

INTERNATIONAL SHOWDOWN

the stars and stripes take over Harder Stadium

Emily Hobbs
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The United States women's national soccer team faced off against Chile on a historic night in Santa Barbara. In their first ever international match on California's Central Coast, Harder Stadium welcomed a crowd of 14,797 fans in a dominant 5-0 win. This is the second consecutive win for the United States women's national soccer team (USWNT) this week, after a 6-0 win against Paraguay on Jan. 24.

The match began with U.S. team

instantly dominating possession and creating early opportunities. The first shots taken came from forward Jameese Joseph which Chile goalkeeper Ryann Torrero handled well. The next close opportunity came from forward Emma Sears, who expertly volleyed the ball that soared low and square into the left post. Following that, with an incredible assist from defender Ayo Oke in her debut start, USWNT newcomer and midfielder Croix Bethune scored the first goal for the U.S.

At just the 18 minute mark, breaking across the field with only the goalkeeper in front of her, Bethune was able to score the first goal of her international career.

The successive kick-off came with another near miss from Sears, with the ball bouncing off the exact same post she had previously hit.

The USWNT's second goal came in the 26th minute when Joseph landed the first goal of her international career; in her first ever start with the national team. Fully facing away from the goal, Joseph was able to whirl past Chile's defense for a goal shot from the boundary of the penalty box. The USWNT finished the first half strong as captain and defender Emily Sams scored from straight up the middle with an assist from Sears, also boasting her first

international career goal. Sears tried for another U.S. goal, but was blocked by Torrero.

The USWNT was up 3-0 heading into the second half with a

commanding start, playing nearly the entire first half on offense and scoring three first-time goals in international games.

Subbing in at the top of the new half, 19-year-old defender Jordyn Bugg went in for Oke, and coming into the second half of the game, the U.S. had 12 shots on goal. Only 28 seconds into the second half, they secured another. Sears sent a ball into the top right corner of the net, with Torrero unable

ANUSHA SINGH / DAILY NEXUS



USWNT celebrates victory in international friendly against Chile.



to reach, making it 4-0 USWNT.

At the 53 minute mark, Bethune earned a free kick and, stifling another offensive breakout, Chile's defensive team and goalkeeper were able to stop the scoring. Following this, a quintuple substitution from Head Coach Emma Hayes brought on forward Trinity Rodman for Kate Wiesner.

The USWNT brought it home with the fifth and final goal, which came in the second half by Rodman finding space amongst Chile's defense, zipping one into the back left and sealing the dominant victory for the USWNT. Directly following her goal, Rodman celebrated by dancing with Hayes, underscoring the energy brought into the game by the U.S.

The game concluded with no extra time at the end of the second half and with no further attempts on goal by Chile, giving the USWNT their second consecutive win this week.

UCSB's Persian Student Group holds rally for Iran



Community members wanted to take action following the estimated 12,000 to 20,000 protesters killed by the regime.

Noura Elkhatib
Staff Writer

The UC Santa Barbara Persian Student Group held a rally for Iran at the Arbor on Jan. 14, and continued demonstrations throughout the week. Around 60 students and community members attended, calling for the fall of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which has been in power for nearly 47 years.

The demonstration echoes the anti-government protests that erupted on the streets of Iran since Dec. 28, 2025, as a result of record economic inflation. On Jan. 8, the regime enacted a full internet blackout against Iranian citizens. Between 12,000 and 20,000 protesters in Iran have been killed by the regime.

"The entire nation has been taken hostage," Persian Student Group treasurer and fourth-year financial mathematics and statistics major Sahand Ahmadi said. "It's a repressive security apparatus that is indiscriminately killing the people of a nation."

Religious studies professor Aazam Feiz, who teaches Persian language and literature, stressed the importance of her presence during this time to provide emotional support for students with family in Iran, whom they cannot reach because of the internet blackout.

"They have shut down all of the

telephone lines. We cannot call them. They could not call each other," Feiz said.

Organizers shared a petition requesting UCSB Chancellor Dennis Assanis to issue a statement supporting students who are currently experiencing distress because of the ongoing unrest in Iran. Feiz emphasized how these gatherings offer emotional support for students of Iranian heritage and an opportunity to uplift their voices.

"This is a time for my students to be together and to be proud of their heritage and to be the voice of the Iranian people. It is my duty to support my students. Emotionally, they need me at this minute," Feiz said.

Student protestors raised a flag of Iran featuring a lion and a sun, symbols that predate the establishment of the Islamic Republic in 1979.

"The Iranian people and the Iranian regime could not be more different," Ahmadi said when asked about the difference in flags.

The lion and sun symbols have appeared on the Iranian flag as early as the 15th century. They have become symbols of opposition to the current regime, and a representation of the people of Iran, Ahmadi explained.

These student demonstrations are not unprecedented. In 2022, UCSB students joined in solidarity

with the Woman, Life, Freedom Movement, protesting the death of Mahsa Amini at the hands of the Iranian Regime for allegedly violating the Regime's strict public morality laws.

Feiz emphasized that the protests are not held solely because of economic concerns or religious extremism, but rather aim to call for a full regime change and the fall of the current state.

"We are not against Islam. This is not Islamophobia," Feiz said. "It is not only for inflation. It is not only for hijab. They want regime change."

While this isn't the first time that students have protested since the regime took power, Feiz noted that this time, protestors are calling for the exiled Crown Prince Reza Pahlavi to come into power.

"It's not a protest anymore, this is a revolution," Feiz said.

During the rally on Wednesday, student protestors chanted "Javid Shah," which Feiz translated to "long live the king," calling for the Pahlavi to return to Iran to rule.

"We believe that it is a moral responsibility on the people of the world to stand with and support the Iranian people," Ahmadi said. "I think what UCSB students can do is raise as much awareness as possible about what's going on, and to urge their political representatives and government officials to take action."

Former UCSB student convicted of rape, battery

Michelle Cisneros
Lead News Editor

A jury found a former UC Santa Barbara student guilty of three counts related to sexual assault, battery and rape on Jan. 20. He will face 30 years to life in prison at his sentence hearing in April.

The Santa Barbara County District Attorney's Office first filed felony sexual assault charges against then-first-year biology major Arian Eteghaei in August 2021.

According to Noozhawk coverage at the time, he was initially charged with two counts of forcible rape, two counts of forcible sexual penetration by a foreign object, two counts of forcible oral copulation and false imprisonment by violence, as well as misdemeanor battery. These incidents occurred between October 2020 and June 2021 and involved three women, according to the criminal complaint.

According to the Santa Barbara

Independent, three more survivors came forward following the filing and publication of his first case. In November 2021, a second case with additional felony sexual assault charges and one misdemeanor charge was filed.

Eteghaei faced 17 counts overall, but the jury remained deadlocked on most of them once the three-month trial concluded. He had been out of custody "for several years" with electronic monitoring, according to Noozhawk.

After the verdict was read, Superior Court Judge Von Deroian ordered that Eteghaei be taken into custody. When deputies escorted him from the courtroom to another location where he'd wait to be transported to jail, Eteghaei attempted to flee before being caught by bailiffs about one block from the courthouse.

He is currently being held without bail and will be sentenced on April 8.



Courtesy of Noozhawk

Eteghaei faced 17 counts overall, but the jury remained deadlocked on most of them once the three-month trial concluded.



Jack Dindia
Lead News Editor

Career Services hosts Winter Networking Mixer

Career Services is hosting a Winter Networking Mixer on Thursday, Jan. 29, from 1-3 p.m. at the Student Resource Building (SRB) Multipurpose Room (MPR).

“Looking to boost your professional confidence? Join UCSB Career Services for a casual, educational, conversation-focused event designed to help students learn from industry professionals,” the description read. “Employers will be stationed at cocktail tables while students circulate, ask questions, and gain insight into career paths, industry expectations, and professional development.”

Career Services recommends students come dressed in business casual or business professional clothing.

Women’s Center hosts Feminist Book Club

The Women’s Center is hosting its Feminist Book Club on Thursday, Jan. 29, from 3-4 p.m. at the Women’s Center Community Room in the SRB.

“Join us as we dive into Michelle Zauner’s poignant memoir, *Crying in H Mart* — a powerful exploration of grief, identity, and the deep bonds between mothers and daughters,” the Shoreline description read.

Free books will be available for participants.

RCSGD hosts QTLC Winter Carnival

The Resource Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity (RCSGD) is hosting the QTLC Winter Carnival on Friday, Jan. 30, from 12-3 p.m. at the SRB South Side Lawn.

“Join the Queer and Trans Leadership Council (QTLC) at our carnival-style tabling mixer! Meet and support the QT-centered organizations of QTLC, play carnival-style games, and build community! Whether you are looking to get involved, seeking resources, or looking for a good time, all are welcome to attend the event,” the Shoreline description read.

RCSGD hosts ‘Sapphic Scrapbooking - Black QT Icons!’

RCSGD is hosting “Sapphic Scrapbooking – Black QT Icons!” on Friday, Jan. 30, from 2:30-4 p.m. at the SRB first floor conference room.

“Are you looking for a sapphic community space? Do you have a habit of collecting ticket stubs, polaroids, or stickers? Believe the hype, its the return of Sapphic Scrapbooking!!” the Shoreline description read.

UCSB Sustainability hosts ‘Storke Garden Volunteer Day’

UCSB Sustainability is hosting a “Storke Garden Volunteer Day” on Friday, Jan. 30, from 2:30-4:30 p.m. at Storke Family Student Housing Community Garden.

“We will be weeding, mulching, building garden beds/cages, and providing general assistance to the garden. Storke Garden is a plot based community garden that supports students with dependents in growing their own food and enjoying the natural world with their families,” the Shoreline description read.

Improvability hosts ‘Improvability Show!’

Improvability is hosting a comedy show on Friday, Jan. 30, from 8-9:30 p.m. at Embarcadero Hall.

“We do improvised comedy shows at Embarcadero Hall EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT! Start your weekend with improvability and join us for a little bit of laughter and fun, all made up on the spot, using your suggestions! Every show is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity!” the Shoreline description read.

Tickets are \$3 at the door.

Department of Recreation hosts ‘Climbing with Pride’

The Department of Recreation is hosting “Climbing with Pride” on Saturday, Jan. 31, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Recreation Center Climb Wall.

“Join us for a night of climbing and celebrating the LGBTQIA+ community at the UCSB climbing wall! Anyone who wants to get into climbing, as well as for anyone who already climbs and is looking for a fun night of socializing and beta swapping!” the Shoreline description read.

Women’s Center hosts ‘Bouquets of Self-Love’

The Women’s Center is hosting “Bouquets of Self-Love” on Monday, Feb. 2, from 12:30-2:30 p.m. at the SRB MPR.

“Write a love letter to yourself, reflect on what you need, and create a beautiful bouquet to take home as a reminder that you deserve tenderness and care,” the Shoreline description read.

Office of Black Student Development hosts Black History Month Opening Ceremony

The Office of Black Student Development is hosting the Black History Month Opening Ceremony on Monday, Feb. 2, from 5-7 p.m. at the SRB MPR.

“Join us as we kick off Black History Month with OBSD’s annual BHM Opening Ceremony. Let’s honor our history and create a legacy of our own,” the Shoreline description read.

Food will be provided for attendees.

Health & Wellness hosts ‘UCSB Safer Sex Peers’

Health & Wellness is hosting Unit 1 of its “UCSB Safer Sex Peers” series on Monday, Feb. 2, from 5:30-6:45 p.m.

“Be a non-judgmental resource for peers to help make informed and thoughtful decisions about their physical, emotional, and social well-being,” the Shoreline description read.

Unit 1 will include “teaching holistic sexuality, gender identity & sexual orientation, reproductive health & anatomy, sexual response.”

IHC hosts ‘Free Screening of ‘It Was Just an Accident’

The Interdisciplinary Humanities Center is hosting a screening of Iranian filmmaker Jafar Panahi’s film “Un Simple Accident,” or “It Was Just an Accident,” on Monday, Feb. 2, from 8-10 p.m. at the Theater and Dance West building.

“Winner of the Palme d’or – Cannes 2025 ‘Jafar Panahi’s ‘It Was Just an Accident,’ a searing moral thriller about a group of Iranian former political prisoners who are granted a once-in-a-lifetime chance to avenge themselves...” as Richard Brody of the New [Y]orker names this as one of his top 3 films of the year,” the Shoreline description read.



Michelle Cisneros
Lead News Editor

UCPD arrests man on UCLA campus after alleged anti-Muslim threat to Iranian student

A man was arrested on Jan. 16 after allegedly making threatening comments to an Iranian student earlier that day. According to the Daily Bruin, the UC Police Department (UCPD) will present the incident alongside the suspect’s prior arrests to the Los Angeles County District Attorney’s Office.

The Iranian student, Ashley Sarooie, told the Daily Bruin that the man approached her on the UC Los Angeles campus and asked if she was Iranian. Sarooie said the incident left her feeling nervous and distraught.

“He was like, ‘Do you know what my country is going to do to your country?’” Sarooie, who asked to be referred to by her middle and last name, said. “He was like, ‘We’re going to clear all the Muslims.’ ... He referred to ‘the Muslims’ as a group of people. He used a derogatory term for it.”

UCPD and the Los Angeles Police Department previously arrested the suspect on six separate occasions.

“I would hope that UCLA figures out a way to make everyone come together more as a community, to put a stop to things like this

and educate everyone on peace,” Sarooie said.

UC Berkeley professor carries Olympic torch alongside service dog

Matteo Garbelotto-Benzon, a UC Berkeley adjunct professor, took part in the Olympic torch relay on Jan. 28. Garbelotto-Benzon was accompanied by his service dog, S’Abba, possibly marking the first time that a person with a mobility disability carries the torch alongside their service animal.

Garbelotto-Benzon, who was raised in Italy, was chosen as one of roughly 10,000 people who will carry the Olympic torch from Olympia, Greece to Milan, Italy, according to a University of California press release.

“I am so proud that S’Abba may be the first service dog to help a person with a mobility disability walk with the torch for the Olympics,” Garbelotto-Benzon said in the release.

Skiing has helped Garbelotto-Benzon conduct forestry-related research for decades. After a ski accident and pulmonary embolism in 2018, Garbelotto-Benzon adopted S’Abba to help him walk and ski again.

“My whole life has been about growing up [around] the forest and the mountains, and I’m so grateful that I have been successful in doing what I love and able to transfer my passion to California,” Garbelotto-

Benzon said.

UCSC researchers find text in physical world can disrupt AI-powered vehicles

A team led by two UC Santa Cruz professors have been researching “environmental indirect prompt injection attacks,” or the effects of misleading text on an artificial intelligence’s (AI) perception system.

According to a UC press release, professors of computer science and engineering Alvaro Cardenas and Cihang Xie presented the first academic work on this topic late last year. Their study asserts that misleading text written in the physical world can affect how an AI model makes decisions.

Autonomous technology, such as self-driving cars or package delivery robots, often utilizes visual-language models. This means that AI systems can use written feedback, such as traffic signs, to navigate the world. However, these systems can be hijacked through distinct text inputs to “ignore safety rules, reveal sensitive information, or take unintended actions,” according to the release.

The study also outlined ways to counteract disruptions. Later this year, the project will be presented at the 2026 Conference on Secure and Trustworthy Machine Learning, hosted by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers.

The Daily Nexus Sudoku

Andrew Wang
Games Developer

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“One battle after another.”

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IVCSD seeks community input on Deltopia alternative event



Around seven to 10 people attended the town hall, where IVCSD representatives shared current plans for the event and took questions from community members.

Levi Kauffman
Assistant News Editor

The Isla Vista Community Services District hosted a town hall on Jan. 20 for community members to ask questions and provide input on their upcoming alternative event to Deltopia, Isla Vista's yearly unsanctioned street festival.

On Jan. 13, the Santa Barbara County (SBC) Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to adopt a 72-hour noise ordinance on Deltopia weekend in April, proposed by Isla Vista Foot Patrol (IVFP). Before the vote, IVFP amended the ordinance to allow for a local governing body like the Isla Vista Community Services District (IVCSD) to host a permitted community event.

Around seven to 10 people attended the town hall where IVCSD Community Programs and Engagement Director Myah Mashhadialireza and General Manager Jonathan Abboud shared current plans for the event and took questions from community members. They began by going over the background of Deltopia, the recent noise ordinance, the different governing bodies in I.V. and IVCSD's goals for the event.

According to Mashhadialireza, the main goals of the event are to "save the music," to keep it safe and local as well as to take back narratives around I.V. She also emphasized the importance of community involvement and expressed disappointment with the lack of turnout.

"We have a lot of work to do to communicate what our goals are and why it's important that people get involved, and I think that that's not what people are getting in the news right now," Mashhadialireza said. "They're just seeing a lot of red flags and 'no's, and I think it's really up to us to communicate how we can show them that there's a path forward and it's something they can be excited about."

IVCSD plans to further promote their event through community outreach by tabling and posting on social media. They must also submit their permit application with SBC by Feb. 4.

The event's budget is currently \$250,000 total, with \$110,000 coming from IVCSD's existing festival budget and the remainder coming from the Associated Students Program Board (ASPB). IVCSD staff are actively looking for sponsorships but recommend increasing the festival budget by \$30,000 to match ASPB's contribution.

Currently, IVCSD plans to have three band stages, three DJ stages, a 21+ beer garden, art structures, a thrift market, an interactive art zone and a silent disco. Attendees will be able to access food, water, bathrooms and safety station tents.

The event will involve local businesses and be centered around downtown I.V., stretching from Pardall

Road to Little Acorn Park. It will be patrolled by private security rather than local law enforcement. According to Mashhadialireza, IVFP has only made a verbal promise not to police the event.

IVCSD is also hiring eight event leads to plan, coordinate and execute entertainment zones with local businesses, performers and artists. According to Mashhadialireza, IVCSD has previously struggled to get volunteers for prior events held during Deltopia, which is in part why they have created the paid positions.

IVCSD anticipates over 10,000 local attendees for the event and plans to distribute 8,000 wristbands for I.V. residents, giving them special perks such as free food and line fast passes. Students living in campus housing are currently unable to get wristbands, but Abboud said that IVCSD is "working on that."

Mashhadialireza emphasized that while wristbands aren't needed to access the event, they aim to create a distinction between locals and out-of-towners and grant locals "VIP access."

"If you don't have a wristband, you might not even be from here, and I think that's also important for us as a community to start recognizing who are my neighbors and who is not a local," Mashhadialireza said.

One attendee expressed concerns that some residents may abuse the system and obtain wristbands for non-locals. Abboud said that "there can be abuses of any system," and that he hopes community members will act in good faith.

Mashhadialireza shared forms for people looking to get involved with the event and give feedback on event plans. She hopes that there will be more community involvement in the future.

"What should we call this new event? What elements are missing that we want to see? What does success even look like for something like this?" Mashhadialireza asked. "That is what we want to collect, that when we move forward, we move together, and not as much as separate entities trying to figure that out on our own."

Multiple attendees expressed their concern that the event may go against "the spirit of Deltopia." Mashhadialireza shared that, while planning the event, IVCSD had considered an on-campus event but chose to make it more decentralized and spread across I.V. as a means to make it more faithful to the original idea of Deltopia.

"I think the spirit of Deltopia is in the people," Mashhadialireza said. "What hurts the spirit is not what we're trying to do. What hurts the spirit is the ordinance that took the music away from the entire rest of the town. And I think what we're trying to do is just give some sort of autonomy back to the students."

Senate announces support for Gaucho Bucks integration, adopts AI policy

Wynne Bendell
University News Editor

The 76th Associated Students Senate formally announced support for the integration of Gaucho Bucks into student meal plans at its Jan. 21 meeting. The Senate also adopted an Artificial Intelligence policy at its Jan. 21 meeting.

Senator and third-year psychological & brain sciences and sociology double major Victoria Ly presented a resolution supporting the integration of Gaucho Bucks into meal plans. According to the resolution, the integration of Gaucho Bucks would allow students to use their meal plan at various retail dining establishments on campus "without increasing overall student costs." The Senate adopted the resolution.

Next, the Senate adopted a resolution regarding the use of artificial intelligence (AI) and large language models (LLM) in the Associated Students (A.S.). This resolution will act as a guideline for AI and LLM usage throughout the association, which is acceptable as long as "the individual can clearly justify their usage and ethical responsibilities."

According to the resolution, prohibited use of AI and LLMs includes photo and video manipulations of students, the generation of legislation without citation and use of private information. The resolution outlines that the generation of graphics, writing assistance in "large reports" and analysis of A.S. Legal Code are acceptable uses of AI and LLMs.

Later in the meeting, California Public Interest Research Group



CALPIRG is currently in the midst of a pledge drive to fund their "Save the Oceans" and textbook affordability campaigns.

(CALPIRG) member and second-year political science major Alex Borgas announced the group is currently in the midst of a pledge drive to fund their "Save the Oceans" and textbook affordability campaigns. According to Borgas, CALPIRG has over 30,000 undergraduate students across the UCs who have pledged \$10 a quarter.

First-year electrical engineering and economics double major and Internal Compliance Officer for the office of the Internal Vice President Matthew Nelson said their office has reached out to the different College of Engineering departments to see if any of them would be interested in creating a minor for the college. Nelson said that the Computer Science department is interested in creating a minor and will work to see that out.

A.S. President and fourth-year Spanish, communication and global studies triple major Le Anh Metzger requested \$43,300 for her office – \$11,300 for honoraria and \$32,000 for special projects. The request was not approved as a formal itemized budget request

was not presented, with some senators raising concerns about the high request amount.

Senator and fourth-year history and global studies double major Neo Harter presented a resolution condemning antisemitism in response to a recent incident of antisemitic vandalism in IV. The resolution was referred to the Outreach Committee.

"Everyone at this campus deserves to feel safe and deserves to study in a safe environment regardless of your race [or] ethnicity," Harter said. "As a body that represents the students on this campus, we have to understand that neutrality can be interpreted in an extremely negative way and in a way that empowers the oppressor."

The Senate approved all appointments and resignations, including the resignation of now former Senator and fourth-year political science major Caleb Claro.

The meeting concluded by going into a closed session to discuss "staff organization, internal job descriptions and affairs." The Nexus was not able to confirm the details of the conversation.

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2/5

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Persian community members hold vigil honoring lives lost in Iran



Community members wanted to take action following the estimated 12,000 to 20,000 protesters killed by the regime.

Jack Dindia
Lead News Editor

Roughly 50 Persian students and community members held a vigil in front of the UC Santa Barbara Library to honor the protestors killed by the Iranian government on Jan. 22. Attendees, many of whom have family from Iran, hoped to spread awareness about the government suppression by the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The vigil was largely organized by professor of Persian language and literature Aazam Feiz. She said members of the Persian Student Group came to her and expressed that they wanted to take action following the estimated 12,000 to 20,000 protesters killed by the regime, as well as enacting a full internet blackout.

“They are mostly heritage students and sometimes people with no background in [the] Persian language, and they know about this news and they worry for their families. So they came to me and they told me, ‘we want to do this,’” Feiz said.

Once the vigil began at 4:30 p.m., participants lit candles around a sign that read “12,000 KILLED IN 2 DAYS.” Attendees held signs reading “stop execution in Iran” and “Reza Pahlavi,” the name of an Iranian political activist who heavily opposes the Islamic Republic, among other signs.

Feiz first spoke to the crowd about the current situation in Iran and read the names of several people who were killed by the regime. According to Feiz, over 100,000 people have been arrested in Iran, and the country has failed to keep track of arrest records, making it difficult for citizens

to communicate with family members who have potentially been arrested.

“There is no record of those who have been arrested. As a mother, as a father, I don’t know where my child is,” Feiz said. “If I go anywhere, they say we don’t have any records. So these people are kept in different prisons, and they don’t have enough space for them. We worry for those people.”

Participants waved the Iranian flag, while chanting “Freedom for Iran,” “Genocide in Iran” and “Trump act now,” among others. Fourth-year financial mathematics and statistics and data science double major Sahand Ahmadi spoke on the importance of the people of Iran reclaiming their flag.

“Almost every Iranian will tell you this, this is truly an occupying force. These people do not represent Iranian culture identity in any way. And same goes for their flag, which is why it’s so important for us that we reclaim the flag, the true flag of Iran, which is the lion in the sun. And we disperse of that garbage regime flag that doesn’t represent our country,” Ahmadi said.

Feiz spoke about how she hopes that President Donald Trump will “support the people of Iran” and not make a deal with the Islamic Republic as “any negotiation will not be to help the people of Iran.”

“We want President Trump and all the countries in the world, European countries, [to say] ‘enough is enough’ for one time. Please have a humanitarian action and release the people of Iran,” Feiz said.

First-year biology major Mohammad Erfan Firooz

Bakhsh, who was born and raised in Iran, discussed his firsthand experience in the country. He said one of his connections had seven of their family members killed by the regime, which he claims the regime is denying.

“The regime itself claimed that the people were getting killed by outsiders. But the videos were clearly showing the people were getting killed and they were getting shot at by the Islamic Republic and by the police forces. We’ve seen the videos, it wasn’t good,” Erfan Firooz Bakhsh said.

First-year electrical engineering major Armin Moayedjafari, who’s from Iran and currently has family living there, emphasized his distress in not being able to contact them due to the internet blackout.

“I don’t know what’s going on because there’s no internet, so I don’t know how they’re doing. I don’t know if they’re still alive even. So it’s really hard and really heartbreaking what’s happening in Iran,” Moayedjafari said.

Feiz expressed hope that the university will support the students and form a resolution to “condemn what’s going on in Iran.” According to Feiz, the Iranian government “portrays itself as a victim internationally” while they “violently repress” their own citizens. She also clarified that this “is not Islamophobia,” and that they respect the religion and specifically want freedom for the people of Iran.

Feiz said that, as someone from Iranian society, she feels a responsibility to amplify the voice of “those who cannot speak freely.”

“We do not forgive. We do not forget,” Feiz concluded.



Participants lit candles around a sign that read “12,000 KILLED IN 2 DAYS.”

Camino Pescadero beach stairs due for repair in late spring

Lucy Wellons
Staff Writer

Recent storms continue to impede repairs on a collapsed beach staircase at the end of Camino Pescadero. Local officials are aiming to reopen it by late spring to early summer.

A beach staircase located at the end of Camino Pescadero partially collapsed into the ocean on Nov. 5, 2025. Evidence of the collapse was first reported on the social media platform Yik Yak on the morning of Nov. 6, with a picture of the collapsed segment of the stairs

in the ocean.

The Nexus was unable to confirm when the stairs were expected to be repaired at the time of the initial collapse. In an updated statement from District Representative and Communications Director for Santa Barbara County (SBC) Eleanor Gartner, the SBC Parks Division is expected to complete repair work by late spring to early summer.

The Parks Division noted that “high surf and wave action” has damaged construction, and that crews are continuing to monitor conditions to ensure the stairs

can be repaired safely. Any additional significant weather events may cause further delays in the reconstruction of the beach entrance stairs.

Powerful atmospheric river storms, such as those between Dec. 23 and Jan. 4, caused bluff erosion adjacent to the stairs, as well as visible damage to the cliffs supporting many homes along ocean-side Del Playa Drive. The ongoing effects of climate change have also accelerated coastal erosion, creating growing concerns about bluff safety in the community.

UCIMM provides free immigration legal services to university community



According to Espinoza, the purpose of UCIMM is to provide legal services to students and their families.

Iris Guo
Community Outreach
News Editor

The University of California Immigrant Legal Services Center was created in 2014 to provide free immigration legal services with the goal of supporting the entire university community by expanding legal equity. The center employs attorneys and other staff who serve every UC campus, excluding Berkeley.

Yoxira Espinoza, a University of California Immigrant Legal Services Center (UCIMM) staff attorney, has been serving UC Santa Barbara since Oct. 2025.

According to Espinoza, the purpose of UCIMM is to provide legal services to students and their families, allowing them to “find a viable immigration pathway [or] find protections from deportation.” By achieving this, the center hopes to improve student educational outcomes and opportunities for economic advancement.

The services provided by UCIMM include legal consultations and representation in matters that include Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) renewals, as well as applications for permanent residency, naturalization and citizenship, among others. The center also works to provide community education and resources to ensure UC affiliates are informed about changes related to immigration policy.

According to Espinoza, the students who UCIMM typically assist are those impacted by the U.S. immigration system, including those who identify as undocumented, those from mixed-status families, lawful permanent residents, refugees and asylum applicants. In certain circumstances, UCIMM is also able to assist international students.

“Immigration practitioners have different specialties and expertise. Today, we don’t have staff with that expertise in student visas and employment-based visas,” Espinoza said. “However, in some cases, if an international student has fallen out of status and is eligible to pursue relief in which we have expertise, then we can potentially provide assistance in the center.”

Beyond students, UCIMM can provide services to the family members of students. According to Espinoza, the center can “extend services to some UC staff and faculty” depending on the specific situation and the applicability of their expertise.

Espinoza utilizes an online booking process for UCSB students and other eligible individuals to schedule an appointment with her. At an initial appointment, she will typically ask questions about immigration history and family background in order to assess

any form of relief they may be eligible for and to find if UCIMM has the capacity to assist them.

Espinoza handles a “wide range” of casework, including green card applications, DACA renewals, applications for naturalization and relief for survivors of crimes and domestic violence. UCIMM is also able to provide eligible individuals with full legal representation.

Additionally, the center can assist in emergency situations — such as if a student is arrested or detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (I.C.E.) — and serve as a “first point of contact” and update family members on what has occurred/

Due to the federal government’s escalation in immigration enforcement, Espinoza said that there’s a “huge need for information right now.”

“A lot of the students of all statuses are feeling concerned and worried about their safety and well-being as well as their families,” Espinoza said. “At all campuses, we are seeing a demand for consultations more than we have been able to meet.”

According to Espinoza, students across the UC system have been impacted by the federal government’s immigration enforcement policies.

“We’re seeing a growing number of families being impacted by immigration enforcement,” Espinoza said. “In some cases, parents are being detained and in some cases being deported. This is directly affecting the children [which includes] UC students.”

Espinoza calls herself a “product of the UC system,” as she attended UC Riverside as an undergraduate and the UC Davis School of Law. She said she believes her position as an immigration attorney is a way to give back to students and the overall community.

“I really enjoy working with students and giving back to them and in any way [to] alleviate their stress. They have to juggle so many different things like their coursework and internships and everything,” Espinoza said. “If there’s any role that I can play in removing the stress from their families being affected or impacted by immigration — that’s something that I find really rewarding.”

Espinoza expressed that she hopes more students know that UCIMM is a resource available to them and their immediate relatives. She encourages students who have concerns relating to the immigration system to schedule a consultation with her as soon as possible.

“Immigration cases take a very long time, so the earlier that we’re able to help them, I think, is the most beneficial for them,” Espinoza said.

MultiCultural Center hosts housing discussion

Elijah Obando
Staff Writer

The MultiCultural Center, in collaboration with local housing resources, hosted a housing discussion on Jan. 20. The event aimed to inform attendees about campus and Isla Vista's housing options, connect students with housing resources and provide a space for open dialogue on housing affordability.

The event, titled "What's going on with housing?" was held in collaboration with UC Santa Barbara University & Community Housing Services (UCHS), the Blum Center's Campus Housing Coalition, the Isla Vista Tenants Union (IVTU) and the Isla Vista Community Services District (IVCSD).

The event began with a presentation from UCHS Manager Jenn Ja Birchim. Birchim informed attendees about the process of getting university housing for continuing students, explaining that typically 20% of the continuing student population receives university housing.

"Last year, we had about 5,100 applicants and we were able to offer [housing to] a little over half of the students that applied for campus housing contracts," Birchim said.

Birchim clarified that housing contracts are based on a weighted lottery system and are not given on a first-come, first-served basis. This means that the system guarantees housing for certain applicants based on a criterion and then randomly selects the rest. Groups that are guaranteed include Regent Scholars, unaccompanied homeless youth, Guardian Scholars and veterans, though Birchim said they take up "a very, very small percentage."

Birchim said that some applicants, though not guaranteed, are prioritized over the rest, such as students a part of the Promise Scholar program. Since many applicants are not guaranteed housing contracts, Birchim warned against students waiting until summer to find housing alternatives.

"We don't really want students to wait until summer to figure out their housing situation, to hold on hope for a UCSB housing contract, because we don't know whether or not we're gonna have any space in UCSB housing until the new transfer [and] new freshman process ends, and that's usually in probably late July," Birchim said.

Birchim explained that UCSB's student apartments are only available to third- and fourth-year applicants. However, this may change in the future after the construction of the San Benito Housing project.

Birchim also stated that with the demolition of the Santa Rosa Residence Hall set to take place at the end of the academic term, upcoming second-year applicants may be allowed to live in UCSB's student apartments.

Birchim then shifted focus toward alternatives to university housing. She provided information for students about how to find housing in I.V. or the surrounding area. Birchim explained that students should know their budget, who they are going to live with and how to prepare for the leasing

process. One of these resources is the UCHS Rental Listings website, which shows locations available for rent in the area.

"So you can all log in, and you can view [rental listings] by map, amenities, street, locations, Goleta, Santa Barbara, Isla Vista. I have two staff members that pre-screen any landlord before they list with us to make sure that scams don't get through," Birchim said.

According to Birchim, UCSB will be hosting three rental fairs in the upcoming months. The first fair will be on Feb. 5 at Storke Plaza, the second will be on Feb. 12 at the Corwin Pavilion and the last will be on March 3 at Storke Plaza.

The event concluded with a panel discussion presented by Becky Chen, a fourth-year sociology and film and media studies double major and student assistant for the Blum Center's Campus Housing Coalition, and IVCSD General Manager Jonathan Abboud. Chen explained that the coalition is a research center on UCSB's campus dedicated to housing and educating the student community.

The host and creator of the event, fourth-year economics and Black studies double major and MultiCultural Center programming assistant Thiana Aklidikou explained that she created the event because of her own struggles with housing accessibility.

"All of this stemmed from my personal experience, having this rough time finding housing. I didn't get housing my second year until August, like the end of August. So that's kind of been why housing has been a thing for me ever since, 'cause I just was like, it shouldn't be like that," Aklidikou said.

Aklidikou prompted the presenters with a series of questions.

"If you could change anything tomorrow, and you have the authority to do so, what would that be?" Aklidikou asked.

Abboud responded that he would make I.V. a city, and that he would have the University and and Isla Vista combined under one local government. Earlier in the panel, Abboud stated that the IVCSD has tried in the past to become a city but has failed every time.

Chen responded to the question by explaining she would close the inequality between property management companies and student tenants.

"I think it's really important for students to get involved, but the barrier to that is our students are only here for around four years and because of their transiency, they don't feel empowered to organize," Chen said.

Aklidikou concluded the panel with a final question: "What is realistic [for the presenters to do] in the next one to three years or so?"

Chen responded by explaining that it is realistic to see more student engagement with upper levels of administration, such as the chancellor and higher officials in the financial aid office.

Abboud responded by saying that although it is realistic, it is most likely improbable that I.V. will become a city. He explained that a closer form of government with more power would be able to help I.V. residents more than under the county's jurisdiction.

Former UC president discusses higher education, career journey at UCSB



UCSB professor Susannah Scott interviewed former president Michael V. Drake on stage, asking him questions about his journey to becoming UC president and the events that transpired during his term.

Michelle Cisneros
Lead News Editor

Brimming with football references and medical analogies, former University of California President Michael V. Drake spoke at Campbell Hall on Jan. 22. Drake discussed the role of higher education in society and major events within the UC during his presidency.

"As a surgeon ... you sort of take responsibility for the thing that you're doing," Drake said regarding his transition from physician to higher education. "I always felt that I had to be prepared and ready to take responsibility for the thing that I was doing."

The event was part of the Arts & Lectures "Justice for All" series. Drake was the 21st University of California (UC) president from August 2020 to August 2025, overseeing the reopening of campuses after the COVID-19 pandemic and the largest strike in the history of American higher education. During his tenure, the UC agreed upon a five-year compact with Governor Gavin Newsom to increase funding for the university system, alongside other goals for higher education.

Following decades of medical leadership at UC San Francisco and the wider UC system, his medical background informed his decision to take on the job as UC president at a time when the UC was deciding how to safely bring students back to campus after the pandemic.

Drake was the first Black UC president and lived through racial segregation during his childhood. In the wake of demonstrations against racial injustice during 2020, Drake entered the UC with goals to expand the diversity and accessibility of higher education. UCSB Chancellor Dennis Assanis introduced Drake to the stage, highlighting their relationship throughout their time in university leadership and Drake's accomplishments during his tenure.

"Under his leadership, the University of California expanded its strong commitment to access, affordability and academic excellence," Assanis said.

Drake began his remarks by discussing his upbringing during racial segregation, as well as the role of higher education in America and how it had benefited him and his family.

"[It] took a lot for the country to move through this period, roughly 100 years after the Civil War, to finally take off the shackles of Jim Crow," Drake said. "One of the things that seemed important to me at the time, and in retrospect, was very important, was that one of the pathways for our – I'll say salvation, for our improvement, for our growth, one of those pathways was education."

Drake explained that during his time overseeing UC Irvine and Ohio State University, he taught a course titled "Civil Rights, the Supreme Court and the Music of the Civil Rights Era." He said his son's school art assignment influenced his approach to the course as well

as his high school job at Tower Records in Sacramento.

Regarding his thoughts on the role of universities within society, Drake referenced the ideas of Clark Kerr, the first UC Berkeley chancellor and twelfth UC president.

"One [of Kerr's ideas] is that knowledge makes the world go round, and the university is still the best place for new ideas. I think that that's true," Drake said. "Universities need to evolve with and change with the time, but [are] celebrated and protected by successful societies, and it's something for us to remember to do as we move forward."

Next, UCSB professor Susannah Scott interviewed Drake on stage, asking him questions about his journey to becoming UC president and the events that transpired during his term.

Scott asked Drake to describe one thing he wished he could've accomplished during his time as president, to which Drake replied he wished he was able to implement an employee tuition support plan.

"For mid to lower income families, it's a big help and I think that we should do that to try to help them," Drake said. "I liked having my colleagues be invested as parents of students."

Drake described an instance in which a woman wore Ohio State merchandise to represent her children's school as an example of how tuition support for employees helps increase social mobility.

"I said, 'Were you an alum? How are you associated with the university?' And she said, 'Oh gosh, no, I didn't go to college, but both of my children did, and I couldn't be more proud,'" Drake said. "The concept of people working and then creating opportunities for the future, for their kids ... I still think that's a great idea."

Speaking on the 40-day graduate student strike in 2022, Drake said it was "difficult" to come to a resolution because it "pitted" the UC against its students.

"I wish that the two sides could have appreciated the value of the change that we made ... from the university side to realize the importance of treating graduate students fairly, make it that they can support themselves," Drake said. "I would have liked some of the organizers to be more appreciative of the challenge that it was for us to do that, and then more welcoming and grateful for the changes that we brought to them."

The conversation then moved on to campus climate during the 2023-24 academic year, where students held demonstrations following the attack on Israel by militant group Hamas and Israel's continued siege on the Gaza Strip. Drake said that following the Oct. 7 attack, the Congressional Jewish Caucus invited him to see raw footage of the event.

"In a campus community where we need to represent everyone, we're a place for everyone trying to balance those forces," Drake said. "It was challenging for the world

as a whole, challenging for us as campuses ... I'm glad we're on the other side and I look forward to the world really dealing with the horror that still exists these days in Gaza."

Drake continued by explaining that each campus had its own response as well as its own encampment. Meaning, each campus community necessitated a different response to student demonstrations.

"That's kind of our balance is to try to have rules that apply broadly, that everyone can follow, but then nurturing the individual specialness of each of the campuses and of the labs," Drake said.

Scott also touched on UC Berkeley's release of 160 names to the Department of Education's (DOJ) Office for Civil Rights. Although it occurred after Drake left office, the original agreement for redacted information was made during Drake's term. Drake reflected on his father-in-law's experience as a surgeon during the Korean War and how that impacted his decision-making skills when faced with situations such as this one.

"The idea of applying principles in a consistent and transparent way to problems that come up, and trying to know your values and stick with your values and applying those is a good way to make the next step when you're dealing with a traumatic or difficult circumstance," Drake said.

Scott and Drake also discussed how universities can build back trust in higher education with the American public. A Pew Research Center study conducted last year found that a growing number of Americans believe higher education is "generally going in the wrong direction."

Drake said that he would like to further "interrogate" the claim that higher education isn't useful anymore.

"You're on the airplane. You want your pilot to be trained, or the person who designed the plane to be an engineer ... So there are lots and lots of things that I think everybody would say are critical, of course, that means that universities have to be as strong as they can be for it to work," Drake said. "We have to be thoughtful [or] better about the elitism of our being good at things and so that we can be better at certain things, but that doesn't mean we're better than you as a person at all."

The evening concluded with Drake discussing his hopes for the UC under President James Milliken.

"The incredible people that we have in our community, from the people who work in food service and groundskeepers to everybody who works in the administrative staff, the faculty, the students, the people who come here to try to learn and make themselves in the world a better place. What a great privilege [it] is to be involved [in] that," Drake said. "What a great privilege [it] is to take that knowledge out into the world after and see those things actually work. I think we have to remember that."



The MultiCultural Center hosted a housing discussion on Jan. 20 to inform students of their on and off-campus housing options.

Immigrant rights activist speaks on immigrant justice in higher education

Iris Guo
Community Outreach News Editor

Immigrant rights activist Ju Hong spoke on his experiences as an undocumented immigrant and fighting for immigrant justice within the higher education system at the Student Resource Building to an audience of around 20 community members on Jan.22.

The presentation, titled “Opportunity for All: The fight for Immigrant Justice in the Higher Ed,” was cosponsored by the Department of Asian American Studies, Undocumented Students Services (USS), the Migration Initiative, Associated Students and the Community Labor Center.

Hong is the director of the Dream Resource Center at the UC Los Angeles Labor Center, a program that trains youth to get involved in social activism and advocate for “equity and justice for workers, families, and communities.”

Hong began his presentation reflecting on the first year of President Donald Trump’s second term. He specifically raised the issue of how the One Big Beautiful Bill Act provided “over \$100 billion” of funding to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (I.C.E.) through 2029, which enables “mass deportation” as well as “investment in surveillance, data systems and coordination tools” used to arrest and deport individuals.

The main concerns Hong highlighted were the expanded enforcement of deportations across the nation and the use of “aggressive strategies.” He specifically called out arrests and

detainments that have occurred in spaces like churches, hospitals, immigration courts and schools.

“We have witnessed a rapid erosion of democratic norms, diminished trust in public institutions and relentless and brutal mass deportations and anti-refugee campaigns targeting immigrant and refugee populations,” Hong said.

Hong also mentioned the suspension of immigration visas and a “tightening legal system.” He provided an example of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients being arrested and facing deportation.

“There’s headlines of anti-immigrant rhetoric and harmful policies of the [Trump] administration that have taken a painful toll on communities and [the] immigrant population in every corner of our country,” Hong said. “So year one [of the] Trump administration — it has impacted our communities — we’re waking up to a reality of immigration agenda rooted in xenophobia, nationalism and fear.”

Afterwards, Hong played a short film titled “Halmoni” for audience members. The film follows Hong’s experiences as an undocumented immigrant who moved from South Korea as a young boy and his experiences as an immigration rights activist. The short film depicted a sequence in which Hong disrupted a speech by former President Barack Obama to call out deportations of undocumented individuals.

Because of his immigration status, Hong was unable to visit his family members in South Korea for many years. After he was able to receive DACA, he was able to visit his elderly

grandmother in South Korea only a few months before her passing.

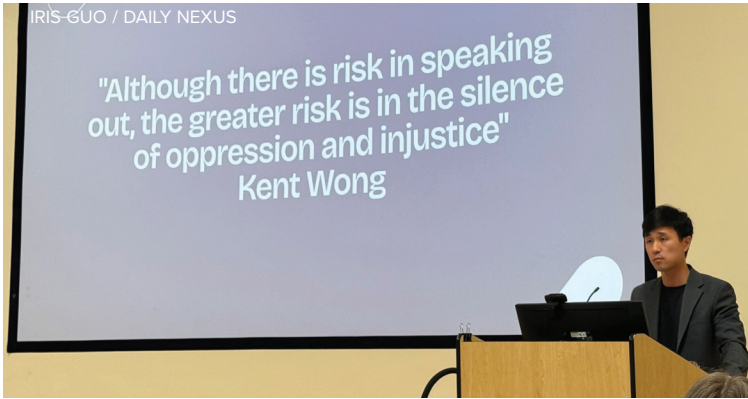
Following the screening, Hong spoke about the various hardships his lived experiences as an undocumented immigrant brought to his life, later inspiring him to pursue social justice as an activist.

“My immigration journey into a social justice movement is not by choice, but necessity,” Hong said. “Eventually, my mom made a bold decision — she decided to move to a new country to seek a better life with me and my older sister — we landed in the San Francisco Bay Area.”

One particular experience that Hong reflected on was when he had to travel 24 hours via Amtrak to Washington to obtain a driver’s license, due to policies at the time preventing undocumented individuals from doing so in California. Hong failed the exam, causing him to feel like his “spirit was out of [his] body.”

“I’m just reflecting, why do I have to go all the way to other states just to get a driver’s license when my other friends are getting a driver’s license two blocks away from their home?” Hong said. “I was like, it’s not fair. Something is wrong and something is not right. I think that’s the moment when I decided to speak up and do something about it.”

Hong then spoke on the activism he has done for undocumented immigrant rights. In 2011, he was accepted to the UCLA Labor Center’s National Dream Summer Fellowship, where he and other undocumented students “conducted civil disobedience action in San Bernardino County” in protest against the 287(g) program, which allows local law enforcement to



Hong is the director of the Dream Resource Center at the UC Los Angeles Labor Center, a program that trains youth to get involved in social activism.

act as I.C.E. agents.

“After years of organizing the 287(g) program was suspended in the seventh county and it was through sustained collective action [that] undocumented youth and allies across the country have fought for and won major programs like DACA, Health Care for All and California Dream Act,” Hong said.

Hong then spoke regarding various statistics of undocumented students in California.

“Over 70% of undocumented students do not have DACA,” Hong said. “Students overwhelmingly report missing out on jobs, internships, scholarships and research opportunities solely due to their immigration status.”

Hong then highlighted the Opportunity for All Act, which was advocated for by the Undocumented Student-Led Network and Immigrant Justice in Action Coalition (IJAC), aiming to remove hiring restrictions

for all California students. The bill was passed by the CA State Assembly in April 2024.

The presentation concluded with a Q&A session, during which one student attendee asked Hong how to overcome the fear surrounding activism and how to get started. Hong provided various campus resources, including the USS and the Community Labor Center. He also mentioned “advocacy-heavy” undocumented student organizations, including IJAC, which are student-led to connect students together.

“It’s a different time. This administration is lawless and we’ve even been doing ‘Know Your Rights’ [events],” Hong said. “‘Know Your Rights’ may not apply because I.C.E. and enforcement agencies are just violating the laws, so it is a scary time. First and foremost, I do think that it is important for undocumented students to protect yourself and your communities and your families.”

Iaorana Te Otea hosts annual Winter Lū‘au

Elijah Obando
Staff Writer

Iaorana Te Otea hosted its annual Winter Lū‘au at the Lotte Lehmann Concert Hall on Jan. 24. Over 300 guests showed support for UC Santa Barbara’s Polynesian dance, drum and appreciation club.

Iaorana Te Otea (ITO) translates to “greetings from the drum beat.” The club aims to teach Hawaiian and Tahitian dancing as well as Tahitian drumming since its establishment at UCSB in 1990. A lū‘au is a traditional Hawaiian celebration significant to Polynesian culture, often including different styles of dancing and drumming.

The lū‘au consisted of original choreographed performances showcasing Hawaiian hula dancing, chanting and Tahitian drumming, and was split into two acts. The first act focused on Hula ‘Auana, a contemporary form of hula dancing, while the second act focused on Hula Kahiko, a traditional form of hula dancing.

Hannah Kang, a fourth-year political science and economics double major and co-president of ITO, explained the background and significance of Hula ‘Auana dancing.

“Auana symbolizes the water and nature of hula dancing. Hula ‘Auana is performed with a variety of instruments and vocals,” Kang said. “This style is more free-form than Kahiko.”

Kang further explained that Hula ‘Auana is performed to English or Hawaiian songs and accompanied by musical instruments.

For a majority of the lū‘au, Alex Yong, a fourth-year psychological & brain sciences and film and media studies double major, and ITO’s co-drum master, provided context for each of the performances.

“Our dancers have worked tirelessly since October to learn new techniques, chants and the ability to hold a smile for two and half minutes,” Yong said.

One performance during the lū‘au featured the use of a traditional Hawaiian rattle called an ‘ulī‘ulī, commonly used in the traditional Kahiko style of dancing. Yong explained the use of ‘ulī‘ulī and the background of the performance’s choreography in further detail.

“The ‘ulī‘ulī are commonly used in Kahiko, but you can also see them used in ‘Auana performances such as this one. This dance is about the beauty of the Naupaka flower, symbolizing a connection to the land, love and protection,” Yong said.

The second act of the lū‘au presented a “sneak-peek” of ITO’s drum performance to be performed in May and was led by Yong and Elijah Calip, a fourth-year microbiology major, and ITO’s other co-drum master.

For the remainder of the lū‘au, the performances used Hula Kahiko. Yong explained that the sounds of Hula Kahiko are made only using percussion instruments, such as bamboo sticks, called “pūili,” or hard gourds, called “ipu.” Yong said that Kahiko requires strength because it is used to honor the gods and chiefs, known as “the akua.”

The lū‘au closed with a group ‘Auana dance titled, “Ka Uluwehi O Ke Kai,” which translates to “the plants of the sea.” Yong explained the choice of this song for their closing number.

“We picked this as our closing song because it describes the intermingledness of the ocean seaweed. Like the seaweed, all of our dancers and drummers have created bonds and relationships with one another that are comparable to the entanglement of seaweed,” Yong said.

One attendee, Jaya Chohan, a third-year environmental studies and economics double major, said she attended the event to support her friends.

“I have two friends that are a part of ITO, so I came to support them. I really liked the drum performance. That was cool, so I’m excited for the next show,” Chohan said.



The annual Lū‘au featured Polynesian dance and drum.

The Daily Nexus Crossword

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14

5. Burned down by protestors in the 70s

6. A.S. Executive who helps Isla Vista

7. P in ILP

8. First name of current chancellor

1. Hosted by Iaorana Te Otea

2. Pick-up dining hall food here

3. The Nexus is located under

4. First name of former chancellor

5. Acronym for first-gen friendly program

6. 91.9


Across

2. 6 feet deep near Manzi

3. US Soccer Team Played Against ____

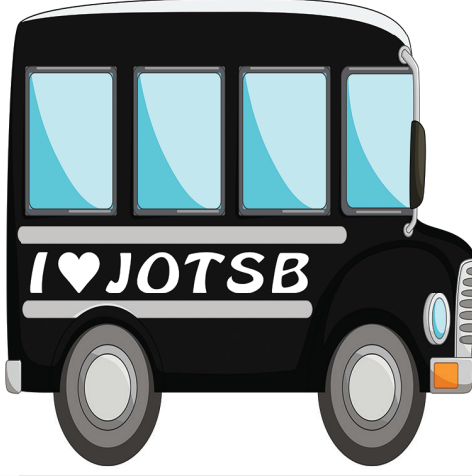
4. Unofficial UCSB mascot

Down

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SCIENCE & TECH



Matter of Opinion:

PMS pisses me off



COURTESY OF WOMANLOG

Preksha Koushik
Staff Writer

My most unnecessary argument took place in ninth grade. My history teacher and I were disagreeing about whether or not there is a correct way to hold a pencil. Admittedly, I did get a little too passionate about my argument, but only because he continued to talk over me. I'll never forget what he said when I finally raised my voice so that he could hear me over his:

"Is it that time of the month?"

Not only was he wrong, but he also didn't even have the decency to say the word "period." Why is it that periods or hormones are so often blamed whenever menstruators are emotional?

First, it's important to understand how the idea of constant mood swings, in relation to periods, was cemented in our society. There are two main occurrences around menstruation linked to changes in mood. The first, and most common, is premenstrual syndrome (PMS). Mayo Clinic estimates that roughly 75% of menstruators have experienced one or more symptoms of PMS, which is categorized by both physical and emotional symptoms, such as joint and muscle pain, headache, fatigue, as well as anxiety, mood swings and insomnia. Though PMS affects many people, its magnitude varies greatly.

The more severe form of PMS is known as premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD). Roughly 5-10% of menstruators experience PMDD, and it is recognized as a debilitating disturbance that often impacts daily routines, relationships and general functioning, as people with PMDD experience clinical levels of depression and anxiety.

The most recognized cause for these legitimate mood changes are an individual's hormone levels, which are known to fluctuate throughout the menstrual cycle. Hormones, which are chemical messengers that travel in our bloodstream that are linked to changes in the body, play a key role in reproductive health for everyone. The two main ovarian hormones, estrogen and progesterone, are often cited as the causes for mood changes, especially during the luteal phase when both progesterone and estrogen levels decline. Some studies even link estrogen levels and that of serotonin, a neurotransmitter heavily involved in determining mood.

PMS, PMDD and the scientific basis of hormonal changes unfortunately enable society to attribute every mood change of a menstruator to their period, invalidating experiences. While it is true that hormones have real consequences on our bodies and minds, that does not mean that every negative

emotion is linked to hormonal changes or menstruation.

PMS and mood changes have also been used as a talking point in political rhetoric, when women are characterized to be incapable of leadership because they are too emotional. Instead of being treated as a legitimate condition affecting the lives of many people, PMS is now used as a way to demean and discredit emotional responses even when menstruation is not involved. This disregard of emotions surrounding the menstrual cycle CAN also be linked to a broader stigmatization of mental health. When we believe that issues are imaginary, we invalidate very real struggles.

"I'm just PMSing," I tell my friends.

When I cry myself to sleep that night, I tell myself my feelings are not real.

Invalidation often also comes from within, while PMS is used to justify and explain every negative emotion when menstruating while ignoring the underlying problem.

For example, on the talk show "The Doctors," clinical psychologist Jane Ussher explains an interaction she had with a patient where the patient had a long day at work, then came home and did every household chore while her husband was "sitting in the garden, drinking beer, and reading the paper." The patient

then went on to say that this made her very angry, and therefore was an example of her PMS. The real problem, her husband being unhelpful, was not addressed, because both of them continued to blame her PMS for her emotional outbursts when she was just feeling alone in caring for their children. Saying that emotions are caused by PMS effectively claims that they come from no real cause, which is rarely the case.

When PMS and hormones are used to justify emotions, two issues arise. One, we solidify that being emotional itself is not normal or allowed. Whenever a person is asked if they are on their period simply for showing emotions, we reinforce the idea that having emotions is irrational, which should not be the case.

Two, we invalidate emotions by reducing them to hormonal changes. As one Reddit user puts it: "If women are always having shifts in emotion because of hormones due to periods or ovulation, how do you know if anything is real?" This sense of helplessness surrounding menstrual cycle related hormones is understandable when it feels all in our heads.

As it turns out, in a way, it is in our heads. A study by UC Santa Barbara researchers of 30 naturally cycling women examined white matter (WM), cortical thickness

(CT) and brain volume changes in correspondence with the hormones estradiol, luteinizing hormone, follicle-stimulating hormone and progesterone. The study found that "simultaneous brain-wide changes in human WM microstructure and CT coincided with menstrual cycle-driven hormone rhythms." Such findings illustrate that these hormone levels are consistent with physical changes to the brain, not simply emotional changes. Both emotional and physical changes throughout menstrual cycles are not imaginary and should not be treated as nothing when they result in such significant changes.

We can understand that some feelings may be exacerbated by PMS and hormonal changes while also understanding that those feelings are not invalid and often have reasoning behind them. Every emotion is "real," whether it is driven by hormonal changes or not. It's important to give yourself grace for the very real emotional and physical changes that occur during a menstrual cycle, and acknowledge that working through these changes does not mean ignoring strong emotions when they arise.

Mr. Gillis, if you're somehow reading this, I hope you understand how wrong it was to ask me that. And I still think I'm right about the pencil argument.

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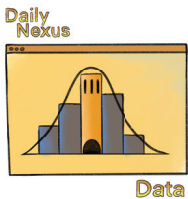
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DATA

How UCSB’s Educational Opportunity Program bridges connections with incoming freshmen

Krithi Saravanan
Data Editor

Since its founding in 1966, the Educational Opportunity Program has led efforts on campus to provide students with a multifaceted educational support system grounded in inclusion and empowerment.

In doing so, Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) has helped establish a number of programs still used by UC Santa Barbara students, such as Campus Learning Assistance Services and Early Academic Outreach Program. EOP also sponsors cultural centers on campus including the African diasporic Cultural Resource Center, American Indian and Indigenous Cultural Resource Center, Asian Resource Center, Chicany/Latinx Cultural Resource Center and Middle Eastern, North African, South Asian Resource Center.

Aaron Jones has been the director of EOP for the past eight years, prior to which he worked in Associated Students for 14 years. Jones holds two degrees from UCSB – a bachelor’s degree in Black studies and political science, and a master’s degree in education – and is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in education at UCSB’s Gevirtz Graduate School of Education. Over the course of his undergraduate career from 1989 to 1994, Jones was an EOP student himself.

“The purpose of EOP was ... to provide opportunities and support resources for students who historically have been denied such opportunities to attend an institution of higher education,” Jones said of EOP’s founding mission.

Since the program’s inception, Jones believes that the scope of EOP’s work has broadened. The proposal and eventual passage of Proposition 209 in 1996 – which prohibited consideration of race, sex, color, ethnicity or national origin in programs within areas of public education, employment and programming – brought about a notable change to the program.

“One of the three [previous] criteria for being a member of EOP was ruled illegal with the passage of 209,” Jones said. “So previously,

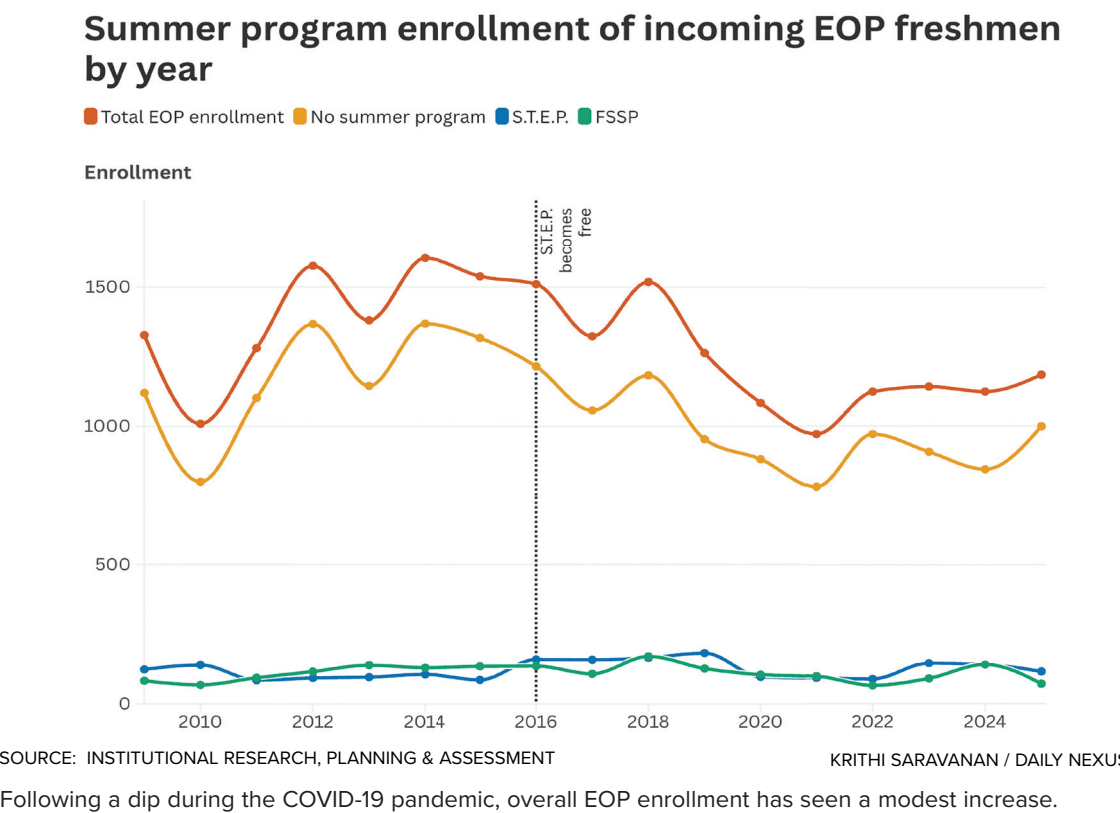
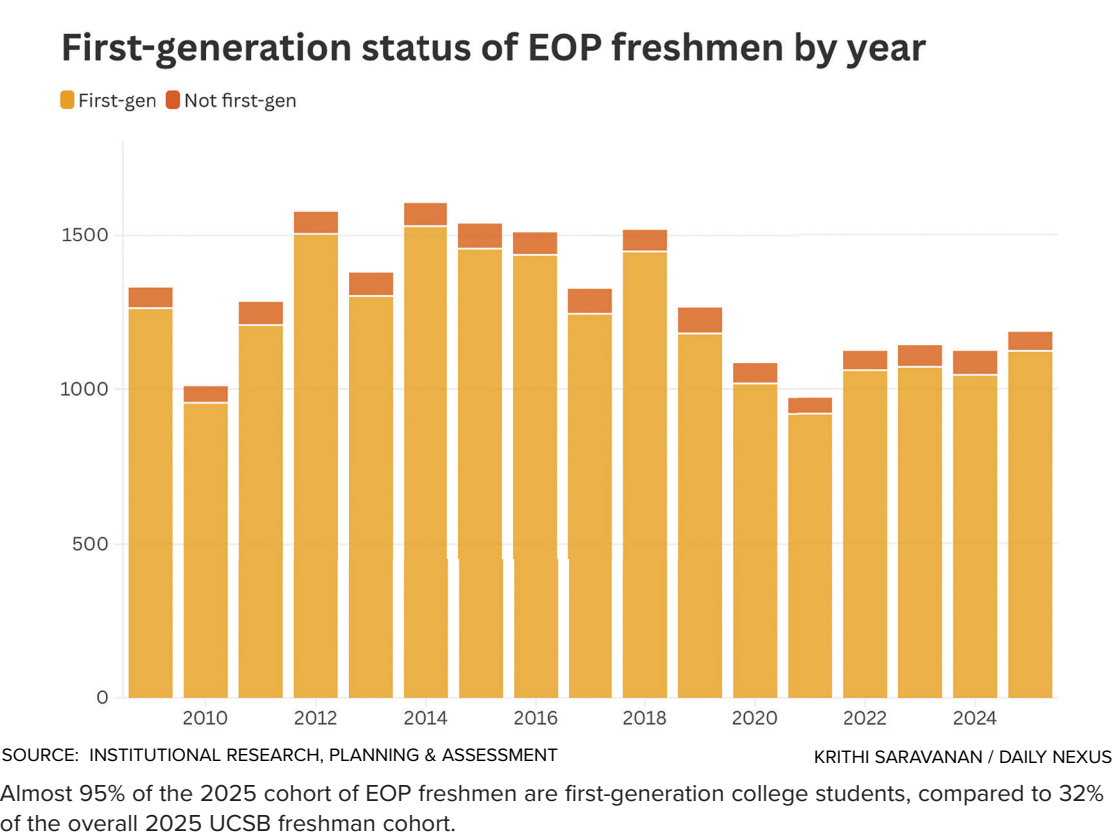
the criteria was first-generation, income eligibility and/or being from an underrepresented minority. My parents went to college, I was not first-gen. We were solidly middle class, I was not on financial aid. But because I came from the underrepresented minority, I was eligible to be in EOP. So that’s changed after 1996 ... our focus, really specifically, but not exclusively, is on first-generation and what we call income-eligible students, which currently is about 35% of the undergraduate student population.”

Eligibility for EOP membership is determined when students fill out their UC application. If a student’s parents or legal guardians have not attained a bachelor’s degree in the U.S. or if a student meets income criteria based on the Cal Grant ceiling, set forth annually by the California Student Aid Commission, they are automatically invited to EOP following their acceptance into UCSB. If a UCSB student doesn’t meet either of these criteria, they can still join EOP as an associate member.

EOP offers two one-week, residential summer bridge programs to incoming EOP students: Summer Transitional Enrichment Program (S.T.E.P.) for freshmen and Summer Transfer Transition Program (STTP) for transfer students. Over the past 10 years, both programs have been offered for free as a result of the Undergraduate Student Success Grant through the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost. Prior to the grant, S.T.E.P. participants were charged based on their Expected Family Contribution (EFC), a metric that has since been replaced by Student Aid Index (SAI) as the standard measure of financial need.

Established in 1977, S.T.E.P.’s programming has a shared emphasis on academic preparation, personal growth and fostering connections with other students and EOP staff. During their week on campus, S.T.E.P. students also become more familiar with navigating campus and accessing resources at UCSB.

EOP counselor and coordinator Luther Richmond graduated from UCSB with a bachelor’s degree in communication in 2007 before



attaining his master’s degree in counseling from San José State University in 2010. Subsequently, he returned to UCSB as the director of the American Indian Scholars Program at the Office of Education Partnerships, where he also worked for a year between

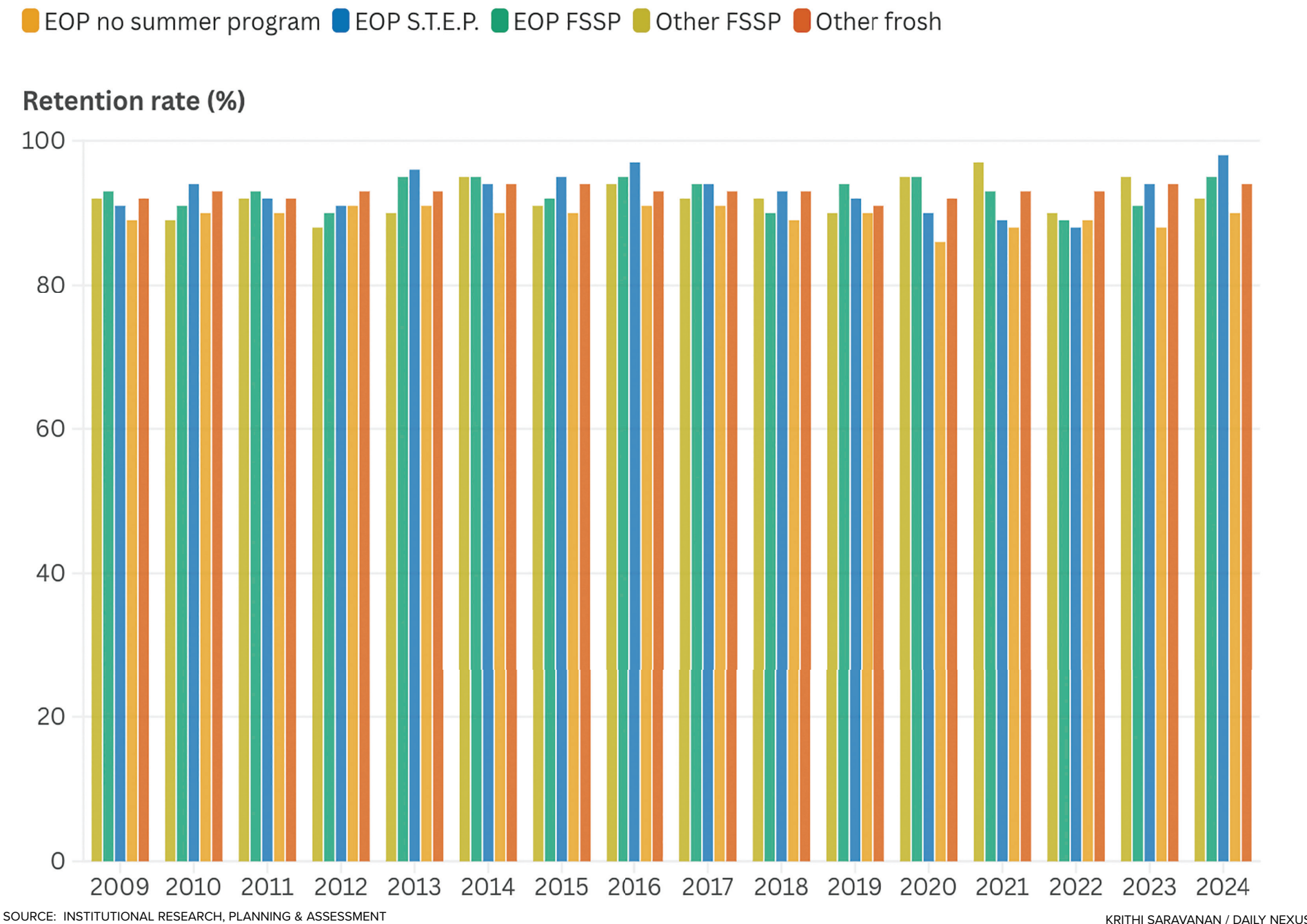
getting his bachelor’s degree and pursuing his master’s. Richmond joined the EOP staff in December 2013. Like Jones, he participated in S.T.E.P. prior to his freshman year at UCSB.

“We want students to create their networks of support, see

themselves on campus, feel a sense of belonging and not only know where to go on campus, but who to go to in those departments before they even get here,” Richmond said.

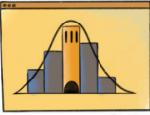
Incoming EOP freshmen’s enrollment in S.T.E.P.

Second-year retention rates by year



DATA

Daily Nexus



Data

generally isn't affected by overall EOP enrollment; instead, the number of students that S.T.E.P. can accommodate, as well as the duration of the program itself, largely depends on the funding the program receives.

“When I did S.T.E.P. it was a two-week program, and I think there were, like, 230 students, because they had the budget for all that,” Richmond said. “In 2008 there was the financial crisis. And then that kind of came to a head in 2011. That’s when they made the decision to take a week off and turn it into a one-week program ... And so from 2013 to 2024, really, our goal was always to try to get 175 students, because that’s what we had allocated for. This past year we had to reduce, and our target was 130 students. So it’s really mainly reflected in the budgetary situation.”

Although funding from the Undergraduate Student Success Grant allows both S.T.E.P. and STTP to be offered for free, additional financial support for the programs allows EOP to not only sustain current programming but also look into expanding their capacity to engage more incoming students. Additional financing can come from extramural funding or reducing current program expenses. EOP’s goal, ultimately, is to find a sustainable source of funding.

“For 2026 we’re actually seeking some support from the Student Fee Advisory Committee,” Jones said. “We’re hopeful that they’ll help us for 2026 and also give us time to figure out what 2027 and beyond is going to look like in terms of funding for S.T.E.P.”

S.T.E.P. and STTP are the analogous predecessors to the Freshman Summer Start Program (FSSP) and Transfer Edge, respectively. FSSP, like S.T.E.P., is a residential program offered to all incoming freshmen. Unlike S.T.E.P., FSSP is six weeks long, offers academic credit to participants, does not give priority to EOP students and is not free for participants.

“Anecdotally, what I’ve seen is ... comparing the EOP S.T.E.P. students to the EOP FSSP students, their SAI or their EFC are usually lower for S.T.E.P. [students],” Richmond said. SAI replaced EFC as the standard measure of financial need in the 2024-25 award year.

Jones also noted that not all students are able or inclined to attend a six-week program over the summer.

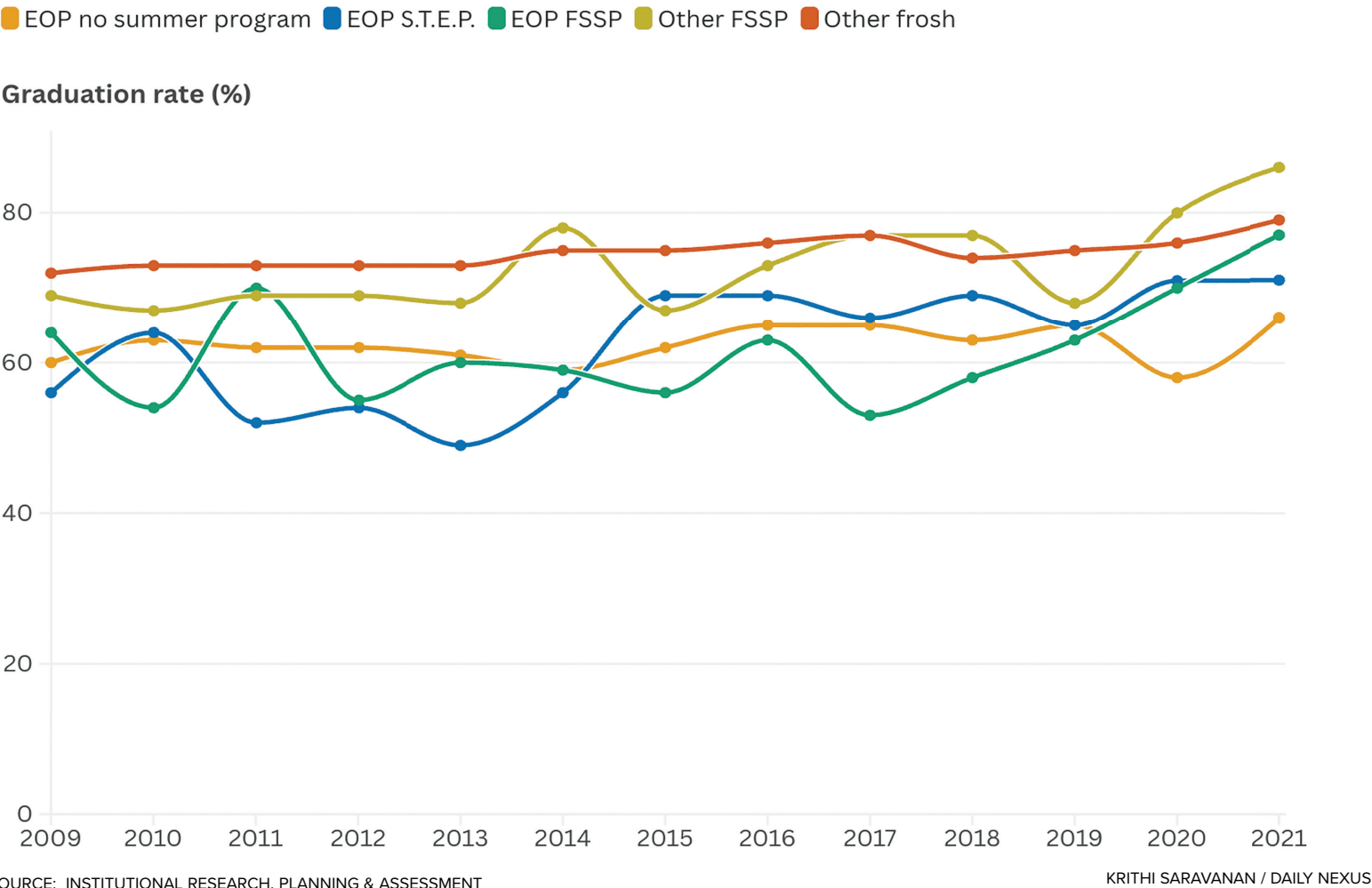
“Some students work during the summer, or some students may not have the capacity to be able to go to a six-week program. They may have other obligations. Or vice versa: some students may be ready to go ... [they] can get a jump on [their] graduation requirements,” Jones said. “I think it just really just depends, but we do take that into consideration for our S.T.E.P. and STTP participants who are often driven to the program by their parents or their guardians, who have to take time off to do that ... Especially for first-generation students, not everybody can just bounce for six weeks.”

In line with its purpose of being a holistic introduction to the undergraduate experience, S.T.E.P.’s programming comprises academic, community and residential components. During the week that a student participates in S.T.E.P., they live in residence halls, take a writing course, attend seminars on personal growth and academic best practices and partake in social activities, which include a talent show and a beach day.

Queen Allah, a third-year sociology major with a minor in applied psychology, attended S.T.E.P. as an incoming freshman. In the summers of 2024 and 2025, she worked with S.T.E.P. as a resident assistant.

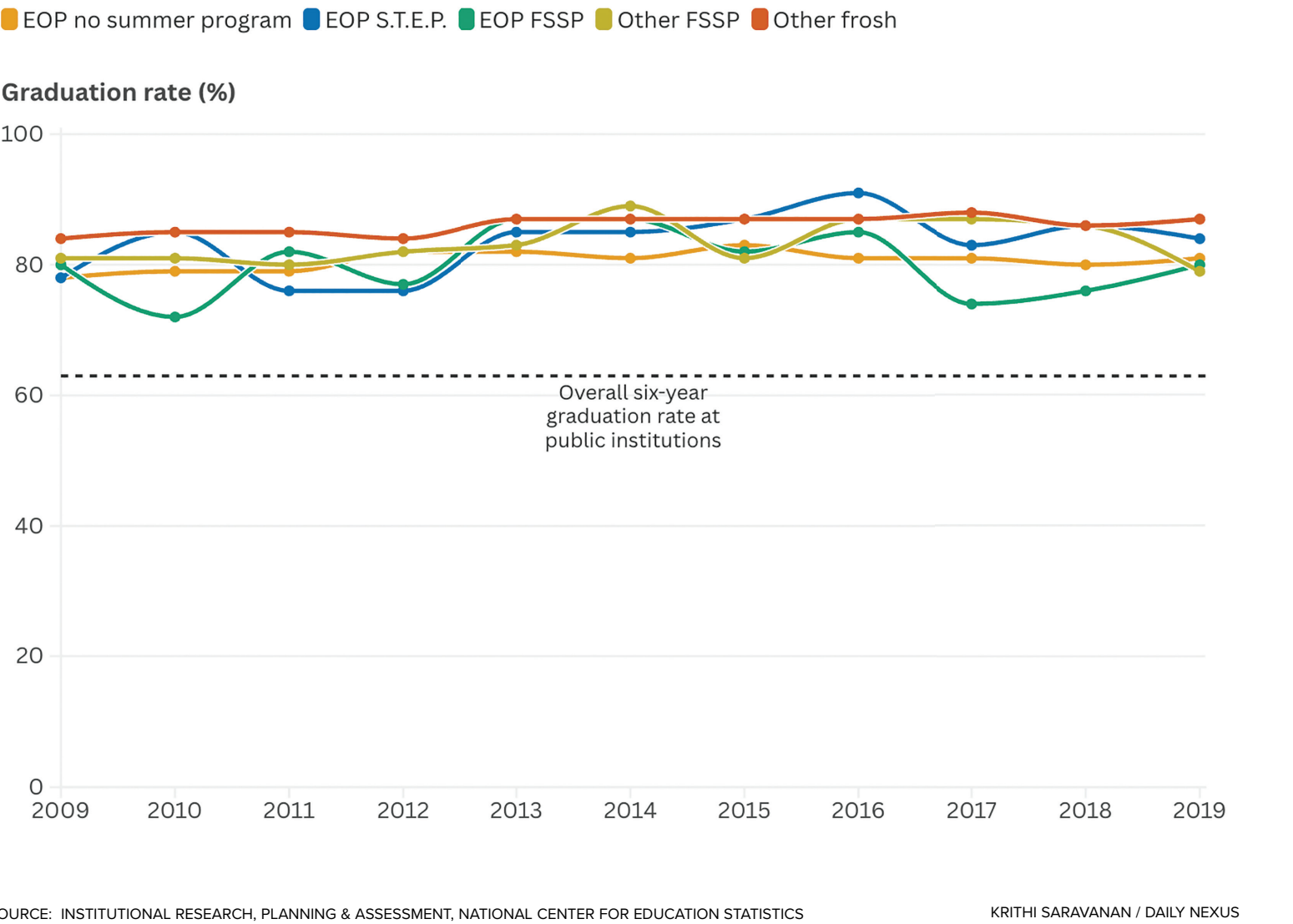
“I thought [S.T.E.P.] was going to be the run-of-the-mill, orientation-adjacent spiel [or] overflow of information ... people telling you about all these things without really taking the time to explain how you access them,” Allah said. “The people [at S.T.E.P.] poured into you so you could have the confidence to ask for help. I think that was the most valuable thing because it’s really hard. And it’s a scary thing to do, to ask for help, especially as an incoming freshman to this big school where people don’t look like you, where people are not from the same sort

Four-year graduation rates by year



Four-year graduation rates among all three EOP groups have fluctuated since 2009, though the four-year graduation rate for EOP FSSP students has steadily increased since 2017. Small cohort sizes for summer programs may also be leading to year-to-year volatility.

Six-year graduation rates by year



The six-year graduation rates across all groups are tightly clustered around 80%. All five rates surpass the overall six-year graduation rate at four-year, public, postsecondary institutions in the U.S.A. recorded in 2020 by the National Center for Education Statistics.

of income background as you.”

In addition to her involvement with EOP, Allah is also the co-chair of the Black Women’s Health Collaborative (BWHC) within Associated Students. She attributed the confidence to seek out the former co-chair of BWHC at a mentorship program to the ways in which S.T.E.P. normalized asking for guidance on campus.

“S.T.E.P. puts a magnifying glass on your experience – and that’s necessary,” Allah said. “I would hope people know that

“It’s like something you carry with you. I feel like it never leaves throughout undergrad. You’ll always run into another Stepper and ... it kind of broadens your connections within people at this university ... I’m a big believer [that] it’s not always about what you know but who you know. It can open different doors,” Mohamed said.

Richmond shared a similar thought vis-a-vis retention rates for EOP S.T.E.P. students.

“One of the main things is that

Early exposure to academic resources can also help students become well acquainted with how to use them optimally throughout their college careers.

“I see a lot of positive thinking around major changes – early on, or in their second and third year. So I think that the students who are using their resources and going to counseling and figuring out what it is that they really like, by kind of hearing themselves talk it out with a counselor, I think that’s why those [graduation] rates go up,” Richmond said.

“A big misconception is that students who ... are failing or something come into EOP,” Richmond said. “At this point, we have students thriving. A majority of students who get awards at the end of the year are EOP students and S.T.E.P. participants. And I think that’s really special, because we really help students thrive and not just get by.”

Looking ahead, Jones aspires to expand EOP’s reach to incoming students at UCSB. Notably, a clear, existing indicator of EOP’s historically widespread impact on campus is present in the fact that many institutions at UCSB are former functions of EOP that now operate as their own departments.

“A lot of the institutions that you see that exist today are a direct result of EOP,” Jones said. “So Campus Learning Assistance Services actually used to be a function of the Education Opportunity Program until it became its own department. Early Academic Outreach, for

example, used to be a function of EOP. EOP used to actually go and do outreach to bring students, to recruit students. So now that’s its own department. Financial aid is now, of course, its own entity ... The first peer mentors on campus were EOP peer mentors.”

Additional resources would help fortify S.T.E.P. for future cohorts of students. Increased funding could allow the program to be a week or two longer, which may make it long enough to be unit-bearing and potentially also give students more time to deepen the connections they make during their first week at S.T.E.P.

“The heart-centered approach for student success is, in my opinion, universal. And it’s not rocket science. It’s not hard. We know the formula that works ... the first ingredient of that formula is our summer bridge programs. And then we’re able to kind of build upon that,” Jones said. “If I had double the resources, I still couldn’t serve half of the EOP students, but we know what we have that works, and resources are always a challenge. Fortunately, we have campus partners that are of a similar mindset ... and similar goals and values.”

“We’re able to work collaboratively across the campus, across divisions and throughout various departments to do this work,” Jones said. “Many of us, myself included, are the results of that work, the recipients of that work from previous years, even at this institution, and are committed to doing that work.”

“S.T.E.P. puts a magnifying glass on your experience – and that’s necessary.”

QUEEN ALLAH

just because it doesn’t pertain to you doesn’t mean it’s not making a word-class impact on your classmate, or the person next to you or your neighbor.”

Seba Mohamed, a second-year psychological & brain sciences major who was also a S.T.E.P. Resident Assistant in the summer of 2025, found S.T.E.P.’s multifaceted approach to academic preparedness helpful, especially because of its shared focus on campus resources and interpersonal networking.

network of support. It really keeps students [at UCSB],” Richmond said. “A lot of people really link up with a lot of people in S.T.E.P., and so there’s 150, 175 other people who have this other experience with you.”

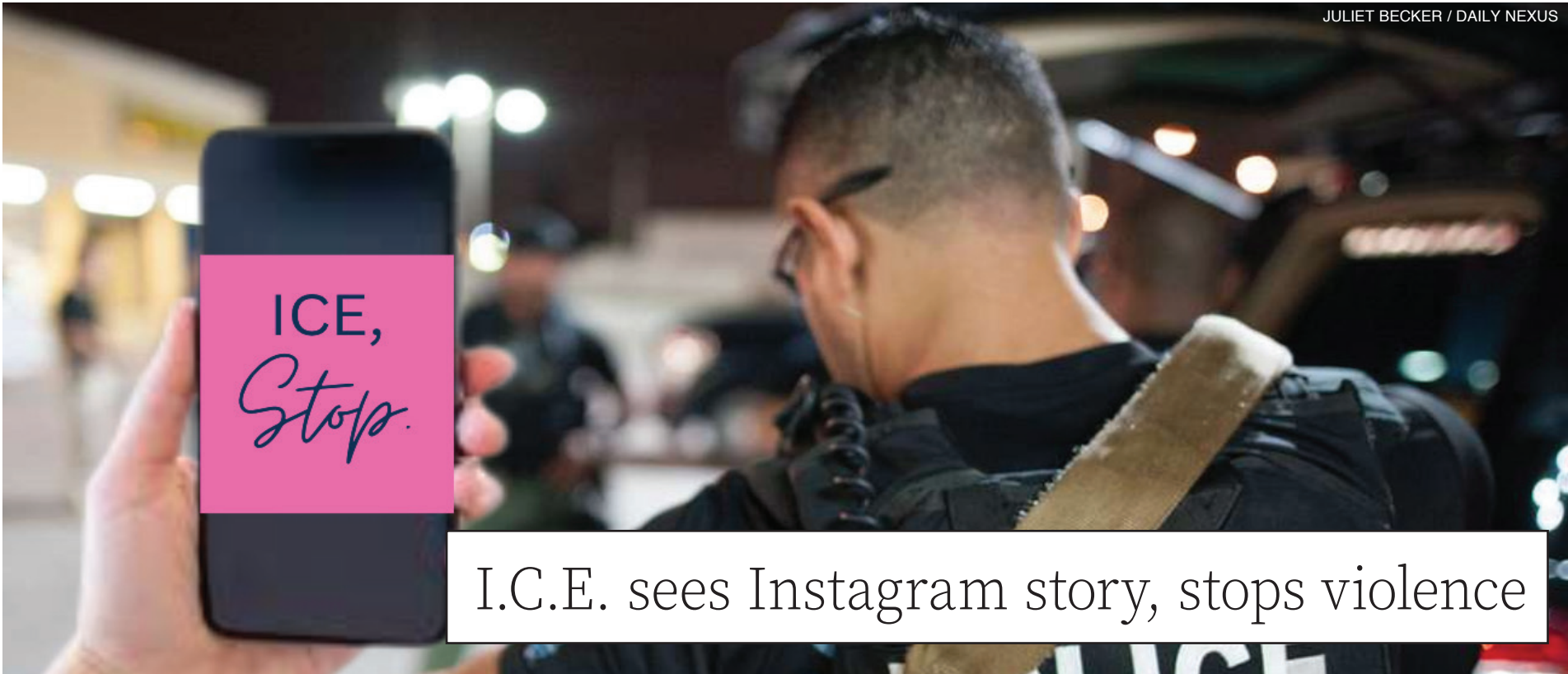
“I’ve noticed that S.T.E.P. students in their first year, they’re using their resources at a much higher rate, I feel,” Richmond added. “They’re less hesitant to ask for support and that’s what really keeps them into their second year.”

Daily
Nexus
Stench



NEXUSTENTIALISM

It's Satire, Stupid.



JULIET BECKER / DAILY NEXUS

I.C.E. sees Instagram story, stops violence

Joseph R. Biden
Activist

After a year of escalated Immigrations and Customs Enforcement activity under the second Trump administration, including what critics call violent and undemocratic enforcement tactics Immigrations and Customs Enforcement has announced that its abhorrent behavior will come to an end.

The reason? In fact, Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (I.C.E.) said that its decision traces back to our very own campus.

"I was scrolling through social media the other day when I saw that @ryan_beemer26 reposted an infographic on his Instagram

story. It was a colorful square that simply said, 'ICE, STOP.' This was the clearest signal of resistance we'd seen," United States Border Patrol commander-at-large Gregory Bovino said in a press conference on Monday.

UC Santa Barbara fourth-year history major Ryan Beemer has been widely credited with stopping I.C.E. raids across America.

"There was Martin Luther King Jr., there was Cesar Chavez, there was Gloria Steinem, and now there's me," Beemer said. "Reposting that graphic was the best decision that I could have made. I'm so proud of myself"

Fans were eager to know about Beemer's motivation for his groundbreaking activism and

begged to know how he had the courage to stand up against injustice.

"Honestly, I was initially just interested in fucking this liberal chick I met at Sandbar last week. I actually hid my story from a lot of my buddies when I posted it because I thought they would flame me for being soft. But I'm glad it found the right people, now I have hella bitches in my DMs," Beemer said.

Along with his romantic conquests, Beemer also noticed a tipping point in I.C.E.'s behavior that made his alarm bells ring.

"Once they started killing normal white people in Minnesota, I knew that I had to say something," Beemer said.

Some community members

expressed jealousy at Beemer's success in Instagram activism.

"I posted about I.C.E., too – where's my applause? I literally posted 'IF YOU SUPPORT I.C.E., UNFOLLOW ME' on my story last week so that people knew I was cool like that," second-year political science major Kayla Orange said about her Instagram story that boasts over 400 viewers.

Local I.C.E. officials weighed in on the impact that Beemer had on the institution.

"Before, I wanted to use my extensive background in questionably legal gun use and 4chan-informed political ideology to kick out illegals and protect the homeland," I.C.E. agent Grant Silva said. "But now, I really see

how my work at I.C.E. can be bad. I think I'll be a cop instead."

Overall, Beemer's heroism has been rewarded across the globe. Rumors of a 2026 Nobel Peace Prize have circulated on campus, as well as a (straight, don't worry) cameo for Beemer in the second season of "Heated Rivalry."

"I'm glad that I could help put a stop to the violence in our country. Once I saw that I.C.E. was getting people who looked like me, I realized that the situation was actually bad. This is your sign to speak up when something might affect you, and only you, specifically," Beemer said.

Joseph R. Biden will post "Trump is bad" next!

WHAT I.V. STREET ARE YOU?

FAVORITE LATE NIGHT I.V.

FOOD?

A. Wingstop
B. I.V. Deli
C. Deja Vu

LECTURE ATTENDANCE THIS WEEK?

A. 0-1, left in the middle
B. Maybe most
C. All of them, I'm paying hella for this education

WHEN'S THE LAST TIME YOU OPENED YIKYAK

A. Today
B. In the last year
C. Never

MOSTLY B'S

America's whole model was based on the diversity found on this street. Lady Liberty herself was born and raised here. You either never go to class or sit in the front row.

BODY COUNT

A. 50+
B. 0-3
C. 3-10

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU SAW EX-CHANCELLOR YANG IN A CAR?

A. Text the group chat
B. Hop in
C. Run

MOSTLY A'S

Del Playa – First, put your shirt back on. You love to chance fate by sitting on the curb and you have mastered the art of the nature pee (in a bush).

MOSTLY C'S

Embarcadero del Norte – Everyone knows you, you're happening, but you don't have any real friends. People only like to see you at night.

MADELINE BRYCE / DAILY NEXUS



MADELINE BRYCE / DAILY NEXUS

Midterms renamed to avoid triggering students

Tiny Tinkle
Empath

In response to growing numbers of students panicking at the mention of m*term ex*ms, members of the "Don't Say It" club on UC Santa Barbara's campus are trying to make a change.

The club, consisting mostly of linguistics majors, has pushed to rename the triggering phrase to something less harmful to students' psyche. This is in response to the common knowledge that it is the word itself that makes students so stressed out.

Members of the club have given their insight on the movement.

"After doing extensive research on words, we think 'information check' should be the new phrase adopted by every department at our school," President Hoot n' Hollar, a fifth-year word-lover major, said. "These words roll seamlessly off the tongue and are a better description than the previous term in every conceivable way."

The movement has been named "Information check to showcase knowledge," with

the club having started a petition on change.org. Based on these steps, the adoption of this new term seems inevitable, and has inspired a larger movement. In fact, a phenomenon of changing words has been adopted by unexpected members of the UCSB community, but its implementation is questionable.

Lollie Dart, a second-year mechanical engineering major, explained how her professor started to change terms in class.

"He was very excited when he learned of the movement and started to change names on assignments. Assignments are now titled things like 'You won't pass this,' and 'Luck won't save you now.' I'm scared every hour of every day," Dart said.

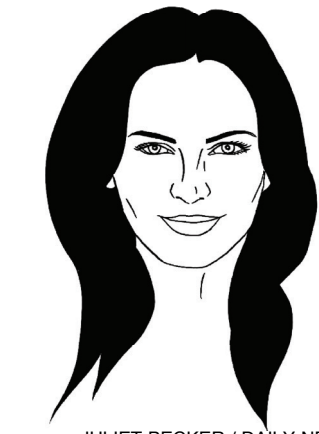
So m*terms, even though they determine the same in every capacity, will at least be named differently, allowing for everyone to get more confused of what is expected of them.

Good luck with your information checks this week.

Tiny Tinkle can't wait for this week to be over.

COLUMNISTS

sex and the community



JULIET BECKER / DAILY NEXUS

Diana Paradise
Sexpert

It seems like you can't suck a single dick in this town without finding out that said dick belongs to your freshman year roommate's lab partner's sorority big's ex-situationship who committed some heinous offense against her.

When you first arrive in Isla Vista as a doe-eyed freshman, it feels huge. Unlimited hot guys span for miles, there are no parents to catch you bringing a guy home and parties create the perfect environment for endless hookups. Yet, once one reaches their geriatric third year, hooking up in I.V. becomes more stressful than it is fun.

I.V. is an entangled web of classmates, fraternities and sororities, clubs, 15-person houses and bands. If you've had sex with anyone in I.V., you likely can't take a sunset stroll down Del Playa Drive without running into a girl with whom you've shared a dick.

I didn't realize how toxic this environment is for hooking up and dating until I had the privilege of spending a semester in Paris, where I enjoyed France's finest export: men.

In a big city, you can make out with someone at the bar

Is I.V. too small for dating?

How to have a sex life when everyone is connected

whose name you don't know and never see them again. You can quintuple-text someone begging them to come over, show up in a trench coat with nothing underneath (I would know) or commit some horrible dating faux pas and it will never matter.

The anonymity of a non-I.V. environment offers a drastically more authentic and fun dating experience. What is that guy, who you drunk called eight times, going to tell his friends? You might not ever meet them, you might never see that guy again and there is an unlimited supply of other anonymous guys to have fun with.

However, I.V. is the exact opposite. If you're talking to someone who ends up being your coworker's high school best friend's ex, the news that you texted one too many times, or used a little too much teeth during head, will ripple through the social network quickly.

I.V.'s hyper-interconnectedness has created an environment that thrives on a lack of romance and an overabundance of gossip and nonchalance. Your faux pas exists not just between you and your partner, but defines your reputation in such a small community.

It doesn't help when you have to confront your ex-conquests and all of their friends on a practically weekly basis in the Arbor. I mean, the odds of never seeing someone that you once knew are very slim.

We are not unique in this way,

in that presumably every college town has these organizations that create ample connections and throw parties where the inevitable happens. However, I.V.'s stereotype of having an especially substantial hookup culture has proven true, at least in my years here.

When everyone has hooked up with everyone (at least by association), how do we avoid or navigate these awkward situations?

Well, for one, we can stop with the incest. If you've hooked up with all of your club's executive board and they've all hooked up with their housemates who've all hooked up with the Sig Pi fall 2023 pledge class, your web has become too tangled.

We all know about the coworker crush stereotype: When you're forced into enclosed spaces, long hours and stressful decision-making circumstances, you're bound to develop feelings for your otherwise unremarkable colleague. This phenomenon becomes especially prevalent at UC Santa Barbara, where people are sexy and half of club or work meetings involve getting wasted on someone's couch.

Moral of the story: don't mix business and pleasure. For the sake of the web not getting more tangled, and for your own good – you don't want to attend the club's next meeting after the vice president couldn't find your clit on Saturday.

Second, realize that I.V. isn't

permanent (for the most part). We are all shoved into these tiny four blocks for four years where your DFMO (dance floor makeout) with an ugly person at the Snow Club dayge feels like the most embarrassing thing in the world.

And yet, my sexual ghosts of I.V. past have already disappeared from my mind for the most part (shoutout Marcos from Ganja House freshman year). You likely will not have to see that loser that you think ruined your life ever again after a few years (which will go by faster than you expect).

I.V. is a weird simulation that breeds hyper-self-consciousness, stoicism and the Cool Olympics. You deserve the kind of partnership that you want. You deserve to have

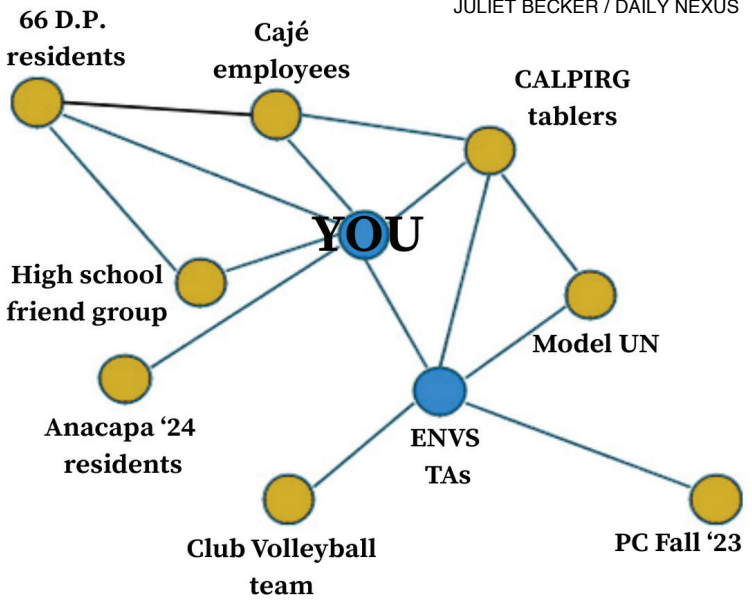
orgasms when you sleep with people. You deserve to have fun in these precious four years.

When you're old and looking back on your college years, you'll look fondly upon your silliest stories, your craziest moments and your most wild hookups. You won't be happy that you were the most nonchalant person in your friend group.

So, be your expressive and silly self! Don't be afraid to double text, or ask for that crazy thing during sex that you've been wanting to try, or tell someone off because they aren't treating you right. The tangled web will shatter soon anyways.

Diana Paradise knows good sex (and isn't afraid to ask).

JULIET BECKER / DAILY NEXUS



Sexual Network Map of I.V.

JULIET BECKER / DAILY NEXUS

What we keep wearing: Ballet flats and soft femininity

Arna Churiwala
Fashionista

Everywhere I go these days, ballet flats seem to follow. They're found under library tables, scuffing across the Arbor walkway and tucked beneath baggy jeans at coffee shops.

When heels and sneakers feel overdone, ballet flats always return as a comfortable and stylish alternative. They aren't just attention-demanding statement shoes, but timeless pieces that keep coming back.

That's the thing about ballet flats: they never really disappear. They fade into the background, wait patiently and reemerge when fashion gets tired of trying too hard. After years of towering Dr. Martens platforms, chunky sneakers and heels that prioritize shock value over comfort, ballet flats are a return to keeping things soft and sleek.

There are two main ballet flats circulating right now, and they're saying very different things.

On one end, there's the balletcore flat. Satin or soft leather, often baby pink or

off-white or muted silver, they may be finished with a thin bow or delicate strap. These are the ones worn with tights, leg warmers, wrap tops and skirts that move when you walk. Leaning into girlhood and softness, they feel romantic and a little impractical, like you just came from dance rehearsal.

On the other side lies the office flat. Structured, neutral and sensible with black leather, an almond toe and no unnecessary frill. These flats are paired with work slacks, blazers and historically, skinny jeans. They signal adulthood and practicality, the classic shoe to choose when you want to be taken seriously.

What's interesting is that both of these versions reject the heel, instead emphasizing ease and softness. One is romantic, the other functional, but both challenge the idea that femininity requires discomfort. You shouldn't have to squeeze your feet into 6-inch pointy-toe pumps to look put together.

Of course, ballet flats didn't start out as practical shoes. Their fashion origin story is basically inseparable

from Audrey Hepburn. In "Sabrina" (1954), she pairs simple ballet flats with her soon-to-be signature capri pants outside the Larrabee building, creating a look that feels super timeless and modern. Hepburn's consistent appearances in flats, both on and off the screen, made them chic and effortless.

In her prime era, ballet flats became shorthand for a "certain kind of woman." Effortlessness became the epitome of taste. But fashion has a short attention span and that softness eventually fell out of favor. Heels took over. By the 1970s, bigger shoes, sharp silhouettes and spectacle became the goal. Ballet flats faded into the background, associated more with practicality than style.

Then came the 2010s, when ballet flats staged a very specific comeback. Paired with skinny jeans and oversized bags, they returned in a distinct workwear context. They were office-friendly, sensible and sometimes – let's be honest – flirting with twee.

Alexa Chung helped make them feel intentional again, styling them with a studied nonchalance and cool-girl messiness. Around the same time, Amy Winehouse was often photographed in Gandolfi pink satin ballet shoes, the kind dancers actually wear. Her version felt personal and slightly undone, reminding people that flats didn't have to stay safe to be stylish.

Still, ballet flats hadn't fully reclaimed their fashion status. That came later.

At their fall 2022 runway show, Miu Miu reintroduced the ballet flat with confidence. With satin and leather iterations fitted with delicate straps and coquettish bows that nodded directly to classical ballet slippers, they felt nostalgic without being costume-like. Girlish, but sharp. Suddenly, ballet flats weren't just acceptable again – they were desirable.

Off the runway, the look was quickly picked up by familiar fashion icons. Lily-Rose Depp's signature ballet pumps tied the style to a kind of French-girl chic shorthand that young girls everywhere love to romanticize. Bella Hadid incorporated flats into her "model-off-duty" look, Devon Lee Carlson leaned into bows and tights and Kaia Gerber made them look almost studious.

Now, ballet flats are one of the most versatile pairs of shoes. They're worn with low-rise baggy jeans, bootcut denim, long skirts and mini skirts with tights. Slouchy leg warmers are pulled over them. They peek out from under sweats or yoga pants, paired with tanks and wrap tops in full ballerina fantasy mode.

What unites all of these looks is the emphasis on movement. Ballet flats are shoes you live in. You walk, sit, sprawl, stretch, dance and exist in them. They move when you move.

As a microtrend, balletcore has popularized soft baby pinks, whites and light greys. Bows, tights, wraps and boleros all work together to create softer silhouettes.



It's adjacent to coquette, but more grounded in physicality and motion.

Balletcore can be pretty polarizing. Some people see it as regressive or overly nostalgic. Others find it freeing from traditional norms of what feminine clothing should look like. What's clear is that it centers softness at a moment when fashion often spotlights harshness.

That's what makes ballet flats interesting right now. Choosing soft femininity can feel subversive. Wearing something gentle, comfortable and traditionally feminine pushes against the idea that power has to look sharp or severe. Ballet flats don't try to dominate, but instead exist consistently, comfortably and intentionally.

Maybe that's why we keep wearing them. Ballet flats don't chase relevance because they don't need to. Time and time again, they've been introduced, abandoned, revived and reimaged, yet they remain fundamentally the same. Trends come and go, and they show up when we're ready for them again – when comfort feels chic.

The most timeless style choices are usually the easiest ones. Which is probably why, no matter how many times we move on, we always end up right back in ballet flats.

Arna Churiwala believes softness never really goes out of style.



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS / COURTESY PHOTO



SPORTS

FROM FRAMEWORK TO FLOW: USWNT executes Emma Hayes' vision at Harder Stadium

Haidden Rogers
Sports Editor

Ahead of the United States women's national soccer team's return to Santa Barbara for the first time since 1991 for their match against Chile, Head Coach Emma Hayes met with the media to outline her priorities. These included the squad rotation, development of new players and the significance of playing this match at Harder Stadium. By the end of the match, Hayes' vision had clearly translated onto the field.

The match against Chile was a rare appearance for the U.S. women's national soccer team (USWNT) at a historic stadium that many have labeled as a "soccer heaven." Hayes emphasized that Harder Stadium was chosen intentionally and received immediate approval from her as the team continued to develop and prepare for the international stage.

"It's not about the size of the crowd, it's about the quality of the crowd ... When something feels full and you're performing for people, that shapes you," Hayes said.

The anticipated atmosphere materialized on Tuesday night as a crowd of 14,797 fans filled Harder Stadium and provided consistent energy and cheers throughout the match. Hayes later said that she had challenged the team to match and feed the crowd's energy with their performance.

Hayes had confirmed ahead of the game that the lineup would include many changes from the team's previous match against Paraguay, which resulted in a 6-0 win for the squad. She cited her intentions of workload



Head Coach Emma Hayes encourages forward Lynn Biyendolo.

management and evaluating a broader group of players early in the season.

"Knowing where the players are at this stage of the season with their [National Women's Soccer League] club, I will not start a player for two games in a row. So there will be a complete lineup change and that will bring a whole set of challenges," Hayes said.

Hayes noted that with inexperience at the international level, the players needed time to settle in. She has been deliberate in prioritizing and establishing the squad's foundation on the field.

"There's still, you know, a little bit of nervousness," she said. "They want to get those things right. They want to prove so much they can get those things right."

“For any organization to thrive, you must have great glue. And this glue right here is what keeps us all together.”

USWNT Head Coach
Emma Hayes

So maybe it will take time for the flow of the game to come to us. But walking around on that field ... one thing I do know is that it is an intimate place to play. And with a sellout situation, I hope it doesn't take 45 minutes to get going with the fluidity that we want."

The USWNT was able to maintain control and find their rhythm quickly, executing on Hayes' emphasis of finding structure before striking.

"I always talk about getting the framework right," Hayes said. "If your structure and principles are right, then you can decorate the house. Which in our world is to be a bit more fluid."

Postgame, Hayes noted that the framework was an encouraging takeaway from their performance.

"The first thing was that they got the framework right ... Sometimes it's not about making the first pass, it's about opening the space for someone else ... I think that light bulb moment for the team was one that gave us more confidence," Hayes said.

Several young players stood out during this match, including defender Emily Sams who wore the captain's armband and contributed to the game in multiple ways, one of which was her first-ever international goal. After the match, Hayes praised Sams' leadership.

"Sams without question leads by example with a combination of her behaviors not just in terms of being competitive but the standards she holds for herself. She's a great teammate, very thoughtful and caring and kind," Hayes said.

Beyond the match, Hayes admired Santa Barbara itself, showing the excitement she had for her staff and players to play in this environment.

"The mountains in the background and that beautiful coloring during sunset. I've got to remember to keep my eyes on the game tomorrow and not the view in the background because this is one spectacular place," Hayes said. As the USWNT showed up to Santa Barbara with a confident showing, Hayes framed the night as both a competitive step forward and a meaningful moment in the program's history.

"To create legacy there has to be that common thread," Hayes said. "Most importantly for any organization to thrive, you must have great glue and this glue right here is what keeps us all together."

Young USWNT team builds chemistry in dominant 5-0 win at Santa Barbara

Arianna Doan
Asst. Sports Editor
Makena Flores
Sports Social Media Manager

Following the United States women's national soccer team's match versus Chile, the Daily Nexus Sports team interviewed three players from USWNT in the mixed zone — Emma Sears, Trinity Rodman and Emily Sams. The U.S women's national soccer team (USWNT) players revealed how essential building and maintaining their chemistry was throughout the match, and how that ultimately led to the team's striking success. While the scoreboard showed a commanding 5-0 win for the

USWNT over Chile on Tuesday night, much of the postgame conversation centered less on the goals and more on the growing connections within a young and evolving squad.

For forward Sears, the match was another step in a process that's still unfolding.

"I think that obviously chemistry is very real on a team, and for us to have not gotten a lot of minutes playing together, I think that's something that we honestly just kind of embraced for the game tonight," Sears said. "I thought that once the game got going, we started to build the connections better across the field and that ultimately helped us win."

With newer combinations of players seeing extended minutes together, Sears described the group as learning on the fly, building trust through live game situations rather than relying solely on practices and training sessions.

That sense of growth extended beyond the field and into the atmosphere within Harder Stadium, where a lively Santa Barbara crowd responded to each attacking moment. Forward Rodman noted how the energy was noticeable, even as players worked to stay composed.

"There's like a balance of not getting too excited because you guys are excited," Rodman said with a smile, describing the

dynamic between the team and the fans.

For a young roster, managing that emotional balance is part of the learning curve, and this game showed that the fresh faces are ready for whatever is thrown at them. Rodman's comment reflected a team feeding off the crowd's enthusiasm while maintaining the focus required to execute over and over again. Rodman was, as usual, a fan favorite of the night, and the entire stadium roared when she finally stepped onto the field in minute 64. Each time she touched the ball, everyone

held their breath in anticipation for what she would do — and she did not disappoint.

Defender Sams also pointed to the environment as a factor in the team's rhythm throughout the night.

"It is awesome to get the crowd behind us when something good happens and you hear the oohs and the ahhs," Sams said. "It makes it a lot of fun because we know we are doing something good here."

Sams' description highlighted a group growing more confident together, not just in their play, but also in how they responded to the moment. The young squad's energy, paired with visible communication and support between teammates, emphasized a theme echoed across the mixed zone: The team is still fresh, but the connections are forming fast.

As the U.S. continues to integrate younger players and new combinations, performances like Tuesday's offer more than just a result. They provide a setting for relationships to develop in real time, something players say is becoming increasingly evident each time they step on the field together.



ANUSHA SINGH / DAILY NEXUS

Midfielder Riley Jackson passes to defender Hal Hershfelt.

A cartoon illustration of a pot of soup with various ingredients like noodles, vegetables, and meat. The text "Daily Nexus" is written in a curved font above the pot, and "On the Menu" is written in a stylized font inside the pot. A hand is shown stirring the soup with a wooden spoon.

PIPER CHENEY / DAILY NEXUS

A bag of Sprouts Farmers Market unbleached all-purpose flour, 5 lb (2.27 kg), sitting on a white surface near a window. The bag features a sunburst design and text including "EXCELLENT FOR BAKING", "GROWN & MILLER IN USA", and "NON GMO Project VERIFIED". The bag is slightly torn at the top. The background shows a window with a view of greenery and a framed picture on the wall.

The only advice I could offer to cope with the reality of broken political promises is to make a batch of cinnamon rolls — after all, it is my favorite distraction.

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LA VISTA



El descubrimiento del siglo: se encuentra una ciudad entera en Perú más antigua que Machu Picchu

Alué Otiura
Escritora para La Vista

A tan solo cuatro horas de Lima, Perú, se encuentra una ciudad que recientemente ha sido descubierta por arqueólogos.

Esta ciudad antigua de la civilización de Caral se encontraba perdida desde

Ubicada en la provincia de Barranca, a unos 200 kilómetros de Lima, Peñico se asentó estratégicamente a unos 600m sobre el nivel del mar, en un terreno elevado que facilitaba el comercio entre las comunidades costeras, montañosas y amazónicas.

Peñico, fue un asentamiento clave de la civilización Caral

valle de Supe.

Principalmente, actuó como un modo estratégico para el comercio y el intercambio de productos agrícolas y bienes exóticos, como las conchas marinas (Spondylus), conectando las redes comerciales de la costa, sierra y selva.

Paralelamente, desempeñó

Ceremonial de los Pututos, un espacio para rituales, administración y reuniones sociales.

Además, su estratégica ubicación geográfica en el valle medio-alto de Supe lo consolidó como un crucial punto de conexión e integración social entre las poblaciones de las cuencas de los ríos Supe y Huaura, facilitando la convergencia de diversas culturas y la reorganización de las redes sociales tras el colapso climático que afectó a la Ciudad Sagrada de Caral.

El descubrimiento de Peñico ha permitido a los arqueólogos comprender mejor el proceso de adaptación y resiliencia de las primeras civilizaciones andinas frente a cambios ambientales drásticos.

Tras el colapso parcial de Caral provocado por eventos climáticos extremos, Peñico emergió como un nuevo núcleo de organización social y económica, demostrando la capacidad de estas sociedades para reestructurar sus sistemas políticos, religiosos y comerciales sin recurrir a la guerra.

Entre los hallazgos más significativos se encuentran instrumentos musicales ceremoniales, esculturas de arcillas, y restos de alimentos provenientes de diferentes regiones, lo que confirma la existencia de amplias redes de intercambio interregional.

La presencia de pututos hechos con conchas marinas refuerza la hipótesis de que el sonido y la comunicación ritual desempeñan un rol central en la vida social y política de Peñico.

Actualmente, la apertura del sitio arqueológico representa un importante avance para la puesta en valor del patrimonio cultural peruano, así como una oportunidad para el desarrollo de turismo sostenible en la ciudad de Barranca.

Peñico no solo amplía el conocimiento sobre la civilización Caral, considerada una de las más antiguas del continente americano, sino que también reafirma la relevancia del Perú como cuna de complejas sociedades originarias cuyo legado continúa siendo estudiado y admirado a nivel mundial.



CORTESÍA DE NEWSWEEK

hace miles de años y tras ocho años de investigación y excavaciones ahora se encuentra abierta.

de más de 3,800 años de antigüedad, destacó por su multifuncionalidad como centro de integración en el

una vital función ceremonial, evidenciada por sus 18 estructuras monumentales, entre las que resalta el Salón

Santa y sus narcoelfos: felices fiestas desde el Polo Norte y la Sierra de Guerrero

Janise L. Fernandez
Escritora para La Vista

Cerrando ciclos una vez más con grandes esperanzas ante el Año Nuevo, hasta el mero fin de 2025 despliega los mismos personajes: el narco y la corrupción.

Sin embargo, dentro de esta conexión entre el pueblo mexicano y el crimen organizado existe una relación de codependencia que bien formó parte de las celebraciones de Navidad y plantea un gran enigma a la nación.

¿En qué momento comienza el poder social y cuándo finaliza el terror civil?

¿Será que el verdadero poder no recae sobre una sombra de temor, sino sobre el cariño del pueblo?

Una práctica, ya antes concebida en suelo mexicano, fue nuevamente captada tras cámaras en la Sierra de Guerrero—un convoy navideño regalando dulces y obsequios en pleno mes de festividades.

No se trata de ningún

concepto turístico o personaje célebre, sino del Cártel de la Sierra en el estado de Guerrero, marcando una vez más su territorio y presencia.

Videos en la plataforma de X se volvieron virales tras la imagen de hombres encapuchados y armados atravesando las calles de esta zona, interactuando con ciudadanos y familias que libremente disfrutaban del espectáculo con disfraces, música y más.

Dentro de estos videos se pueden observar las reacciones neutras de los testigos y cómo el grupo organizado era tratado más como un objeto familiar y recreativo que como una congregación de trata de mercancía ilícita.

Esta es una estrategia recurrente de organizaciones delictivas para no solo poner de frente sus recursos y poder, sino para sentar presencia y aprobación local.

Aunque esto describe un fenómeno presente en toda la república, los estados que se ven particularmente

afectados son aquellos como el Estado de México, Guerrero, Jalisco y Guanajuato, donde se entregan desde recursos básicos para la sobrevivencia en zonas más necesitadas hasta ofertas de trabajo (sobre todo como “halcones” o agentes de vigilancia para el crimen organizado).

No obstante, parece ser que en este año la billetera de Papá Noel fue solicitada meses antes de la época festiva, cuando funcionarios del municipio de Mexicali, Baja California, se vieron obligados a pedir ayuda para los insumos del Hospital General.

Específicamente solicitando el apoyo de “El Ruso” (el narcotraficante Juan José Ponce Félix), el 23 de septiembre se colgó una narcomanta a la inversa que pedía una subvención para el abasto de medicamentos y recursos.

Ponce forma parte del Cártel de Sinaloa, indicando que el ganarse bases sociales es un instinto clave tanto en el norte como en el sur que

altera la recepción del público general hacia el narco.

La búsqueda de apoyo en la que se prioriza a los cárteles sobre el gobierno marca una grave alerta roja para toda la nación.

Desenmascara la notoria y ya común insensibilidad que se presenta en México y sus ciudadanos que expanden sus listas de regalos para el Santa Claus Mexa y gozan de las abundancias que transporta en su trineo, dejando en el olvido el auténtico negocio que patrocina estos obsequios.

Genera una frontera

borrosa entre la verdadera funcionalidad y criminalidad del tráfico de droga y lo que este dinero puede propiciar—transmitiendo así que el control social genuino se obtiene con lujos y espectáculos (a diferencia de amenazas y matanzas) para distraer a la población de la recurrente violencia, inseguridad y pobreza.

Se proyecta, de esta manera, que sin el apoyo del pueblo el narco pierde sus bases, pero la moneda de estos siempre le convendrá a un México precario.



CORTESÍA DE PEXELS Y WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Mi vida como estudiante guatemalteca en UCSB

Ana Ramirez Cermeño
Escritora para La Vista

Soy una joven guatemalteca, hija de padres emigrantes, y actualmente estoy en mi tercer año en la Universidad de California, Santa Bárbara.

A veces camino por el campus mirando el océano y todavía me cuesta creer que estoy aquí.

No porque no lo merezca, sino porque el camino para llegar no

ha sido sencillo y muchas veces lo recorrí con miedo.

Aprender un nuevo idioma ha sido uno de los retos más grandes y difíciles de mi vida.

Recuerdo entrar a los salones de clase con el corazón acelerado y el cuerpo temblando, pensando cada palabra antes de decirlo, preguntándome si mi acento me iba a delatar, si alguien se iba a burlar de mí o si iba a ser vista como “menos” por no hablar inglés perfectamente.

Hubo momentos en los que preferí guardar silencio y no hablar con nadie por miedo a que se burlaran de mí o a que no entendieran mi inglés.

Como hija de padres emigrantes, cargo con una presión que no siempre se nota: la presión de no fallar, de aprovechar cada oportunidad y de honrar los sacrificios de mis padres, quienes dejaron su país con la esperanza de que yo pudiera tener un futuro diferente al de ellos.

Mientras otros estudiantes se

enfocan solo en exámenes o planes de fin de semana, yo muchas veces pienso en mi familia, en todo lo que costó llegar hasta aquí y en lo mucho que quiero salir adelante para demostrarles que sus sacrificios valieron la pena.

Al llegar a UCSB, pensé que sería un lugar donde me sentiría sola o fuera de lugar.

En parte sí me sentí sola, porque nunca había estado separada de mis padres por tanto tiempo, pero lo que me dio fuerzas fue tener claras mis metas y mis sueños.

Poco a poco, esa idea de no pertenecer se fue rompiendo.

Encontré una comunidad hermosa, solidaria y humana: personas que me escucharon con paciencia, que me ayudaron cuando dudé de mí misma y que me demostraron que no tenía que esconder quién soy para sentirme parte de este lugar.

Hoy entiendo que mi historia no es una desventaja.

Ser guatemalteca, ser hija de emigrantes, pensar en dos idiomas y vivir entre dos culturas me ha hecho más fuerte, más consciente y más resiliente.

No ha sido fácil, pero he luchado y seguiré luchando por ser mejor cada día.

Me siento feliz y orgullosa de la persona en la que me he convertido gracias al apoyo de las personas que me aman.

Esta es solo una de muchas historias de estudiantes migrantes que caminan por esta universidad todos los días haciéndose la misma pregunta: si este es un lugar para ellos.

A esos estudiantes quiero decirles que sí, que este es un lugar donde podrán crecer, vivir nuevas experiencias, luchar por las metas y los sueños que desean cumplir.

Son historias que merecen ser contadas, escuchadas y respetadas.

Aunque todavía sigo aprendiendo y adaptándome a las oportunidades de este país, hoy puedo decir con orgullo que pertenezco aquí y que estoy logrando mis objetivos.

No dejemos que el miedo al fracaso nos quite la oportunidad de cumplir nuestros sueños.

A quienes se sienten con miedo o inseguridad, les quiero decir que nunca es tarde para empezar a luchar por lo que aman.

Al principio será difícil, pero nunca imposible.

Alcemos nuestra voz y demos que somos capaces de alcanzar nuestras metas y construir el futuro que deseamos.



ANA RAMIREZ CERMEÑO / NEXO DIARIO

ARTSWEEK

Daily Nexus

Artsweek

A night of rebellious creativity
with Miranda July



“All Fours” was a 2024 National Book Award finalist for Fiction and made the New York Times 10 Best Books of 2024 list.

Kiana Woods
Copy Editor

Baby blue skirt floating behind her, world-renowned director, author, filmmaker, actress and author Miranda July strolled across the stage to the joyous applause of Campbell Hall’s audience on Tuesday, Jan. 20. Hosted by UC Santa Barbara Arts & Lectures, July, joined by California artist and UCSB art professor Shana Moulton, spoke in front of students and community members about life, creativity, her new book and aging.

Originally known as a filmmaker and performance artist with a raw, quirky style, July had written books before, but “All Fours,” published in May 2024, garnered a new kind of attention. The novel follows an unnamed narrator on a road trip across the United States that quickly gets derailed and discusses prevalent issues like perimenopause, sexuality and domesticity. With over 210,000 ratings on Goodreads, July said she actually expected the success, earning clapping and exuberant whoops, with some audience members holding up July’s novel that they purchased from Chaucer’s Books in the lobby.

July spoke with a friend — whom “All Fours” is dedicated to and loosely based on — and they had a feeling the novel would make an impact because of the “loose space

it was entering.” Next to her, Moulton smiled in agreement.

“This kind of success makes the world safer for me, and more friendly and warm,” July confessed.

The inspiration for “All Fours” came to her while she was making the film “Kajillionaire” (2020). July kept taking notes on her thoughts, but she “knew” it wasn’t for her current project. Describing a connect-the-dot puzzle where you can’t draw the line to connect the dots, she had to “withstand the not-knowing.” Giggles filled the air of Campbell as she aggressively poked the air and drew a zigzag to emphasize her analogy.

Moulton pointed out that “All Fours” started some communities among women on Substack, which July said is “amazing,” and reminds her of “Joanie 4 Jackie,” a network for women filmmakers she organized in the mid-1990s. This modern group on Substack shared their experiences and work together in a somewhat similar manner. July emphasized that this exists entirely separate from her, but she still writes on Substack.

The site has a “cool bias” for her work — her viewers seem to appreciate her writing more than the videos she posts there, despite her being known more largely as a filmmaker. Ever the rebel, July confessed she wants to see just how

much “the system can handle” and experiment at some point by posting some “slutty” videos on Substack, earning an eruption of laughter from spectators.

July began rebelling against the “system” at a young age, starting with her first production at 17. Inspired by a pen pal that was in prison, she didn’t know how to express her intense feelings for the alternate world she had come to know, so she created a play to convey her emotions. Watching from the audience of the punk club that she had rented out in Berkeley, July knew that this production was going to be what she did. As the crowd in Campbell clapped, July allowed herself a moment of silent reflection.

What she was actually saying “yes” to at that age was not a path in life, but the “closest thing to love” she knew. The act of creating and directing the play was a space where she poured love and dedication into, a passion she has been pursuing ever since.

Appreciators of July’s art are certainly glad that she went this direction in life.

“Miranda July makes some really quirky, weird films. When I heard she was coming to speak at UCSB, I couldn’t believe it. I’m an artist myself, and I really love her performance art,” third-year art major M. Taylor said.

July doesn’t restrict herself to one creative field, however. While she is known for acclaimed films such as “Me and You and Everyone We Know” and “The Future,” she also is a novelist. Part of the inspiration for “All Fours” came from a book she picked up in a store with her ex-husband. A picture book of sorts, it followed a series of beautiful sisters through every stage in life. To the shocked laughter of the audience, she describes the panic of seeing women as “monstrous” towards the end of the book.

“I’ve been so free my whole life. I dropped out of college, I did my own thing and then I realized society was going to do that to me.” July knew herself, and by extension, all women, were going to be seen as a horrific creature for aging. Ever the

boundary breaker, July insists she can’t have that.

Much to the amusement of the crowd, July furthered her point by jumping up from her chair and crouching behind it, so her head was only visible. Face above the fabric of the chair, she said being young and viewing womanhood as a “specific thing” is “almost like you’re in a fox hole ... you’re in a fucking fox hole.”

“Perimenopause and getting comfortable with the changes that come with aging kick up the dirt around you, and breaks you free from the hole,” July said.

As the older women in the audience hummed in agreement, July simply announced, “I was freaked out, and I’m not now.” She broke boundaries in the creative arts, changing the world to make it fit her notion of how it should behave. Perhaps that is the most punk and rebellious thing the human race can do.



A sacred show: Magnetize and guest
Johanna Warren create a musical haven

Sofia Cain
Reporter

On the 67 block of Sabado Tarde Road, a backyard was transformed into a musical haven on Jan. 18 when Isla Vista band Magnetize opened for singer-songwriter Johanna Warren.

The band, which produces all original music, includes UC Santa Barbara seniors Adeline Gouda, an environmental studies major, and Sophia Pelosi, a sociology major. Lucas Herzog and Santa Barbara City College nursing student Victoria Larson are also in the band, though only Gouda and Pelosi were present at this particular show. Audience members huddled together on blankets scattered across the grass of the home popularly known as “Purple House” while cigarette butts glowed, dotting the lawn like stars and creating an intimate and casual atmosphere, exactly what Magnetize was going for.

Magnetize’s IV. shows have become fewer, as they more often play venues downtown, making the show all the more special as it was held in their own yard. This was the first show Magnetize has played at their own home.

“We set up the whole yard and made the sound system really good. I felt really comfortable. Being at home was really nice. It felt like a relief to me,” Gouda said.

Warren — an American folk singer, now based in Wales, who has garnered over 5 million streams on her top song “Black Moss” on Spotify — further added to the magic with her airy and soothing vocals on her ballad-esque songs.

Co-lead singer and guitarist Gouda explained her connection to Warren’s music, which began with a roommate showing her one of

Warren’s songs.

“She’s been my top artist for a year now. When she was coming up there were not people who were receptive to her kind of music yet. Now she kind of paves the way for artists like us,” Gouda said.

Warren’s music warrants that kind of admiration with her stunning vocals and lyricism, in addition to touring with household names such as Mitski and The Army, The Navy. Her debut album “Fates” was released in 2013 and she has toured several times since.

However, Warren goes about touring in a non-traditional way, generally playing house shows instead of larger venues. This is how she ended up in IV. in the first place, after Magnetize reached out offering their yard as a venue.

Purple House’s yard is not large, but it comfortably fit the nearly 30 attendees to listen to the emotionally evocative music performed by both artists. The string lights and overgrown garden paired with the chipped wooden chairs Magnetize played from and the lack of a stage created the coziness advertised on posters for the show.

On a background of purple, the posters read “A Cozy Backyard Show.” Magnetize’s setlist consisted of songs written for the people in attendance, for the weird experience of aging into adulthood in Isla Vista, of falling in love in this place, for the love of friendship.

Before arriving at Purple House, Warren had reservations about playing in Santa Barbara due to strange experiences the last time she visited: a teenage Adderall dealer, a possible hitchhiking cult murderer and a man that moved like a glitching video game. Her stories drew the audience in and the show was in conversation with



Magnetize performing in the Purple House backyard.

the audience.

It was clear that Warren’s set list was fluid, moving with the feeling of the crowd, again reinforcing the intimacy of the show. The receptiveness of the audience allowed Santa Barbara to have redemption in Warren’s eyes, a testament to the warmth of both the people and the place.

Audience members teared up during Magnetize’s songs and during “For My Brother,” they clutched each other more closely, the air heavy with emotion. The show felt far removed from the typical band show experience in Isla Vista where crowds are often rowdy. Instead, Magnetize

and Warren offered the audience momentary peace and reflection.

Pelosi, co-lead singer, was grateful for the opportunity to play for such an intimate group.

“I feel like there’s a lot of times where people are not going to shows for the music. And the kind of music we make is intentional listening, so it felt like that kind of moment,” she said.

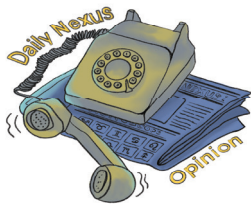
In their own home, the sounds of guitars, artist’s vocals and the breeze blowing through the palm trees were heard, rather than screaming audience members. The yard became a sacred space and only a handful of times did Isla Vista assert its presence through

roaring car engines.

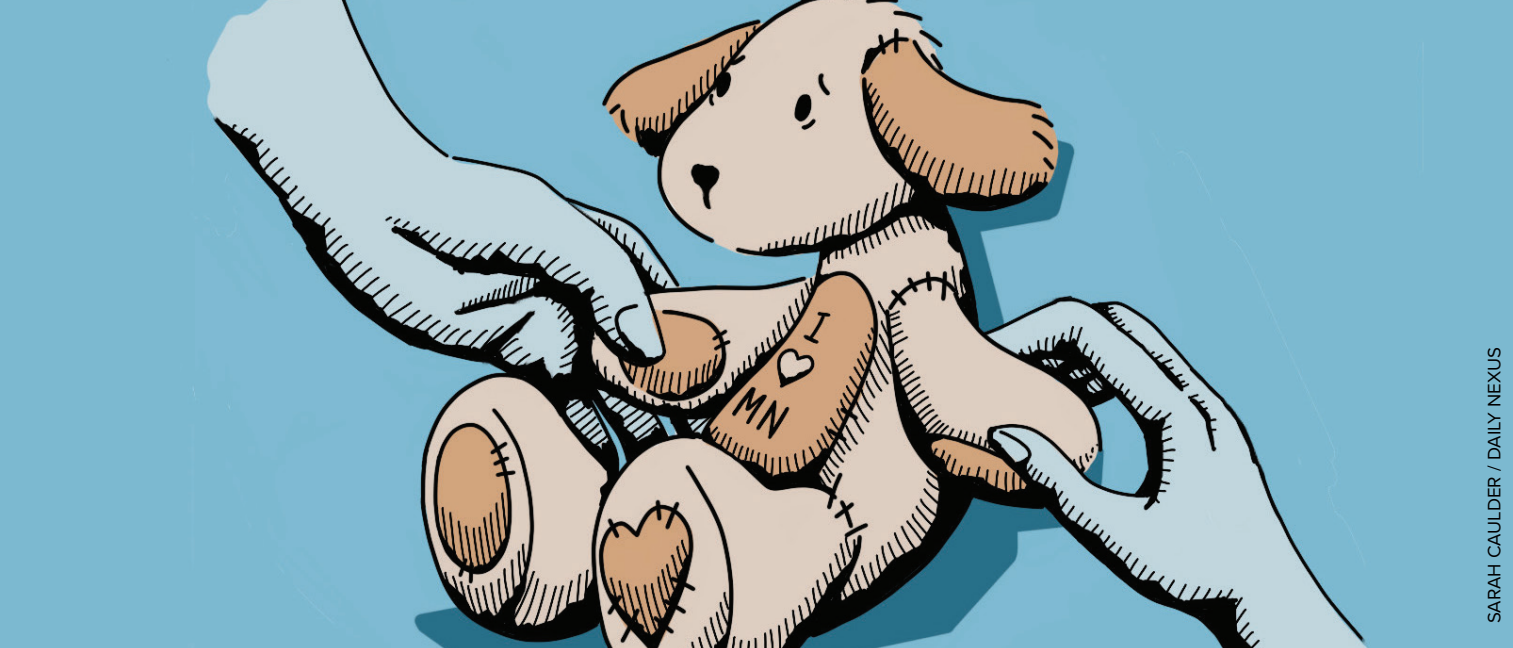
The night was chock-full of biblical references made by Warren, furthering the illusion that the backyard was in fact the Garden of Eden. Further sanctifying the space was Warren’s request that the audience not clap, but rather offer snaps or little hoots and hollers. The little snails crumbled the wall separating audience members from musicians on stage.

“It was a good reminder that the artists you look up to are just people. It’s hopeful to anyone pursuing any sort of craft that the people you look up to are just people; so you can do it too,” Pelosi said.

OPINION



Are we losing our democracy?



Kira Logan
Opinion Editor

News outlets top the notifications on my phone, as there seems to be constant news-breaking headlines from the Trump administration every day. Averaging four hours a day on The New York Times app, my anxiety has never been higher — and time has never gone slower.

On Jan. 20, 2025, 45th and 47th President Donald Trump was inaugurated for his second nonconsecutive term in the most powerful seat of our country. This time, he has made seemingly irreparable damage to the core of our democracy and the foundation of our country. Yet, despite the constant terror and tragedy happening around me, life eerily moves on.

I see families being torn apart, books being banned, universities being threatened for their curriculum, civilians being murdered in broad daylight and our tenuous government systems wielding unchecked power like never before. This question sends chills down my spine yet persists in my mind: Are we losing our democracy?

Countries that typically slide away from democracy into autocracy have uncannily similar patterns and tendencies. There is undeniably democratic erosion happening in the United States, and the sobering reality is that we have been slowly, but consistently, regressing in different ways.

Despite us not being close to a true autocratic government, like Russia or China, our current government is still taking conscious steps away from our predetermined democracy. It becomes even scarier in the modern era when authoritarian takeovers don't begin with an outright military coup; the takeover is slow, calculated and an attempt to consolidate all authority to one elected leader. In this case, the convicted felon, rapist and joke of a leader: Donald Trump.

Trump's attempt to make political opposition more difficult has been successful so far, with many forward measures to stifle free speech, but more importantly, speech that does not praise him. The best way to get ahead about what's going to happen next is to read what's happened before: we've seen this happen with known authoritarian leaders. Namely, Vladimir Putin in Russia, Nicolás Maduro in Venezuela and, to lesser degrees, Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Turkey, Viktor Orbán in Hungary and Narendra Modi in India. With a heavy hand, these leaders have attempted and succeeded at stifling free speech in both miniscule and larger ways. The Trump administration, following in their footsteps it seems, has begun to repress dissent against them. From suspending late night talk shows for speaking out against Trump, signing two major executive orders against free speech on his inaugural day of office last year, verbally assaulting female reporters asking him questions, defunding public news stations and denouncing free speech on his own media platform, Truth Social, Trump is not new to media censorship.

As a writer, journalist, reader and woman, Trump's actions are a direct attack against who I am and what I stand for. This level of infringement on a constitutional right in the U.S. has not happened since, arguably, the second Red Scare in the 1940s and 1950s. Free speech and speech against the Trump administration still remain

vibrant, despite the president's attempts to dull or quiet them. Trump is a fearmonger above all; his evident goal is to scare journalists and civilians that they will pay a price for criticizing him, his allies or his agenda.

In addition to restricting speech and dissent, the Trump administration has influenced and contributed to over 6,870 instances of book bans within the 2024-25 school year. Notable books like "The Perks of Being a Wallflower," "Wicked," "Nineteen Eighty-Four," "To Kill a Mockingbird" and "The Catcher in the Rye" have all been banned in multiple states across the country. This is blatant censorship and an unprecedented attempt to attack authors and stories, an attempt to attack the beautiful power that literature has.

When a democracy slides toward autocracy, the current leader makes an effort to neuter the legislature, allotting themselves more power than legally allowed; we see our Congress following this path. The Trump administration has violated federal law by withholding funding authorized by Congress for libraries, scientific research and preschools, to name a few. He has heavily gutted funding or dismantled authorized agencies like the Department of Education and USAID, and even imposed new taxes, his tariffs, without congressional approval. More recently, Trump's Executive Order 13987 has been completed as the United States has officially pulled out of the World Health Organization — while still owing them \$278 million. We are at the mercy of a leader who is consciously plowing through checks and balances, and Trump is consistently making illegal power grabs, defying the Constitution by trampling on Congress' power of the purse.

An authoritarian vilifies marginalized groups, which Trump has been known to do through his first term and even more in his second term. History shows that authoritarians attempt to demean, bully and harm minority groups by turning them into a falsely perceived threat that provides a justification for a leader to amass power. Trump has consistently stated through his presidencies that marginalized groups, particularly immigrants, are responsible for the nation's problems.

For Trump and his administration, it seems that verbal assault towards immigrants was not sufficient. His mockery and violence started via social media in an attempt to dehumanize them; posting videos of shackled immigrants and making commercials out of immigration detention centers. However, Trump's need for fear in his citizens has superseded any bit of morality he had left; Immigration and Customs Enforcement (I.C.E.) has been raiding our country and slaughtering citizens in broad daylight.

Most recently, Alex Pretti,

a 37-year-old intensive care nurse and U.S. citizen, was shot and killed in broad daylight. The story is being falsified as Trump tries to puppeteer a false narrative that instills fear into the American people. Renee Good was shot in the head under false pretenses, with unwarranted and unnecessary force from I.C.E. Trump's attempt to use the military for domestic control is him trying to suppress dissent, instill fear and convey supreme power. From the National Guard being deployed to tour large cities to crack down on protests this summer, to I.C.E. agents forcibly entering homes and purposefully preying around Home Depot parking lots for people of interest, Trump has shown his willingness to use our own military against us.

He has shown us that it was never about immigrants "taking up" jobs, or not obtaining citizenship the correct way, or "cheating the system." It was never about the betterment of our country, it's always been about racism. It's always been a pro-violence plot on our home soil.

Authoritarians seek to suppress inconvenient truths, truths that do not side with the persona they create for the media. This is a stark difference from democratic governments, supposedly us, who prize accurate information as a guide to decision-making for the betterment of the country.

Trump has sought to manipulate government information in several ways: from firing the head of the Bureau of Labor Statistics after they reported disappointing job growth that he didn't want to hear, to shutting down federal data collection related to worsening climate change, to taking steps in controlling public media.

He's pushed Congress to end funding for public radio and television, taking out multimillion-dollar payments from ABC, Paramount, YouTube and Meta to settle baseless claims that he's been treated unfairly. He's trying to reduce coverage that does not parrot his views; a toddler throwing a fit in his booster seat. Except it's the president. And this is our country.

In regards to coverage, whether intentional or not, we see a lack of media coverage regarding other documented murders linked to I.C.E.; Silverio Villegas González, Keith Porter Jr. and others have been killed by off-duty I.C.E. agents and have failed to make national headlines. This should be a wake-up call to signal a wider pattern of violence, something inherently disturbing and brutal, within these I.C.E. agents.

We're also seeing Trump falsify a story and directly contradict video evidence regarding the unjust murder of Pretti. He's lying to our faces, and the federal government owes Americans a thorough investigation and truthful account of this cold-blooded murder. When the

government kills, they have an expectation to defend themselves by saying it was in the best interest of the nation. Truth to the people is a line of demarcation between a democratic government and an authoritarian regime. Pretti and Good are dead. The administration refuses to explain why.

While Trump's first term and campaigns for his second held many harrowing promises, he has unfortunately followed through with them in his second term. In place of an independent and free press, Trump evidently hopes to create a shallow ecosystem only willing to promote his interests, violence and false talking points.

Lastly, almost all emperors and kings have glorified themselves by displaying their portraits everywhere. Talking about themselves to the highest degree. Holding their narcissistic heads high as they assume civilians bow to them. Trump is no different — despite the American tradition being to reject that kind of hagiography for living presidents. Banners of Trump line government buildings, his name is being plastered onto historical monuments, he posts AI memes wearing a crown, holds military parades on his birthday and the Treasury Department plans to make a commemorative coin with Trump's face on it. His false, unwavering confidence, despite his complete lack of competency, is common among autocrats. Trump comes at the country's problems assuming that he alone can fix them. He is equating himself with the entire federal government, centering himself and assuming it cannot exist without him.

He's greedy. His culture of corruption eerily resembles the behavior of foreign autocrats. He's using what belongs to the American citizens, the power and resources of our fair democratic government, to benefit himself. He's not even trying to hide it.

Civilians are being killed. Foreign leaders are being captured. Threats to occupy international land are looming. Military forces are entering cities. Congress is seemingly powerless. No one can stop him.

So, this poses the question: Are we losing our democracy?

No.

No, and I sigh. No, because I see the American people fighting back. I see protestors in Minneapolis holding their ground against their own military. I see protestors in Washington D.C. objecting to the anniversary of Trump's first full year in office.

No, and I exhale. No, because that has to be the answer. I see obstetrician-gynecologists fighting against his war on science. I see "Not my President" shirts in my family's closets. I see hope.

The clearest sign that a democracy has died is when a leader and their party make it impossible for their opponents to win an election.

The United States is not an autocracy today. We still have a mostly free press and independent judiciary, we have Americans attending protests in their cities. We have still started down an anti-democratic path, and many Americans — including people in positions of power — remain complacent about this looming threat.

Kira Logan thinks we should ban guns, not books.

HOROSCOPES

The signs as banned, challenged or censored books

ARIES

MARCH 21 – APRIL 19

“To Kill a Mockingbird” by Harper Lee

TAURUS

APRIL 20 – MAY 20

“Fahrenheit 451” by Ray Bradbury

GEMINI

MAY 21 – JUNE 20

“Slaughterhouse-Five” by Kurt Vonnegut

CANCER

JUNE 21 – JULY 22

“The Giver” by Lois Lowry

LEO

JULY 23 – AUGUST 22

“The Handmaid’s Tale” by Margaret Atwood

VIRGO

AUGUST 23 – SEPTEMBER 22

“The Perks of Being a Wallflower” by Stephen Chbosky

LIBRA

SEPTEMBER 23 – OCTOBER 22

“Brave New World” by Aldous Huxley

SCORPIO

OCTOBER 23 – NOVEMBER 21

“Wicked” by Gregory Maguire

SAGITTARIUS

NOVEMBER 22 – DECEMBER 21

“The Bell Jar” by Sylvia Plath

CAPRICORN

DECEMBER 22 – JANUARY 19

“The Catcher in the Rye” by J.D. Salinger

AQUARIUS

JANUARY 20 – FEBRUARY 18

“1984” by George Orwell

PISCES

FEBRUARY 19 – MARCH 20

“Lord of the Flies” by William Golding