

# EVPLA holds voter registration event in Isla Vista



A.S. External Vice President for Local Affairs (EVPLA) Osaze Osayande and I Vote volunteers pose for a group photo at the event.

Devin Gowdy  
Staff Writer

The Associated Students Office of the External Vice President for Local Affairs hosted a voter registration event on Feb. 9 in the Isla Vista Community Center in preparation for election day on March 5.

The “IV: I Vote” registration drive featured guest speaker California 19th District State Senator Monique Limón, representatives from various campus organizations, clothing vendors, food stands and live music from local bands Cordoba and Lizardsmouth. The first 100 attendees also received free Yetz’s Bagels.

Fourth-year psychological & brain sciences major and External Vice President for Local Affairs (EVPLA) Osaze

Osayande organized the event along with EVPLA staff and other campus groups.

“I thought this would be a great opportunity to encourage students to understand the importance of voting,” Osayande said. “So that’s why we wanted to bring Monique Limón, for example, and a couple of people from the [Community Services District] as well.”

In previous years, the event focused on voter education instead of registration. Osayande emphasized that providing information to voters was important, but she wanted to get people actually registered to vote.

“This is the start of a very important election year, and I think it’s important for college students to come out and vote,” Osayande said. “I really wanted there to be an opportunity for

people to get registered at the event, which is why I reached out to Gaucho Vote Coalition.”

The campus organizations in attendance included UCSB Campus Democrats, Associated Students Lobby Corps, the Gaucho Vote Coalition and the California Public Interest Research Group (CALPIRG), among others. Many of these organizations had voter registration efforts of their own, such as canvassing and voter registration.

First-year environmental studies major and CALPIRG Chapter Chair Sierra Ferrante said CALPIRG’s efforts focused on increasing civic engagement.

“We have the New Voters Project as part of our organization, which is the oldest nonpartisan youth voter initiative in the country,” Ferrante said. “Young people are one of the lowest voting demographics, and that shouldn’t be. We should be heard in our democracy.”

The Gaucho Vote Coalition registered people to vote for the duration of the event.

Second-year political science and economics double major and Gaucho Vote Coalition intern Byron Chan explained the importance of civic engagement in Isla Vista.

“The local elections, in my opinion, are a little more important because your voice has more impact because less people tend to vote in the local elections, which means that your individual vote matters a lot. And the local measures affect you more directly,” Chan said.

Limón explained during her

Voter Registration p.4

# UCSB love stories



Pricila Flores  
Editor in Chief  
Lauren Chiou  
Artsweek Editor  
Stella Mullin  
Artsweek Editor



The Daily Nexus conducted a social media form calling out for UC Santa Barbara couples that met on campus and are still together. Here are their stories.



Jody Weverka '84 & Philip Weverka '84

Jody and Philip Weverka met in their freshman year at UC Santa Barbara on the fourth floor in San Nicolas Residence Hall, living right down the hall from one another in 1980.

“We actually believe we met on the first day of move-in day. We don’t remember seeing each other, but we both went to McConnell’s ice cream with the RA that evening,” said Jody.

Phil was a philosophy major and went on to law school post-graduation. Jody was an English major, also attending graduate school and later became a high school English teacher for 36 years.

During their time at UCSB, the two used to take Sunday walks out to Campus Point, an iconic campus viewpoint.

“I think that was our first kiss. A sunset in January,” Jody said.

The two dated all throughout college (with a brief moment apart during their second year), eventually graduating together in 1984.

“We had a long courtship,” Phil said. “We didn’t get married until five years after we graduated. And we each went to grad school during that time but stayed a couple.”

“I think you have to give yourself time to grow together or grow apart,” Jody said. “It’s pretty rare to meet somebody when you’re 18, and I was actually 17. And to find that your life philosophies remain the same, along with your paths, goals and experiences.”

Love was in the air in Isla Vista, as Jody’s roommate ended up eventually marrying Phil’s roommate.

“They weren’t together in college. They were of course really good friends that we hung out with all the time. And they turned into our lifelong friends,” Jody said.

“We’re all friends! Phil’s friends are my friends. My friends are Phil’s friends. I think that’s pretty cool all these years later to have this thing we shared,” added Jody. “I think it was a pretty great place to be 20.”

The two bonded over their shared interests but also introduced one another to new things. For Jody, Phil introduced her to music. For Phil, Jody introduced him to baseball.

“I think it was important that we each had time to pursue our own interests and experiences and also share some of them. I think that has been the case for more than 40 years,” she continued.

After graduating in 1984, the two traveled together for six months in Europe, which is when Jody realized that Phil could be the one.

“We gave ourselves the chance to have some challenges together. We could see in which ways we could complement one another and work through some of those stresses,” Jody said.

“I feel like we came out pretty well on the other side,” she continued. “I think we still like each other.”

UCSB continues to have a large impact on the Weverkas’ lives. Their son attended UCSB as well and is currently a graduate student in ecology, evolution, and marine biology.

“Every time we see anybody wearing Gaucho gear, we always comment on it,” Phil said.

After all of these years, the pair’s bond continues to grow stronger.

“We complement each other. Our individual strengths help build our mutual relationship,” Phil said. Jody and Phil wed in 1989.



Kenechukwu Mmeje '02 & Natasha Mmeje '02

Kenechukwu (K.C.) and Natasha’s chemistry began in general chemistry. And before that, they lived 15 miles away from each other in Southern California without even knowing each other. Having mutual friends, they all sat in the same area for lectures which opened the door to a connection. They often studied as a group and shared notes.

But, they had both come to UC Santa Barbara with partners. They both broke up with their partners during Thanksgiving time – what they call the “turkey drop”. Being single, it allowed for them to connect on a different level.

Soon after their first date was a National Association for the Advancement of Colored People dance. They dressed up and went to the ball in a rented car.

The couple credits their friends as having a pivotal role in their getting together.

“They were passing messages saying, ‘hey he wants to ask you,’ and it was two weeks out, so I was like, ‘I don’t know I guess it is not happening,’ but he came to my dorm and asked me to go to the dance and I said ‘yes.’”

During their undergraduate time at UCSB, they look back to out-of-the-classroom experiences where they spent time together in the same organizations. Natasha was a member of Delta Sigma Theta and K.C. was a member of Alpha Phi Alpha and the two often did events together.

“We were kids when we got together, we were 18 and we kinda grown up and sometimes we grew apart, but we always found ourselves back together in the different stages of our lives,” Natasha said. “Be patient because if love is really there, it will always come back to you.”

After graduation, the couple went through long distance while K.C. completed his master’s degree in Vermont. Natasha later joined him in Vermont to pursue a job opportunity.

They then faced the possibility of long distance again when Natasha wished to pursue a master’s degree in Southern California.

“To preserve a relationship, it is going to require you to step out on faith. You are not going to know what the next step is, but you have to have some degree of confidence,” K.C. said.

They wed in Southern California in 2006 after being together since 1998.

Natasha and K.C. have been together for 26 years, 18 of those spent married. They now live in Dallas with two teenage daughters.

UCSB Love Stories p.8

# Year of the Dragon: Students celebrating Lunar New Year away from home



For many students, Lunar New Year consists of a shared meal with loved ones.

Melody Xu  
Reporter

As the Year of the Dragon commenced last week with the onset of the Lunar New Year, UC Santa Barbara students reflected on how they celebrated the holiday away from home.

Lunar New Year marks the beginning of the new year, according to the lunar calendar, and is celebrated predominantly across Asian cultures through a variety of traditions.

Third-year computer science major Sophia Tran, the cultural education chair

of the Vietnamese Student Association (VSA), engages in Vietnamese culture on campus through the club. Its annual “Tết Week” leading up to the new year consisted of traditional gambling games, karaoke night and spring roll-making this year.

“Everyone comes from different backgrounds when we come to college and it’s very much away from home, so VSA is there to be a community for people where it’s a home away from home,” Tran said. “In hosting these events, it’s bringing back our culture from what we grew up with. Bringing

it and sharing it with our newfound friends.”

Tran said that at home, Lunar New Year would bring her family together for a potluck with traditional Vietnamese foods such as fruit cocktail “chè thái” and rice cake “bánh tét.” Red envelopes would then be presented and a gambling game would commence.

“We basically do a feast and then the elders will give red envelopes to the younger children,” Tran said. “Then we do the gambling game ... with

Lunar New Year p.4

# Vista Point: Weekly goings-on in and around Isla Vista

Asumi Shuda  
Lead News Editor

## Women’s Center presents “Galentine’s Day”

The Women’s Center is hosting a “Galentine’s Day” on Thursday, Feb. 15, from 2-4 p.m. at the Women’s Center Lounge.

“Join us at the Women’s Center for our Galentine’s Day, as we celebrate love in all its forms,” the Shoreline description read. “Come enjoy FREE snacks and drinks while we facilitate discussions and partake in fun activities.”

Cookies, cupcakes and lemonade will be provided. Prospective participants are encouraged to RSVP for the event on Shoreline.

## Student Veterans Club hosts pizza, game night

The Student Veterans Club is continuing its biweekly pizza and game nights starting on Thursday, Feb. 15, from 4-7 p.m. at the Veterans Resource Center.

“Join fellow veterans, dependents, military-affiliated, and military-interested folks for a chill evening of hot pizza, warm cookies, cold drinks, and fun games,” the Shoreline description read.

Pizza, cookies and drinks will be provided.

## Asian Resource Center hosts Lunar New Year celebration

The Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIDA) Living Learning Community is hosting a Lunar New Year celebration on Thursday, Feb. 15, from 4-6 p.m. at the Asian Resource Center in the Student Resource Building (SRB).

“Join our Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIDA) students in celebration of Lunar New Year,” the Shoreline description read. “Enjoy food from APIDA culture such as boba tea and spam musubi.”

Participants can enter a prize giveaway by partaking in the activities of the event.

## MultiCultural Center presents “Black Flea Market”

The MultiCultural Center (MCC) is hosting its second annual Black Flea Market on Thursday, Feb. 15, from 6-8 p.m. at the MCC Lounge.

In collaboration with the Office of Black Student Development, the event will feature food, music and vendors.

“This event will celebrate all the Black magical essence and royalty present during Black History Month,” the Shoreline description read. “Join us for a fun filled evening consisting of FREE goody bags for the soul, body, mind, and spirit – delicious soul food, music, talented Black creatives and entrepreneurs, and the best of vibes while in community with one another.”

## Health & Wellness hosts Gumbo Workshop

Health & Wellness is hosting a Gumbo Workshop in celebration of Creole culture on Friday, Feb. 16, from 4-6 p.m. at the SRB Multipurpose Room. Participants will learn how to cook gumbo.

“This Louisiana classic is a traditional stew and a hearty and healthy option on a chilly evening,” the Shoreline description read.

## Resource Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity presents “Coming Out Monologues”

The Resource Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity (RCSGD) is hosting its longtime “Coming Out Monologues” on Friday, Feb. 16, from 6-8 p.m. at the MCC Theater.

“The Coming Out Monologues are for more than just sharing your coming out stories, they’re also an open space to share your experience as a queer person in any form you see fit: spoken word, music, dance, however you express yourself on stage,” the Shoreline description read.

Performers are encouraged to sign-up prior to taking the stage.

## Interdisciplinary Humanities Center organizes live Rocky Horror Picture Show

The Interdisciplinary Humanities Center is hosting a Rocky Horror Picture Show with a live shadow cast on Friday, Feb. 16, at 10 p.m. at the Isla Vista Theater.

“Magic Lantern Films presents the horror-comedy Rocky Horror Picture Show,” the Shoreline description read.

## Sikh Student Association hosts two-day pop-up market

The Sikh Student Association is hosting a pop-up market on Tuesday, Feb. 20, to Thursday, Feb. 22, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Lot 22 Lawn.

“Vendors will be displaying their creation in efforts to fundraise for Stella Polaris,” the Shoreline description read.

## Walter H. Capps Center hosts lecture with Stanford professor

The Walter H. Capps Center is hosting a lecture with Stanford University Professor Lerone A. Martin on Tuesday, Feb. 20, from 5-6:30 p.m. at the MCC Theater.

Titled “The Gospel of J. Edgar Hoover: How the FBI Aided and Abetted the Rise of White Christian Nationalism,” the lecture will discuss the professor’s recent book.

“His research draws on thousands of newly declassified FBI documents, including a civil lawsuit against the US Department of Justice for FBI files on Billy Graham,” the Shoreline description read. “In this talk, Martin transforms how we understand the FBI, white evangelicalism, and our nation’s entangled history of religion and politics.”

## UCSB Capital Internship Program hosts UCDC Student Panel

The UCSB Capital Internship Program is hosting a student panel on the UC Washington Center (UCDC) internship program on Wednesday, Feb. 21, from 4-5 p.m. at the Student Affairs and Administrative Services Building room 2201.

Free food will be provided.



Sindhu Ananthavel  
Lead News Editor

## Shots fired at UC Berkeley Lower Sproul Plaza

A suspect non-affiliated with campus fired several gunshots at UC Berkeley’s Lower Sproul Plaza on Friday night, Feb. 9, according to the Daily Californian.

UC Berkeley dance organization AFX Dance was practicing in the plaza when the suspect arrived on a motorcycle and demanded the students turn the music down and give him a phone charger, the Daily Cal reported. When he became more agitated, students called the police, and the man pulled out a gun and fired it in the air at 8:40 p.m.

A shelter-in-place was lifted at 9:50 p.m. after the suspect was detained. Although no one was injured, a bullet shattered a window in Eshleman Hall. Officials did not confirm the exact number of shots fired, but several outlets estimated it to be three to nine.

The suspect was identified by campus spokesperson Janet Gilmore as a 59-year-old male unaffiliated with campus. He will be charged with possession of a loaded firearm and negligent

discharge of a firearm, according to the Daily Cal.

## UC San Diego UAW 2865 rallies to support international postdoc worker released from position

UC San Diego UAW 2865 members rallied at UC San Diego Health on Jan. 26 in support of Suresh Madheswaran, an international postdoc worker who was released from his position in November, the UCSD Guardian reported.

Madheswaran is a postdoc with research interests in tumor immunology, and moved from India to UCSD after being promised long-term appointment by his principal investigator (PI), according to the UCSD Guardian. His initial one-year contract was extended until Jan. 2025 after positive performance reviews, but on Nov. 13, his PI informed him over Zoom that he was to be immediately released from his position with no warning.

The termination notice occurred seven days after the birth of his child and began the one-month notice before termination of employment. After, there is a one-month grace period before he must leave the country in February and separate from his wife and child. The university officially stated his termination

was due to a lack of funding, the UCSD Guardian reported.

The union held its first rally on Jan. 17, demanding the university extend Madheswaran’s visa and call for better job security. Following the rally, a tentative deal for Madheswaran to keep a temporary position at the university and thus remain in the U.S. was abruptly struck down by UCSD Human Resources, prompting the most recent sit-in.

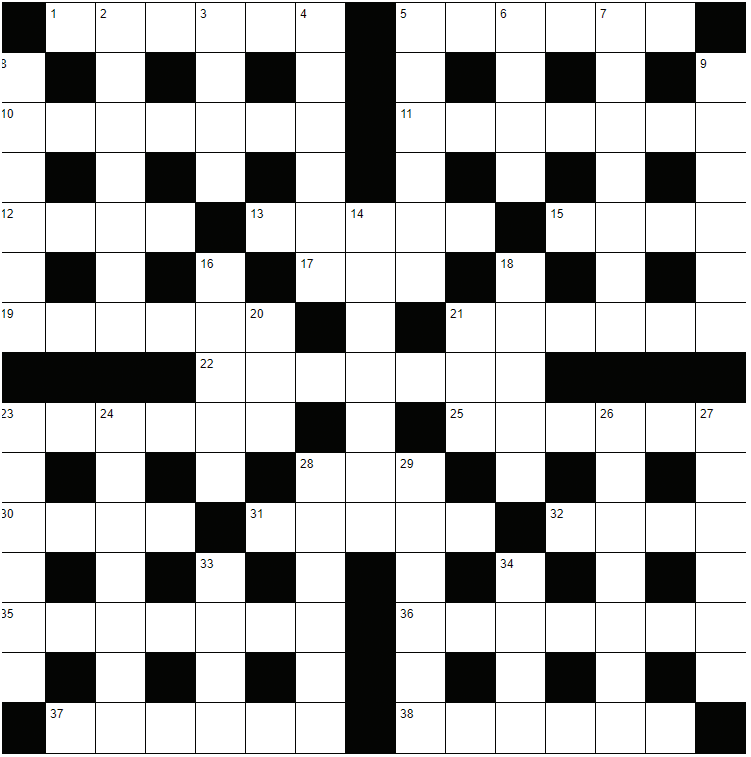
Two hours into the Jan. 26 sit-in, UCSD Health CEO Patty Maysent agreed to meet with Madheswaran and UAW representative Srividya Ganapathy. Madheswaran was told the original deal would not go through as it would set a precedent the university anticipated international postdoc workers would exploit.

UCSD representatives confirmed to the UCSD Guardian, however, that they would hold Madheswaran’s visa until March 1.

As of Feb. 11, Madheswaran has been unable to secure a position. UCSD holding his visa allows him to volunteer at any other non-university affiliated organization or institution, but does not give any long-term solutions.

UAW continues to support him in his search.

# The Daily Nexus Crossword



Angelina Song  
Asst. Data Editor

## ACROSS

- Commonly eaten for breakfast – often with milk
- The great outdoors
- To be defenseless, with no weapons
- To \_\_\_\_ one’s thumbs (be idle)
- NaCl
- When a tree is abundantly green
- Parts of a play
- Foxes are often described as such
- To have made a rotation
- Capital city of Germany
- To submit monetary sums in

a bank account

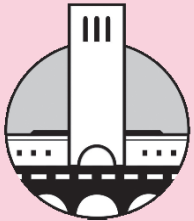
- The art of creation, decoration and more
- Big group of people who live in an area, who may or may not share similar cultures
- A gesture of respect
- Rescuing someone
- A colloquial term that has been adopted to be used as an affirmation of someone else’s statement
- “Tell her to call me \_\_\_\_ – it’s an emergency”
- Often done by burglars, pirates, incoming armies and stray cats
- When waves recede quickly at the beach, often associated with an earthquake

- Who raised you?
- The entire purpose of fidget spinners

## DOWN

- Often the counterpart in a narcissistic relationship
- “Beef,” “Succession” and “The Bear” won this award
- \_\_\_\_ and gentlemen, welcome to the 76th Hunger Games.”
- When electronics bear news for the recipient
- A psychedelic experience
- The group who beheaded Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette in 1793
- Isla Vista at 5 p.m.
- The addition of salt, pepper, paprika, cloves, etc.
- A neurotoxin, but consumed regardless
- A pooled investment fund, often managed by someone
- Steel
- Where the lion sleeps
- Trash and recycling \_\_\_\_
- To want
- Scattered grassland biome
- Noodles will claim they are this but they actually take 3-5 minutes to make
- Square piece of soft, folded paper used when eating
- Picnic \_\_\_\_
- Counterpart to the season Megan Thee Stallion claimed
- Organism that does not produce eggs
- Head, shoulders and chest

Crossword answers can be found on our website [dailynexus.com](http://dailynexus.com).



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# Family Literacy Program hosts its first Lunar New Year event



The Community Affairs Board's Family Literacy Program hosted the event at the I.V. Community Center.

**Alissa Orozco**  
*Reporter*

The Community Affairs Board Family Literacy Program hosted its first-ever Lunar New Year event for local K-12 students on Saturday, Feb. 10, at the Isla Vista Community Center.

Family Literacy Program (FLP) is a branch of UC Santa Barbara's Community Affairs Board (C.A.B.) which provides access to free, high-quality tutoring to local K-12 students from UCSB student volunteers. The event was open to the entire community, with several crafts and activities mirroring the

holiday's traditions. Children were provided red envelopes embedded with gold dragons to hold their crafts – red symbolizing good luck and fortune. The program also provided children's books that explained the history and significance of the Lunar New Year, a holiday that marks the first full moon calendar and is widely celebrated across Asia. "[The] goal is spreading cultural awareness and education surrounding this holiday," FLP co-coordinator Arnold Johnson said in a statement to the Daily Nexus. Johnson noted that outreach

for the event was difficult, speaking to the large size of both the Goleta Union School District and Santa Barbara Unified School District making lines of communication stretch thin. "I've had difficulty spreading the word and reaching good contacts in the school systems," Johnson said. However, the event was successful among the youth in the community, according to Johnson. The program hosted children and parents from at least six different elementary schools. "I think we reached most of the families through a district Friday Flyer," Johnson said. "But the dragon crafts were a hit and the families were very excited to hear about future events from C.A.B. as well as our Family Literacy Program tutoring." FLP hosts weekly tutoring sessions at the Isla Vista Community Center on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5-6 p.m. Additionally, the program is holding a children's book fair in Corwin Pavilion as part of C.A.B.'s annual Volunteer Week in the spring.

# Gauchos Go Green hosts sustainable Valentine's Day cardmaking



Participants created cards using recycled arts and crafts supplies sourced from the Art From Scrap Creative ReUse Store.

**Michael Zhang**  
*Reporter*

Gauchos Go Green hosted a sustainable Valentine's Day crafts session on Saturday, Feb. 10, at Sea Lookout Park. From 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., participants created cards using recycled arts and crafts supplies sourced from the Art From Scrap Creative ReUse Store, a thrift store for art supplies located in downtown Santa Barbara. Around 20 attendees selected from a variety of materials including cards, markers, beads and doilies. Fourth-year political science major, Gauchos Go Green events chair and lead organizer of the event Amanda Bennett said her main goal was to reuse recycled materials while celebrating the holiday. "There's a lot of waste with Valentine's Day and a lot of plastic pollution," Bennett said. "Valentines on sale that ultimately never get sold just get dumped, so I wanted to get materials from thrift stores that have already been

recycled once and recycle them again." The Valentines maker's market aligns with the organization's broader goals to promote environmental consciousness through a collaborative effort. "We do a lot of educational events, like on how to compost or reduce your energy output ... to raise awareness on how to live sustainability or to promote it, in general," Bennett said. Formerly known as Greeks Go Green, Gauchos Go Green regularly hosts local activities and education programs on sustainability as well as coordinates with the National Panhellenic Conference and Interfraternity Council to help establish Greek chapter houses as "green certified." This is a distinguishment given by the Santa Barbara County Green Business Program as a part of the wider California Green Business Network upon chapters meeting sustainability standards, which mandate energy efficiency and water conservation standards within Greek chapter houses.

# SBCC student arrested in I.V. for robbery, assault



The 19-year-old was arrested in connection with a disturbance that took place on the 66 block of Sabado Tarde Road.

**Alex Levin**  
*University News Editor*

The Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office arrested a Santa Barbara City College student on Sunday, Feb. 11, at 2:40 a.m. for robbery, conspiracy and assault causing great bodily injury. The perpetrator, 19-year-old Christian Guarascio, was arrested in connection with a disturbance that took place on the 66 block of Sabado Tarde Road, where deputies learned that suspects "attacked a victim and stole property from his person," according to Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office (SBSO) Public Information Officer Raquel Zick. SBSO deputies recognized Guarascio – who matched the description of one of the suspects from the crime – on the 65 block of Del Playa Drive. Guarascio was charged with three felonies of robbery in the first degree, conspiracy and assault with force likely to cause great bodily injury. He was released on a \$100,000 bail on Feb. 11 at 12:54 p.m.

# SAKE BOMBING!

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# Financial Crisis Response Team announces new housing resource

Asumi Shuda  
Lead News Editor

The UC Santa Barbara Financial Crisis Response Team is providing low-income undergraduate students with grants to pay housing costs for 2024-25. The Security Deposit Program is available to undergraduate students who are currently enrolled in six units or more and “demonstrate financial need,” according to a press release by the Financial Crisis Response Team (FCRT). California Dream Act students and international students are also eligible for the grant – two student

populations that historically receive few financial resources from the university, primarily due to limited employment options. The resource will also provide the opportunity for reimbursement on security deposits paid after Jan. 1, if eligibility criteria are met. The FCRT assists UCSB students who are “facing significant financial difficulties that jeopardize their path to graduation through emergency funding and resource connection,” according to its program outline. The Nexus will continue to report on this topic as more information becomes available.

## LUNAR NEW YEAR

our New Year’s money.” Since leaving home for college, Tran has found different ways to celebrate each year. While she said her parents visited for the holiday last year, Tran celebrated by helping out with T t Week before heading to a T t festival in Southern California. “I’m going to Orange County with my friends,” Tran said. “There’s an organization of VSAs around Southern California, and every year they do this festival called T t Festival.” People find different ways to celebrate from college, Tran said, though many end up returning home for the weekend. “I’ve talked to my other friends about what they do for Lunar New Year in college, and I’ve gotten mixed reviews,” Tran said. “Some of my friends will just go home, I’m always like ‘Oh my gosh, you’re going back home to the Bay for one weekend?’ ... One of my friends said she doesn’t get the red envelopes unless she goes home ... The cost-benefit for paying for the flight – it benefits her more. I thought that was really funny.” For fourth-year art student Haoran Jiang, celebrating Lunar New Year at college meant gathering with his friends and cooking Chinese food, mirroring the family gathering he would have back home. “The atmosphere is not that great,” Jiang said. “Because in China we usually celebrate with our family, but my family’s not here.”

Fourth-year computer science student Steven Choi, President of the Korean Language Club also celebrated this year with traditional food. “What my family and I would do, we would eat this food called tteokguk, which is sliced rice cake soup,” Choi said. “Basically, it’s a tradition you do every year if you eat it, it’s basically for good luck for the year and you gain an age. And, yeah, I don’t really get to eat the food that often so it’s pretty nice to feel like home.” This year, Choi celebrated with the UCSB community by planning a Lunar New Year Social on Feb. 9 in the MultiCultural Center Lounge. Choi said that his club collaborated with Korean music and pop culture club Seoul’d Out to host the event and share Korean traditions for the new year. “Most people these days, they’re probably interested in some form of Korean culture like K-pop or new Korean music, or Korean shows,” Choi said. “We want to dive a little bit deeper, show people the Korean traditions that date back a long time ago – what Koreans and other Asian cultures do on Lunar New Year.” Whether at school or home, Choi said Lunar New Year is about family. “To me, Korean Lunar New Year is just a period of time where you can spend with your family and close ones and eat tteokguk and maybe play some traditional Korean games,” Choi said. “Mostly just for being close with your family and loved ones.”

## VOTER REGISTRATION

Continued from p.1


speech that voting is about expressing your personal values. “There is probably no elected official that I know of who votes the way that everybody wants them to vote, but you do think of elected officials who have your values,” Limón said. Limón further stressed the importance of voting in the upcoming election. “I think for me, as an elected official, not only do I see the importance of making sure that a lot of voices go [to] the ballot

box so that we know who they want to elect but that a lot of people go [to] the ballot box so that we know what’s important to voters. You’re not just voting on candidates; you actually have measures as well,” Limón said. After her speech, Limón opened the floor for questions. She responded to questions about homelessness, housing, police and labor protections, explaining what she has done to address these issues on the state level and what the public can

do to address these issues in the upcoming election. “One of the things you’re going to get a chance to vote on is Proposition 1. That is going to be on the March 5 ballot, and that is going to be a reflection of how our communities in the state of California feel related to helping to support more mental health services for our communities,” Limón said. The deadline to register to vote for the March 5 primary elections is Feb. 20.



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# Los Angeles Times Columnist Gustavo Arellano receives Luis Leal Award for his journalistic work



Arellano has authored four books in addition to his Los Angeles Times satire column, “¡Ask a Mexican!”

**Grace Medeck**  
*Reporter*

Los Angeles Times journalist Gustavo Arellano received the Luis Leal Award for Distinction in Chicano/Latino Literature on Feb. 7 for his work as a journalist, columnist and reporter.

The Southern California native’s work over the years includes personal stories about discovery as a Latino man growing up in Orange County with two Mexican-immigrant parents and answering questions from Mexican American readers about cultural identity in his Los Angeles Times satire column, “¡Ask a Mexican!”

Most notably, Arellano emphasized that he is not afraid to tell stories that make people uncomfortable.

“I try to tell stories that say something about Southern California right now,” Arellano said. “But I don’t shy away from things that I might not agree with.”

Despite writing for the Los Angeles Times for five years from December 2018 to the present and working

as a columnist for three years, from 2021 to now, journalism wasn’t always Arellano’s calling.

He received his bachelor of arts degree in film studies from Chapman University in 2001 and said he hoped to become a professor after receiving his master’s degree for Latin American Studies at UCLA. It wasn’t until he wrote a fake angry letter to the editor in response to an article written in the April Fool’s edition at OC Weekly – one of Orange County leading newspapers – almost 16 years ago that he began to develop an interest in journalism.

“I came into journalism completely by accident. I have always cared about injustice, and I liked the idea of having newspapers pay attention to what’s going on. And they unlocked in me something I never knew existed: this passion for storytelling.”

Arellano has authored four books – “Orange County,” “Taco USA: How Mexican Food Conquered America,” “Ask a Mexican” and “A People’s Guide to Orange County” – in addition to his

satire column.

In his work, Arellano explores themes on racial marginalization, political activism and connection to one’s cultural identity. As a Mexican American journalist, Arellano said he seeks to educate readers on issues that expose injustices in Orange County, as well as teach cultural appreciation of Mexican heritage.

“It was supposed to be a satirical column, but it also just taught people about Mexican history.”

In “¡Ask a Mexican!” Arellano found readership “perfect” to relay these topics to because of the social environment Orange County is set in.

“It would make complete sense to mock Orange County – that they would believe something like that. It is very easy to ridicule Americans for their ignorance of Mexicans, and that’s what my column was about.”

“In Orange County, there is so much racism against Mexicans,” he said. “Only in Orange County could there possibly exist an advice

column about Mexicans.”

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 38.0% of Orange County is white, while 34.0% of the population is Hispanic or Latino. A large majority of this makeup has roots in Mexico. This area has seen the extremes of racially motivated violence over the past several decades, especially against the Latino community. In 2021, Pew Research reported that 54% of U.S. Latinos experienced some form of discrimination during the first year of COVID-19.

Growing up in Anaheim, Arellano explains that while he personally didn’t grow up with racism, he struggled to find his identity as a Latino man, specifically being Mexican American. “I didn’t grow up being castigated for being Mexican. I was castigated for not being Mexican enough,” he said.

According to Arellano, the column was an opportunity to teach about the complexities of Mexican identity to an audience to combat ignorance, as well as answer genuine questions about Mexican history.

Arellano primarily writes on issues that affect Orange County and the Greater Los Angeles area, often covering sensitive topics in his investigative work, such as the role of undocumented immigrants in California politics or Donald Trump’s infamous taco salad.

“I have always cared about political activism, and I wanted people to care about what was going on,” Arellano said.

In one of his latest pieces for the Los Angeles Times, Arellano reflects on an investigative story he covered earlier in his career that exposed Father Eleuterio Ramos for sexual misconduct in the Orange County and Los Angeles parishes, in which Ramos admitted to molesting at least 25 young boys. In his follow-up work, Arellano reports on misconduct in the public sphere, sourcing from lawyers, parish officials and law enforcement.

In stories such as these, where powerful leaders turn a blind eye, Arellano says he makes sure to bring attention to these subjects that “comfort the afflicted and afflicts the comfortable.”

“I never throw anything against the wall. I am going to do everything possible to tell the full story.”

Arellano’s journey in shaping how audiences view Orange County and Southern California doesn’t come from his four published books, his prize-winning columns or his various awards over the years. He said it comes from his focus on others.

“You need to tell the stories of others,” Arellano said. “Eventually, that is how you are able to speak your voice.”

Above all, Arellano emphasized how integral various genres of writing are to articulate political activism and disseminate “great stories” to the world.

“Satire is always a vehicle of political humor and oppression. People will want to consume a great story, and

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# ARTSWEEK

## SBIFF 2024: Bradley Cooper honored with Outstanding Performer of the Year

Lauren Chiou  
Artsweek Editor

Actor, director and writer Bradley Cooper received the Outstanding Performer of the Year at the 39th Santa Barbara International Film Festival on Thursday, Feb. 8.

The Outstanding Performer of the Year is given to an actor or actress whose performance in a film has exceeded greatness. Cooper received the honor for his role as Leonard Bernstein in Netflix's 2023 "Maestro," which he directed and co-wrote as well.

Cooper was joined on the red carpet with co-star Carey Mulligan, where the Daily Nexus got a chance to speak with him. When asked if his multiple roles in the filmmaking process changed his approach to acting, Cooper replied, "It didn't change it at all. It's the same approach of doing a role just as an actor."

"It helps when you write it and you sort of envision the world," Cooper said. "Your brain gets to utilize those other aspects. So, I feel like they feed on each other in a great way and actually fuel the acting."

Following the red carpet, the stars and audience members made their way into the theater. Santa Barbara Film Festival (SBIFF) Executive Director Roger Durling kicked off the night by welcoming event moderator Pete Hammond, awards columnist and film critic for Deadline. Hammond took the stage to give a brief introduction to the honoree.

"When you talk about Bradley Cooper, you should also throw in outstanding director, outstanding writer, outstanding producer. He's done it all in 'Maestro,'" Hammond said.

"Bradley Cooper has made the 21st century his creative playground, making him appropriately 'outstanding performer,' but the real deal is a filmmaker," he continued. "There is inevitably much, much more to come for Bradley Cooper."

Hammond's foreword was paired with a montage of Cooper's 25-year-long, genre-spanning career, featuring clips from "The Hangover," "American Hustle" and "Guardians of the Galaxy." The montage was set to music from the Oscar Peterson Trio, with music inspired by Bernstein. When the sequence ended, Cooper ran onto the stage while waving to the crowd. He was met with roars of applause from the audience.

"All right, they like you. They really like you," Hammond said.

The conversation started off with Cooper discussing the appropriate energy and atmosphere captured by the film compilation. "I love how unorthodox it is. It was very Leonard Bernstein," Cooper commented on the highlight reel.

He continued to discuss the unorthodox structure of "Maestro," which was done through the inclusion of Bernstein's music. "We really wanted to make a movie



Bradley Cooper recieved an award for his role as Leonard Bernstein in his Netflix biopic "Maestro" (2023).

that was scored to Leonard Bernstein's music, in a way that we could expose people to the breadth of what he was able to give to us," Cooper said.

The energy was high in Arlington Theatre, with both those on stage and in the audience engaging in the playful nature of the evening. Hammond pulled out a printed 39-page Wikipedia article of the list of the awards and nominations received by Cooper, from Golden Raspberries to Golden Globes. Amidst the laughs elicited from this gag, Hammond still managed to speak to the powerhouse of Cooper's career. "All of this is testament to what you've [Cooper] done here," Hammond said.

Hammond guided Cooper through his vast career, starting with the 25th anniversary of his first job: "Sex and the City" in 1999. Cooper had a minor role in the second season of the show as "Jake, the downtown smoker."

"Is that hard to believe?" Hammond asked about the anniversary of his first job.

"Yeah, I'm getting older!" Cooper said, followed by laughter from the audience and himself.

He continued to tell the story of his brief time on "Sex and the City." "I auditioned for them. At that time, I didn't really realize that you could ever get the job."

"I remember when I got the call to do it, I was terrified. What do you mean I have to do it?"

It's clear that Cooper has come a long way since being "Jake, the downtown smoker." When asked if he always wanted to be an actor, he immediately replied, "Always, since I was, like, 11."

"I always knew I wanted to do it, but I was terrified, I was very shy. But I always knew I wanted to do it."

Despite his multiple accolades and achievements, Cooper

constantly expressed gratitude and humility. He took time to acknowledge the discussion moderator, interrupting his own tribute to include praise for Hammond. "I met Pete so many years ago and he is one of the nicest human beings in the business."

Cooper's vast filmography was a common theme throughout the discussion. He discussed his comedic origins exemplified by his role as Phil in "The Hangover," which went on to become one of the highest-grossing R-rated comedies in the U.S.

"We didn't know what we were making and weren't even sure if it was a comedy," Cooper said. "We were staying at Caesars Palace in Vegas. I had tiger claws on my neck and no one even looked at us."

When asked if he could consider a fourth "Hangover" movie, Cooper answered with an immediate nod. "I would do it in a heartbeat."

Director David O. Russell's "Silver Linings Playbook" marked a shift in Cooper's career, as Russell was his first inspiration to go into directing.

"[O. Russell] really believed in me as a storyteller. He really took me under his wing, and I went to film school with him for that movie ['Silver Linings Playbook'] and 'American Hustle,'" Cooper said. "I definitely wouldn't have been able to even think I was capable of directing a movie if I hadn't had the experience of working with David O. Russell."

Hammond drew comparisons of Cooper's career to Clint Eastwood's, who directed him in "American Sniper." The two's careers have followed similar paths: both actors and directors, switching between on-screen and behind-the-scenes work.

The pair then discussed Cooper's experience taking on dual roles in filmmaking, often directing himself in his movies. "I really do love being in the field as an actor/director. It's what's intoxicating about it."

Cooper's first venture into being an actor/director was 2018's "A Star is Born." Starring alongside Lady Gaga, "A Star Is Born" went on to prove Cooper as a force to be reckoned with – actor, writer, producer, singer-songwriter and, most notably, director.

During the interview, it was revealed that Cooper considered Beyoncé and Adele for his co-stars, before deciding on Lady Gaga.

"She is just a force of nature," Cooper said on Gaga, praising her performance and stardom.

Cooper also looked back on his Academy Awards performance with Gaga in 2019. "I had no desire to sing

live on network television. But I knew if I didn't sing and she was up there singing 'Shallow' with someone else, they would be like 'well, that guy obviously can't sing because he's not doing it.' But it was awesome."

The final conversation topic was Cooper's most recent film, along with the project he was being honored for, "Maestro." Hammond welcomed Cooper's co-star, actress Carey Mulligan, on-stage to talk about the film.

"I am having the loveliest evening," Mulligan said upon reaching the podium. She then turned to Cooper. "It makes me want to watch all your films again."

"What might be too easily taken for granted is your [Cooper's] innate gift as an actor," Mulligan said when speaking about Cooper's talents on-set. "I don't think acting is a 10,000-hour skill. I don't think you can prep or practice, that's something else."



Carey Mulligan and Brad Pitt, friends and colleagues of Cooper's, spoke about the honoree's excellence and passion for film.

"Those impressions that you leave on people is just talent. That's just God-given talent, aside from anything else," Mulligan continued. "Having an evening to honor that is just so incredible."

After Mulligan's speech, Hammond steered the conversation to the Bernstein family's support of "Maestro."

On working with Bernstein's family, Cooper said, "They're tough cookies. They don't pull any punches at all. They're like what I assume their father was like, their mother too."

Cooper thought back to showing Bernstein's family the final cut of the film, and the movie nature of their emotional reaction. "We're all hugging in the exact same position as the film. I felt like I was him [Bernstein]. Lenny felt like he was with us the whole movie."

"When this came around, it almost felt like I was supposed to do this," Cooper said.

Hammond then welcomed

actor Brad Pitt on-stage as a surprise guest. Pitt and Cooper have been longtime friends, both being esteemed figures in the industry.

Upon taking the podium, Pitt said, "The first time I saw Bradley, I said to myself, 'one day I'm going to milk this guy for a free trip to Santa Barbara.'" The crowd laughed in response.

Pitt praised his friend's illustrious career, focusing on Cooper's success as a director.

"I'm not going to say I know for certain what's at the heart of Bradely's brilliance, but I am going to take a stab at it," Pitt said.

"It's his verve and his voracious love for this little thing we call the human experience," Pitt continued.

Pitt ended his speech by commenting on Cooper's multiple Academy Awards nominations. "I do hope that this is his year [to win], because it's well overdue."



Cooper received the Outstanding Performer of the Year for his work in "Maestro" and spoke on the film's unconventionality.

# ARTSWEEK

## SBIFF 2024: Robert Downey Jr. honored with the Maltin Modern Master Award

Zachary Kramer  
Reporter

The Santa Barbara International Film Festival awarded its highest honor, the Maltin Modern Master Award, to actor Robert Downey Jr. at Arlington Theatre in Santa Barbara on Friday, Feb. 9.

Before the event began, a crowd formed around the red carpet, hoping to catch the attention of the A-listers as they proceeded into the venue. In a whirlwind of applause, cheers and pandemonium, the crowd erupted as Downey Jr., along with friends and co-stars Rob Lowe and Cillian Murphy, stepped out onto the Santa Barbara International Film Festival (SBIFF) red carpet.

The stars took their time and posed for photos and embraced the flashing cameras. Joining them was Leonard Maltin, a revered film critic and historian, after whom the award is named. Afterward, the stars retreated inside and the deluge of fans and reporters soon followed, getting to their seats before the event properly began.

Kicking off the night, Roger Durling, the executive director of SBIFF spoke. “There was one person I always wanted to honor and it was Robert Downey Jr. So, it is a dream come true tonight,” the director said. The packed Arlington Theatre shared Durling’s enthusiasm as thunderous applause filled the house.

“Rising from those mistakes to soar once again is what Robert Downey Jr. exemplifies ... I think he’s just amazing,” Durling continued before introducing the moderator of the night, American film critic Leonard Maltin, who the award is named after.

Maltin, clad in a dark purple suit, walked onto the stage to even more applause. The moderator continued to express pure admiration for Downey Jr. before introducing a montage that highlighted his extensive career from his start in “Pound” (1970), “Chaplin” (1992) and, of course, “Iron Man” (2008) and “Oppenheimer” (2023).

Entering the stage, the Academy Awards nominee and Golden Globe winner radiated charisma despite the challenging and dark topics of his life that were touched upon in the opening introductions, and the audience reciprocated this energy by booming cheers for the celebrity.

“Let’s get moving, this is not the only award I’m accepting tonight,” the star joked as he



The Santa Barbara Film Festival honored Robert Downey Jr. with the Maltin Modern Master award.

sat down across from Maltin. Beginning a long night of praise for others, Downey Jr. expressed his gratitude for the editor of the “bananas” montage and thanked the crowd for their energy. “No matter how well things go for you ... you always wonder are you gonna show up ... and be advised [the audience] is a little bit light out there.”

Before discussing his work, the renowned actor praised SBIFF and the importance of the event. The star did everything to keep the spotlight on others, even in his moment of well-earned recognition.

On the topic of fate, Maltin

asked, “Was it destiny that put you here?”

“One million percent,” Downey Jr. replied. “I planned every step of the way ... I am just a really weird planner.” This segued into a conversation about his origins in acting which, of course, included discussion of filmmaker Robert Downey Sr, the actor’s father and the subject of a 2022 documentary, “Sr.”

“[‘Sr.’ was] one of the most important projects,” Downey Jr. said.

The star was quick to tell stories and insights that, while not having anything to do with Maltin’s questions, kept the

night lively and entertaining.

“What was I talking about?” Downey Jr. joked, after going off-topic once again.

Friend and former classmate Lowe and co-star Murphy gave speeches and introduced film clips, but not before Downey Jr. could express his most profound admiration for them, calling Lowe a “role model” conducting oneself in Hollywood and saying that Murphy “functions at a higher level.”

On “Oppenheimer,” Downey Jr. said he was “born to play a supporting role in favor of someone else.”

When discussing his vast filmography, Maltin asked, “Are you a workaholic?” to which Downey Jr. replied, “I’m a something-aholic.” This then flowed into his work on “Chaplin,” for which he was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Actor in a Leading Role in 1993.

“[Chaplin] just seemed like this make or break opportunity.”

“You just want to feel like you’re making them happy,” Downey Jr. said of working with directors. “I want to commune with that director to the point that [they] and I become the third thing, which is the character I’m playing.”

Speaking on his resurgence, “Zodiac” (2007) was mentioned, which was described as an inflection point in the star’s career as well as a reflection point. Speaking about his role as a reporter who turned to drugs and alcohol in the movie, he said, “better to play it than to be it.” The film was instrumental in reviving Downey Jr.’s credibility, as Hollywood saw the talented actor become reliable once again.

“Talk about turnaround,” Maltin said of the actor’s resurgence back into mainstream culture and cinema.

After the release of “Iron Man” (2008), “Tropic Thunder” (2008) and “Sherlock Holmes” (2009), Downey’s ego was inflated, but he gave the credit

to the others working on the projects for their success. Downey Jr.’s wife and children also keep him grounded.

“They really have only a passing interest in my majesty,” Downey Jr. said, while laughing.

On working with Christopher Nolan on “Oppenheimer,” Downey Jr. expressed pure gratitude for the faith the director placed in him. “If I’m not prepared within an inch of my life, I will probably evaporate,” was the actor’s mentality while on the set of the 2023 summer blockbuster. “It was just very exacting and very rewarding, and I think it was probably the best movie I have ever been a part of.”

“Hopefully, we are communicating something that transcends,” Downey Jr. said.

Lowe and Murphy then reappeared on stage to present the Maltin Modern Master Award to Downey Jr. The trio hugged as the pair handed the honoree the golden trophy.

Keeping to the night’s theme, Downey Jr. thanked the audience once again for their overwhelming energy, thanked Maltin and spoke to his significance within the film industry.

The actor honored Lowe for showing his generation how to act in Hollywood and Murphy for finally getting the praise he should receive, describing Murphy as “a force of nature.”

Before concluding, Downey Jr. thanked his wife, held the award high for the whole theater to see and walked off stage to a standing ovation.

“Never say never,” Downey Jr. quipped at one point in the evening, summing up the actor’s rollercoaster from ’80s ratpack, addict and now a key figure in Hollywood culture.

Downey is currently the front-runner for Best Supporting Actor at the 2024 Academy Awards for his portrayal of the antagonist bureaucrat Lewis Strauss in Nolan’s “Oppenheimer.”



“Oppenheimer” co-star Cillian Murphy (left) and actor Rob Lowe (right) posed on the red carpet with Downey Jr.

UCSB LOVE STORIES

Continued from p.1



**Tricia Paulson '17 & Nicholas Besse '17**

Together for almost nine years, Tricia and Nicholas met at their UCSB freshman orientation in the summer of 2013. A little under two years later, mid-way through sophomore year, they began dating.

"The first time I asked her out, she ran away from me," Nicholas said.

"In front of the UCen. I was overwhelmed," Tricia added, giggling.

Despite the initial rejection, Tricia and Nicholas eventually made it to their first date, and from that point on, so many seemingly ordinary UCSB places began to hold special meanings to their relationship.

"When we did start dating, we were sitting in the labyrinth in the spring of 2015. I was getting up the courage to tell him I loved him. And I finally said it, and it was at night and it was getting cold. And Nick was like, 'Oh yeah, I know' and said, 'I love you' back," Tricia shared.

Tricia's favorite part of being in a relationship in Isla Vista was all the walking. She walked everywhere (bikes weren't for her), so the time she got to spend walking and talking with Nicholas was special. Their friend groups inevitably overlapped, so they were able to walk to and from houses together.

Tricia shared that one of the reasons their relationship has lasted this far and successfully made it out of I.V. is remembering that they are both against the problem instead of against each other.

"Post-graduation is scary and hard for a lot of different reasons. Recognizing that you are going through a lot of change and that your relationship is going to change too ... like, that's okay, you just need to figure out how to tackle it together," she said.

To beat the post-I.V. bubble pop, Tricia also advised "being open and honest with your partner and finding a balance between what you need and what your partner needs, and keeping that at the core of it is really helpful."

"She stole mine," Nicholas said.

After graduation, the two moved to the East Bay and Santa Cruz and did long distance for a few years before moving in together in 2021. They had never lived together before, both worked from home and quickly received shelter-in-place orders. They went from long distance to no distance and learned their key piece of advice: to get mad at the situation instead of blaming.

To tie up their relationship in one word, Nicholas chose caring and Tricia chose diligent.



**Talia Karu Katz '18 & Greg Katz '18**

Greg and Talia began dating at UC Santa Barbara, but they go all the way back to high school. They reconnected at Santa Barbara Hillel, where Talia was president at the time. She remembers the night Greg came to a Shabbat dinner.

"I panicked, and I had to say 'hi' because I was saying 'hi' to all the tables and I said 'hi' and sat down and started a friendship."

One of their first hangouts and what Talia considered a date was at Rincon, a Mexican restaurant that stood at the end of the Pardall Road, where the commercial center ended. Talia ordered, but

Greg didn't.

"I was pissed that he wasn't hungry and wasn't going to eat with me," she said.

Greg approached the day as a time to connect and get to know her better for a friendship.

But, there was a turning point for Greg, pioneered by Talia, that sealed their relationship as a romantic one. They had been hanging out for one to two months after their reconnection at Hillel and were planning a Solvang day trip.

"Are you going to kiss me before we go to Solvang?" Talia asked Greg the night before as they hung out in her apartment.

They remember this line laughing and Greg says he did not expect it. He thought they were just going to go to Solvang and have a good time.

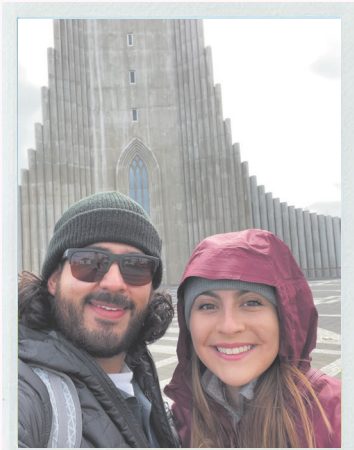
They never ended up going to Solvang. But their kiss was momentous in their relationship.

And for Talia, her moment was a day in which she, her friends and Greg all hung out together and went to Trader Joe's. She remembers sitting in the passenger seat while Greg drove.

"This could be nice. I could see us going to Trader Joe's together and doing couple-y things together," she said.

During their relationship in Isla Vista, they loved studying at the Music Library, going to Freebirds, Extravaganza, Woodstock's trivia and beach dates.

Greg and Talia wed in August 2022.



**Catalina Miranda '18 & Miguel Toledo '18**

Catalina and Miguel met on Tinder during the final weeks of Fall Quarter 2016. But they say that barely scratches the surface of defining their relationship. They say their relationship was filled with motivation.

"As first-generation students, we were already just so driven to succeed and UCSB amplified that with just its environment and the setting," Catalina said.

Catalina and Miguel say they were lucky to have met and lived in Isla Vista for the beginning of their relationship, as it allowed them to see each other frequently.

They remember their first Valentine's Day fondly. Miguel, a chemistry major, picked up a chocolate pretzel from the Chemistry Club. Catalina remembers thinking the gift was personable and spoke to his interests.

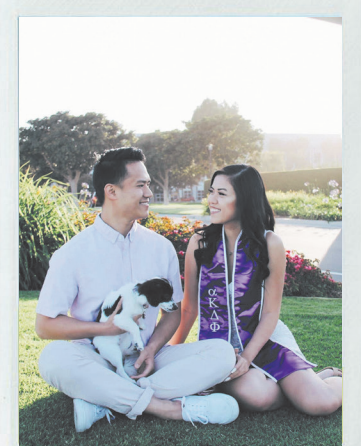
When graduation loomed, they knew they wanted to continue their life together, whatever that would look like. In post-graduate life, they urge couples to have strong communication skills.

"Once you become a real adult ... you think it might be easier because there are less class schedules to juggle, but you realize, like, how demanding the real world can be," Catalina said.

Despite their meeting on Tinder, they advise love seekers to not use it like a habit, to get rid of it early, and to lower expectations. Once Miguel found Catalina, he said he removed the app from his phone to focus on his connection with her. They credited their Tinder success to having mutual friends as well.

"From all the late night study sessions, Deltopias, Extravaganzas, Freebirds nachos for dinner, music festivals, Bill's bus rides to Downtown Santa Barbara on Thursdays, sunset walks to Sands Beach, bike rides to each other's houses on Oceanside Del Playa and the lifelong friends we've made along the way, we are so lucky to have lived such an incredible, quintessential love story during our time at UCSB," Catalina wrote in the Daily Nexus call out Google Form.

Miguel and Catalina have been together for seven years and are parents to an American Staffordshire Bull Terrier named Nikki.



**Elaine Nguyen '18 & Aaron Dicioco '19**

From Facebook Messenger to trips to Tokyo, Elaine and Aaron's relationship has taken flight since their initial introduction in 2017.

Their love story began when Aaron saw a photo of Elaine on a mutual friend's Instagram and asked the friend to set the two of them up.

"He [Aaron] ended up messaging me on Facebook, and we hung out for the first time at his frat's Labor Day party," Elaine said.

Santa Barbara was essential in the development of their relationship. With Elaine being from the Bay Area and Aaron being from Los Angeles, Santa Barbara became a place they shared together.

"I feel like it was just a really good backdrop for not only our college experience but our relationship," Elaine said.

Elaine and Aaron's first official date was peak UCSB. The two went to the Recreation Center, where Elaine worked at the time, and got brunch at Cajun Kitchen in Goleta. The two also went to Aaron's frat parties together, as he was a member of Delta Tau Delta fraternity.

Attending the same school also added a level of depth to the pair's bond. "We actually got to take a class together, which was really fun. I think having that in common and understanding what one another's college experience was like was really helpful and instrumental," Elaine said.

After Elaine graduated in 2018, there was a year the two spent doing long distance. Elaine moved back to the Bay Area after graduation, while Aaron remained in Isla Vista for his final year.

How did they make it through that period?

"Just a lot of communication, a lot of patience with each other," Aaron said.

The two would also drive to visit each other on the weekends. "It can be a little tough being in I.V. when there's a lot of stuff to do on the weekends," Aaron said. "But just making that little sacrifice for each other."

"I think just really making time for one another. Like Aaron said, communication is a big part of it too," Elaine said. "Good communication is at the core of our relationship, and I think that's really important for everyone to focus on."

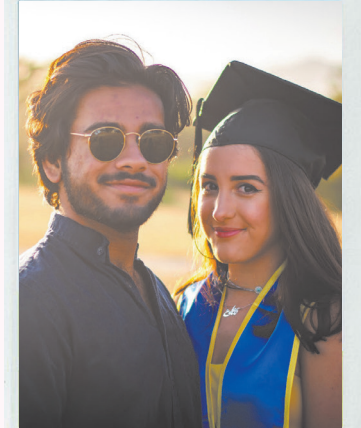
The pair moved in together in 2020 and currently reside in Los Angeles. "Since we've left [UCSB], we've grown a lot," Elaine said. "Our relationship has just really been built on the foundation we established in Santa Barbara."

"It's just supporting each other through all those stages of life," Aaron continued. "It wasn't always super easy. There were little hurdles in our professional lives, for example, where we just had to support each other."

"And we got through them," Aaron said. "We're getting even stronger."

The couple's six-year relationship continues to go strong. "It's grown just as we've grown," Elaine said.

Elaine and Aaron got engaged in Tokyo in September 2023 and are planning their wedding in May 2025. The couple will get married in the place they first met: Santa Barbara.



**Natali Rahimzadeh '18 & Soham Mistry '19**

Natali and Soham met at UC Santa Barbara at the end of the Winter Quarter 2017 on Tinder.

"Keep an open mind about your first and second in-person meeting," Natali advises about Tinder dating. "Use Tinder as a starting point."

They also thank proximity and campus events for helping build their relationship.

"I.V. is a bubble. When you are dating someone, you are around each other all the time. We would have quarters when we'd matched up our breaks in between classes to get lunch together," Natali said.

The couple's first date was at Ortega Dining Commons, what they call a core part of their love story.

"I don't remember a single thing that we talked about ... it was all a blur," Natali said, laughing. I just remember walking up to Ortega and being like, 'AH HE LOOKS JUST LIKE THE PICTURES!'"

During their relationship, they look back to their European study-abroad adventures, Deltopia and biking around Isla Vista as their favorite memories.

But the week before Natali's graduation and with long-distance creeping up, Natali recalls, laughing, Soham tried to end the relationship.

"No, I don't think you are doing this," she said. "Well, what the fuck? We can make this work. Give me an extra six months."

Soham remembers trying to look at the situation logically.

"If you see a future with that person, do anything to soak up UCSB and I.V. in the meantime and cherish those moments," Soham said.

Soham proposed to Natali in 2022 in Mexico. They are set to wed in Santa Barbara later this year.



**Laila Voss '21 & Jake Garcia '21**

In high school, Laila and Jake already knew they liked each other. But they call UC Santa Barbara the place where they fell in love.

"We saw each other grow and helped each other grow," Jake said.

Jake said Laila's presence motivated him to make Laila feel proud.

Jake remembers move-in day, feeling the gravity of being at university for the first time by himself. At night, he rode his skateboard to Sea Lookout Park, where he found Laila, and they were able to talk. Their talk excited Jake about what was to come during his time at UCSB.

During their relationship at UCSB, they loved going on sunset pilgrimages to the beach, going on Café coffee dates and Sizzling Lunch dates. And for special occasions, like Valentine's Day, they enjoyed going to the Boathouse at Hendry's Beach.

And as their UCSB academic career came to a close, they felt like they had a very strong relationship. After graduation, they spent two years doing long distance with 800 miles in between them.

They advise couples now to spend time with other people, together but with other people. And to not be afraid to do long distance.

"It is normal to be nervous, but if you feel like you have a strong relationship and you have a strong bond with your partner, just trust in it and don't be afraid to do it and don't be afraid to put your personal growth first, because if this is the person you are going to be with forever, you are going to have a lot of time together, and there is a lot to be said for trying to be the best person and partner you can be for your forever person," Laila said.

They came to find that they did not want to go on adventures alone.

And in 2022, they had another long-distance scare when applying to doctoral programs. But, they made a collective decision to not accept positions that would place them on opposite ends of the

country for six years. They felt like that decision itself was a serious commitment.

"What was holding us back from getting married besides feeling that we are too young," Laila said.

Jake and Laila wed two years after graduation in 2023, with many UCSB alumni a part of their wedding party.

Laila and Jake are now living in Berkeley completing doctoral programs at UC Berkeley and UC Davis, respectively.

"It feels cozy. It feels nice to come home at night knowing that Laila is going to be there," Jake said.



**Max Abrams '21 & Warsan Ali '22**

Max and Warsan are the products of the unique college experience the pandemic inflicted across the country. However, Max's favorite memories come from the time of isolation.

"I think one of my favorite things [was] we had a lot of free time together, which was rare, especially considering where our lives are now. We used to take a lot of walks to the beach and see the sunset ... Isla Vista was very quiet at that time, and during that desolate period in our community, we embraced the quiet," Max said.

Warsan also loved that time together, in the "sleepy beach town," as she described it, but her favorite memory took place in none other than the UCSB Library, as she was a biopsychology major. In theme with many S.T.E.M. majors at UCSB, Warsan would spend countless nights cooped up studying. On one night in particular, Warsan remembers probably doing general chemistry homework while Max, with absolutely no work to do, kept her company until 2 a.m.

"I wasn't doing any work. I was just trying to loiter," Max recalls.

And in reverse roles, Warsan would join Max in the Daily Nexus office while he worked as news editor. They even have a polaroid of the two of them taped up to one of the walls.

The two marked their one year in Santa Barbara at none other than Zaytoon, the Lebanese restaurant downtown, which quickly became their favorite date spot, aside from the beach.

After graduation, Warsan moved to Sacramento to pursue medicine and Max moved to New York City to pursue media. Moving from the tiny beach town of I.V. to across the country from each other, the couple advises agreeing to some set-in-stone terms. Warsan and Max try to see each other every three months and do intentional FaceTime dates, instead of just chatting on the phone.

"You still have to date the person you're with even when you're long distance," Warsan said.

"To me, it's like a new slate every day, you turn a new page to something fresh. You got to fill it with something nice. You got to put the work in. It's just like anything - even in journalism, right? The pages don't fill themselves. The stories don't fill themselves," Max added.

Persistence, depth and fun came to mind when Warsan and Max were reminiscing on their college relationship. Although they sometimes struggle with long distance, they couldn't imagine being with anyone else, despite living on opposite coasts.

"We do have fun; we do fun things. What makes it fun is creative dates," Warsan said.

For any couples also doing long distance, Warsan and Max love cooking dates at the moment.

To bring things full circle, Max shared one last anecdote about Valentine's Day (although this one not including Warsan).

"This is such a throwback for me. Five years ago, my freshman year, I was a news editor and I wrote a story for Valentine's Day, all about a student selling sex toys. It's great to be back in the Nexus talking about things."

# PHOTO

## In Photos: Lunar New Year

Amy Dixon  
Photographer

The Lunar New Year on Feb. 10, based on the lunar calendar, marked the beginning of the new year. The upcoming year marks the Year of the Dragon, one of the 12 animals in the rotating zodiac cycle. The Santa Barbara Trust for Historic

Preservation (SBTHP) put on a Year of the Dragon Festival to celebrate the diverse Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities and history in Santa Barbara. The event featured local artists and artisans, performance groups, an art gallery and activities for members of the community to celebrate the new year.



The newly painted SBTHP Year of the Dragon mural by muralist and designer DJ Javier.



Local AAPI artisans and small businesses set up booths to display their crafts.



Performance groups, such as Hula Anyone, performed for a crowd in front of the newly painted dragon mural.



Live screen-printing by Mind Garden offered custom designs for the Year of the Dragon.



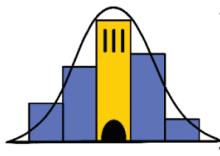
"The Dragon," an immersive art exhibit featuring local AAPI artists, was displayed inside the Presidio Chapel.



Community members gather at El Presidio de Santa Bárbara State Historic Park to celebrate the Lunar New Year — the Year of the Dragon.



Kids colored paper dragons and created paper lanterns.



DATA

# Navigating a bike-friendly campus: challenges and solutions at UCSB

Ju Kim  
Reporter  
Justin Zhou  
Reporter  
Valeria Lopez  
Reporter

As one steps on the UC Santa Barbara campus, one of the first things noticed are the bike paths and filled bike racks scattered throughout. During rush hour, it is not uncommon to see numerous bikes locked to random poles or even on patches of grass unlocked due to lack of spots on the bike racks. In particular, the bike racks next to the under-construction Music Building are especially egregious, with bikes scattered in bushes, locked to the chain-link fence or just tossed aside on the floor.

As UCSB enrollment has increased over the past 10 years, the different modes of transportation have varied and adjusted to the way of student life. According to UCSB's commuter split data, in 2023, approximately 35% of students bike as their main form of transportation, which is a decrease from the 50% who biked in 2010. Additionally, there has been an increase in walking from 18% to 34% from 2010-23.

Adam Jahnke – Associated Students Bike Shop supervisor of nine years – noted the safest option out of the commuter modes on campus, based on the number of accidents that occur from bikes.

“You have your own experience with seeing and/or hearing people get into wrecks on campus with bikes, boards, etc. So I would probably say on campus, walking is probably the safest and walking without your headphones and being attentive.”

Jahnke added that there is a sense of fear among staff about the potential for riding vehicles to get stolen.

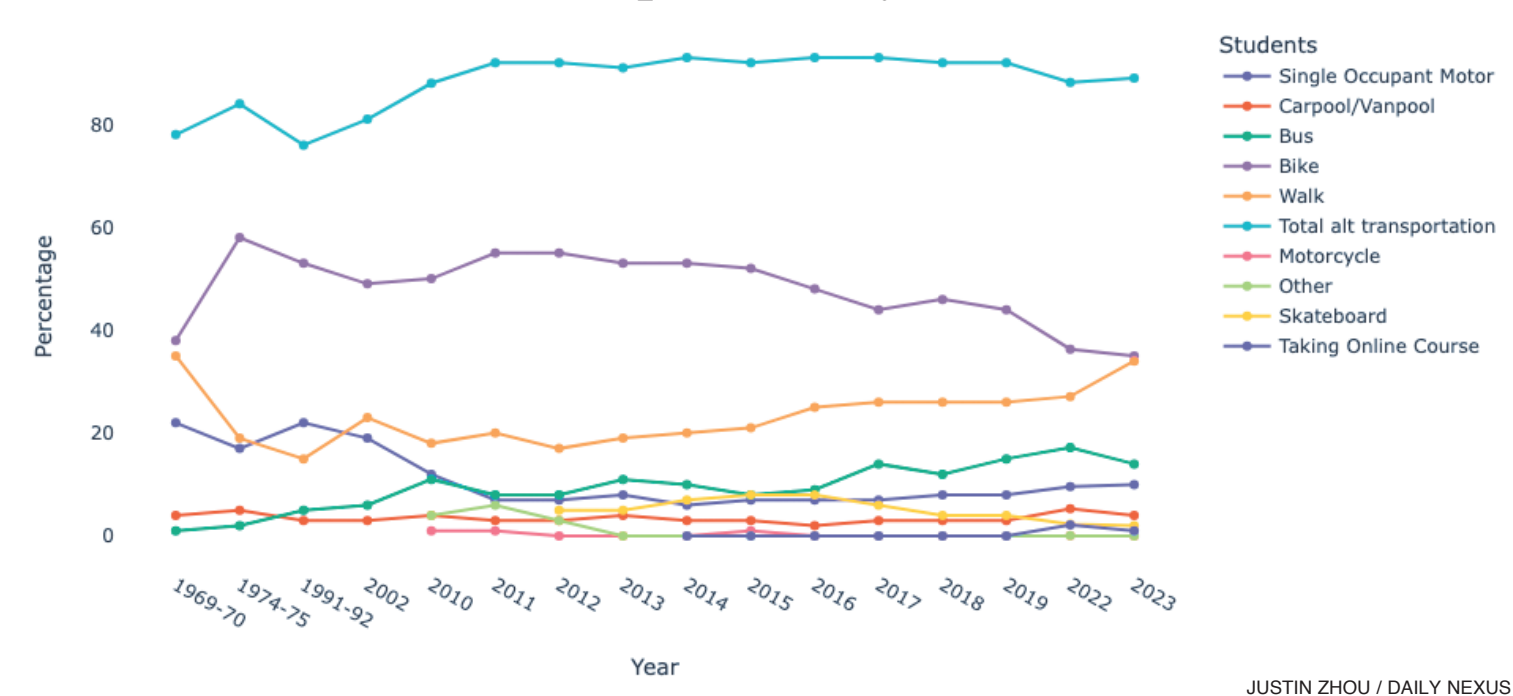
“There’s always been a struggle with giving staff and faculty to also feel encouraged to ride on campus, so I think that little anecdote points to that perception that cycling and skateboarding, e-bikes, scooters are perceived as dangerous on campus,” he said.

It’s important to note the local riders’ perspective on commuters, as it can affect the attitude and behaviors of students toward each other.

“The first three weeks of any quarter are always really hectic. UCSB’s overall age demographic skews on the younger side, and, again, this is anecdotal from my perspective, but I think the part of the danger that comes with the mobility on campus is that you might not have a terribly experienced ridership community.”

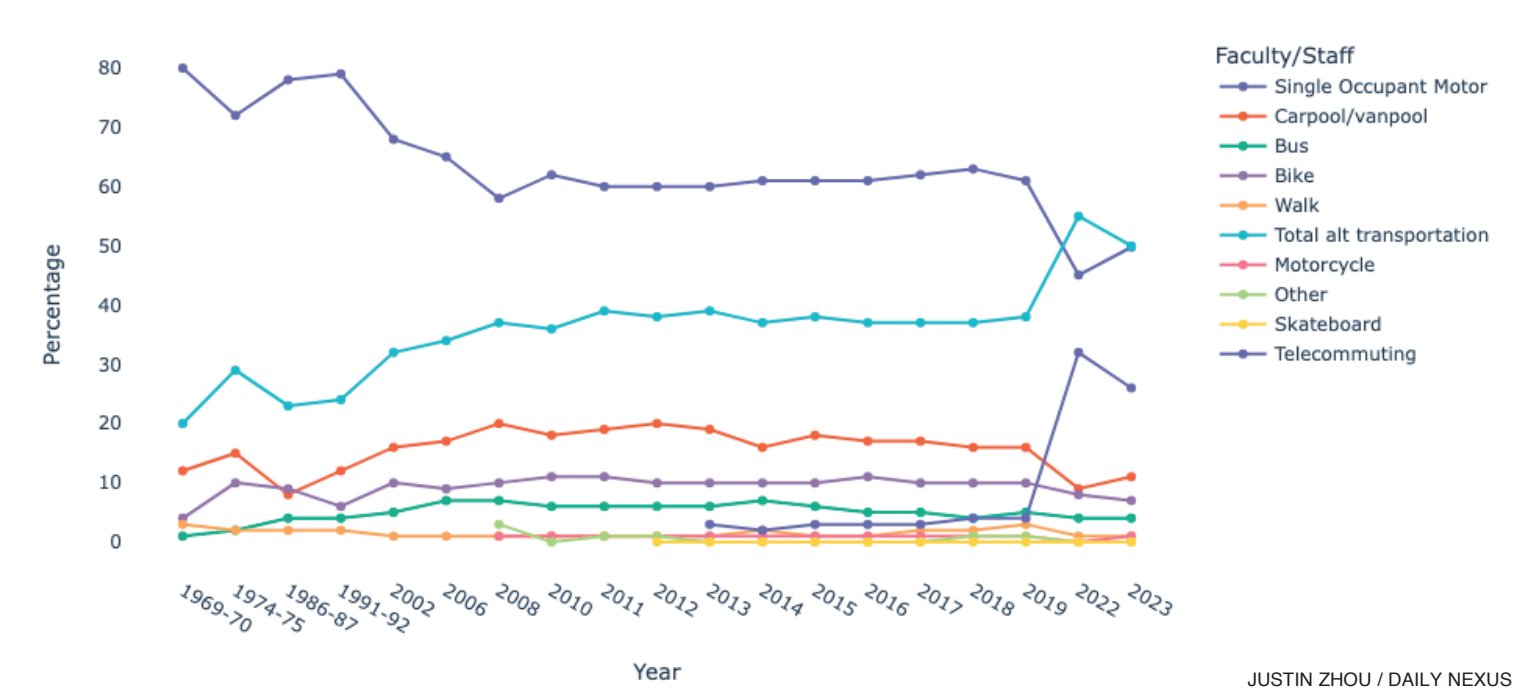
There has been a spike in telecommuting after the pandemic. According to the UCSB commuter split data, a steady 3-4% of staff worked from home from 2013-19, but in 2022, it spiked to 32%.

UCSB student commuter mode split over the years



JUSTIN ZHOU / DAILY NEXUS

UCSB faculty/staff commuter mode split over the years



JUSTIN ZHOU / DAILY NEXUS

Michele Kunz – e-commerce and marketing manager of the UCSB Campus Store – bikes to campus. She noted the various ways the campus could be improved to keep students and other faculty members safer when navigating campus.

“Adding a dedicated bike lane on UCEN Road would create a safer environment for cyclists and help separate them from vehicular traffic. Paving the road would also improve overall accessibility,” she said in a statement to the Nexus. “Painting crosswalks with bright colors can enhance visibility and raise awareness for drivers that there may be pedestrians or cyclists crossing. This can help improve safety for all road users.”

Jahnke has a similar opinion on the ways UCSB’s bike infrastructure could be improved to create a safer campus for students, staff and visitors.

“More paths – we could use better bike stripings. Signs on the paths, I think, would very much help students navigate, and to that point, if there were certain paths that would be aided with the addition of cones or barriers – especially if there’s a space that’s shared within a parking lot or adjacent to a road – I

think all of those things would encourage ridership rates overall.”

Jahnke emphasized a list of behaviors that would improve the biking environment.

“I would say courtesy is at the top of that list, and in subcategories of courtesy, maybe no headphones on while you’re riding a bike, maybe no phone usage – those are big ones,” he said. “If you’re turning, use your bell, use your voice to make people around you spatially aware of your intentions on where you’re going.”

Indeed, many students have personally experienced, or seen accidents occur on the bike paths.

“It’s been not surprising to get responses from students who say they don’t ride or skate or blade because they had had a really awful accident,” Jahnke said.

Additionally, according to Jahnke, the large cycling community within Santa Barbara has transported its culture over to UCSB.

“[Cycling culture has] coevolved with the university over the years, and it’s an exceptional phenomenon we observe, where UCSB holds the highest ridership rate in America – given our population,” he said.

Although meeting

every individual’s needs seems impossible, a small enhancement, such as repaving some roads or painting stripings, can prevent an accident and improve accessibility.

Matt Porter, a mathematics lecturer at UCSB, frequently alternates between biking and driving to navigate the campus. He likes biking since he believes it is generally safer compared to driving.

“I think [the car] is the most dangerous method of transportation there is,” Porter said.

Porter specifically criticized the infrastructure around the area near the Interactive Learning Pavilion at UCSB, noting significant concerns such as the integration of bike paths with vehicular traffic and the presence of potholes on UCEN Road.

“There are some [bike paths] ... they put you on the road, and that stretch is pretty bad in terms of potholes,” Porter described.

Porter also shed light on the relationship between bike paths and pedestrian areas at UCSB. He stressed the need for increased awareness among all campus commuters to enhance safety.

Like Jahnke, Porter believes that a heightened consciousness about the

shared use of these spaces can significantly reduce the risk of accidents and ensure a safer campus environment.

“It seems like people walking are just never completely aware that there’s bikes going by as well, so if we can improve awareness in some way, that will be good,” Porter said.

Regarding parking costs at UCSB, Porter offered a contrasting viewpoint, drawing attention to his experience at Santa Barbara City College.

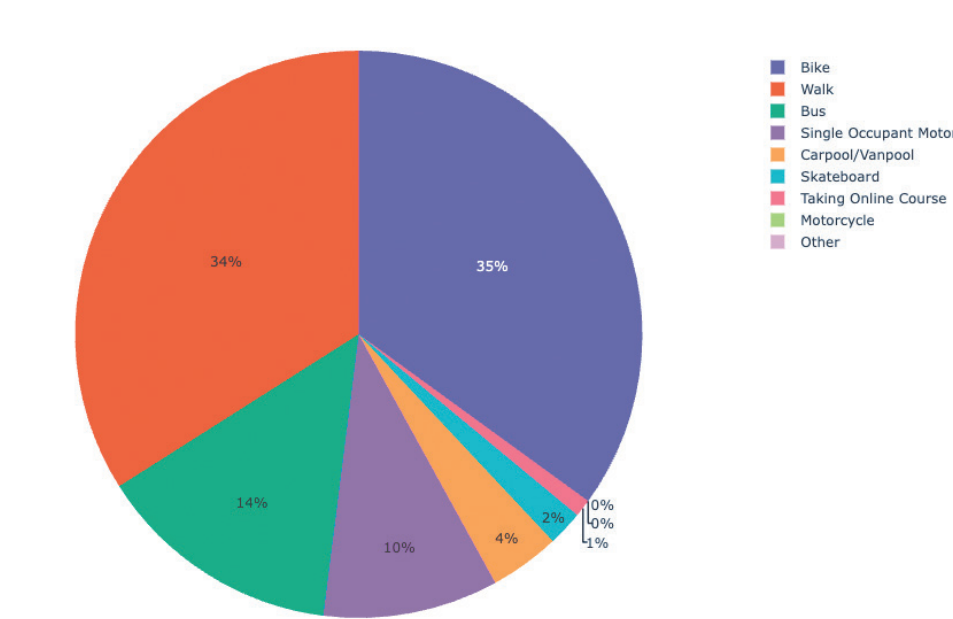
“It’s free for employees, which seems like it should be the case at any workplace, that you don’t have to pay to be able to park at where you work,” he noted.

Additionally, the issue of bike security at UCSB can be a significant concern. As such, Porter brings his bike into his classrooms and offices, as a precaution against theft.

“I know that even when it’s locked, there is plenty of bike theft happening. I bring it into the classroom because I find with 10 [minutes] between classes, it’s really the only way that I can get between my classrooms and be able to be ready to start on time instead of walking,” Porter said.

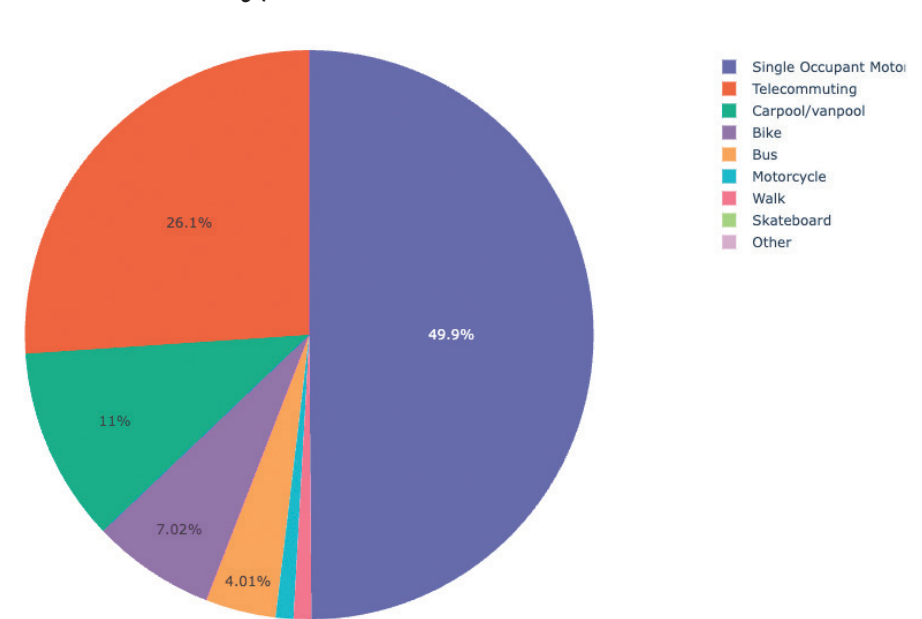
“My bike is way too expensive and special to me to trust leaving it outside.”

UCSB student commuter mode in 2023



JUSTIN ZHOU / DAILY NEXUS

UCSB faculty/staff commuter mode in 2023



JUSTIN ZHOU / DAILY NEXUS

# La biblioteca de UCSB revela un nuevo Makerspace, gratuito y abierto



El equipo está disponible para ser prestado por hasta cuatro horas al día a través de LibCal, la misma plataforma que se utiliza para reservar salas de estudio de la biblioteca.

Melody Xu y Siduo Zhang  
*Escritores para Noticias*  
y Wenn Ortuno-Cortez  
*Escritora para La Vista*

La biblioteca de UC Santa Bárbara reveló su nuevo Makerspace al principio del trimestre de invierno, ofreciendo acceso gratuito a tecnologías incluyendo impresoras 3D, cortadores láser y fabricantes de vinilo.

Ubicado en el primer piso de la biblioteca del lado del océano en la sala 1575, el Makerspace está abierto de 9 a.m. a 5 p.m. Lunes a viernes para todos los estudiantes de UCSB, facultad y personal para trabajar en proyectos personales junto a asistentes estudiantiles del Makerspace. La capacidad máxima del espacio es 46. El Makerspace está financiado por una subvención de \$50.000 del Comité Asesor de Tarifas Estudiantiles (SFAC) de UCSB, presentado conjuntamente por la biblioteca y el departamento de Tecnología de Información (I.T.) de Letras y Ciencias. Adicionalmente, el departamento I.T. Además, el departamento de I.T. brindó soporte técnico para la compra y administración de softwares como Adobe Creative Cloud. El espacio planea abrir los sábados y ampliar su horario hasta las 6 p.m en el futuro.

El equipo de Makerspace incluye ocho impresoras 3d, una pluma fluida 3Doodler, una cortadora láser, una máquina de coser y bordadora Janome, un proyector de patrones, una máquina de vinilo Cricut, una formadora de vacío, una máquina de hacer fondos, varios dispositivos electrónicos y herramientas manuales.

El equipo está disponible para ser prestado por hasta cuatro horas al día a través de LibCal, la misma plataforma que se utiliza para reservar salas de estudio de la biblioteca. Las computadoras dentro del Makerspace

también están equipadas con software esenciales para los creadores, como Adobe Creative Cloud, Autodesk Fusion 360, Janome, Cricut y más.

La idea del Makerspace se originó hace tres años, de acuerdo al Asistente de Makerspace y egresado, B Arriaga, por la necesidad de hacer que los espacios de laboratorio sean más accesibles. Arriaga habló sobre las dificultades para poner en marcha el proyecto durante las etapas de planificación.

“Se ha hablado mucho y se ha planificado y no se han hecho cosas hasta los últimos seis meses antes de la inauguración,” dijo Arriaga. “Hay mucha preparación en pensar por qué merecemos financiación estudiantil adicional, a pesar de que estamos dentro de la biblioteca que tiene su propia financiación interna... así que es realmente fantástico que [la universidad] haya visto el valor de este proyecto siendo completamente gratuito para los estudiantes.”

La directora de Makerspace, Maddie Wishart, dijo que la bibliotecaria de la universidad Kristin Antelman propuso inicialmente el espacio hace tres años. A partir de ahí, el equipo estuvo formado por la bibliotecaria de la universidad para el aprendizaje y la participación, Rebecca Metzger, Arriaga y otras personas afiliadas a la biblioteca de UCSB. Luego, el grupo dividió los deberes de recorrer los Makerspaces en diferentes campus, construir políticas de modelos de servicio y garantizar el acceso equitativo a los equipos. Wishart habló del espacio recién creado como un “recurso comunitario para la comunidad de UCSB.”

Muchos estudiantes no tienen acceso a impresoras 3D ni dinero para comprar una para su uso personal,” ella dijo. “Así que [el Makerspace] en realidad está dando a las

personas la posibilidad de entrar, intentarlo y aprender de ello.”

Wishart enfatizó que la accesibilidad es una parte integral del aprendizaje de los estudiantes y la construcción de comunidades.

“Realmente creo que crear es para todos,” dijo Wishart. “Está integrado, digamos, en el departamento de arte. Pero no necesariamente vemos eso como una garantía y otras cosas como estudios globales o historia o cosas así. Y creo que el hecho de que los estudiantes tengan acceso a la creación a las cosas que conlleva la resolución de problemas, la resiliencia cuando las cosas no funcionan, la capacidad de comunicarse... se pueden transferir a otros aspectos de sus vidas.”

Arriaga dijo que soportaron dificultades personales con la accesibilidad de las instalaciones del departamento de arte de la universidad, lo que los llevó a orquestar este proyecto.

“Mi concentración secundaria fue de arte... y creo que simplemente teniendo el espacio para que los estudiantes vengan y tengan trabajo libre y espacio para hacer eso en lugar de estar atados a reglas, costos y proyectos académicos, hay un gran beneficio para la salud mental,” elle dijo. “He visto estudiantes... que nunca antes habían impreso en 3D ya imprimiendo cosas en 3D, así que eso será realmente impactante.”

Para obtener más información, los estudiantes y personal pueden acceder a la página de Makerspace Canvas, que incluye exenciones, pautas de seguridad e instrucciones para el uso del equipo.

A parte de los recursos sobre Canvas, los estudiantes asistentes también brindan capacitación a través de talleres los cuales son publicados en Shoreline y el sitio web de Makerspace.

# Organizaciones estudiantiles realizan manifestación por Palestina



Una pancarta de tela más grande mostraba huellas de manos rojas y el mensaje “UCSB Mata.”

Erick Ruvalcaba  
*Escritor para La Vista*

Organizaciones estudiantiles de UC Santa Bárbara realizan manifestación por Palestina el 25 de enero en el Arbor para proponer la liberación Palestina. El evento atrajo a alrededor de 50 estudiantes, profesores y personal como participantes y observadores.

La manifestación se llevó a cabo en respuesta al periodista palestina de las redes sociales Bisan Owda, quien convocó a una semana global de huelga, según Estudiantes por la Justicia en Palestina (SJP) de UCSB.

Los volantes para la manifestación pedían “No a la escuela, ni al trabajo, ni a las compras”. Durante la manifestación se distribuyó comida gratuita.

“Hemos pasado más de 100 días de asesinato, desplazamiento y limpieza étnica del pueblo palestino por parte de la entidad sionista armada por Estados Unidos sin llamados a un alto el fuego permanente”, dijo el SJP en un comunicado al Nexus. “Debemos mantener a Palestina en el primer plano de nuestras mentes”.

Los representantes y participantes de SJP crearon una barrera circular alrededor del grupo usando bicicletas y pancartas.

Los asistentes formaron un círculo dentro de la barrera, izando banderas y carteles pro palestinos. Los carteles incluían frases como “Alto al genocidio en Gaza”, “Fin a la ocupación”, “Del río al mar, Palestina será libre”, entre otras.

Una pancarta de tela más grande, sostenida por dos representantes del SJP, mostraba huellas de manos rojas y el mensaje “UCSB Mata” (“UCSB Kills”).

La manifestación comenzó

al mediodía con cánticos encabezados por un representante del SJP.

“Gaza, Gaza, no llores, nunca te dejaremos morir”, resonaban los cánticos. “Nuestra exigencia es justicia, no paz en tierras robadas”.

Los miembros de la recién formada Voz Judía por la Paz de la UCSB se dirigieron al público reconociendo la importancia del día de la manifestación como Tu BiShvat, la festividad judía de celebrar los árboles.

“Sin embargo, en este día no podemos decir que estamos celebrando Tu BiShavt sin reconocer que Israel ha desarraigado 70% de los árboles en Gaza,” el orador dijo.

“Rechazamos la idea de que se debe apoyar a Israel para mantener seguros a los judíos. Los judíos no necesitan un Estado-nación que ocupe tierras y realice una limpieza étnica de personas”, orador dijo.

Los miembros de la Asociación de Estudiantes Musulmanes (MSA) de UCSB compartieron en la manifestación conceptos erróneos comunes sobre el Islam como religión, como que la religión es “sexista” porque las mujeres usan hijabs, y enfatizaron que los valores de la religión dan importancia a la defensa de la liberación palestina.

“Nuestra religión nos enseña a defender la injusticia y, cuando vemos cosas que no están bien, a hablar”, dijo un miembro de MSA.SJP dijo en el comunicado al Nexus que la manifestación era un testimonio del continuo llamado a la liberación de Palestina.

“Nuestra manifestación demuestra que UCSB no se ha rendido”, decía el comunicado. “Estamos aquí respondiendo a los llamados de los pueblos indígenas de todo el mundo y seguiremos luchando por la justicia y la liberación”.

# Receta de sopa de fideo

Erick Ruvalcaba  
*Escritor para La Vista*

Sopa de fideo es un platillo clásico, sencillo de hacer y sabroso. Desde mi niñez me acuerdo que mi madre nos hacía sopa de fideo en ocasiones como cuando hacía frío o cuando alguno de mis hermanos o yo nos enfermamos. Desde que me mude para UCSB extraño comer esta sopa que mi madre nos hacía y siempre que regreso para visitar a mi familia es algo que le pido que

me haga.

Recientemente cuando estaba lloviendo demasiado decidí preguntarle a mi madre cómo hace esta sopa.

Estuvimos en videollamada pasando cada pasó para hacer este platillo.

iDespués de intentarlo me salió igualito como mi madre y les voy a compartir la receta!

## Ingredientes:

- Aceite de vegetal
- 1/4 de cebolla blanca
- 2 dientes de ajo
- 1 paquete de fideo de

- 7.5 oz
- 1 lata de salsa de tomate
- 8 oz
- Sal al gusto
- 2 cucharadas de knorr de pollo

## Instrucciones:

Calienta una cacerola a fuego medio bajo. Agrega el aceite de vegetal y el fideo

Tosta el fideo hasta que esté bien dorado sin dejar de menear el fideo porque se puede quemar. Pica el 1/4 de cebolla y los

2 dientes de ajo finamente y se lo agregas al fideo por un minuto

Agrega la lata de salsa de tomate y suficiente agua para tapar el fideo

Luego le agregas las 2 cucharadas de knorr de pollo y sal al gusto

Le subes a fuego medio alto y le pones una tapadera. Déjalo cocer hasta que el fideo esté listo

Y luego está listo para servir.

¡Así de sencillo es hacer sopa de fideo!

Ya que esté listo la sopa para comer te lo puedes comer así solo o le puedes añadir un toque especial.

Le puedes agregar queso fresco cortado en cuadritos para darle otro sabor y que no te falten las tortillas de maíz para acompañar este platillo.

Y si no le quieres poner queso fresco también puedes hacer unas quesadillas para acompañarlo.

¡Ojalá te guste y uses esta receta cuando estés enfermo o cuando haga demasiado frío!



**Armchair QB**

The Kansas City Chiefs become the eighth team in Super Bowl Era to successfully defend their title since the 2003-2004 New England Patriots.

# SPORTS

**UCSB Athletics**

The baseball team lead their conference as they earned the No. 1 spot in the Preseason Coaches' Poll in The Big West. Zander Darby, Matt Ager and Hudson Barret also earned All-Conference Honors.

## Men’s basketball loses to conference rival UC Irvine



Ajay Mitchell, 2022-23 Big West Player of the Year, surveys the court as he looks to help his team score.

**Aidan Dobbins**  
*Staff Writer*

Despite a strong start from the UC Santa Barbara men’s basketball team featuring an 8-point lead, the UC Irvine Anteaters proved too much for the Gauchos to handle, as they lost on Feb. 8 at home, 76-61.

UCSB opened the match with unselfish ball movement, as within the first 5 minutes of the game, all 5 starters had already scored a field goal. While the scoring distribution in the opening minutes was even, 15 of the Gauchos’ 24 first-half points were produced by the junior guard duo of Ajay Mitchell and Cole Anderson, as the two were finding effective offense from range. Irvine

stayed resilient, responding with an 11-0 run fueled by efficient jump-shooting and scrappy defensive effort. Their momentum would continue for the rest of the half, as the Anteaters held the lead for over 12 of the first 20 minutes. As time for the opening period expired, the Gauchos saw themselves facing a 9-point deficit. However, the team had some potential confidence leading into the second half after a mid-range jump shot by senior guard Josh Pierre-Louis and a block delivered by junior center Evans Kipruto on Irvine’s last shot, altering the game’s momentum.

The second half continued similarly with UCSB’s guards allotting 16 out of their first

18 points of the period. Unfortunately, the Irvine lead would balloon to as much as 24, as the Anteaters were knocking down an array of shots from the midrange and attacking the rim with aggression. An explosive steal and slam by Pierre-Louis seemed to breathe life into the trailing Gauchos, as Santa Barbara would stay competitive and whittle the Irvine lead to 13 with a Mitchell jump-shot. This late spark by UCSB came up just short, as untimely turnovers began to mount and a well-executed Irvine offense proved to be too much for Santa Barbara. The final score favored the visitors, as the Gauchos would lose at home to the Anteaters,

who are currently No. 1 in the Big West Conference. Mitchell led the team in scoring at 17, followed by Anderson and Pierre-Louis at 16 and 12 points, respectively. Junior forward Ariel Bland chipped in 8 points and 8 rebounds, leading the team in boards and tied for most assists at 2.

“Our turnover issues continue to hurt us,” Head Coach Joe Pasternack said. “We have to be better at staying poised and confident on the perimeter and strong with the ball inside.”

Pasternack would credit the Anteaters’ defensive pressure on UCSB’s ball handlers and inside scorers, recounting the Irvine edge in steals and blocks.

Pasternack also commented on the visiting team’s efficient scoring, saying, “You can’t beat anybody [by] letting them shoot at 63%. We are playing to get the best possible seed for the conference tournament.”

This quote was followed up with an 8-point loss to conference rival California State University, Northridge on Feb. 10, spoiling former UCSB star and current Los Angeles Lakers guard Gabe Vincent’s return to the Thunderdome. UCSB men’s basketball will look to return to winning habits on Feb. 15 on the road in San Diego, taking on the UC San Diego Tritons at 7 p.m. The game will be available for streaming on ESPN+.

## Men’s volleyball loses on the road against Pepperdine

**Isaiah Ochoa**  
*Sports Editor*

The UC Santa Barbara men’s volleyball team headed south to Malibu on Feb. 10 to face off against the Pepperdine University Waves. The Gauchos could not find a rhythm as they got swept in three sets, going 25-16, 25-21 and 25-23.

In the previous matchup, the Gauchos lost to the Waves

at home. The game went the distance as teams played 5 sets, but the game ended in Pepperdine’s favor. Looking to bounce back, the Gauchos scored first to start the game as junior opposite Geste Bianchi hit a kill to make it 1-0 Gauchos. From there, both teams went back and forth for 2 points, but the Gauchos rallied to give themselves a 2-point lead of 4-2.

Immediately after the

Gauchos’ rally, the Waves went on a rally of their own, scoring 3 unanswered points to cut the lead and taking a 1-point lead going 5-4. The Gauchos did manage to tie it up at 7, but the Waves did not risk any chance of the Gauchos retaking the lead. After being tied at 7, the Waves scored 4 unanswered points to make it 11-7 in the Waves’ favor.

The Gauchos tried to cut the deficit as much as they

could, but the Waves showed their dominance and extended the lead to 9 points. After one set of play, Pepperdine took set one by a score of 25-16.

Pepperdine stayed hot as they started the second set by scoring first off a bad set from sophomore outside hitter Owen Birg. The Waves extended their lead to 2 points until the Gauchos fought back to tie it. With the score being 5-2 in favor of the Waves, the

Gauchos scored 3 unanswered points as Birg recovered from his mistake to tie it at 5.

After being tied at 5, both teams went back and forth as the Gauchos looked to tie with one set each while the Waves were looking to go up 2 sets. The Waves outlasted the Gauchos in the back-and-forth battle as Pepperdine managed to earn a 3-point lead and maintained it throughout the set, taking it 25-21.

Being up 2 sets, Pepperdine felt nice and became a little comfortable at the beginning of the third set, which the Gauchos took advantage of and went up 3-1. The lead didn’t last long, as Pepperdine bounced back quickly and tied it at 5. UCSB was not looking to get swept in 3 sets, so they responded with 4 unanswered points to go up 9-5. The Gauchos’ lead got up to as much as 6 points, where the score was 13-7.

From there, it all spiraled down for the Gauchos as the Waves scored 6 unanswered points to tie it at 13. The set went back and forth as every point was hard-earned. In the end, Pepperdine outlasted UCSB, taking the set 25-23 as the Waves took both games and swept the Gauchos in 3 sets.

Next week, the Gauchos are hitting the road again to face California Lutheran University in Thousand Oaks. The match is scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 15, starting at 7 p.m.



Junior opposite Rees Barnett jumps up to attempt the spike against a three-person block.



THE DAILY STENCH

It's Satire, Stupid.



Idiot stoner packs bong for Super Bowl

Amanda Lick

*Jack the Ripper*

My bad guys, how was I supposed to know that the Super BOWL with a team called the Kansas City CHIEFS was not weed related? I mean that is just ridiculous.

You know, I don't know a lot about football, but it seems like the perfect occasion to pack a nice bowl and relax. I

played football when I was in elementary school but it was the type where we had those flags on our sides, and my parents made me wear those sport goggle glasses that were so ugly. Actually, now that I think about it, that was so humiliating. I often think about what it would have been like to grow up to become a collegiate athlete. My parents probably would have been so happy but

instead I rip two-hour Fortnite sessions in between classes.

I also have been trying to write in a journal more. I heard that writing down what you do during the day can help you remember things longer. I can't even remember what I ate for breakfast this morning. I've been watching a lot of true crime documentaries lately and it has been making me more paranoid. Like, bitch, you

could just straight up swing on me with an axe even though we have been roommates for a year and a half.

Travis Kelce is on the Chiefs and I can't wait to watch him play. I'm not a Swiftie or anything but it's crazy that the Swifties only had to wait like three months for their favorite team to go to the Super Bowl. Imagine, instead of the San Francisco 49ers, it was the San

Francisco 420ers. That would be crazy.

Thank you for being here today and being present with the thoughts on my mind. I've been taking yoga classes and I really think it's helping with my grounding and being able to touch my toes. Rock on everyone.

*Amanda Lick likes this little life.*



Can we shut the fuck up about Jack Johnson already?

Amanda Lick

*Silencer*

Did you know that Jack Johnson went to UC Santa Barbara? Yes. Yes, I did. So shut the fuck up about it. Call me bitter. Call me what you please. Call me by your name. Whatever! I don't care. I might be the biggest hater on the block but I think it's time to put a stop to the conversation.

Some will remark that they completely understand why Jack Johnson went to UCSB. "The vibes are just like ... so him," I could imagine someone saying. Or, "His music is so chill and I am so obsessed with his aura," I could also imagine someone probably saying. But in reality, the only thing that is turning "Upside Down" is my stomach. And it's not from the stench of the lagoon.

Other schools have famous graduates like Obama and Emma Watson, and who do we have? The man who produced the soundtrack for "Curious George." And also Gwyneth Paltrow.

I also found out that he was in an Isla Vista band called "Soil" while he spent his time here. You're telling me you joined a band that was named after poop? You're actually disgusting. I'm sure he's a

really nice guy but he gives me the vibe of those guys who claim "I didn't need to shower today because I didn't really sweat or do anything."


I heard that there is a rumor his son goes to this school and I just want to say if you are reading this, I love and support you. I am sorry that girls are using your father's music to showcase their aesthetic Del Playa homes on TikTok and that

I am complaining about it. But WE GET IT. He went to school here. Stop attributing your personality to people who have no idea who you are but went to the same school as you.

Jerry Trainor went here though and he seems pretty cool.


*Amanda Lick is a huge fan of iCarly*

Amanda Lick



An ode to Amanda Lick

Amanda Lick started working full time for The Daily Stench after graduating from UC Santa Barbara in 1999, obtaining a degree in Art History. Now, he's one of our most prolific writers, getting both of his articles in print for the **first time ever**, after 10 beautiful years of dedication. We love you, Amanda Lick, and we applaud your uncanny ability to prop the door open for hours before and after our meetings.






# SCIENCE & TECH

## SIMPLY STATED : Are aphrodisiacs a hoax?

Olivia Gil de Bernabe  
*Asst. Science Editor*  
Katharine Chi  
*Staff Writer*

What is an aphrodisiac? An aphrodisiac is a substance or food that can provoke arousal, sexual desire, behavior and even pleasure. There are three typical usage types for aphrodisiac foods: increasing libido (sexual desire), increasing sexual potency and performance and improving sexual pleasure. Ultimately, aphrodisiac foods are typically consumed with the intention of finding more pleasure in sexual activities, but there is a lack of concrete evidence and research that truly proves the validity of these claims.

With regard to the psychological effects of aphrodisiacs, one must recognize the placebo effect – believing that the effect of a substance is more beneficial than the substance itself – and understand that an individual’s expectation could manifest itself into successful results. Although there isn’t research to back the marketing claims of aphrodisiac foods, it does not discredit the fact that certain foods can stimulate an individual’s sex life. Some have specific properties, such as omega 3 fatty acids that increase blood flow and can bring upon the label of “aphrodisiac” as they have the ability to benefit sexual activities.



**Chocolate**  
An iconic Valentine’s Day staple, chocolate, has a mythical status in popular media and literature for being a food that can increase sexual desire and pleasure. Science suggests biochemical reasons for chocolate’s aphrodisiac label. Not only does it contain phenylethylamine, a chemical released during the early stages of attraction, but eating it also appears to release serotonin and dopamine, two mood-elevating chemicals. However, modern research suggests that chocolate’s reported effects on human sexuality have more to do with marketing-induced placebo than with physiological outcomes. One study conducted in Italy to assess the association between chocolate intake and sexual function in women found no statistically significant correlation between chocolate consumption and sexual distress and sexual desire. Women that reported eating more than one chocolate cube daily reported higher sexual function, but the researchers hypothesized that other lifestyle habits accounted for this difference. To this day, no studies have found a physiological effect of chocolate intake on human sexuality.


**Chili peppers**  
Spicy and hot, the concentration of capsaicin is what makes chili peppers a spice delicacy. Chili peppers are considered to be aphrodisiacs that arouse desire due to

their ability to increase body temperatures. A study focused on capsaicin and energy expenditure revealed that the thermogenic ingredient can promote fat oxidation and increase energy expenditure without significantly increasing blood pressure. Chili peppers have been claimed to also increase body sensations. In addition to increasing the body temperature, hot chili peppers are known to increase the libido and testosterone levels, but there isn’t substantial evidence to back this claim.




**Red wine**  
A classic romantic dinner companion, red wine is another famed aphrodisiac. No studies have found causational evidence to support this labeling, but several have suggested a correlational relationship between red wine consumption and better sexuality. In one study sampling women, it was found that women who regularly drank a moderate amount of red wine had higher self-reported sexual desire and overall sexual function as compared to those who never drank red wine. In another study examining the effects of red wine on sexual function in men, scientists found that the antioxidant properties of compounds in wine may be beneficial to the reproductive system. However, they concluded that there is insufficient evidence to state that red wine consumption

improves sexual function due to the lack of research on the precise role of polyphenols and the mechanisms of their action.



**Asparagus**  
Unexpectedly, asparagus is an aphrodisiac that is filled with vitamin E, which is known to increase blood and oxygen flow, as well as potassium, a vitamin that is essential for the production of sex hormones. The nutrients work to cleanse the kidneys and the urinary tract, while giving a boost of energy. In addition to the vitamins packed in asparagus, the vegetable’s aspartic acid alleviates excess ammonia found in the body, thus combatting fatigue and sexual disinterest. In one study, a group of male subjects took asparagus supplements for a two-month period and the results showed improvements in erectile dysfunction in comparison to the control group. A great source for balancing hormone levels, asparagus is an aphrodisiac that can encourage a higher sex drive and improve sexual function.



Art by LAUREN BRYANT

So, is there any definite scientific merit to aphrodisiacs? Not really. Many of them – berries, red wine, dark chocolate – may improve relaxation through increased blood flow, but there is no smoking-gun evidence linking any one food consumption to increased sexual desire and performance. Additionally, the concept of consuming something to improve a sexual experience may seem innocent enough, but indulging in the aphrodisiac market may actually have serious ramifications. For example, the fact that rhino populations have been driven to abysmally low levels is largely attributed to a myth that their horns have aphrodisiac properties. The pursuit of heightened sexual experiences should not come at the expense of endangered species and ecosystems. Therefore, when looking to enhance intimacy, be conscientious of the approach you take. A holistic look on lifestyle and health choices is a better indicator of sexual health, many experts say. Dr. Michael Krychman, a renowned researcher in the field of sexual medicine, emphasized this in one interview discussing aphrodisiacs. “People who exercise, have a healthy diet and lower stress, all these elements work together and they have better sex lives,” he said. So, next time you want to get the mood going, maybe try de-stressing through exercise before you reach for the oysters, asparagus or chocolate.

## “California Against the Sea”: Rosanna Xia visits UCSB to discuss her latest book

Madasyn Mueller  
*Reporter*

Los Angeles Times reporter and Pulitzer Prize finalist, Rosanna Xia, visited UC Santa Barbara on Feb. 8 to discuss how sea level rise is threatening California coastal communities from Crescent City down to Imperial Beach. Xia sat down with Director of UCSB’s Ocean & Coastal Policy Center (OCPC) Charles Lester to discuss her recent book, “California Against the Sea: Visions for Our Vanishing Coastline.” Her talk was part of the larger, public “Imagining California Series,” hosted by UCSB’s Interdisciplinary Humanities Center (IHC) at the Humanities and Social Sciences Building. “California Against the Sea” is a detailed anthology of the 1200-mile California coastline and the people who call it home, from the distant past to the not-so-distant future. Intertwined with insight from several UCSB researchers, Xia’s book is an interdisciplinary investigation. She dissects how the interplay of science, politics, stewardship and land use have shaped the dynamic California coastline while centering Indigenous narratives, such as those of the local Chumash people. Her prose – poised, yet urgent – are a call to action as the Pacific Ocean edges ever-closer into the coastline. Her talk at the IHC was moderated by Lester, whose research was featured in Xia’s book. Throughout the talk, Xia and Lester touched on the adverse ways Californians are trying to impose permanence – such as seawalls – onto the impermanent coast, in an attempt to preserve coastal communities from sea level rise. Cautiously, Xia advised the audience. “The ocean is moving in, the coast is supposed to move with it, and we’re supposed to move with the coast,” she said. “The longer we try to hold this line, the more it is going to cost us.” As she highlights in “California

Against the Sea,” the boundaries between coast and sea are always shifting. “In the last 100 years, the sea rose less than 9 inches in California; by the end of this century the surge could be greater than 6, possibly 7 feet,” Xia wrote. Even for the people who will not live to see this change, the question remains: How do communities transform for the inevitable future? As California moves toward mitigating the effects of sea level rise, Xia argues that the way people assign value to tangible entities, like land, needs to be critically examined. “Who benefits from preserving the world the way it is today? Whose property? Whose health?” Xia asked. Xia spent a large portion of the talk discussing the processes of resilience and restoration in small coastal communities, topics in her book’s section, “Missing Pieces.” Speaking on resilience, she drew the audience’s attention to the small and overlooked Marin City, which she visited while writing her book. For decades now, when the tide is high or there is a heavy rain, Marin City becomes a flooded, trapped wetland. It is an issue expected to get worse with sea level rise, but it’s not at the forefront of residents’ minds. For years, they have been afflicted with unexplained cancer and high asthma rates. Xia explains that for this community, the attention of sea level rise became an opportunity to address decades-long public and environmental health issues. “Restoring green space into a community is a climate change issue [and] a resilience issue,” Xia said. In addition, she underscored how sea level rise became an opportunity to clean up the toxic contaminated soil that has long plagued Marin City. Xia called into question how people restore land matters. “Nowhere in California can things be restored exactly the way things were before,” she said. “How do you bring back the past in a way that will survive the future?”



Sea level rise and coastal erosion are issues all too familiar to residents of Santa Barbara and Isla Vista.

Currently, UCSB and, by extension, Isla Vista – a coastal campus and community – have committed to adapt to and plan for sea level rise. For the UCSB campus, the state of California requires it to have a sea level rise adaptation strategy. The responsibility of this strategy plan largely falls onto the OCPC guided by Lester. “The University is working on this strategy which imagines a future where we don’t try to protect everything with seawalls. And the reason for that is because seawalls are bad for beaches,” Lester said in a separate interview with the Nexus. “The plan expresses this intent to try to avoid that by thinking proactively about, for example, moving back infrastructure or public access along the bluff top, as needed, to adapt to the erosion that is going to continue and likely get worse.” Last week’s coastal balcony collapse on the 67 block of Del Playa Drive, due to coastal erosion after the recent heavy rains, is a poignant reminder that no community is immune from sea level rise. However, coastal bluff collapse

is not an uncommon occurrence for the community of Isla Vista. “The issue of sea level rise and adaptation is a very real one, for I.V. ... It’s been experiencing erosion there for a long time, really since we have the Coastal Act, 50 years ago,” Lester said. He then went on to discuss Santa Barbara County’s own efforts. “The county does have a program in place to try to systematically retreat development on that blufftop which is in danger and not safe ... it’s actually a good example of statewide jurisdiction being proactive [about this problem],” he said. “Which is something Rosanna’s book frames for. How can we get ahead of this thing that is happening, sea level rise, in a deliberate, planned way?” One does not need to be a coastal property owner or a Del Playa Drive resident, however, to participate in the discourse and mitigation of sea level rise; the ocean belongs to everyone. In California, the right to access the coast is guaranteed to every state resident, as enacted in the Coastal Act of 1976. “There is so much shared connection in the ocean,” Xia said

toward the conclusion of her talk. She advises that, as California grapples with sea level rise, inhabitants’ collective admiration of and appreciation for its iconic coastlines remains a uniting force in efforts toward adaptation. Expanding upon this, Xia also noted how non-native California residents are guests on the land. This notion, a point also mentioned in her book, comes from the Tongva Nation concept of *kuuyam*, which means “guest” in Tongva. Xia was first introduced to the concept of *kuuyam* by scholar Charles Sepulveda, a Tongva and Acjachemen. Today, Tongva people currently inhabit *Tovangar*, known presently as the greater Los Angeles Basin. “Letting go of that personal attachment to a place takes courage,” Xia wrote about the importance of centering *kuuyam* as California adapts to sea level rise. “But, by being better guests, by reframing our relationship with place and with the native people of this land, could *kuuyum* ultimately lead to more people taking care of the environment, this coast, this land?”

# ON THE MENU

## Indulging in delight: The irresistible offerings of Kin Bakeshop



Kin Bakeshop rotates their donut and drink flavors daily.



One of Kin Bakeshop's brioche flavors is the strawberry lychee donut.

**Felicia Lo**  
*Staff Writer*

Each bite of Kin Bakeshop's mochi donut has the perfect texture and balance of innovative flavors. It's addicting. One bite after another, I question my own sanity. I remember my reaction to my first bite of one of Kin Bakeshop's donuts: eye closed, fist clenched, breath stopped, trying to find the balance between inhaling the entire donut and slowing down to savor each bite.

Located at the Turnpike Shopping Center, Kin Bakeshop crafts mochi donuts, brioche donuts and a special set of drinks inspired by Asian desserts. The interior of the shop features a minimalist, yet stylistic design — modern and cozy. Stepping inside is like opening my eyes to a new world that is not often seen in the Santa Barbara scenery. Every couple of days, I excitedly check Kin's Instagram account for new menu releases of their brioche and mochi donuts: always a new flavor and always a new texture with a hint of innovation. Although they have a few staple flavors,

such as the cinnamon Nutella mochi donut, I can always count on Kin to create flavor combinations that I've never seen before or never thought would work. They keep me on my toes and keep me hooked and never bored, always having me lurking around their account and always planning my next visit even though my wallet begs me not to.

Granted, the first two times I tried to get donuts at Kin were failures. The first time I went was after I had seen a friend post about it, arriving at the shop at 3:30 p.m., before the closing time listed on Google Maps, unaware of the "customs" of going to Kin. In hindsight, that was a stupid move because even now, getting there at 9:30 a.m. could mean not getting any donuts at all. I thought I had learned my lesson the second time I went, and I was met with a line that probably would have translated into over an hour of waiting for donuts.

So, here's what you have to do: you've got to plan your Kin visits in advance, wake up early enough to get there before they open if you want to be certain

that you get the flavors you want, especially if they are the popular ones. On weekdays, except for Fridays, there usually isn't a long wait. Strolling in the early afternoons might even win you a donut of your choice. However, if you want to get a specific pastry from Kin on Fridays through Sundays, then you better plan ahead or you will be met with a two-hour-long line.

But is all this worth it? Getting a pastry had never been this much hassle until I became hooked on Kin's mochi donuts. Every time I take a bite, my slightly sore legs from standing in line in the early mornings make it worth it. There's a reason Kin is a weekly destination for me and for many others. As a citrus fanatic, their recent lemon yuzu and mandarin tanghulu (yes, they put actual pieces of tanghulu on the donuts) mochi donuts were some of the best desserts I've had in a long time. Without a set menu, it is impossible to give a recommendation item to get at Kin, but there were some memorable flavors that I would like to see again in

the future: hibiscus, Chinese almond cookie, Korean sweet potato and many more. I hate to say this, but you just had to be there, or on their Instagram the day they release the menu. It's always different, and it's always changing.

Although the star of the show is the donuts, Kin also has an intriguing menu of drinks with various Einspanners, cream tops and tea lattes of Asian flavors. Now, I haven't tried one yet (which means I will eventually), but they do look exquisite, and they look their price. A friend who has tried their matcha Einspanner said that Kin's version of the drink is "a matcha equivalent to the teas CHICHA San Chen makes." And having been to CHICHA San Chen, a chain tea shop honored by the Michelin-backed International Taste Institute in 2021, I have to say that I now have high expectations of Kin's drinks. Similarly to how they craft their pastries, they often have specialty drinks that they offer only on certain occasions.

Even though getting a piece of Kin's delights is sometimes more cumbersome than going

to a regular down-the-road bakery, you can always stay up-to-date through their Instagram account. Whenever a new flavor of donuts or drinks is launched, you can count on them to make a timely announcement. Even when you are right outside waiting in line, they send out updates on their pastry counts and offer hot drinks on the windier days. Although I would say that efficiency is not their strong suit, given the often long wait times, their consideration and care for their customers make up for it.

Kin's attention to detail and the thoughtfulness they put into their craft and business really shine through regarding how they interact with their customers online and in person. You can see how owners Tommy Chang and Will Chen really care about their employees and the community that they've built through the messages they post on their Instagram account, sharing their gratitude to everyone involved in their ambitions. Besides being a bakery, they are truly an inspiration on how to run a community-focused business.

## Bananas today, gone tomorrow?

**Pihu Jain**  
*Asst. OTM Editor*

Layers. Multiple of them can be found in onions, people, paint on walls ... too complicated, a lot to reveal, often deceptive once you chip away at them. But, you know what is almost exactly what it is within as it is on the out, only one layer to uncover? Sidestep, make way, here comes the banana. Andy Warhol didn't have his love affair with this soft and sweet, yellow fruit because it was complex or complicated, but because it was "mundane": a symbol of the everyday man, a consumer staple, the quintessential pop of color in everyone's kitchen, a fruit enjoyed by babies and baby boomers alike.

The fruit that we've all gone bananas for arose from a tough, green fruit chock full of black seeds, genetically selected for and bred over centuries to become the edible one we know today. The banana has been a cornerstone of many cultures, like my own. Us Indians make use of every part of the banana: skin, leaves and all. We use the leaves as disposable plates, in formal and informal settings alike, we make curry with the peel, we even use its flowers, stems and sap as ayurvedic remedies for diabetes and countless other ailments. However, the banana didn't make it big in the Western world until a scrappy 18-year-old immigrant Samuel Zemurray got his hands on this yellow pot of gold in the mid-19th century. From then on, the

banana was the star of the world's stage, and it has been that way ever since.

As of today, the banana has amassed a following demanding the production of over 100 billion a year, generating \$8 billion, filling the bellies of millions of people worldwide. The different varieties mixed in more combinations than Fleetwood Mac, leading to today's over 1000 breeds of banana. The reach of the Cavendish is the widest: the breed was designed to withstand overseas export and now constitutes the majority of the bananas exported to the U.S. and Europe. In other countries, many different breeds of banana are consumed regularly, but this is not the case in the States.

America's reliance on the Cavendish breed presents a horrifically prophetic vulnerability with the acceleration of the spread of the Tropical Race 4 strain, or Panama disease, which has been devastating banana populations for the past three decades. The disease reached the South American hub of production, Colombia, for this fruit in 2019, and we can expect a global shortage of bananas to occur within the next couple of years, unless something is done.

And, so, the simplicity of the banana that we've come to love might just be the straw that breaks the proverbial camel's back. The only solution? Diversify, diversify, diversify. Scientists like Dr. Fernando García-Bastidas are working to isolate genes in

the banana that can withstand the Panama disease and, with this knowledge, change the way bananas are bred to keep them alive and thriving.

One day, when we walk into grocery stores we will be greeted with the sight of a spectrum of bananas, perhaps forfeiting our favorite swatch of yellow, going slightly over-budget, but that is a price that I'm willing to pay. Are you?

While you ponder all that you have read here today, why not try the simple banana snack recipe below? Take your time, bite by bite,

and appreciate that light, sweet and starchy flavor we've come to love, and hopefully is here to stay.

**Frozen peanut butter banana slices**

Yields: 2 servings  
Time: 10 minutes prep + overnight (as frozen as you'd like)

Ingredients:

- 2 bananas
- Smooth peanut butter (as much as desired)

Directions:

1. Cut both bananas into

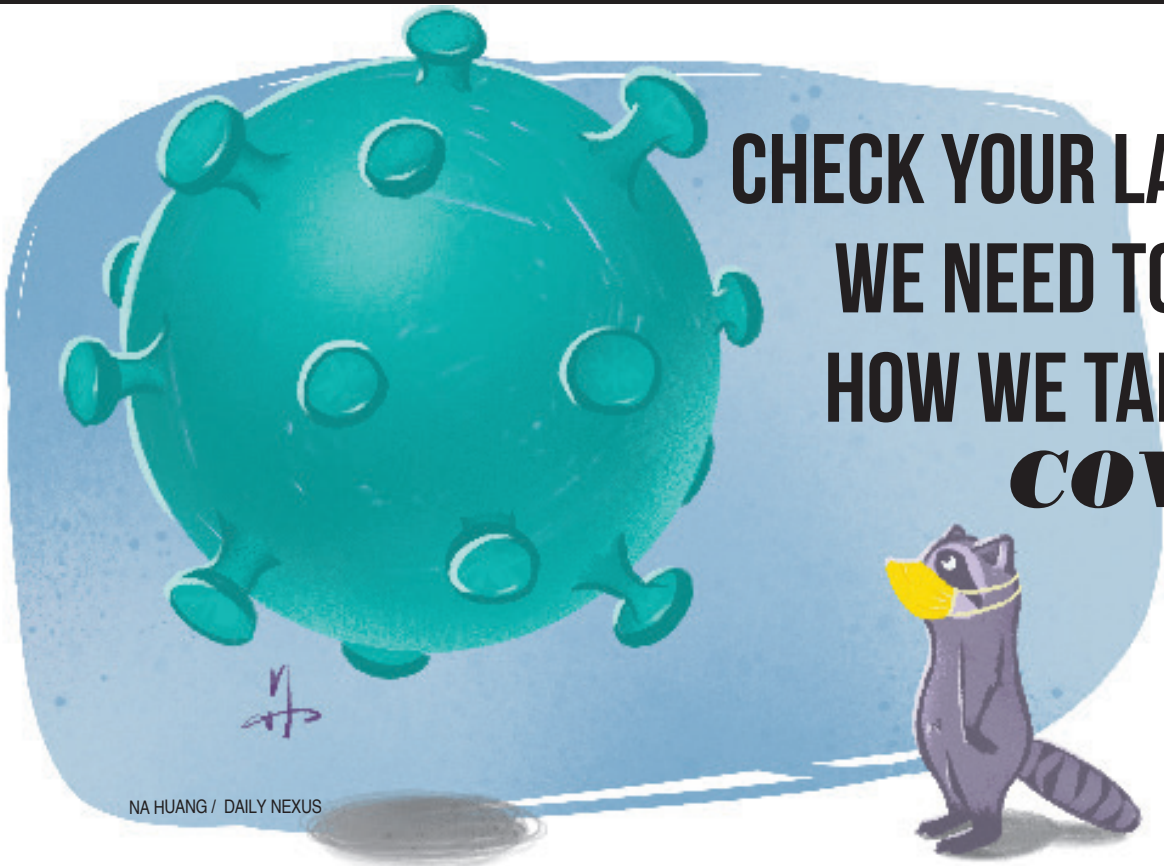
- even circle slices.
2. Place on a plate and spread a layer of peanut butter on top of each (the amount of peanut butter is up to you!).
3. Place in the fridge overnight, take out and enjoy!

This recipe takes no time to prepare, and can be made in bulk and stored for future cravings. I highly recommend it frozen, but I have found just putting peanut butter on the banana slices to be equally delicious. Enjoy!



LAUREN BRYANT / DAILY NEXUS

# OPINION



Phoebe Mitchem  
*Staff Writer*

Check your language: We need to change how we talk about COVID-19.

To a still COVID-19-cautious student witnessing the rise in classroom illness as winter quarter unfolds, the recent updates to California’s Department of Public Health COVID-19 guidance seem to have come at a strange time.

Hospitals across the country have responded to the recent influx of COVID-19-positive patients since December by reinstating mask mandates, yet the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) has determined that the right moment to forgo major isolation precautions in work and school environments – neither particularly known for their immaculate hygiene – is now. Rather than resulting in an already reduced isolation period, a positive test now means an infected employee is free to roam the workplace, “recommended” to wear a mask and – in rather subjective terms – “avoid contact” with high-risk individuals for a period of 10 days. I’m not thrilled, to say the least.

The reduction of isolation restrictions during one of the largest COVID-19 surges so far is upsetting enough, but reading about this development has fueled another source of my pandemic fury more: the misleading terminology used to describe the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The words we use to talk about COVID-19 are important. News media and corresponding journalistic style are meant to deliver information to an audience – their declared goal – in the most comprehensible way possible. That’s why I find it so disappointing to see an integral organization like the CDPH neglect their duty to clarity.

The word “avoid” in the CDPH’s statement is rather subjective – should asymptomatic employees wait for the next elevator or avoid an office floor completely? What about students, who may be coming to class infected in a crowded lecture hall with a select number of open seats? How can they possibly prioritize – or even care about given the anonymity of the setting – avoiding high-risk individuals as the guidelines suggest?

We don’t all wear plaques around our necks identifying our varying disabilities or immunocompromised status. The Americans with Disabilities Act guarantees that such personal information need not be revealed to colleagues or supervisors in a workplace setting. In putting the onus of avoidance on the infected employee or student to steer clear of high-risk individuals, it seems that one of two things may happen, both leading to unfortunate situations.

The infected person may not know of their colleagues’ high-risk status and subsequently infect them. Alternatively, high-risk employees may feel forced to reveal their disabilities to the workplace in an effort to protect their own health – a plea to compassion that the infected individual, likely indoctrinated with the media’s language around COVID-19 already, may fail to respect, which could result in a potentially dangerous infection regardless.

A recommendation, as most protocols now phrase it, does little for compliance and a recommendation with such subjective language within it encourages even less.

Terminology matters, in the same way that technical writers avoid jargon to explain a product’s function without confusion. COVID-19, once reported in this concise manner as news organizations scrambled to explain the who/what/why as quickly and completely as possible, has since gained coverage more in the vein of loosey-goosey opinion pieces than forthright information (Yes, I do see the irony). Much mainstream journalism has taken to the dominant ideology on COVID-19 as a thing of the past, a disease whose dangerous impact is still debatable. Headlines are dominated by questions we’ve had the answers to for years now. “Do Masks Work?” “Is COVID Still a Thing?” Yes to both (obviously).

Granted, the current surge has ramped up much needed coverage on the reality of the continuing pandemic. Nevertheless, colloquial phrases diminishing the threat are still appearing in the media such as “Back during COVID” and “In the middle of the pandemic.” How are they sure it was the middle? At the time of writing this article, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention’s COVID-19 data stated as many as 2000 Americans are still dying of COVID-19 each week, not to mention the indeterminable yet unacceptably large sum of people suffering from Long COVID. Is that not, in the most basic sense of the definition, still a pandemic?

In the chokehold of capitalism, a pandemic ceases to be one as soon as isolation is passé. Inherently motivated by consumerism, the media reflects this notion: travel articles advertise the “Ten Best Countries to Visit After COVID.” Concerts are in full swing: “Here’s How to Get Tickets to be Packed in Like Sardines in the Dead of Winter.” Media advertisements have been flooding us with COVID-19-denialist rhetoric for over a year now, and not for inexplicable reasons. If COVID-19-positive and COVID-19-cautious people stop spending money by limiting their crowd exposure, then the companies

they would otherwise be funding lose money.

The ideology is visible everywhere: brands that initially touted their COVID-19 awareness for consumer support early in the pandemic have now abandoned it, removing nearly anything more than the less-inflammatory, blue surgical masks from their shelves. If these companies publicly encouraged the continued use of masks, implementation of other precautionary measures or so much as acknowledged the reality that COVID-19 is still present and at an active high, then they could lose more support and money from a COVID-19-denialist customer base who shames those that tickle at their cognitive dissonance.

These first few years of the pandemic have shown that by acknowledging the threat of COVID-19, capitalism cannot win – but when capitalism controls the media, a misrepresentation of information means we all lose.

In the feedback loop between consumers, their suppliers and the media, even those who want to break away from the dominant ideology may find it difficult to do so. Publications that once dominated the growing canon of COVID-19 information are seemingly shrinking back, pumping out an occasional update on the science amidst a couple click-generative pieces that do more to confuse than inform. Headlines are supposed to hook indifferent readers’ attention.

But, when reputable organizations publish titles questioning whether COVID-19 vaccines are necessary, instead of foremost encouraging the distribution and uptake of them to add some protection against long-term illness, the headline and article’s impact risks fizzling into apathy.

What is this saying about the media’s duty to inform? In a capitalist society that is threatened by a COVID-19-cautious public (now largely diminished), the role of the media has shifted: it is now “to confuse.” To complicate once straightforward guidance on proper precautions, treatments, and scientific evidence to the point that people – who are hesitant to resume their consumption of concerts, time spent in crowded areas and other capitalist endeavors for the purpose of individual and public health – may resign themselves to giving up and accepting the misused “new normal” completely.

I see this working when I’m one of three students masked in a crowded lecture hall, attending a class on media criticism. We’re learning about this very phenomenon, but it doesn’t seem to get through, so saturated we are with the notion that COVID-19 lies in the past.

This isn’t to say that the CDPH’s decision to scale back isolation policies for asymptomatic and “mildly symptomatic” infections will result in an immediately disastrous impact. It is true that being able to return oneself to work and kids to school would ease the burden many single parents and underprivileged households carry when hit with COVID-19. Yet, this is only a temporary solution to a much larger problem. The same communities that benefit briefly from the new guidelines are significantly more likely to encounter barriers in receiving treatment should they develop severe COVID-19 symptoms or Long COVID. Impoverished communities reliant on lower wage jobs are significantly underserved by health insurance and health care access, which COVID-19 has only exacerbated.

The rush back to work and school, while preventing working mothers from having to stay home and look after their COVID-19-positive children, could also disproportionately harm women, who are both at a higher risk of developing Long COVID should they be infected, and report feeling largely unsupported when speaking up in their workplaces – making it difficult to raise concerns as immunocompromised employees. The capitalist COVID-19 ideology is prioritizing immediate gratification over long-term health, swiping the significance of these eventual repercussions away with terminology meant to minimize and guilt those who raise concerns.

That said, as UC Santa Barbara quietly adopts California’s altered isolation guidelines, I’ll be wearing my mask. Until the media fixes its language and gives us clear answers on the risks of repeated infections and Long COVID, I’ll keep wearing it. Language has power in coverage of the ongoing pandemic, but a media-literate audience has equal power to question its bias. Per the capitalist ideology, we live in a society of individualism – so let’s not accept collective ignorance.

*Phoebe Mitchem is practicing media literacy about COVID-19 and thinks you should too.*

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“Best AI Reproduction of a Dead Actor”

### TAURUS

APRIL 20 – MAY 20

“The Jacob Elordi Award for Best TikTok Edit”

### GEMINI

MAY 21 – JUNE 20

“Best Prequel-Sequel”

### CANCER

JUNE 21 – JULY 22

“Best On-set Vegan Catering”

### LEO

JULY 23 – AUGUST 22

“Best Made-for-TikTok Monologue”

### VIRGO

AUGUST 23 – SEPTEMBER 22

“The Christopher Nolan Award for Best Cillian Murphy Performance”

### LIBRA

SEPTEMBER 23 – OCTOBER 22

“Best Screen-to-Musical-to-Movie Musical Adaptation”

### SCORPIO

OCTOBER 23 – NOVEMBER 21

“Best Love-Hated Original Character”

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“Most Run-Time Padding”

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“The Tarantino Award for Best Foot Shot”

### AQUARIUS

JANUARY 20 – FEBRUARY 18

“Most R-rated PG-13 Movie”

### PISCES

FEBRUARY 19 – MARCH 20

“The Steven Spielberg Award for Worst Animatronic Shark”