the news the day after.”
- MAYA GALAN, SOPHOMORE NURSING



“Maybe. It depends on if I have time. Usually I’m studying or doing my music stuff. I haven’t seen any new movies, mostly old ones.”
- CHRISTOPHER ROBLES-GARAY, FRESHMAN HISTORY



“Yes definitely. My dad’s in the film industry – he’s an editor – and my mom is a producer. I think it is fun to see how everyone is dressed and the different comedy segments.”
- MIA NORLING, FRESHMAN PSYCHOLOGY



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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. Send by Thursday for the following week’s issue.

Jazz Takes The Stage

Drum broomsticks create a smoother sound to the snare and cymbals.



Valley Star | Jeremy Ruiz



Valley Star | Jose Callejas

The double bass is the largest and lowest pitched bow stringed instrument in the modern orchestra.



(L-R) Steve Cotter, Matt Cory, Garrett Smith and Dan Schnelle perform as the Matt Cory Jazz Quartet in the Music Recital Hall of Valley College on Wednesday, March 9. The concert is the second out of 11 free performances that will be held every Wednesday until the end of the spring semester at Valley.

The Matt Cory Jazz Quartet played a free show in the Music Recital Hall on March 9 at Valley College.

ISAAC DEKTOR
MANAGING EDITOR

If it is good enough for Stevie Wonder, then it is good enough for Valley College. A last minute change from piano to trombone left the Matt Cory Jazz quartet having to improvise, yet the four musicians did not miss a beat.

Garrett Smith, who has toured with Stevie Wonder and other renowned musicians, took the place of pianist Josh Nelson, who could not perform due to personal reasons. Whether it was excellent sight reading, a common musical vocabulary or both, the quartet operated like a well-oiled machine despite having only an hour to rehearse. Valley's Music Recital Hall was more than half vacant when Cory's group took the stage, with a few stragglers taking their seats as the band leader counted out the rhythm. From the moment the first note was played, all fifteen audience members were captivated by the free show.

The quartet's ability to think on their feet was on display when, halfway through the show, Music Department Chair Christian Nova handed them a card with a written description, from which they improvised a song. After the show, the audience speculated about the content of the card. No one guessed that it said "a lonely owl under a crying moon."

With different performers taking the stage each week, Valley's free spring concert series presents a wide variety of musical genres. The Kadima String Quartet will be playing on March 16 and a faculty concert will take place on March 23. All shows take place in the Music Recital Hall and are available via livestream.

Read the full story at The Valley Star website.



Valley Star | Jose Callejas
Bassist Matt Cory, leader of the Matt Cory Jazz Quartet, performs a solo.



Valley Star | Jeremy Ruiz
Drummer Dan Schnell has played beside Matt Cory previously in a trio that performed Chet Bakers "I Fall In Love Too Easily."



Valley Star | Jeremy Ruiz

Guitarist Steve Cotter holds a masters degree in jazz studies from North Texas University. Cotter played in the One O'Clock band, a Grammy nominated jazz ensemble.



Valley Star | Griffin O'Rourke

Garrett Smith, trombonist and faculty member at LA College of Music, has toured with Stevie Wonder and Christina Aguilera.

Monarchs mount back-to-back comeback wins against Oxnard



PRODUCING- Valley freshman infielder Katelyn Santisteban gets ready to hit against Oxnard. Santisteban tallied three hits, three runs and five RBIs during both victories versus the Condors on March 8.

Valley softball pulled off its second and third-highest scoring games of the season, stringing together hits to come away with victories.

EDWARD SEGAL
VALLEY LIFE EDITOR

Entering the doubleheader on a seven-game losing streak, the Monarchs fell behind in both legs of the affair, but found a spark thanks to two of their highest-scoringinnings of the season. Racking up seven runs in the last five games, Valley College softball (4-12) entered March 16 's contest in an offensive slump. Condors' centerfielder/pitcher Rylee McDaniel buried three home runs for Oxnard College (0-10), but Valley found an answer to her hitting threat. Every Monarch hitter shared the wealth at the plate, stringing together hits throughout the afternoon to pick up two confidence-boosting victories before conference play. "I've never been involved in a game where the other team scored in five out of seven innings and we scored in one out of six and won the game," said Valley head coach Greg Venger after the second contest. "I thought the best part in that nine-run inning was that there were competitive at-bats, walks and hits more so than the other team's mistakes." The Condors put runs on the board from the get-go, with McDaniel's first moonshot carrying them to a 3-0 lead. Multiple catches in the top of third from sophomore centerfielder Elizabeth Flores and freshman left fielder Lexus Freire prevented the Condors from adding to their lead with runners on base. In the bottom of the third, freshman right fielder Tatiana Williams hit a single to lead off the inning, taking third on two wild pitches. Sophomore pitcher Sidney Hernandez walked and stole second, allowing Freire to send a double sailing into center field and drive home both runners. "[It] feels good, because after [the double], the team's

energy went up," said Freire after game one. "After [winning] we are known for losing energy, so we needed to be humble and keep our energy up." Valley's offense kept rolling, as freshman infielder Citlali Mendez sacrifice bunted Freire to third. Two more walks gave the Monarchs loaded bases, providing a perfect opportunity to take the lead. Freshman infielder Katelyn Santisteban launched a pitch into the left field gap for a three-RBI double, giving Valley a two-run lead. After advancing to third on a fielder's choice, the infielder reached home on a single from freshman pitcher Jessica Lopez. All nine Monarchs had successful at-bats in the third as Valley had one of its largest-scoringinnings of the season, draining the energy out of their opposition. Freshman shortstop Tña Carbajal tacked on another run in the fifth, hitting a double into right field and scoring on a double from Lopez.

"After [winning] we are known for losing energy, so we needed to be humble and keep our energy up."
- Freshman left fielder Lexus Freire

through 14 innings, along with two runs and an RBI. To start game two, McDaniel hit her third home run of the doubleheader to put Oxnard up 1-0. After tacking on two more runs in the third, the Condors loaded the bases with no outs in the fourth, but freshman pitcher Amber Basham finished the job, allowing only one more run and walking McDaniel before she could do any more damage. Trying to spark another comeback, Santisteban sent a line drive single into center field. After two walks to load the bases, Hernandez hit a single into left field to score Santisteban, as the deficit shrunk to three. Williams got her second hit of the doubleheader, finding the left-center gap on a line drive single to score two more runs, cutting the deficit to one. "Honestly, I was a little stressed at first because I had two strikes and no balls, but in my head I was just like, we have full bases, I have to hit," said Williams. "It was kind of like I knew I had to do it, and that last ball, I just had to get a piece of it." Freire walked to load the bases, moving the winning run into scoring position. After a force out at home, Lopez found the right-field gap to score two more runners and give Valley the lead. Carbajal solidified another six-run inning for Valley when she drove in an RBI on a hit to center, setting up Santisteban with two runners on. The infielder hit a line-drive triple into right field, scoring two more to give the Monarchs an 8-4 lead. Elizabeth Flores tacked on one more, scoring Santisteban on a groundout, to make this Valley's highest-scoringinning of the season. Oxnard made it close, adding three runs before falling 9-7. The Monarchs could be heard celebrating louder than ever from their dugout, winning back-to-back games for the first time this campaign.



VALLEY STAR | JOSE CALLEJAS

FOCUSED- Valley College freshman left fielder Lexus Freire eyes home from third base against Oxnard. Freire finished with one hit, two runs and two RBIs through both games.



SCORE- Valley College shortstop Téa Carbajal slides into home plate and scores one of her three runs of the day, beating the wild throw to put the Monarchs up 5-3 in the third inning of game one against Oxnard. Carbajal had with four hits and one RBI through both duels.

Valley's offensive efforts are not enough against the Cougars

Despite Dorian Asher's third home run of the season, Valley could not keep the Cougars at bay, dropping the season series 2-1.

NICHOLAS OROZCO
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

A high-scoring bout in game three of Valley College's series against College of the Canyons ended in heartbreak for the Monarchs after a troubled ninth inning performance from freshman pitcher/center fielder Jackson Lapiner. Splitting the first two games on Tuesday and Thursday, the Monarchs (12-7, 1-2 WSC South) found themselves in position to take game three against the Cougars (8-10, 2-1 WSC South) late into the contest. Valley held a lead heading into the eighth, however, the conference foes battled back and Canyons eventually came out victorious, defeating the Monarchs 12-9. "We knew it was going to be a tough one and we knew they could swing [the bat]," said coach Dave Mallas. "Their numbers are as good as anyone's in the state. They handed us a few opportunities offensively and we just returned the favor." Forced to use the bullpen early after sophomore lefty Isaac Amador was chased from the ballgame, the Monarchs relied upon freshman pitchers Xavier Dubon, Josh Eigenbrodt, Edric Rodriguez, Andrew Howe, as well as freshman outfielders Lapiner and Joshua Wood to clean up against the Cougars. Canyons took an early lead against Amador as consecutive hits drove in a solo run in each of the first two frames. In the top of the third, the left-hander walked in a run with the bases loaded, allowing the Cougars to take a 3-2 lead. Freshman righty Xavier Dubon relieved Amador following the run-scoring walk to try and limit damage.



RELIEVED- Valley College sophomore left-hander Isaac Amador pitches against College of the Canyons on Saturday. Amador exited his start after 2.0 innings, allowing four hits and four earned runs.

"I am just trying to help my team as much and however I can."
- Freshman left fielder Dorian Asher

MOONSHOT- Valley College freshman left fielder Dorian Asher swings during Saturday's game against College of the Canyons. Asher hit a three-run home run against the Cougars.



VALLEY STAR | GRIFFIN O'ROURKE

Dubon struck out two batters and induced a ground out, only allowing one more run — also from a walk. Valley's Saturday starter hurled only 2.0 innings, striking out one batter while allowing four hits, four earned runs, two walks and two hit batters in his brief stint on the mound. After falling behind in the first two innings, the Monarchs quicklybattledbackintotheaffair. Freshman third baseman Lee Brandzel began his day with a single in the top of the second. He was brought home when freshman right fielder Josh Wood hit a bloop single that pushed between the third baseman and outfielders in left field. Keeping the line moving, freshman left fielder Dorian Asher hit a single through the left side, scoring Wood to tie the game at two. Down 4-2 in the bottom of the third, freshman second baseman Manolo Taffola reached first on a single and stole second thereafter. The Cougars' battery was not on the same page, causing two wild pitches and allowing Taffola to score, shrinking the deficit to one. "Put up a crooked number," coach Dave Mallas said to the bench while acting as first base coach. With bases loaded in the bottom of the fifth, the Monarchs did just that. Tying the game at four with a Brandzel single to left field, Wood joined the action and continued the rally with an RBI groundout to first base, giving Valley the 5-4 advantage over Canyons. Asher topped off the inning with a bang and Mallas received his wish, when the righty lifted a three-run home run well over the scoreboard in left-center, making the score 8-4. With the no-doubt-

er, the Monarchs' left fielder had his third home run of the season. "I am just trying to help my team as much and however I can," said Asher. "Going into the at-bat, there was two strikes on the count. I tried to not let the moment get away from me. [The Cougars' pitcher] hung a curveball and I made good contact on it." However, the Cougars did not give up, tacking on runs through RBI groundouts in the sixth, seventh and eighth, and scoring two more runs on bloop singles that evaded the reach of Taffola in short-right field. Canyons' three inning rally pushed the Cougars ahead 9-8 entering the bottom of the eighth. Valley promptly tied it up when freshman pinch-runner Cary Thames took second on a wild pitch, and later scored on a groundout. Despite Valley's late efforts, Lapiner moved from center field to the mound in the top of the ninth and could not find an exit to the frame. The righty struck out one batter, but allowed three runs on two singles and a double — giving the Cougars a 12-9 lead and the eventual victory.

Next Games

Today vs Citrus

March 18 @ Citrus

March 22 vs Bakersfield