



## El Congreso urges Chancellor Assanis to meet new list of demands

Lola Hadley  
News Intern

El Congreso de UC Santa Barbara published a letter of demands to Chancellor Dennis Assanis on April 26 regarding unaddressed construction requests of the El Centro, Arnulfo Casillas and the hiring of a Hispanic-Serving Institution director.

El Centro, Arnulfo Casillas is an autonomous cultural resource building on the UCSB campus. The building houses various cultural organizations, study spaces and offices.

"[T]his historic building serves as a 24-hour safe space. It is the only location on campus accessible to all students by access card at all times, providing undocumented and at-risk students with a sanctuary space," the letter stated.

UCSB earned federal recognition as a Hispanic-Serving Institution in 2015, exemplified through student organizations like El Congreso and community spaces like El Centro.

El Congreso is a student-led cultural and advocacy organization at UCSB which was founded in 1973 as a result of the Chicano Movement. The activism within the group has helped to establish the Chicana and Chicano Studies department and to address student needs across campus.

El Congreso Records Chair and Chicana/Latinx Cultural Resource Center peer mentor and third-year history and sociology double major Ashley Aguirre, alongside third-year biology major Maritza Ramos Leon spoke on the updated list of demands for Chancellor Assanis.

According to Ramos Leon, El Centro has needed repairs for years due to continuously



El Congreso continues to advocate for their needs and moving forward on their desired projects.

"neglected maintenance orders." In 2022, El Congreso sent former UCSB Chancellor Henry T. Yang a list of demands that included El Centro's maintenance, renovations, personnel and proposed projects across campus.

This resulted in Yang allocating \$1 million for the building in 2023. \$600,000 was dedicated to immediate renovations and maintenance for El Centro while the remaining \$400,000 went towards creating a building committee.

In order to start the proposed building project, both Assanis and Interim Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Mike Miller need to approve the building committee that was promised before Yang left.

"It's been almost a year of this being in his office. So this culminated in us making the [recent] statement publicly. We delivered the letter to his office [and] we handed it to his secretary

so he'd have a physical copy of it," Aguirre said.

Until the committee is approved, El Centro, El Congreso and other involved organizations cannot "touch the money" promised to them by Yang. Aguirre and Ramos Leon stressed the needed haste for this due to the fiscal year that ends on June 30, with fears that the budgets may be reallocated.

"The big concern was that if he doesn't sign off on this committee and we don't touch the money or use the money, they technically have the power to just take away that money and put it into something else," Ramos Leon said.

El Centro's expansion committee has considered seeking external funding to start this project due to the inaction from administration.

"Buildings are very expensive, and so that money is mostly dedicated to hiring an architect, making the preliminary sketches. The next thing that we need to do is form a building project proposal,

which will have the architectural sketches and the budget of costs, which obviously takes a different level of expertise than students have," Ramos Leon said.

In 2022, the organization requested a full-time coordinator for El Centro; the compromise was to hire a part-time graduate student to fill the role.

"The problem is that our demand was [to] have a full-time coordinator. We got a grad student coordinator and now we won't even have that because of the budget cuts," Aguirre said. "El Centro itself doesn't have a budget. We just work out of here and rely on the good graces of administrative allies [for] funding."

After the updated list of demands was delivered to the chancellor by El Congreso members, both Assanis and Miller alluded to new plans for student service buildings in their responses. Aguirre expressed concerns regarding the future of

El Centro.

"We really care about El Centro staying a space that is open to all that isn't necessarily under one institutionalized department," Aguirre said. "Because at its heart, it's very student-led and all the activism that has been grown out of here has been on behalf of students."

There is speculation among El Congreso members about plans for a second Student Resource Building or a similar building on campus to house all cultural programs, organizations and resources in one place. Assanis' response stated, "The Division of Student Affairs is in the process of launching a campus space analysis ahead of a possible capital project to address student space needs."

In an email to El Congreso, Miller stated similar notions.

"Additionally, my office is engaged in conversations with student leadership around space needs and the concept of proposing a SRB II building. Those discussions are very preliminary, but there is widespread support given the urgent space needs for critical student groups like those housed in Bldg. 434," the email read.

El Congreso members and organizations within El Centro continue to await a response from Assanis and Miller on their list of demands and approve the building committee.

"This delay in the building committee is not just its own problem. It's a symptom of the larger neglect to student affairs, cultural resource centers and uplifting those positions, like these spaces that students hold dear and that they use frequently, and this moving quickly without informing students or informing student leaders, despite these promises to do so," Aguirre said.

## Adam Schiff, local representatives condemn Sable pipeline restart

Wynne Bendell  
Lead News Editor

The Environmental Defense Center hosted a press conference on May 7 with California Senator Adam Schiff and local stakeholders who condemned Sable Offshore's oil pipeline restart.

In March, the Texas-based oil and gas company restarted oil production from the Santa Ynez Unit after 11 years of inactivity following a 2015 rupture that spilled over 100,000 gallons of crude oil near Refugio Beach. The restart was prompted by Secretary of Energy Chris Wright who issued a statement of approval following President Donald Trump's March 13 executive order that invoked the Defense Production Act because of the war with Iran.

The restart is in violation of an injunction placed on Sable prohibiting the restart of the specific or same oil pipeline. As of May 1, California Attorney General Rob Bonta filed a motion for a preliminary injunction of the pipeline restart, which is Bonta's second lawsuit against the Trump administration's efforts to restart the pipeline.

Overlooking the Pacific Ocean at Shoreline Park, Environmental Defense Center (EDC) Chief Counsel Linda Krop welcomed guests with a reminder of why they are still in the fight against Sable.

"We are here today because our coast and the rule of law are under threat. We're facing an outrageous and unprecedented situation with the restart of the Sable pipeline, the same pipeline that failed in 2015 and caused one of the worst oil disasters in California history," Krop said.

Krop went on to say that every day that Sable continues its oil production "increases the risk of another massive oil spill." Before introducing the first speaker, Krop announced that the EDC and the Center for Biological Diversity and

Earth Justice will be filing a motion to "intervene and join the state of California in fighting the Trump order."

Next, 24th District Congressman, Salud Carbajal, emphasized the environmental impact of the 2015 oil spill and the 1969 spill that sparked environmental advocacy nationwide. Carbajal said that the "pro big oil Trump administration" is putting the Central Coast at risk for another spill with the restart.

"I think for many of us, the fight to stop Sable can feel personal because so many of us can vividly remember what it's like when oil companies get reckless. Who can forget 1969 Santa Barbara and 2015 Refugio?" Carbajal said. "Oil spills both left damage to our environment, our local economy. Oil slick beaches, piles of dead wildlife and a costly cleanup bill. Simply put, they were major environmental disasters for our community."

Additionally, Carbajal condemned Trump's "reckless" proposal to open up the California Coast to oil and gas leasing for the first time in over four decades. He reminded the audience of Trump's campaign promise to be big oil's "best friend" if they donated to his campaign, which Carbajal said is the "one campaign promise he has actually managed to keep."

"We do not want to gamble with our environmental and [economical] well-being, and we will not sacrifice our public safety in the name of a big oil bottom line," Carbajal said.

Next, in light of the pipeline restart, Schiff emphasized the importance of moving from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources, stating that it would be an overall positive shift. He specifically called for the end of fossil fuel reliance, stating that it would prohibit the federal government from using the "oil economy" as a justification for foreign intervention.

"I think moving off of fossil fuels

and moving to renewable sources of energy is an environmental imperative. It is a health imperative. It's an economic imperative. It is a national security imperative," Schiff said. "So many of these conflicts, like this war we're in now with Iran, end up being about the oil economy, and the more that we can do to wean ourselves off this reliance on fossil fuels, the better we are across the board."

Schiff called out the "absurdity" of Trump invoking the Defense Production Act and using war and gas prices as reasoning to restart oil production, despite gas prices continuing to rise and oil companies seeing billions in quarterly profits.

"This has nothing to do with national security. It has nothing to do with your price at the pump. It only has to do with the present, keeping a promise to the big oil companies," Schiff said.

Next, California State Assemblymember Gregg Hart condemned Trump and Sable's illegal opposition to environmental protections.

"We cannot allow Sable and the Trump administration to operate as though they are above the law, particularly laws that are designed to protect [the] environment and public safety," Hart said.

Hart promised to continue fighting against Sable and the restart of the pipeline, underscoring how critical it is to protect the health of marine life and the California coast.

"We have institutions in the rule of law that we're going to hold these federal actors accountable to. Our coastline is too important and too vulnerable to the aging infrastructure that these oil industries operators operate, and we cannot allow for weakened oversight of our regulatory processes," Hart said. "We're going to protect our environment and preserve these resources for future generations without repeating the

mistakes of the past."

Mati Waiya, chairman of the Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation, said that the restart is in direct opposition to "children's birthright to a healthy ecosystem and a place that they can call home."

"It's like a nightmare. It's going to happen again, and then we're going to look back. We have to ask ourselves, 'How much and how long do we accept this brutality?'" Waiya said.

Brady Bradshaw, representing the Center for Biological Diversity Action Fund, spoke to the importance of continuing to resist Trump, stating that giving up is not a sustainable option.

"What's happening today is Trump's energy agenda, which can be summed up in three words: fossil fuel authoritarianism. When big oil billionaires have a president in their pocket because of donations they made, this is what happens,"

Bradshaw said. "The president [is] invoking a fake national energy emergency to force an unsafe pipeline back online. When power is abused like this, the easiest thing to do is to throw up our hands and give up, but we're fighting back because we have to draw a line in the sand."

To conclude the event, Schiff called out Sable for its "hostile" environmental policy and announced the pipeline restart on the 10-year anniversary of the Refugio spill.

"Sable was just too happy to announce the restart of this project on the 10-year anniversary of the oil spill. Who does that? Who thinks that's a date to be celebrated and commemorated? It's just a deliberate poke in the eye. It's an attitude that we see frankly, throughout the administration, that says we not only don't care about the environment, we are just affirmatively hostile, and we are proud of it," Schiff said.



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# NOTES TO NAILED IT

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Dylan Vo  
Staff Writer

### TSC hosts 'Coffee & Community'

The Transfer Student Center (TSC) is hosting "Coffee & Community" on Thursday, May 14, from 10:30-11:30 a.m. at Kerr Hall 1120.

"Coffee & Community is a weekly event to bring together first-generation & transfer students to build community over coffee and snacks!" the Shoreline description read.

### Health & Wellness hosts 'Dog Therapy Day'

Health & Wellness, in collaboration with Counseling and Psychological Services Mental Health Peers, Active Minds, Associated Students (A.S.) Commission on Student Well-Being and the A.S. Public and Mental Health Commission, are hosting a "Dog Therapy Day" on Thursday, May 14, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Lot 22 Lawn.

"Stop by to pet a Certified Therapy Dog to lower blood pressure, reduce stress, and stimulate memory and problem-solving skills!" the Shoreline description read.

### UCSB Library hosts screening of 'Hamnet'

The UC Santa Barbara Library, in collaboration with the Carsey-Wolf Center, is hosting a screening of the film "Hamnet" on Thursday, May 14, from 5-9:45 p.m. at the UCSB Pollock Theater.

"The Carsey-Wolf Center is delighted to present a screening of Hamnet in conjunction with the UCSB Library exhibition Infinite Variety: The Many Lives of Shakespeare's Texts. Jean Feerick (English, John Carroll University) will join moderator Jim Kearney (English, UCSB) for pre- and post-screening discussions of Hamnet and its relationship to Shakespeare's life and work," the Shoreline description read.

### Santa Ynez, El Dorado and Westgate Apartments host 'Magnets and Tacos'

Santa Ynez, El Dorado and Westgate Apartments are hosting "Magnets and Tacos" on Thursday, May 14, from 6-8 p.m. at the Jameson Community Center.

"Join us this Thursday in Jameson Community Center for a fun-filled evening of clay and magnet crafts with food

from Super Cuca's! Enjoy tacos and create your own magnet while learning about summer housing options and UA move out!" the Shoreline description read.

### IHC hosts screening of 'The Hunger Games'

The Interdisciplinary Humanities Center (IHC) is hosting a screening of the film "The Hunger Games" on Thursday, May 14, from 8-10:30 p.m. at Isla Vista Theater.

"Come see the original movie. Represent your district in Bingo with prizes for the victors. And may the odds be ever in your favor!" the Shoreline description read.

### TASA hosts 'TASA Hot Pot Night'

The Taiwanese American Student Association (TASA) is hosting a "TASA Hot Pot Night" on Saturday, May 16, from 7-9 p.m. at the Student Resource Building.

"Do you like food? Well, this is the perfect place for you, come enjoy some HOTPOT, choose your broth, make your dipping sauce, and much more with all your friends!" the Shoreline description read.

### Department of Recreation hosts 'Women's Climbing Night'

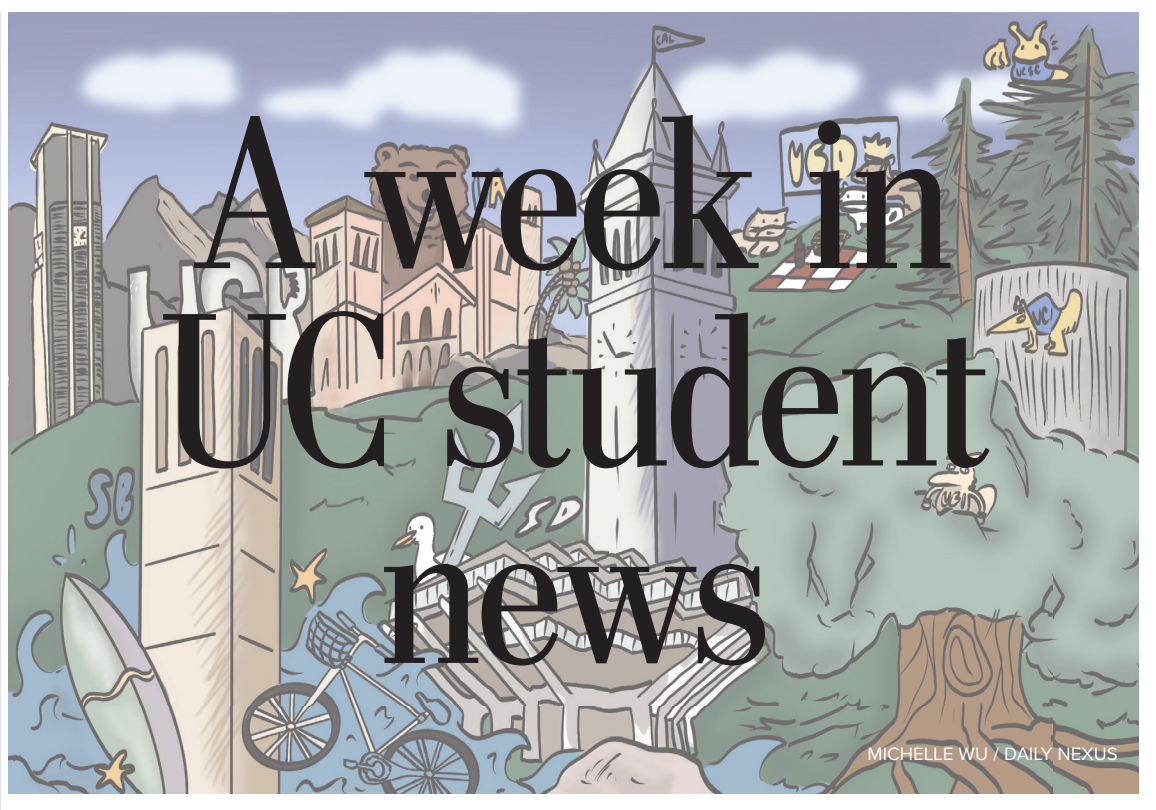
The Department of Recreation is hosting "Women's Climbing Night" on Sunday, May 17, from 6-8 p.m. at the Recreation Center.

"Join our climbing center staff for a night of climbing and socializing at the UCSB climbing wall! This event is designed to welcome women who want 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.

### RCSGD hosts 'Ice Cream Social'

The Resource Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity (RCSGD) is hosting "Trans Empowerment Hours | Ice Cream Social" on Monday, May 18, from 6-8 p.m. at the RCSGD lounge.

"Come celebrate our last Trans Empowerment Hours of the year with ice cream! This will be a great chance to debrief the quarter, strengthen connections with your community, and reflect on everything we've accomplished!" the Shoreline description read.



Wynne Bendell  
Lead News Editor

### AFSCME 3299 files ballot initiative

The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 3299 announced it had filed the University of California (UC) Support Staff Down Payment Loans Initiative on May 6.

AFSCME 3299, which represents over 40,000 service and technical workers across the UC system, submitted the ballot initiative with 1.3 million signatures to all 58 election offices. The initiative would require the UC to offer 20% down payment loans for UC frontline staff who are first-time homebuyers with the stipulation that the loans are guaranteed to be repaid and require no taxpayer money.

"This groundbreaking measure will give thousands of our members a pathway to homeownership, having ripple effects on our families for generations," the press release read. "As we address one key leg of the housing crisis stool — workers being priced out of homeownership — we are also supporting the recruitment and retention of essential UC workers."

AFSCME 3299 cited the rising cost of living throughout California, specifically in areas with UC campuses, as the motivation for this initiative, stating that nearly 81% of their members cannot afford a one-bedroom home close to

where they work.

Additionally, the labor group has been in contract negotiations for over two years and plans to begin an open-ended strike on May 14.

### UC Health proposes \$36.7 million budget to regents

UC Health proposed a \$36.7 million budget for the 2026-27 academic year, a 3.5% increase from the current budget, at the regents meeting on May 5.

According to the regents meeting agenda, the budget will primarily be allocated toward resources for health research, systemwide strategic partnerships and investment in modernizing data analytics for healthcare. Additionally, UC health leaders proposed the elevated budget because of cost of living increases for staff.

UC Health Executive Vice President David Rubin also presented a one year update on its strategic 2025-2028 plan, which focuses on five objectives to "address growing pressures on the University's academic health system, including rising costs, workforce shortages, and increasing reliance on government payer programs."

The objectives include developing a plan to protect federal health programs and improve its safety net partnership with the state and placing services and training programs in regions that have been "under-resourced." UC Health also

plans to improve ambulatory access for patients to support the health of employees and students, and utilize infrastructure to support patient care and research.

"Through this work, UC Health is strengthening access to care, expanding workforce capacity in underserved regions, enhancing patient experience, and advancing data and research capabilities, demonstrating the value of a unified, systemwide approach," the agenda read.

### UCSF receives \$100 million for capital needs, health innovations

Philanthropists and longtime supporters of the UC, Kathy Chiao and Kenneth Hao, gave UC San Francisco a \$100 million commitment for capital needs projects and to advance health innovations.

From this investment, \$50 million will go to supporting capital projects and \$40 million to advancing innovation initiatives. The last \$10 million will go to the UCSF-Stanford collaborative Weill Cancer Hub West, a cancer research and treatment center.

According to the press release, UCSF's capital priorities consist of modernization of the Parnassus Heights campus to build the new UCSF Health Helen Diller Hospital, as well as building a new hospital building for UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital - Oakland.

# Biweekly I.C.E. Sighting Report

Lucy Wellons  
Staff Writer

Information is primarily sourced from community alerts from the 805 UndocuFund, a local nonprofit that verifies Immigration and Customs Enforcement sightings in the Central Coast. A full map of Immigration and Customs Enforcement sightings

reported by 805 UndocuFund in Goleta and Santa Barbara can be found on the Daily Nexus website.

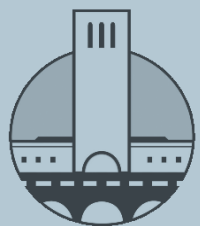
### April 30: Carillo and State Street (10:44 a.m.)

Four Immigration and Customs Enforcement (I.C.E.) agents were reported in the Secure Continuous Remote Alcohol Monitor office. An altercation occurred between I.C.E. agents and

a Santa Barbara Resiste rapid response volunteer. The volunteer was assaulted and pepper-sprayed. One detainment was confirmed.

### May 11: Figueroa and Santa Barbara Street (8:50 a.m.)

Two unmarked I.C.E. vehicles were reported at Figueroa and Santa Barbara Street. No detainments were confirmed.



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"I'm gonna start booning everywhere."

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# Data breach causes Canvas to shut down, nearly 9,000 schools affected

Levi Kauffman  
County News Editor

The online learning platform Canvas was temporarily shut down following a data breach involving its parent company Instructure. The shutdown is affecting almost 9,000 schools worldwide.

On May 7, certain university Canvas sites appeared with a message calling for Instructure and “affected schools” to contact ShinyHunters, the cybercrime group behind the attack, before the end of the day on May 12 or have their data leaked. In a statement from ShinyHunters to the Daily Californian, the hacker group said, “We urge Instructure to reach out and resolve this situation with us amicably.”

According to a list of breached schools, UCSB was one of three undergraduate UCs – alongside UC Merced and Santa Cruz – that was not hacked. Additionally, Santa Barbara City College and Santa Barbara Unified School District were on the list.

In an online statement, the UC said they are “closely monitoring” the situation and ask “community members to remain vigilant and exercise caution.”

“Out of an abundance of caution, the University of

California Office of the President has instructed all UC locations to temporarily block or redirect Canvas access, and Canvas access will not be restored until we are confident the system is secure,” the statement read. “We understand this disruption is concerning. We will continue to monitor the situation and are evaluating next steps. Protecting the personal and institutional information entrusted to the University remains our highest priority. We will continue to work with UC location partners to understand the impact of these incidents on our students and faculty.”

ShinyHunters declined the Daily Nexus’ request for comment.

In an email sent May 8 to the UCSB community, administration shared that the University and Office of the President will work over the weekend “to finalize detailed security analysis and restore access to Canvas as soon as possible.” They expect to have Canvas restored by Monday but noted that “timing may shift as analysis continues.”

In a campus-wide email on May 9, UCSB administration notified students that Canvas has been restored and is operational.

COURTESY THE OU DAILY

SHINYHUNTERS  
rooting your systems since '19 ;)

ShinyHunters has breached Instructure (again). Instead of contacting us to resolve it they ignored us and did some “security patches”.

▲ WARNING

If any of the schools in the affected list are interested in preventing the release of their data, please consult with a cyber advisory firm and contact us privately at TOX to negotiate a settlement. You have till the end of the day by 12 May 2026 before everything is leaked.

Instructure still has until EOD 12 May 2026 to contact us.

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# A.S. 2026 spring election results

Wynne Bendell  
Lead News Editor

The 2026 Associated Students spring election ballot included 18 fee increases as part of the Save Student Services fee initiative. Over the past year, Student Affairs found that 18 fees have not increased with a cost-of-living adjustment since their creation, some of which are over 20 years old.

Of the 18 fee increases, only the Counseling & Psychological Services and Career Services support fee and the Recreation Programing fee received the sufficient votes needed to pass.

**For A.S. specifically:**

All Associated Students (A.S.) fee reaffirmations and constitutional amendments passed. Additionally, the Research Experience & Education Facility (R.E.E.F.) fund and the Mobility Transportation Program secured a new student fee to fund each program. For the complete list of elected senators, read more at [dailynexus.com](http://dailynexus.com).



*E.J. Raad*  
President



*Victoria Ly*  
Internal Vice President



*Noah Luken*  
External Vice President for Local Affairs



*Jasmine Hsieh*  
External Vice President for Statewide Affairs



*Suyan Wang*  
Student Advocate General

# Senate considers restructuring of Judicial Council, hears from legal resource center

Wynne Bendell  
Lead News Editor  
Zach Miller  
Staff Writer

The 76th Associated Students Senate considered a bill that would restructure the Judicial Council by adding a subcommittee at its May 6 meeting. The Senate also heard from the Legal Resource Center.

## Public forum

The Associated Students (A.S.) Legal Resource Center (LRC) lawyers Jessica Anticouni and Robin Unander updated senators on their work this year. The LRC provides around 950 consultations per year and runs a student intern program that takes 10-15 students per quarter. Unander explained that they assist students with a multitude of legal matters, including tenants' rights, minor alcohol and drug infractions, driving-under-the-influence violations, noise complaints, family law and immigration law. She encouraged the Senate to inform the community about all of the different services the LRC can provide.

## Reports

Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Life Suzanne Perkin announced that the Office of the President has opened a public comment period on revisions to Policies Applying to Campus Activities, Organizations and Students (PACAOs) Appendix H, the policy on student conduct and discipline, which will be open until June 11.

Valentina Paez, second-year political science and economics double major and Strategic Operations Office (SOO) outreach coordinator, raised concerns over her office's possible removal from A.S. legal code. Paez discussed their

SHENGYU ZHANG / DAILY NEXUS



The LRC provides around 950 consultations per year and runs a student intern program that takes 10-15 students per quarter.

primary project, the Strategic Vision plan, an interactive dashboard that will allow students to track initiatives in real time. She also mentioned their iPads for Equity program, which provides over 200 loaner iPads to students every quarter. In addition, the SOO has worked to provide Grammarly Premium to all students, accessible transportation across campus, Basic Needs vending machines and several other services.

Next, outgoing Student Advocate General and fourth-year psychological & brain sciences major Sydney Bivins shared updates on a bill that would transfer authority over Policy I, abusive conduct and bullying violations, from the Judicial Council (JC) to her office. The bill was referred to the liaison committee.

JC chairs, fourth-year statistics and data science major Harriet Jackson and fourth-year political science and philosophy double major Josie Penix, spoke out against the proposed

Boards, Committees and Units (BCU) Adjudication Act of 2026. The bill calls for the creation of a new sub-judicial council made specifically to handle cases in which a BCU is alleged to have acted in a way that does not follow its mission statement.

Penix argued that it has never been the case that a sub-judicial council has been delegated with enough work to be necessary in her four years of experience on the JC. She also stated that although an appellate court system made sense in theory, in practice, any negative decision would always be appealed by a BCU. This would result in the same amount of work for the original JC, rendering the sub-judicial council a waste of time and resources.

Senators and authors of the bill, fourth-year history and global studies double major Neo Harter and first-year physics major Alec GeoSimonian, responded to the criticism. Both GeoSimonian and

Harter asserted that the legislation was intended to remedy the lack of clear rules on when honoraria can be docked and what constitutes a violation serious enough to warrant removal from office. The bill was ultimately referred to the executive committee.

A.S. President and fourth-year global studies, communication and Spanish triple major Le Anh Metzger plans to put Santa Rosa Residence Hall's NARCAN cabinets in the Main A.S. Office and the University Center, after the hall closes for construction.

## Legislation proposed

Next, First President Pro Tempore and second-year political science major Evan Sussman proposed a bill to update the internal funding policies of the association. If passed, the bill would clearly state that registered campus organizations, which are not A.S. entities, can only request money from the Senate Unallocated account as a last resort for campus-wide

events. The bill was referred to the executive committee.

Sussman then proposed a bill to consolidate inactive and replicative BCUs. If passed, A.S. could cut the Chief Operations Office, Environmental Justice Alliance, Commission on Marginalized Genders, Alternative Transportation Unit, Jewish Commission and Commission for Students Against Sexual Assault. The bill was referred to the liaison committee.

Next, Senator and second-year political science major Erica Sherkin proposed a bill that would revise the office of the A.S. president's legal code, which would add a Basic Needs commissioner position. The bill was referred to the advocacy committee.

## Legislation passed

The Senate adopted a bill that updates Raices De Mi Tierra's legal code to expand their mission statement to support undocumented students.

"Raices is committed to providing legal resources for undocumented, mixed-status, or students affected by discriminatory policies and actions," the bill read.

Next, the Senate adopted a bill to update standing Policy 22, which outlines clear procedures for food expenditures to combat overspending within the Association, specifically prohibiting entities buying food for meetings under three hours.

## Financial allocations

The Senate reallocated \$1,400 from the Community Volunteer Foundation, which is inactive, to the Student Homes Coalition to fund travel for an upcoming lobby day.

Finally, the Senate replenished the finance committee's spring quarter fund with \$70,000 from the A.S. reserves account.

# EVPSA and Lobby Corps host town hall with Assemblymember Gregg Hart

Julia Sanabria  
News Intern

The Associated Students Office of the External Vice President for Statewide Affairs and Lobby Corps hosted a town hall with California State Assemblymember Gregg Hart on May 8. Located in the Pardall Center, the town hall focused on fostering community connection and promoting open dialogue about pertinent issues.

The town hall began with a series of questions asked by an organizer who facilitated the rest of the Q&A. The discussion centered around the Sable pipeline restart, financial aid, the incarceration system and protection for undocumented individuals.

Hart emphasized environmental issues as a top priority for his office and explained that he spends a considerable amount of his time in Sacramento advocating for environmental protections. He highlighted the "false choice" between jobs and protecting the environment.

"Is it possible to have economic growth and still be green? And the answer is absolutely yes, and we're demonstrating that," Hart said.

This pipeline restart has incited formal safety and environmental concerns from many California residents and numerous lawsuits; there is still major pushback from federal actors toward state environmental autonomy.

"Senator Monique Limón, who's the president of the California State Senate, and I have been working together to address this and make sure that California's environmental laws are respected as we look at whether or not this pipeline should restart," Hart said.

Rather than restarting the pipeline, Hart suggested pivoting toward renewable energy sources. He lamented that California is restrained by the federal government's preference for fossil fuel. However, Hart was passionate about preventing the current administration from furthering its "agenda to destroy renewable energy and to support oil development and go back in time." Hart is confident about winning in court but reminded attendees that the process takes time.

Hart emphasized that "California's under attack, and [they] are trying to respond in every single way [they] possibly can." After President Donald

Trump took office, California Governor Gavin Newsom allocated \$50 million to the Attorney General, half allocated for filing lawsuits against the federal government and the other half to aid immigrants.

In addition, AB 2011 would ensure mental health services have "parity" with physical health services. This bill was created in hopes to combat the Trump administration trying to withdraw protection of mental health services.

Hart said he is making an active effort to protect California's "prosperity." He believes this prosperity can be boiled down to two key components: diversity and higher education.

"Everybody in California has a role to play and the opportunity to contribute. Lots of other places don't do that. We have the most diverse population of any place in the world in California. And the second thing is that we invest in higher education. We have the best higher education system in the world," Hart said.

Hart highlighted his support of AB 2251, which improves cost-of-attendance calculations so that financial aid better reflects students' real living expenses. He explained the importance of the cost-of-attendance calculation being precise to each community because there is a huge difference in costs from one California education institution to another.

"Instead of there being generic general costs-of-attendance calculations, they [should be] precise and local and specific. In that way, each campus and each student has the maximum opportunity to get the most financial aid that [they] are eligible for," Hart said.

On the theme of transparency in the education system, Hart pointed to his support for AB 530, which would have required the California State University to report expenditures over \$10,000, but was never voted on. However, this bill would not have applied to the University of California system due to the institution being constitutionally independent from the state legislature.

"We need to make sure that every dollar that's in the education system is accountable and visible and transparent," Hart stressed.

AB 2257, authored by Hart, aims to reform the criminal justice system. Hart said he thinks there are fundamental issues with the criminal justice model in place



Hart emphasized environmental issues as a top priority for his office and explained that he spends a considerable amount of his time advocating for environmental protections.

and the bill would give the boards of supervisors the opportunity to make a change to the system.

"I think it's appropriate to open up the possibility that jails could be managed by somebody other than the sheriff," Hart said. "My bill would simply say that boards of supervisors should have the authority to choose to do something differently than the status quo. They don't have to."

Hart sees a lack of collaboration between local government and the sheriff. He believes with AB 2257 in place, jails would be more efficient rehabilitation centers due to performance evaluations holding people to a standard and ensuring protocols are followed.

Within the last 20 years, the law only allowed enforcement-trained individuals to be elected sheriff. This rule raised fiscal responsibility inquiries for Hart. "Is that path and background the best for managing a complex department with hundreds of millions of dollars and making sure that overtime rules are followed? You know, maybe, maybe not. And, and I just think that boards should have the choice to make that a different decision," Hart said.

Hart said there is currently an excess amount of state prisons and money is being spent to keep them open even though they do not contain prisoners. The sheriff, Bill Brown, has proposed spending millions of dollars to increase the capacity of jails in Santa Barbara County. Hart disagreed with this approach and

suggested using that money for different types of public safety services.

"Our system, unfortunately, really just locks people up and keeps them in jail for a very long time, it doesn't focus on rehabilitation and restoration. We have a tremendous revolving door of people who do not have additional skills, who do not have the training to get back on track, who continue to commit more crimes and end up back in local jails or prison. And that model, sadly, is in place here in Santa Barbara County," Hart said.

Hart said he believes that everyone in the community "deserves to be respected and protected"; this belief extends especially to those targeted and impacted by the influx of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (I.C.E.).

He described the changing political environment as the most "visible" attack by the federal government under Trump's administration. Hart said the California government is focused on trying everything they can to preserve their values.

California Democrats have been trying to fight the Trump administration by providing financial support to legal organizations, proposing legislation requiring I.C.E. agents to wear badges and no face coverings as well as keeping I.C.E. agents off of county-owned property.

As seen by Hart, one of the most damaging effects of I.C.E.

behavior is the increased negative connotation for all police officers. Increased fear of law enforcement has been recorded.

"The most effective policing is community-oriented policing: policing where officers have a good relationship with the community they serve, and that people feel comfortable reporting crimes and going to law enforcement and engaging with them and being trusted messengers in their own communities," Hart said.

With this difference in views between the California government and the federal government, Hart emphasized the importance of the upcoming November primary elections. The Supreme Court retracting the Voting Rights Act is going to lead to flipping "seats in places that we were not anticipating," Hart said, meaning California needs to respond.

In an interview with the Daily Nexus, Hart explained the need to be accessible to his constituents in order to pursue issues that matter to them. He encouraged UC Santa Barbara students to strengthen their voices.

"The challenges we face with the federal government are enormous and unprecedented, and I know students are concerned about their future and want to have the best opportunity for good jobs and quality of life, and so being engaged in community affairs and politics, and making sure their voice is heard loud and clear couldn't be more important than it is right now," Hart said.

# \$15.3 million awarded for I.V. community microgrid

Levi Kauffman  
County News Editor

Santa Barbara County was recently awarded \$15.3 million to develop a community microgrid for Isla Vista. The grid will support “critical community facilities,” 120 residential customers and an additional 50 non-residential customers.

A microgrid is a localized, interconnected power grid that can operate independently or in tandem with a main power grid. In general, they consist of electricity generation resources, battery energy storage and a microgrid control system. Microgrids can disconnect from the main grid to allow for “islanding,” where connected facilities can supply electricity during outages.

According to Santa Barbara County (SBC) Sustainability Division Manager Garrett Wong, the bounds of the microgrid were determined after identifying points in I.V.’s utility distribution system that could be physically disconnected if needed. The microgrid plan prioritized “critical community facilities” such as the I.V. Sheriff’s Office, Neighborhood Clinic and the Community Center. Residential and non-residential properties “downstream” from the disconnection points also got roped into the grid; however, this will not raise their power bills.

“It was more a coincidence, not an intentional design, that these commercial accounts are part of the system,” Wong said. “They’re going to benefit if the power goes down, there will be other blocks in Isla Vista where the lights are out, but these certain blocks would have the



The microgrid will be “clustered around” People’s Park with the main power lines affected running down Embarcadero and Trigo Road.

lights on.”

Wong said that the main power lines affected run down Embarcadero and Trigo Road and that the microgrid will be “clustered around” People’s Park. Additionally, while SBC Sustainability hasn’t notified future microgrid customers, they plan to begin outreach once they are “more robustly into the project.”

According to Wong, most microgrids serve only one customer and community microgrids are “rare.” The

I.V. community microgrid will largely be the first of its kind and serve as a “demonstration piece.”

“It’s a very different operation than what we’re used to, but it’s an opportunity, I think, to demonstrate what local community energy resilience could look like and how that can be the backbone of, more broadly speaking, community resilience,” Wong said.

Funding for the project comes from utility company Southern California Edison (SCE)

under the statewide Microgrid Incentive Program, which is run by the California Public Utilities Commission. According to SCE’s website, to qualify for the program, communities must be vulnerable to outages, considered a disadvantaged and vulnerable community and meet the technical eligibility. Wong explained that many power lines that connect I.V. run through the mountains and are at risk when a wildfire breaks out, such as the 2017 Thomas Fire which resulted in blackouts in I.V.

“We don’t have any ability to manage our power locally and be self sufficient if we were ever to get cut off by the transmission lines or something like that,” Wong said. “So the next best option is to try and do microgrids.”

While there is no official timeline for the project, Wong expects construction to begin within two to three years following initial studies and last less than a year. Once built, the grid will be tested before finally beginning its 10-year operating period. Given the “protracted timeline,” Wong urged community members to be patient.

According to Wong, the \$15.3 million budget covers various expenses. \$4 million will go to SCE for utility costs, roughly \$4.5 million will go to labor costs, \$400,000 will go to “community engagement and workforce development” and \$6.7 million will cover equipment.

Wong emphasized that the project aims to involve the community and provide “educational and professional opportunities.” He shared that he spoke with a UCSB electrical engineering lecturer about using the project to offer students a “hands-on learning experience.”

“We want to make sure that there’s educational and workforce opportunities along with the program as well. So maybe giving some people opportunities to learn about electrical engineering or construction as a part of the project,” Wong said. “We’d like to be a part of the community and the educational institutions’ processes and be accepted in that way.”

## IVTP hosts “Fuck Fast Fashion” show to promote sustainable style



IVTP held its “Fuck Fast Fashion” show featuring a runway of secondhand clothing, live music and local vendors on May 9.

Marissa Macher  
Reporter

Isla Vista Trading Post held its “Fuck Fast Fashion” show featuring a runway of secondhand clothing, live music and local vendors on May 9. The event aimed to highlight the environmental and ethical impacts of the garment industry while offering students an alternative to commercial retail.

Isla Vista Trading Post (IVTP) operates primarily through a donation-based system, where community members can donate and take used clothes, facilitating a circular clothing economy within I.V. According to IVTP President and fourth-year communication major Shawn Wilke, the show was intended to demonstrate the versatility of used clothing.

“The fashion show isn’t all directly clothes from IVTP. We just want to give people a chance to come show their sustainable outfits and show that you can really make these cool outfits out of secondhand clothes,” Wilke said.

IVTP’s outreach coordinator and third-year environmental studies major Natalia Aiello expanded on the organization’s stance against the current fashion industry standard, citing ethical concerns and production speed.

“Fast fashion is something that is manufactured unethically,” Aiello said. “To us, what we characterize as

fast fashion is something that’s made to fit the fast demand of the fashion industry constantly changing, but that’s at the sake of people. Communities are exploited to make that fast fashion. So it’s essentially poorly made, cheaply made [and] quickly made to keep up with trends.”

Event participants said that fabric quality and individual expression are the primary reasons to avoid traditional retail stores.

“I just don’t like fast fashion or shopping in new stores because the fabric these days, it just feels very cheap and it doesn’t feel like it’s going to last a long time,” fourth-year public health and sociology double major Claire Reynolds said. “I feel like you can find the things that are good material and have lasted through many people.”

Angelina Valadez, a third-year art major, noted how many people in the crowd were looking for unique pieces of clothing that define their personality.

“They look around and see clothes that are to their specific tastes,” Valadez said. “You get different kinds of clothes rather than the ones you just see everywhere in the stores.”

The event featured local crochet vendors who utilize upcycled materials, such as Olivia Perry, a first-year psychological & brain sciences major, who explained her process of creation and how she targets her sales toward

college students.

“I’ll go to a thrift store or a scrap store and I’ll buy used yarn. It ties in by matching the theme, and you don’t need to go to all these fashion stores to get something cute when I’m over here making it,” Perry said. “Since I’m also a college student I understand the prices people are willing to pay and clothes they’re willing to wear. So I make a lot of day party wear and that definitely attracts people.”

Another crochet vendor at the event, Alicia Vinaja, a recent UCSB alum, observed a shift in student shopping habits.

“On your way back from class, you see all of the people that are selling their clothes and reselling. I know all of my friends thrift – none of them buy from the actual store anymore,” Vinaja said. “I think it’s becoming bigger and more accessible.”

Local band Good Grief performed at the event, and members spoke about how their own music coincided with the idea of going against fast fashion. Jake Twomey, a fourth-year political science and economics double major, described his band’s involvement and stance on issues that relate to the environment.

“We try to blend modernity with a sort of return to nature. You need to have that classic ‘Use what you have and don’t overproduce,’” Twomey said. “If [artists] have some sort of audience, it’s great to promote that issue. So when people talk about fast fashion, it’s about protecting this planet and using what we make.”

While the movement is gaining momentum, IVTP member and third-year environmental studies major Sammi Dorostkar noted that while accessibility to sustainable wear can seem out of reach, it can still be attainable.

“If you go into town there’s some vintage shops, and it’s like: You’re reselling a bad leather jacket for \$200, but

then there are some stores that are very accessible,” Dorostkar said.

Wilke explained how IVTP has started making slow fashion, a movement within the fashion industry that enables consumers to focus on quality over quantity when buying clothes, accessible to students on campus.

“We host these events where we give out clothes for free. It’s becoming more accessible but IVTP makes it easy because it’s in the area, you can walk and then you get items for free,” Wilke said. “Even though the name is ‘trading post’ we don’t expect anything in exchange.”

Aiello described how their events and the slogan “3-for-free” contradict the overconsumption in everyday shopping habits. The 3-for-free is a limit put in place by IVTP where students can only take three free items from the donation bins.

“The intention with our

‘3-for-free’ events is to limit people. Enforcing the idea of mindful consumption and we hope to further instill that in Isla Vista with our programs,” Aiello said.

Jetta Dohrenwend, third-year psychological & brain sciences major and IVTP member, emphasized the role of society engagement in reducing corporate reliance, and how the event is all about collective action.

“It’s a community-building thing – something to bring people together to say, ‘We don’t have to consume more,’” Dohrenwend explained. “We actually don’t need to rely on companies with non-ethical clothing practices to have good fashion or have a cute style.”

The closing runway show had members of IVTP and the community show off their sustainable clothing outfits that reflected personality and resistance against the fast fashion industry.



According to IVTP President and fourth-year communication major Shawn Wilke, the show was intended to demonstrate the versatility of used clothing.

# SBResiste volunteer accuses I.C.E. agents of using excessive force while observing detention

Lucy Wellons  
Staff Writer

A core member of the rapid response volunteer network SBResiste, Ana Garcia, was involved in a violent altercation with United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents while responding to a reported sighting at the Secure Continuous Remote Alcohol Monitor of California office on West Carrillo Street on April 30. The organizers say the incident reflects a broader escalation of violence toward volunteers monitoring enforcement activity in Santa Barbara.

Garcia arrived at the scene after a tip through the SBResiste Rapid Response Network, a Santa Barbara-based grassroots organization that aims to protect immigrant communities in light of aggressive United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (I.C.E.) activity. She had initially planned to meet up with someone monitoring a different I.C.E. vehicle, but received another report about the presence on State Street and Carrillo Street and decided to investigate alone before additional responders were able to arrive.

After searching the area, Garcia entered a building and spotted I.C.E. agents ascending the stairs to the Secure Continuous Remote Alcohol Monitor (S.C.R.A.M.) office and followed them to observe and document. As she began walking up the stairs to reach the I.C.E. agents, she claimed that they immediately accused her of impeding their activity.

"Before I even made it to the top floor [the agent] started accusing me of impeding. I was like, 'I'm not impeding. What are you talking about?' and I just kept walking up the stairs," Garcia said. "He waited for me at the top and started pushing me before I even made it onto the platform. So I muscled my way up onto the platform because I didn't want to get pushed down the stairs. He was pushing me super intensely, saying, 'Don't impede. Don't impede.' I was like, 'I'm not impeding, I'm walking,' — I wasn't even recording."

According to federal law, impeding an I.C.E. officer involves active physical obstruction, assault, resistance, opposition or intimidation of officers during enforcement actions. Filming or observing I.C.E. officers is protected by the First Amendment under the condition that it does not prevent them from working.

Garcia continued walking toward the I.C.E. agents at the top of the stairwell, before the agent who was accusing her of impeding physically restrained her against the wall, allegedly punching her in the side and shaking her repeatedly. She noted that the officer accused her of fighting back during the incident, but she denied this claim.

"At some point during that interaction, he was like, 'Are you crazy? Are you hitting me?' And I was like, 'No, I'm defending myself because you're using excessive force for no reason, I'm doing nothing. I'm by myself, there's nothing going on here,'" Garcia said.

According to Garcia, the agents



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The interaction between Garcia and the I.C.E. agents followed a pattern of increasing presence at the SBC Jail.

at the scene called for her to be arrested, but the agent restraining her, whom she identified as the supervisor of the Santa Barbara I.C.E. force, refused. She responded by asking the agent, "Why? Because your excessive force is going to get you in trouble."

While Garcia was being physically restrained, another agent attempted to pepper-spray her. The spray struck the wall instead, but agents left the residue behind after the incident. Because the pepper spray was deployed in an enclosed space, S.C.R.A.M. employees had to wear masks for the remainder of the day and clean the area themselves, according to Garcia.

"We talked to the lady at the S.C.R.A.M. office, and she was wearing a mask. The whole building still smelled really intensely of the pepper spray. I spoke to the woman, and she started crying, and was like, 'We don't work with I.C.E. Nothing like this has ever happened before,'" Garcia said.

After the initial confrontation, the agents exited the S.C.R.A.M. office with the individual who was detained in their custody. According to Garcia, after the agent released her, she followed them down the stairs and taunted one of the officers, who then turned around and pepper-sprayed her directly in the eye before leaving the scene.

"I probably should have just been quiet because I was by myself and didn't have backup. But sometimes you can't help yourself, you're just a fucking asshole and I hate you, and you're kidnapping somebody, and I'm beat up over here. What's all that I have left? Cutting words," Garcia said. "Big mistake, because then he turned around and pepper-sprayed me right in my face. It hit my eye, pretty directly, and that one totally fucked me up. I couldn't breathe."

Under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and I.C.E. use-of-force policy, an authorized I.C.E. officer may use force only when no reasonably effective, safe and feasible alternative appears to exist and may use only the level of force that is objectively reasonable.

In a SBResiste statement, the group said they believe the agents who attacked Garcia felt "emboldened" by the fact that she was alone. Another core member of SBResiste, who chose to remain anonymous, spoke about the importance of keeping eyes on I.C.E.

"The reason they were so empowered and emboldened to be so violent was because they knew that there was no one else there. No cameras, no form of accountability. They felt like they could hurt her because they just knew that there wasn't gonna be any consequences for them," the anonymous member said. "When there are more people, more rapid responders or people keeping their eyes on what is happening, these agents act less violently."

Garcia said that she felt more encouraged to continue working with SBResiste after her interaction with I.C.E. at the S.C.R.A.M. office.

"I grew up in an area that is more diverse, has a bit more crime. And so that part doesn't scare me at all. That's normal stuff. I'm terrified of a fascist government takeover," Garcia said. "For me, the alternative is much worse than fighting."

The anonymous member agreed with Garcia, emphasizing the importance of pushing back against I.C.E.

"I think a lot of people are seeing the violence that is being enacted on rapid responders, Renee Good, Alex Pretti and beyond that. Just the amount of repression that these organizers are facing in other places has scared people. They think that if they do something, they will get hurt. But the truth of the matter is they will hurt us regardless of whether we do something or not," the anonymous member said. "That is how fascism works, and the only hope we have of preventing them from hurting anybody is if we push back and say that this is not okay."

The interaction between Garcia and the I.C.E. agents followed a pattern of increasing presence at the Santa Barbara County (SBC) Jail. In the weeks leading up to the incident, I.C.E. officers were reported to be at the jail multiple times a week. SBResiste has been monitoring these sightings and condemns the actions of the agents.

"We're not defending any person in particular or any crime in particular. We are defending the right to due process. None of that is happening. So when I.C.E. goes into the jail and kidnaps somebody from there who's being released, that is a violation of due process. And so we are concerned that if we allow them to take that step, that creates a pathway for them to then violate my due process and your due process. And so it's not

about protecting any individual necessarily. It's about protecting the rights that we all deserve and that are enumerated in the Constitution," the anonymous member said.

According to SBResiste members, the confrontation with Garcia reflects larger concerns about the methods I.C.E. agents use during operations. They alleged broader patterns of I.C.E. working with law enforcement to discourage and intimidate observers by making misleading or legally inaccurate statements about their rights.

In a recent statement, the Santa Barbara Police Department reaffirmed that the organization does not engage in immigration enforcement. They stated that their role in federal immigration actions is guided by their "commitment to safety and respect for all."

Garcia described an experience she had with law enforcement after following an unmarked I.C.E. vehicle that was allegedly driving recklessly into an elementary school parking lot. After parking next to the agent's vehicle, she said that a Ventura County sheriff came to speak with her.

"[The sheriff] was very intense and was trying to tell me that I needed to give him my driver's license and all this stuff. And I was like, 'For what?' And he [said], 'Because, I'm pulling you over,' blah, blah, blah. And I was like, 'No, I'm parked, so try again.' And he [said], 'You have to identify yourself. I was like, I actually don't, unless you have a legal reason,' Garcia said.

Garcia went on to describe that seven other sheriff's vehicles arrived, and she spoke to two other deputies who pressured her to give them her information. She said that the incident eventually ended because they could find no legal reason to make her identify herself.

The anonymous member also described an event where they observed I.C.E. take a man on a stretcher due to injuries sustained while trying to escape detainment outside of the SBC Jail. They stated that a sheriff came up to them and began questioning their presence.

"A sheriff walks up to me [saying], 'What are you doing here?' Trying to ask me all these questions. And then I remembered my rights, and I [said] 'Am I being detained?' He's like, 'No, but you could be.' And I [asked], 'Am I free to go?'" the anonymous member said. "We're not being detained, so I walked away, and that's literally

all I had to do, because he did not have any legal basis to make me answer any of his questions."

The SBResiste members highlighted these interactions to emphasize the importance of knowing your rights while interacting with I.C.E. agents and law enforcement. They claimed that their rapid response volunteers are taught how to safely observe enforcement activity, document interactions, stay in groups and stay calm when questioned by officers.

"The first time anybody encounters an agent it is frightening. You have physical, bodily reactions to seeing this masked person with a gun in your neighborhood trying to steal one of your neighbors. I think the first time I saw an I.C.E. agent, I was terrified. I froze, and I was like, 'You could just kill me right now' — it's very scary to understand how much power they have," the anonymous member said. "We're always trying to be there in a group for safety reasons and also if anybody starts panicking, they can back off."

The pair expressed their frustrations with the public's perception of SBResiste and other rapid response networks, noting that what is visible online is only a small portion of the broader efforts around community organizing and that videos of responders "saying all sorts of nasty shit" to officers is not representative of their work.

"They assume that is all we do and that all you can do if you join this organization is go out there and get in an agent's face, and you have to say snarky shit to them. That is not even half of the labor that people put into this," the anonymous member said. "We're trying to build a better society, and a better society needs everybody's input, and everybody has something to bring. I really want people to understand that even if you are too frightened to go and potentially put yourself in physical danger, that is not all we do. No matter what you do, we really, really need you."

Additionally, the members spoke on the broader implications of the violent incident involving Garcia and how they hope the public will react, emphasizing the importance of continued observation and community involvement to hold I.C.E. agents and law enforcement accountable. They emphasized that they believe situations involving I.C.E. are "getting serious in a way that [is] very concerning," and that there is a lack of accountability for officers, demonstrated by agents' interactions with Garcia.

"I want people to understand that no matter how privileged they think they are and how safe they think they are, the violence that you are allowing again, the violence you allow to happen to other people, will eventually come back around and hit you," the anonymous member said. "The rights that we allow them to take away from other people, the way that we allow them to treat people that have the least rights in our society is a test run for what they can do to the rest of us, even if you did not care at all for the people that were being harmed, you should be worried."

## Die Bretzel: A taste of German culture at UCSB

Michael Spanjol  
Reporter

As classes get out and crowds of students rush past the Arbor, a line begins to form in front of a little cart near the University Library lawn. "What can I get for you?" Peter Gaum, owner and operator of Die Bretzel, the German sausage stand on campus, asks a student.

Die Bretzel is the longest-running University Center food operation on campus, celebrating 35 years of business this year. The stand serves authentic German sausages, pretzels and hot dogs Monday through Thursday from 10:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Gaum started his time at UC Santa Barbara in 1988, when he moved from Germany to the United States to teach in the German department. It wasn't until 1991 that he and his then-wife took over a hamburger stand and replaced it with the sausage

cart to help cover their child's medical bills.

While the business was originally opened to help with finances, Gaum didn't expect it to last as long as it has.

"We thought [the stand was] gonna be a temporary short-term solution for our debts. Never in my wildest dreams did I think that's what I'm gonna do for my career," Gaum said.

Gaum previously operated two other food stands, one on campus near Buchanan Hall and one in the Paseo Nuevo mall in downtown Santa Barbara. However, today the original is all that remains.

Since starting Die Bretzel, Gaum has ventured out into other industries around Santa Barbara, opening a bakery, a women's clothing boutique and a nationwide line of nutrition bars.

Adding to the stand's authenticity, a majority of the food products sold come from

German or local sources. The hot dog buns are baked fresh in Gaum's bakery every day, while the sausages are custom-made by a German butcher in Los Angeles and the sauerkraut comes from Germany.

Many students had positive things to say about the stand.

"I come here at least every other week. It's really good," third-year economics major Isaiah Prophet said. "You know those summer days where you'll get out of the pool and the hot dogs are ready. This honestly feels exactly like that. It feels very homey."

As the school year nears its end, the cart continues to attract new customers.

"This is my first time coming to the hot dog stand," third-year Adrian Addey said. "I keep hearing people talking about it a lot, and I heard it's a UCSB staple. I'm a transfer student, so I'm trying to be a part of the culture."

Even years after graduating

from UCSB, alumni pay a visit to the stand when they're in town.

"We have so many parents right now show up visiting their kids, who came to the hot dog stand when they were students here," Gaum said. "So it's really funny and they appreciate the memory."

After over three decades of



Die Bretzel, the longest-running University Center food operation on campus, celebrates 35 years of business this year.



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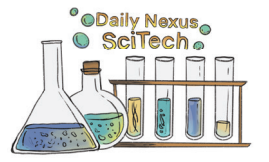
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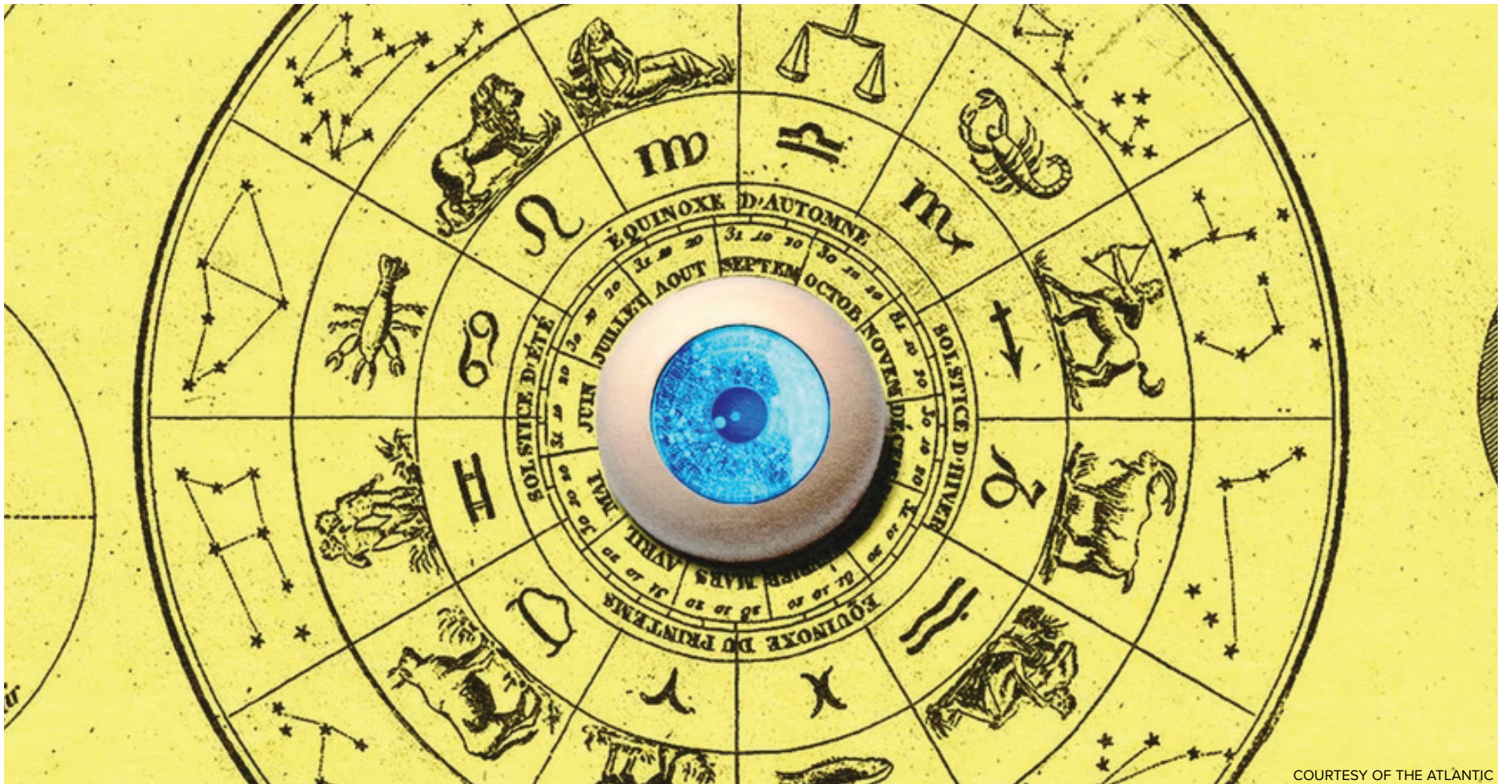
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# SCIENCE & TECH



## Opinion: Does AI have a place in astrology?



COURTESY OF THE ATLANTIC

Macoy Greco  
Reporter

"The external stars affect the man," wrote Theophrastus von Hohenheim (1493-1541), better known as Paracelsus: an alchemist and a vital figure in Renaissance development towards modern medical science who, like many college students today, believed in astrology.

According to a 2024 Pew Research Center study, approximately 30% of Americans aged 18-29 profess belief in astrology. Gen Z nurses a growing fascination with the occult, turning more and more to esoteric and unorthodox traditions as the thought of a faithless existence (in this economy?) grows untenable. Yet, as traditional means of engagement with non-traditional practices are increasingly inaccessible to Zodiac-curious youth, a radical new power — like Aleister Crowley arriving at Blythe Road in dark regalia — has entered the dueling circle.

Prayed to by knuckle-draggers you overhear at the library and divorced fathers alike, generative artificial intelligence (AI) has become the go-to pocket deity of 2026. A sort of latter-day Thoth-Hermes, housed in every tablet in the world. A god of knowledge who does not so much teach as he does supplant

calculations involved in the creation of astrological charts are spotlighted in Co-Star's promotional blurbs: "We use NASA data to know exactly where the stars are." Astroline goes further on their website's About page, declaring their astrology is "grounded in behavioral patterns — not mysticism or fate."

Admittedly, the connection kind of checks out: What better to chart star patterns than the pattern-chatter par-excellence? In a 2023 article in the European Journal of Cultural Studies, Concordia University doctoral student Leona Nikoli writes: "As a mode of speculation, astrology presents a striking similarity to artificial intelligence: through the observation and study of celestial patterns, it is used to both rationalise and anticipate patterns of individual behaviour, societal events and natural phenomena."

Still, it must not be overlooked that astronomy is a widely-discredited pseudo-science, which is to say nothing of its

Pop Magic!) to practical ends.

This magical work depends on the practitioner, in will and deed, which is why these apps work overtime to purvey an image of quirked-up humanity. In their promotional copy, both services highlight that real people aid in their astrological work, and Astroline lists several

offers unlimited void questions for \$8 a month. While perhaps believing in and spending money on AI-based star prediction (in this economy?) seems ludicrous, 2024 findings by researchers at the the Massachusetts Institute of Technology indicate that "belief in AI predictions is more closely associated with paranormal beliefs than one's cognitive style" and is particularly strong among those with affinity for AI. They go on to say that their "findings suggest that people may perceive AI predictions in a way that is similar to the way they perceive astrology-based predictions," speaking of astrological work as a whole, rather than just the AI-driven subset that Co-Star represents.

To take the correlation a step further, Nikoli says that "supernatural fixation on magic as the mediator between experience and reality shifted to a preoccupation with the mind" and, from there, was ultimately

users are free to believe in the salience of the algorithmically written (or rewritten) horoscopes accompanying the claim with the Paracelsian thought that believing St. Peter's statue is equivalent to believing St. Peter himself — is ultimately to underline that magic is a fundamentally creative and fundamentally personal act. Indeed, Astroline's stated focus on "emotional processing" is not far off the mark: The power of magic lies with the practitioner, not to in-absurdity pursue impossible ends, but rather to devote their mental and emotional energy towards possible and positive ends. Harmless, if not fundamentally potent. Thus, to whatever degree one "believes" in astrology or magic, even if it is not a mote, it should be healing-crystal clear why young adults handing power over their inner-most mental and emotional sanctums to the bot Kabbalah offered by these apps is to their detriment, particularly when they come encoded with an obvious monetary incentive for highlighting the negative aspects of horoscopes (as is often alleged about Co-Star), thereby strengthening an emotional stranglehold on their users. Honestly, it's a shame it can't be kicked down the stairs, like Crowley was at Blythe Road.

Indeed, AI-delivered or otherwise, astrology itself could stand to be treated with further negligibility as Gen Z's fledgling



THE MOON.

"expert practitioners" by-name on their website. While much of Co-Star's content is human-written, then modified and switched around by algorithms, it is nonetheless designed to tug on users' heartstrings: "Someone is disastrously in love with you." "Do: Power ballad, Black leather, Eyeshadow." This content extends to detailed breakdowns of users' potential day-to-day struggles, and pushes even further, into "the void" — a feature where users can ask questions and receive AI-generated "advice."

Astroline, by contrast, seems to be almost entirely AI, offering an opportunity to chat with "live advisors," aka obvious AI-chatbots. "I can sense your curiosities trembling just beneath the surface," Ella-Louise says, the app's human-faced chatbot with an alleged "21 years of practice." Moreover, in a move that verges wholeheartedly into machine-based divination, Astroline goes so far as to offer AI palm and tarot-card readings.

These features seem designed to fabricate a sense of user-activity rather than passive engagement, and thereby work to confine users' magical practice and experiences to the app. And for good reason: Receiving the results of Astroline palm readings requires a nebulous subscription of \$5 a week, while Co-Star's premium service (gag-inducingly-named "Pro-Star")

"superseded by the imaginary of algorithmic cognition." Thus, perhaps AI is not just a natural partner to astrology, but the natural end of all human fascination with magic, finally granted digital apotheosis. Perhaps Thoth-Hermes has not been replaced, but merely reborn a fourth time. Either way, Paracelsus does say that: "Whether the object of your faith be real or false, you will nevertheless obtain the same effects ... it will always produce the same wonders."

Yet, to note that these apps'

esoteric acolytes each find their ways to their own unique practices, creatively developing magical practices that work for them and them alone. While some will naturally err with Paracelsus and conclude that power still resides in the stars, that planetary events precede those on earth, others should feel free to discard the cosmos at their leisure, to find what works. As the Latin goes: "Sapiens dominabitur astris." The wise person rules their stars.



WHEEL OF FORTUNE.

knowledge, keeping his worshippers shallow and dulled. And now, through astrology apps like Co-Star and Astroline, AI tries its hand at magic — claiming to use the knowledge of the stars to divine the futures of its users.

Don't be surprised. Sure, the minimalist, Google-slide-template aesthetic of these apps hardly evokes leather-bound grimoires, yet, before being consigned to the realm of esotericism, astrology — and magic in its entirety — was a science as real as any other, rigorously studied alongside astronomy across the medieval and Renaissance worlds. Certainly, the mathematical

validity, but to emphasize that its continual relevance relies on the faith believers place into it. Indeed, Paracelsus does not only write that "the external stars affect the man" but goes on to detail that "the internal stars in man affect outward things, in fact and in operation, the one on the other." In the course of history, as well as in present-day practice, magic can ultimately be found as the crossroads between religion and science, predicated on the observational practice of faith-based "experiments" (to coin author Grant Morrison's article

# COLUMNISTS

## sex and the community



JULIET BECKER / DAILY NEXUS

Diana Paradise  
Sexpert

Getting together with my friends who are in stable relationships feels like being a little kid at the adult table. When we meet for our weekly coffee or bong session, they share the trials and tribulations of long-term relationship life while I gush over my ex-sneaky link liking my Instagram story.

"I've been craving freedom," my taken friend told me over an overpriced Cajé smoothie the other day. I was surprised to hear this, considering her relationship seems somewhat ideal. How could someone with a loving and attentive boyfriend envy my comparatively lonely and dull dating life?

In no man's land – or no *man* land, I should say – everyone seems to be wishing for companionship. When you've just flunked your midterm, you want nothing more than to cry on someone else's chest. When you're hungover to the point of bedriddenness, all you want is

## The grass is always greener: *Feeling lonely when single and trapped when coupled*

someone to bring you a Yetz's bagel. Friends are incredible, but sometimes they can't fill the void of singledom.

Could the couples be struggling too?

In relationships (or lack thereof), the grass is always greener on the other side. When your boyfriend is trying to start a text fight over the fact that your location isn't updating while you're at the bar, it can be easy to envy your friend who's in the corner flirting with a cute guy. Especially when distance is introduced, like your hometown relationship or study-abroad tension, your partner can seem tiny compared to your huge world.

Is it wrong to have the feeling that you want to escape from a relationship? Long story short: no. Feeling trapped in a relationship doesn't automatically mean that you hate your significant other and want to join us in the streets.

Especially for those who have spent a long time single before getting into a serious relationship, the loss of independence can be a struggle. When your boyfriend wants to hang out in every free moment, sheds body hair in your bed and always drinks out of your water

bottle, it can be suffocating.

Wanting freedom from co-dependence can often be conflated with wanting the freedom to sleep around, but you can want the former without the latter. The free time, lack of concern for another person's emotional needs and, frequently, hotter body that you have when you're single are all valid aspects of your life to miss when they're gone.

These feelings are most easily identifiable and triggered when other eligible mates are present. Especially when you are a taken amongst singles, it can feel antisocial to shy away from socializing with people at the bar because your significant other will be mad about it.

The answer to these problems is boring: you have to communicate. The little "icks" that come with your partner being overbearing or clingy build up over time and can frequently kill relationships. If you do truly love your partner and want to have a lasting relationship, you need to voice that you want more time with your friends or to take care of yourself.

Sleeping over three times per week, eating dinner together every night and texting non-

stop is lovely for the honeymoon phase – but not sustainable. If you want to maintain any semblance of romance, intimacy or excitement in your relationship, you can't be 100% together 100% of your free time.

Absence makes the heart grow fonder. When your significant other isn't crowding every other aspect of your life, you might crave their affection a little stronger on girls' night, rather than feeling envious of your single friends. Plus, when you get to come home to them later, that's when the real fun begins.

Now, for us singles.

In "Sex and the City," one of the few times we see renowned maneater Samantha crave the true love of a man is when she has the flu. While taken envy singles when you're out at the bar, singles envy taken the morning after. This is partially personal – I feel most lonely when hungover – but I feel that it captures a larger sentiment. People frequently joke that they want a boyfriend "only on Sundays" to heal their Sunday scaries and care for them.

Like taken feel most oppressed by their significant others when the relationship is doing poorly, we can often crave companionship when our own

lives are in shit. Seeking comfort when you're sad or sick is maybe the most basic human instinct. It's what drives our need for partnership and togetherness.

So, lean on the people around you. It might not be the same as having one consistent partner who is perfectly attuned to all of your needs, but your friends, family members and mentor figures can provide comfort in your lowest moments.

The amount of calls I made to my mom skyrocketed once I became single. Your friends might not want to hand deliver you bagels when you're hungover, but they are frequently down to get coffee or drinks when you need them.

Companionship and love come in all forms and being single doesn't mean you have any less love or care in your life. You just have to reach out and find it where it already exists.

The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence, but that doesn't mean you should throw away a good partner – or your independence – based on your envy of your friends' situations.

*Diana Paradise knows the grass is greenest in her own bed.*

## SBusiness



JULIET BECKER / DAILY NEXUS

Aaron Ramirez  
Rainmaker

For many UC Santa Barbara students, the question feels unavoidable every spring: How will I pay for next year's tuition?

As financial aid letters arrived this spring, a troubling pattern emerged for thousands of undergraduates: their out-of-pocket costs are climbing faster than the university's support. UCSB's endowment reached \$647 million in 2024, growing over 18 times from \$35.8 million in 1995, yet student borrowing costs continue to rise and need-based aid has not expanded proportionally. For students already balancing part-time jobs with course loads in the 2025-26 academic year, the math doesn't add up.

The disconnect feels personal and immediate for many on campus. Each year brings another letter saying tuition has gone up, leading to reality checks about how much borrowing will be necessary to afford a degree. An endowment growing to record levels while need-based aid stagnates is not just a policy question – it is a lived experience for thousands of UCSB undergraduates trying to figure out how to stay enrolled.

UCSB's official 2025-26 cost of attendance for a California resident living in residence halls is \$47,418, up from \$44,568 in the 2024-25 academic year. UC tuition alone rose from \$14,436 to \$14,934 this year. Yet, the university's endowment, a long-term investment fund designed to support student aid and institutional priorities, has continued to grow. This poses a question haunting many students: Why aren't those gains translating to more financial support?

### The numbers behind the gap

UCSB's endowment has grown from \$585.5 million in 2021 to \$647 million in 2024, a gain of roughly \$61.5 million in just three years. UC system data shows the average debt at graduation for UC student borrowers was approximately \$18,400 in 2020-21. Nationally, the mean debt at graduation among bachelor's degree recipients in 2019 was over \$28,000. Encouragingly, 57% of UC undergraduates graduate with no debt at all, but for those who do borrow, the burden is real and growing.

Best practices in higher education suggest universities spend four to five percent of their endowment annually on student aid and operations. Applied to UCSB's \$647 million endowment, that would be roughly \$26 million to \$32 million in annual spending power dedicated to aid. Whether UCSB meets that benchmark is not fully transparent in publicly available data, and that lack of transparency is itself part of the problem.

In 2023, UCSB has also launched its second long-term fundraising campaign, aiming to raise an annual average of \$200 million between 2025 and 2031. That ambitious goal suggests the University has the institutional capacity to mobilize private resources at scale. The question is what share of that fundraising will go directly to undergraduate aid rather than to research, capital projects and faculty recruitment.

### The 2025-26 budget crisis

This year's financial picture is especially urgent. Governor Gavin Newsom's 2025-26 budget reduced UC General Fund support by 7.95%, or approximately \$396.6 million system-wide. UCSB itself faces a \$24 million permanent state funding reduction combined with a \$45 million expenditure increase, projecting a permanent budget reduction of 10% to 12.95%. UCSB's former Chancellor Henry T. Yang, who stepped down in July 2025 after 31 years in office, called the situation a "formidable challenge."

State financial aid has also been hit. While Cal Grant funding increased by \$109 million for 2025-26, the Middle Class Scholarship

## UCSB's \$647 million endowment vs. student debt: *Why is aid not keeping pace with tuition?*

faced a \$110 million cut plus the rescinding of a \$289 million one-time fund for the program. As a result, total Middle Class Scholarship awards are projected to drop from \$924.8 million in 2024-25 to just \$527.2 million in 2025-26. The program previously covered 35% of a student's remaining cost of attendance. This year, it covers only 18%.

The cuts are visible across campus. UCSB's CalFresh outreach program, which helps students access federal food assistance, faces a \$178,219 budget cut for 2026, a 60% reduction. The UCSB Library, which previously operated 24/7, now closes overnight. The physical therapy department closed in August 2025. A vacancy management program centralizes hiring, and many positions remain unfilled.

### Rising costs, stagnant aid

The cost of being a UCSB student keeps climbing. For context, a one-bedroom apartment in Isla Vista averages approximately \$2,800 per month, according to rental market data from RentCafe. UCSB residence hall meal plans range from approximately \$1,844 to \$2,044 per quarter, depending on plan tier. Daily Nexus reporting has documented that meal plan costs alone have risen nearly 50% since 2014, from roughly \$10 per meal in 2014 to \$15 in 2024.

Meanwhile, UCSB's need-based aid has not expanded proportionally to keep pace with these increases. According to U.S. News data, 46% of first-year UCSB students receive need-based aid, and the average aid amount across undergraduates is \$20,405. But for low-income and first-generation students, that aid often still falls short of actual costs, especially with the Middle Class Scholarship gutted, leaving borrowing as the only option to bridge the gap.

This reflects a larger national trend. Over the past two decades, universities have increasingly shifted from need-based aid to merit-based aid. The rationale is institutional prestige. Merit scholarships attract high-performing students and boost rankings. But they do not necessarily reach the students most in need. When combined with rising tuition and cost of living, the effect is clear; higher education becomes less accessible to low-income and first-generation students, even at public universities built on principles of affordability.

### What students want to see

With Dennis Assanis stepping in as UCSB's sixth chancellor on September 1, 2025, students and faculty are watching closely to see whether the new administration will prioritize undergraduate affordability. A petition circulating among undergraduate students demands that UCSB dedicate a greater share of its endowment spending and fundraising directly toward undergraduate need-based financial aid.

The request is not unreasonable. There is no structural reason UCSB could not allocate more endowment growth and fundraising toward expanded need-based aid. It is a matter of institutional priority. University leadership would have to decide that supporting low-income undergraduate access is more important than other uses of endowment spending. With \$200 million in projected annual fundraising over the next six years, there is real room to redirect resources.

UCSB's administration has launched meaningful initiatives in recent years, including the Promise Scholars program for high-achieving students that demonstrate need according to UCSB's Office of Financial Aid

and Scholarships. But individual initiatives have not reversed the overall trend. Costs keep climbing. The endowment keeps growing. The state has cut funding. Federal funding for student services has been slashed. The gap between institutional resources and student financial need keeps widening.

### The broader question

This tension reflects a larger national debate about who universities serve. Research universities like UCSB depend on endowments and research prestige to attract top faculty, generate federal funding and compete globally. That investment in research matters. UCSB's research mission is legitimate and important.

But there is always a cost. When institutions prioritize research and capital projects over undergraduate aid, they implicitly rank those investments above affordability. For a public university founded on the principle of accessible education, that tradeoff raises fundamental questions about mission. UCSB is a public institution. It was created to serve California students, not to just become a world-class research university. Those two goals should not be in tension. If they are, the public mission has to come first.

For many UCSB students, the resolution feels urgent. Every quarter without expanded aid is another quarter of work-study shifts missed, another quarter of loans deferred, another quarter of wondering whether a prestigious degree will be worth the debt. With a new chancellor at the helm, a \$647 million endowment to draw from and a \$200 million annual fundraising goal in motion, the resources are there. The question is whether UCSB's leadership will decide that students should come first.

# COLUMNISTS

## What we keep wearing:

Arna Churiwala  
Fashionista

Lately, everyone on campus seems to be carrying their entire lives on one shoulder.

Oversized suede totes swing against baggy jeans on the way to class. Slouchy leather handbags collapse into themselves under lecture hall seats. Someone digs through a massive bag during section, somehow pulling out a laptop charger, chapstick, headphones tangled beyond repair and an emergency snack all from the same abyss.

The tiny shoulder bag is dead. The big bag is back.

For years, fashion revolved around miniature purses that could barely hold anything besides a debit card and a tube of lip gloss. Tiny baguette bags hung off shoulders more as decoration than functionality. The smaller the purse, the chicer it seemed.

But recently, the pendulum has swung hard in the opposite direction.

Now, the most fashionable

bags are huge, slouchy and visibly overstuffed. They look lived-in. Broken-in. Like they've survived a week of classes, emotional turmoil and at least three coffee runs.

A big bag makes sense on campus because most of us are essentially carrying around portable survival kits at all times. Laptops. Chargers. Water bottles. Wallets. Protein bars. Makeup pouches. Random pens floating loose at the bottom. A cardigan for when the library gets too cold.

The modern college tote is less "fashion accessory" and more "mobile ecosystem."

Still, the return of oversized handbags isn't just about practicality. It's tied to fashion nostalgia, specifically the revival of messy, glamorous 2000s and early-2010s style.

Before hyper-minimalism took over fashion, the "it-girl" bag was enormous.

Think paparazzi photos of Mary-Kate Olsen hauling oversized leather totes through airports, giant

## Slouchy bags

sunglasses covering half her face. Lindsay Lohan balancing giant slouchy bags on one shoulder while clutching iced coffee and a flip phone. Nicole Richie layering bohemian dresses with oversized hobs that looked heavy enough to contain someone's entire apartment.

The bags weren't pristine. That was part of the appeal.

The leather creased. The hardware tarnished. The shape collapsed in on itself. These bags looked used in a glamorous way, like their owners were constantly on the move.

Two bags in particular have returned to near-mythical status: the Balenciaga City Bag and the Chloé Paddington.

The City Bag, with its soft leather, dangling tassels and moto-inspired hardware, practically defined off-duty celebrity style in the 2000s. Meanwhile, the Paddington became iconic for its oversized padlock and heavy, slouchy silhouette. Both bags felt excessive in the best possible way.

Now, they're everywhere again.

Part of that resurgence comes from the broader revival of indie sleaze and 2010s fashion. Fashion has been moving away from the hyper-controlled "clean girl" aesthetic and toward something messier, moodier and more chaotic. Big handbags fit perfectly into that shift.

Tiny purses feel polished and restrictive. Big bags feel spontaneous.

There's also something refreshing about a trend that embraces practicality without sacrificing style. After years of carrying bags too small to fit a phone charger, fashion finally seems interested in functionality again.

Even luxury fashion has

embraced the oversized silhouette.

At Miu Miu, handbags often look intentionally overfilled, styled alongside wrinkled knits and layered basics that mimic student dressing. The Row has turned giant leather totes into symbols of quiet luxury, proving that simplicity can still feel dramatic at an oversized scale. Meanwhile, Balenciaga continues leaning into exaggerated proportions entirely, making huge bags feel intentionally excessive rather than purely functional.

And then there's the return of boho fashion, which naturally revived the giant slouchy bag alongside it.

At Chloé, flowing dresses, suede textures and oversized shoulder bags have brought back a softer, more undone version of luxury. The modern boho revival feels less festival-costume and more intentionally disheveled. Big purses complete that look perfectly.

Because the appeal of the oversized bag isn't just size. It's what the size communicates.

A tiny bag suggests curation. Precision. Control.

A huge bag suggests movement. Chaos. A life full enough to require extra space.

There's something cinematic about it. A giant bag slipping off your shoulder while you rush across campus somehow feels cooler than standing perfectly still with a tiny purse tucked neatly under your arm. The slouchiness makes an outfit feel effortless, even when the rest of the look is simple.

That contrast is part of what makes the trend work so well.

Tiny tank top with giant leather tote. Ballet flats and a massive suede shoulder bag. Oversized hoodie paired with an even bigger purse.

JULIET BECKER / DAILY NEXUS



The proportions feel slightly ridiculous, which is exactly why they work.

The styling also feels more personal than the tiny-bag era ever did.

People decorate their big bags now. Keychains. Ribbons. Pins. Tiny collectible plushies hanging from zippers. Bags become reflections of personality rather than polished status objects. Even the contents themselves feel strangely revealing.

There's an intimacy to watching someone pull their entire daily life out of a bag piece by piece.

And unlike many fashion trends, this one actually accommodates real life.

College students don't live minimalist lifestyles, no matter how aesthetically pleasing minimalism looks online. We carry too much stuff. We overprepare. We throw random objects into our bags "just in case." Big bags acknowledge that reality instead of pretending otherwise.

Maybe that's why they feel so refreshing right now.

After years of hyper-curated fashion, oversized handbags reintroduce a little chaos. They're impractical in their own way, sure, but they also feel human.

The oversized bag doesn't just carry your belongings. It carries evidence of your life: receipts crumpled at the bottom, journals with bent corners, lipstick rolling somewhere near your keys.

Sometimes the chicest thing an outfit can say is: I have somewhere to be, and I brought everything with me.

*Arna Churiwala believes a good bag should hold your entire life.*

JULIET BECKER / DAILY NEXUS

JULIET BECKER / DAILY NEXUS



Siobhan Stewart  
Beat Reporter

A video of a bride dancing on her wedding day to "Midnight Sun" by Zara Larsson landed on my TikTok For You Page the other day. She was hitting every beat of the dance choreography for the popular song with her bridesmaids.

One of the biggest and most joyous days in one's life, and this bride chose to remember her special day dancing with her girls to "Midnight Sun." That video illuminates the power Zara Larsson has recently accumulated. Not just an artist people stream, but one that people want to move to.

"Midnight Sun" debuted in the top 10 in multiple countries, and the title track alone has surpassed hundreds of millions of streams globally. On TikTok, videos set to her songs have accumulated billions of views, with fans recreating her choreography in gyms, homes and wedding receptions.

Zara Larsson is not a new name. The Swedish singer has been in pop music since her breakout, racking up

## put me on aux

### Midnight Sun's endless run

hits like "Lush Life," "Never Forget You" and "Symphony." She was always talented, always present. But there is something different happening now with "Midnight Sun," her fifth studio album released in September 2025. The cultural moment surrounding it is less like a comeback and more like an arrival.

The album is dance-pop, the kind that makes people want to sing along and move, inspired by the endless light of Swedish summers. It also carries the DNA of her 2010s hits. That nostalgia had been building before the record dropped; in 2024, a dolphin meme set to "Symphony" went viral, and Larsson did not shy away from it. She embraced it.

That energy carried into her aesthetic too — eccentric, vibrant, unapologetically maximalist. She has a bright look that can be spotted miles away. Her signature colorful charm belts may seem like a small detail until you notice how many fans have started wearing them or making their own. That is the mark of an artist who has built not just a sound but a world, one people genuinely want to be a part of.

The sense of belonging doesn't stop at the screen.

Larsson has been pulling fans on stage to dance with her during her Midnight Sun Tour, and the footage of these moments has spread all over social media.

She chooses random people to come up, showing no signs of bias. Her inclusion of members of the audience has even allowed many of them to find their own moment of fame, gaining millions of views and some even being interviewed about their magical experience for news shows like ABC.

She shares an inside look at her world, thinking the people who made it possible for her to be where she is while celebrating with them. An artist who does not just perform at an audience but invites them into the show itself, turns a concert into a shared experience, and it speaks to why her fan base feels so connected to her right now.

Beyond sharing her platform with her fans, she also shares her sparkling moments with her dancers on stage. Every performance she invites her backup dancers to have their own introduction moments, letting them be more than just the background. They have a small dance while a song with lyrics about themselves plays.

She is known to be a "girl's girl," someone who supports and uplifts other women. And that spirit is visible in everything she does.

What is perhaps the most inspiring is the variety of people she connects with. Her music isn't unique to one demographic. Kids are into it. Young adults are into it. Brides are dancing to it at their weddings. There is an energy Larsson brings, the joy and the physicality that transcends the limitation of certain ages.

She is an inspiration that you can choose to not be written off after a few hit-songs. A lesson that when the moment comes, you don't let it pass. You turn it into something new. Larsson caught the wave of motion from a silly dolphin-meme that many people would have dismissed and rode it to unseen heights. Proof that it is never too late to become the star you've always dreamed of.

But saturation has a cost. Her music has reached every corner of the world. Locally, I hear it in the stores, on the social media apps, in advertisements and from my friends. I've got to be real. I think it is overplayed.

While I did enjoy the song

the first few times I heard it, and the videos of her fans dancing are sweet, Larsson's "Midnight Sun" has begun to annoy me. It is catchy in a similar way to when your siblings sing the same verse over and over. I never seem to be able to get it out of my head. However, that is the power of a truly infectious song.

The song being overplayed is in itself proof of something clicking with people. In this day and age it is very hard to create something that is trending longer than a minute. And Larsson produced something beyond a trend. She has started her own era. And one that others can be a part of.

That bride on my For You Page was not just picking a wedding song. She was choosing a feeling — joy, movement, a dance to bond with her friends for her special moment. A moment she will cherish for the rest of her life. That is what Zara Larsson has given people with this era. It is not something you can manufacture. A feeling, a community and a genuine culture. That is what separates a pop star from a cultural moment.

*Siobhan believes everyone deserves their own dolphin-meme moment in life.*

# ON THE MENU



## Ethnoburbs and motherlands: The flavors of home



The San Gabriel Valley is the largest ethnoburb in the United States.



Lunch at a Taiwanese restaurant with Ama and Agong after they ordered the entire



To my grandparents, food is a love language.



My first and only time in the motherland was when I was eight years old.

**Lauren Chiou**  
*Artsweek Editor*

I got lunch at a Taiwanese restaurant with Ama and Agong and they ordered the entire menu.

I met them at a restaurant in my hometown — San Gabriel, just east of Los Angeles. My grandparents visit San Gabriel pretty frequently. I would like to think it's because of me, but I know I'm not the only reason. They come for the food.

The San Gabriel Valley is the largest ethnoburb in the United States. It's a popular home to Asian immigrants, bringing the motherland to the States and creating a culturally rich and diverse city that fiercely defies Americanization. Its economy is driven by the small businesses of Asian immigrants, primarily our famous restaurant scene with flavors so notable they're spoken about in the motherland.

When the waiter came to our table and Ama started rattling off menu items in Taiwanese, I felt my face blush with embarrassment

at each additional dish added to our order. Pork, oyster and pork-and-oyster soup. Fishcake. Fried squid. Braised pork chop. Pickled cabbage, marinated cucumber, bok choy and garlic. Shrimp noodles. Oyster pancake.

As the 16 (yes, 16) dishes got delivered to our table, I stared in disbelief at the sea of plates.

"I ordered extra for leftovers," Ama said. "I don't want you to forget the taste of our home."

To my grandparents, who immigrated to the U.S. from Taiwan in the 1970s, food is a love language. We're a not-so-affectionate bunch, preferring to show love by wordlessly scooping third helpings onto dinner plates instead of giving hugs.

My first and only time in the motherland was when I was eight years old. Ama and Agong took my family on a two-week trip to Taiwan, showing us their childhood homes and the beauties of the island. To this day, it's the most heartwarming display of love I've ever experienced.

I remember that trip in flashes — monkeys in the trees, mopeds on the street. Cigarette and street vendor smoke filling my lungs and clouding my eyes. Aerial views of night markets from my father's shoulders. Cartwheeling in front of a Buddhist temple. Sitting on a plastic vinyl couch in the living room, listening to relatives bicker in a foreign language.

What's most potent in my memory are the flavors of Taiwan. Second helpings of braised pork rice and roast duck with hoisin sauce. Reaching across the table to grab rice rolls for breakfast. Slurping noodle soup with such fervor that I splash my mother's shirt with broth. Sneaking away extra packages of sweet and crumbly pineapple cake, hiding them in my pocket to eat on the train.

Maintaining this appetite was effortless in the San Gabriel Valley, where Asian flavors are rampant. Dim sum and bingsu and sashimi were regulars in my diet, exploring diverse cultures through meals

with friends and family. I didn't actively seek out this form of cultural education, I was simply surrounded by it.

I never realized the privilege of culture until I moved away to college. During my years living in Santa Barbara, the closest thing I got to xiaolongbao were frozen soup dumplings from Trader Joe's. I used chopsticks to eat popcorn. On Lunar New Year, I ate a hamburger.

It wasn't until I spent a quarter abroad in London when I began to yearn for flavors of my past. As I tolerated mushy potatoes and peas and battered fish, it became apparent that I was lost in a culinary sense. I was homesick for a home beyond San Gabriel — I wanted to see the monkeys in the trees and sneak pineapple cake from the pantry.

I never thought my diet would influence how I experienced my culture and viewed my background, or considered that it might be a dishonor to the cultural experiences gifted to me by my

grandparents. I lost my taste for my motherland's flavors and made no effort to maintain that unique connection.

Food has that effect, the power to capture the heart-wrenching taste of home in a bowl of noodles. When I came home from my three months abroad, I went to get a bowl of beef noodle soup in San Gabriel. I ate it so fervently that the savory broth pooled around the bowl, t-shirt stained and stomach happy.

That lunch with Ama and Agong was the first time I had traditional Taiwanese food in almost four years. As we worked our way through each of the 16 dishes sitting at our table, I felt closer to the home of my grandparents and my namesake. It was like I was eight years old again, eating persimmons on the streets of Taipei as Agong reminisced on his childhood.

I took three to-go containers back with me to Santa Barbara. Snuck away some extra pineapple cake as well.

## 21 food lessons I've learned by 21



Bún chả in Hanoi, Vietnam.



Wine tasting in Tuscany, Italy.



The first apple pie I ever baked.

**Polly Symes**  
*Reporter*

On the 11th of July 2026, I will officially turn 21. In August, I will celebrate this birthday with a lovingly planned three-course meal followed by a ceilidh, a traditional Scottish dance, in a hotel by the seaside with friends and family.

Twenty-first birthdays in the United Kingdom mean somewhat less now than in previous generations, with 18 now being more widely recognized as the crossing into adulthood: the one that legalizes the purchasing of alcohol, the right to vote and to buy property.

However, inspired by the work of @out-of-season-fruit and her article "30 (food) lessons I've learned by 30" on Substack, here is my own spin-off for my 21st year of living, detailing "21 (food) lessons I've learned by 21."

Ages 1-8, I remember relishing cold, sweet ice lollies while lying in the green grass of our family garden, licking batter-laden spoons in the kitchen while my mother baked fairy cakes for school bake sales, and using raisins to write my name out in cursive on our dining room table.

At 12, I hosted a 'whipped cream fight' as a birthday party, and at 14, I remember the excitement when my friends and I were allowed to

order Domino's pizza after a beach trip. Later adolescence and the schooling that accompanied it was a challenge; I was soothed by the hot chicken pies my mother took out of the oven through the winter, and the ridiculous pot noodles loaded with food additives that I shared with my sister.

18 was the first year that I lived independently from my family, travelling in Italy and Vietnam and living in London for the first time. With Vietnam came incredible bún cha and terrible bao, and in Italy, I was mostly too young and too broke to eat out much, but developed a profound appreciation for Chianti Classico red wine. Beginning university, I learned the challenge of cooking meals every evening to eat alone, and of sharing a kitchen with a family of mice.

Now, at 20 but in my 21st year of life, my palette has learned the brilliance of Mexican cuisine that has had such a big impact on California, the beauty of supermarkets where they pack your shopping (thank you, Trader Joe's) and the joy of realizing that the foods you thought you didn't like are actually delicious (crab and avocado, respectively).

Beyond that, what follows are 21 lessons I have learned about food in 21 years living on planet Earth:

The freezer is there for a reason: use it. If you live alone and are tired of eating the same thing every day,

freeze a couple of portions for a rainy day. Also, every freezer must contain a bag of frozen peas and a pint of ice cream at any given moment — you never know when you'll run out of fresh vegetables or be in need of a last minute dessert.

Salt is the secret ingredient to almost every dish. A tomato sauce is transformed from bland to brilliant with the correct amount of salt, and a chocolate chip cookie goes from good to dizzyingly divine with a sprinkling of sea salt.

Always have some form of cheese in your fridge and a bag of tortillas in your pantry. Quesadillas are quick, tasty and require very little headspace to prepare.

Someone who makes you tea is someone who loves you.

Spending your evening preparing a delicious, homemade meal in the company of a jazz album by Stacey Kent is often more enjoyable than staying out at the club until 4 a.m.

Getting through a British winter is not for the weak: go to the pub once a week for a half-pint of cider and a bag of crisps — things will feel a little easier.

Don't let food-related stress stop you from cooking for your friends. Sharing a meal with people you love can be as simple as a bag of penne pasta and a jar of basil pesto.

When you are cooking for yourself, you can eat pasta as many times a week as you want.

If you are craving teriyaki sauce but don't have teriyaki sauce on-hand, you can make your own with soy sauce, sugar/honey, garlic, ginger and cornflour.

A tall glass of cold milk from the fridge, together with a few squares of milk chocolate (or Reese's) from the cupboard, is the perfect thing to inhale when you have just got back from the club at 4:30 a.m.

You love the smell of garlic on your fingers. Always use double the amount of garlic a recipe suggests.

If following an online recipe, either print it or write it out by hand — making bread dough does not go well with sticky hands tapping at an iPad screen.

Food-centric first dates are not the way forward — something about first-date butterflies will completely ruin your appetite. Instead, do a memorable activity, like an outdoor swim or a trip to a new place in your city.

Get a job that allows you to try a new restaurant in London every now and again. It will make you love the city more.

You will never "grow out" of eating cake batter and cookie dough. As long as you are in the U.K. — or any other country where eggs are properly refrigerated and chickens are vaccinated — eating small amounts of raw egg in baking batter won't be a problem.

That being said, do not eat egg in any manner in Croatia — your

"Mama Mia" dream will soon morph into a two-week hospital stay while you and your entire family recover from salmonella.

Don't feel guilty for splurging on a good quality virgin olive oil. Beyond using it to sauté onions, it really does have profound seasoning power: drizzled over soups, risottos and pastas it is utter heaven.

Dry herb collections are a long-term investment: you'll only have to buy most of them once every few years. So just buy them all; it'll pay off quickly.

Cold lettuce-based salad is never going to work for a winter lunch. Go for homemade soups, hot quinoa-kale salads and croque madames.

Chili oil is a beautiful thing. Enough said.

Using stock cubes, jarred curry paste or ready-made puff pastry does not constitute 'cheating'. There is no 'cheating' in the kitchen, only useful tips that make things a little easier: if a stock cube is what pushes you to make leek and potato soup, and if Thai red curry paste encourages you to make Thai red curry and puff pastry encourages you to make apple pie, these must be good things.

That's about it for 21 food lessons in 21 years of life. I am excited to see what lessons the next couple of decades will bring!

# FILL OUT OUR 'BEST OF' SURVEY



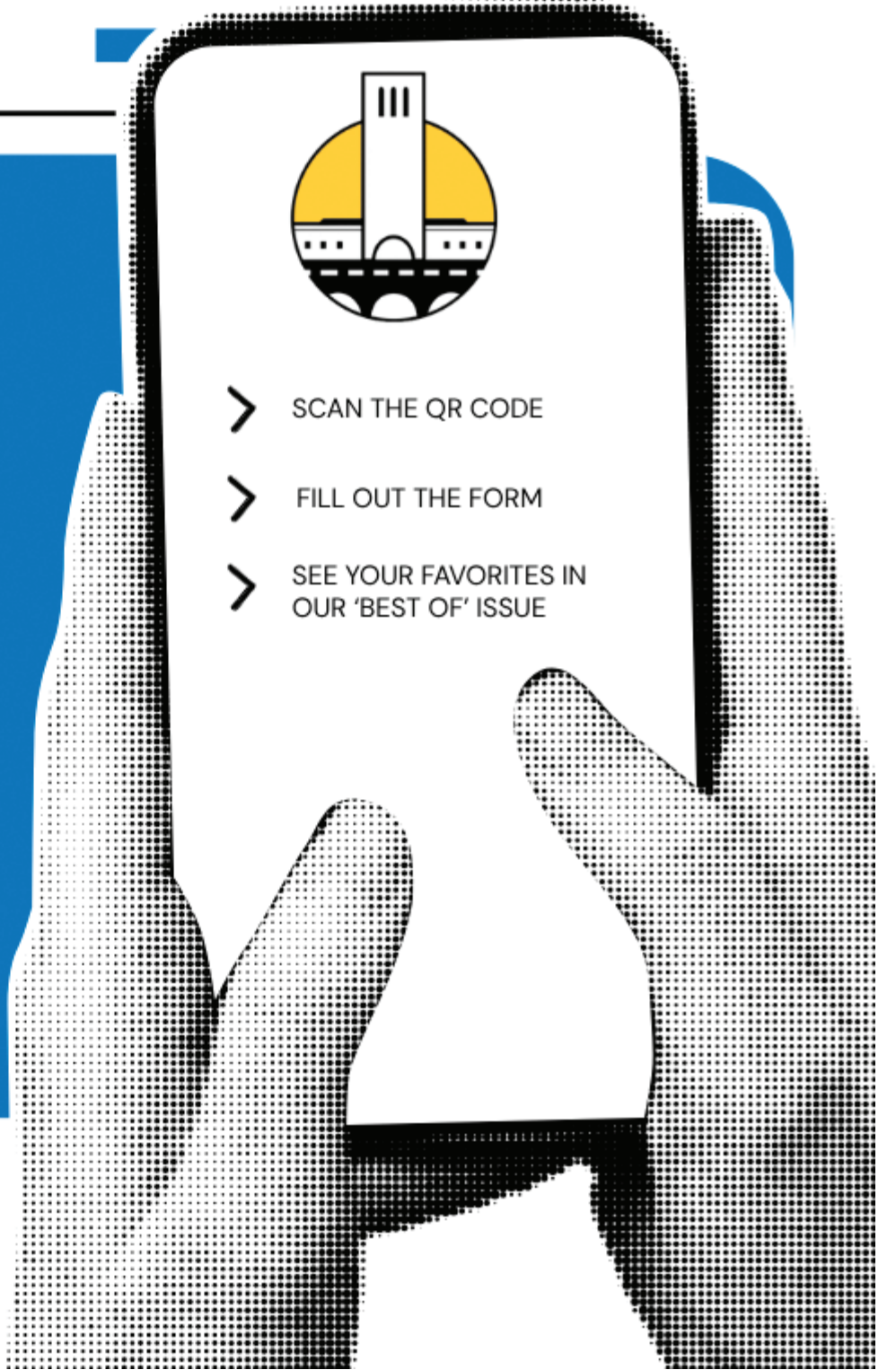
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OUR 'BEST OF' ISSUE





# NEXUSTENTIALISM

It's Satire, Stupid.

## DOs and DON'Ts of Extravaganza

### DO:

- bring open containers
- bring children
- stand up to cops/security
- crowd surf
- praise our president
- talk to your ex
- make love, not war
- smoke on others
- litter
- boo artists

### DON'T:

- wear deodorant
- sing or dance
- wear sunscreen
- be mindful of others
- sing or dance
- be loud
- make eye contact with others
- wear shoes or socks
- practice safe sex
- bring Access ID
- eat beforehand



JULIET BECKER / DAILY NEXUS



JULIET BECKER / DAILY NEXUS



MADELINE BRYCE / DAILY NEXUS

### Extravaganza lineup unites straights, gays alike

### Horses escape from 68 Pasado, find frat ketamine

Jesse Joint  
*Frat correspondent*

Last weekend, as the usual Isla Vista festivities began to bathe the town in multi-colored lights and the sound of 40 beginner bands, an unusual newcomer to the Goleta scene took the night by storm, or rather, by hoof.

According to eyewitness accounts, at around 11:17 p.m. on Saturday evening, over 16 horses had escaped containment from the shackles of one of the nearby 68 Pasado estates and had begun bolting down the nearby Sabado Tarde and Pasado streets toward the direction of campus, at speeds up to 30 mph.

Nearby student Stacy Bridles, a third-year statistics and data science major, was an eyewitness to the outbreak of equestrian domination.

"It all just happened so fast," Bridles stated. "They were all going the same direction like a homing beacon. Like that one fierce scene in 'The Incredibles': 'Do you know where your husband is!?' Ugh Edna Mode,

iconic."

Bridles then steered back on track.

"Anyway, it was like they had an objective, like they were drawn to something," she said.

The source of the horse's rambunctious outing was found within the Kappa Epsilon Tau (KET) fraternity, where after the horses had bolted across the I.V. region, they landed within the back of their notorious "Blizzard Gettin' Slizzered" function.

After they had broken the perimeter, a periwinkle horse quickly dashed through and knocked over an unsuspecting KET frat member, revealing a suspiciously large bag of ketamine onto the floor of the backyard.

As the periwinkle horses neighed in jubilee, other horses entered through and crowded around the exposed ketamine and began to joyously lick up its contents.

Then, as the horses were leaving the party comfortably numb, we were quickly able to grab a few words with the groundbreaking periwinkle

horse who led the charge.

"The night was just not the vibe and once I heard that KET was having one of their 'snow' functions, me and the other equestrian girls decided that we would have to make an appearance," Amanda, a third-year communication major and proud periwinkle horse, said.

"I'm so excited we came out here tonight and now we are a set diva!" Amanda added as she trotted out with the rest of her horse friends.

As the parties died down, many of the horses were reportedly seen racing Lime scooters, beautifully evoking a synergy between nature and machine. This display was sadly interrupted as animal enforcement arrived to wrangle the horses back to the Pasado estates they called home.

Although the night of the horses was brought to an end as they rested in their stables, they are now eagerly awaiting their next bout in town.

*Jessie Joint will be hitting up KET.*

High Value Female  
*Hungry*

Extravaganza's lineup has finally been released and, surprisingly, UC Santa Barbara students of all sexualities have united over the artists picked to perform.

Preceding the announcement of the lineup, students took to platforms such as Yik Yak to announce which artists they didn't want to see perform. Despite this immense pressure, the Associated Students Program Board (ASPB) thankfully pulled through and managed to snag a lineup of performers that actually aren't all terrible. A fascinating phenomenon has now occurred: students of all sexualities have made plans to attend Extravaganza.

"When I saw Dominic Fike on the lineup, I knew I had to pull up. His music is so good!" Lauren Sanchez, a third-year communication major who identifies as a lesbian, said.

This sentiment was shared by Matthew Stern, a heterosexual second-year biology major. "When I saw Dominic Fike on the lineup, I knew I had to pull up. I don't really listen to him but I know chicks love him and

I'm kinda in a dry spell right now so I kinda need this."

Students have begun to notice how students of different sexualities aren't actually that different to themselves. Michaela Rosenberg, a heterosexual fourth-year political science major, has finally begun speaking to the bisexual girl in her sorority after almost four years of silence.

"I just remember always thinking that those gay girls were gonna creep on me in the high school locker room, cause like, who wouldn't? Anyways, after hearing that the weird lesbian girl in my sorority also likes Earl Sweatshirt, I've just realized how wrong I was about the gays," Rosenberg said. She has gone on to become a volunteer with LGBTQ advocacy organization GLAAD.

Despite all of the political challenges going on today, it's nice to see that Gauchos are finding ways to connect with each other and overall becoming more accepting. However this begs the question: is Extravaganza more important than Stonewall?

*High Value Female is happy to be living through LGBTQIA+ history.*

# GAMES

## The Daily Nexus games

	1	2	3
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	7					8	5
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	6					1	
	1			3	5		
7	5					2	3
							7

Sanchita Koppa  
Assistant Games Editor

**Down**  
1. Santa \_\_\_\_ (city northwest of Santa Barbara)  
2. Place to exchange vows  
3. Short videos that may be shared in Instagram DMs  
4. Dig, as a tunnel  
5. To catch

**Across**  
1. Embarcadero del \_\_\_\_  
4. Bundle of hay  
5. Embarcadero del \_\_\_\_  
6. Common default font option  
7. Pandas and grizzlies


Sanchita Koppa  
Assistant Games Editor

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	
9					10				
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19							20	21	22
			23						
24	25	26		27			28		
29			30				31		
32							33		
34							35		

**Across**  
1. Participate in an election  
5. One of the Four Corners states  
9. Follow commands  
10. Air horn sound  
11. Word after picket or finish  
12. Lab container  
13. Emoticon akin to OwO  
14. Open \_\_\_\_ night  
15. S.B. to L.A. direction  
16. Mexican folk music genre  
19. Celsius, but not Fahrenheit  
23. Great-great-great-grandparent, e.g.  
24. CBS forensic franchise  
27. Ailing  
28. Rival city to S.B. in the Blue-Green Rivalry  
29. Dangerous  
31. "Break \_\_\_\_!" (good luck)  
32. Tummy  
33. Small snack  
34. "Immediately!"  
35. Michelin rating unit

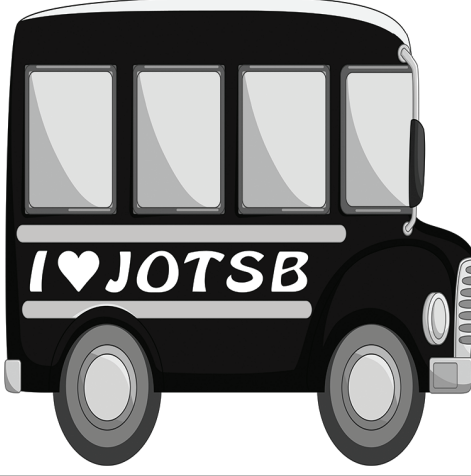
**Down**  
1. It may be measured in cups  
2. Jedi Kenobi  
3. Job security, for a professor  
4. Part of a potato or a hurricane  
5. T.A. alternative, in many S.T.E.M. classes  
6. Seize  
7. Greek god of war  
8. Response during attendance  
10. \_\_\_\_ test (measure of female representation in media)  
12. Mode of transportation

for many UC Santa Barbara students  
14. Make bigger, in a way  
17. 401(k) alternative  
18. Org. collecting taxes  
20. "This party's hype!"  
21. Unincorporated neighborhood west of Santa Barbara, informally  
22. Albertsons rival  
24. Country famous for cigars  
25. Console for "Super Mario World," for short  
26. \_\_\_\_ Vista  
30. Swiss peak  
31. Six-pack muscles

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# LA VISTA



## Confiar en los tiempos de Dios

Ana Ramirez Cermeno  
Escritora para La Vista

Muchas veces en la vida queremos resolver nuestros problemas rápidamente o cumplir nuestras metas en cierto tiempo.

Planeamos cómo queremos que sucedan las cosas y esperamos resultados inmediatos.

Sin embargo, cuando las cosas no pasan como esperamos o tardan más de lo que imaginamos, es fácil sentir frustración y pensar que nada está saliendo bien.

Yo también he sentido eso muchas veces.

Hay momentos en los que uno se desespera porque siente que sus sueños, metas o planes no avanzan.

A veces vemos que otras personas logran cosas rápidamente y comenzamos a preguntarnos por qué nuestra vida no va igual.

Esa comparación puede hacernos sentir inseguros o pensar que estamos fallando.

Pero con el tiempo he aprendido algo muy

importante: Dios tiene tiempos perfectos.

No todo sucede cuando nosotros queremos, sino cuando realmente debe pasar.

Aunque a veces no entendamos por qué ciertas cosas tardan, eso no significa que Dios nos haya olvidado o que nuestros sueños no se vayan a cumplir.

Muchas veces, los procesos difíciles también nos enseñan paciencia, fortaleza y fe.

Si todo ocurriera exactamente cuando nosotros quisiéramos, quizás no aprenderíamos a valorar las cosas de la misma manera.

Hay experiencias que nos preparan para lo que viene después, aunque en el

momento no podamos verlo.

Siento que uno de los mayores retos es aprender a confiar mientras esperamos.

Vivimos en una generación acostumbrada a la gratificación instantánea, donde queremos respuestas y resultados inmediatos.

Sin embargo, la vida no siempre funciona así.

Algunas cosas necesitan tiempo para crecer y acomodarse de la manera correcta.

Por eso creo que no debemos desesperarnos cuando las cosas no salen según nuestros planes.

Cada meta, cada sueño y cada situación tiene su momento adecuado.

A veces lo que parece un retraso en realidad es una preparación para algo mejor.

También he aprendido que confiar en Dios trae paz.

No significa que nunca vayamos a sentir miedo o preocupación, pero sí significa creer que todo tiene un propósito y que las cosas llegarán en el momento correcto.

Confiar en los tiempos de Dios es entender que no necesitamos tener el control de todo.

Aunque no siempre entendamos lo que está pasando, debemos seguir adelante con fe y paciencia.

Lo que es para nosotros llegará en el tiempo perfecto y en el momento adecuado.



CORTESÍA DE ISTOCK

## Memento mori: ¿Qué hace que la muerte sea muerte?

Azucena Sanchez  
Editora para La Vista

Estaba pensando en la muerte. No de una forma que provoque preocupación, sino más bien del tipo que me hace cuestionar la muerte en sí misma.

Me pregunto qué es exactamente lo que hace que la muerte sea, bueno, la muerte.

La vida tiene un comienzo; la Biblia afirma que surge con el primer aliento, otros dicen que es el momento en que uno se siente más vivo.

Como al saltar de un avión.

Y otros dicen que la vida comienza en el momento de la concepción.

Independientemente de lo que pienses, siempre hay un comienzo.

Pero, ¿qué es lo que la convierte en un final?

¿Qué significa exactamente morir?

¿Es cuando el cuerpo, el alma y la mente están en silencio?

¿Cuando los pensamientos se han ido y la sangre deja de correr?

¿O es como dijo una vez Martha Graham: "Un bailarín muere dos veces: una cuando deja de bailar, y esta primera muerte es más dolorosa"?

¿Es la muerte el momento en que uno experimenta el fin de hacer lo que alguna vez amó?

Hay múltiples formas de muerte y, en realidad, las cuestiono todas.

La primera muerte de un artista es cuando ya no puede dedicarse a su arte, pero ¿es realmente la muerte si vuelve a tomar un lápiz años después de haberlo dejado?

¿O cuando un pianista vuelve a descubrir su amor por el piano?

¿Eso cuenta como un renacimiento?

De cualquier manera, hace unos años leí "La ladrona de libros" y, sinceramente, mientras pensaba en la muerte, no pude evitar recordar al narrador del libro, que es la Muerte misma.

El hecho de que la Muerte esté escrita con tanta empatía y vea la vida humana como algo trágico, pero al mismo tiempo como algo que puede atormentar incluso a la propia muerte, es muy curioso.

En la novela, la Muerte hace un comentario que me hizo detenerme y respirar hondo: "Los humanos, si algo tienen, es el buen sentido de morir".

Lo que quiere decir con eso es que lo que nos hace humanos, es el hecho de que vivimos y luego morimos.

No vivimos para siempre.

A veces, solo vivimos por un respiro.

Sin embargo, tenemos el privilegio de morir.

Querer vivir para siempre parece agotador, incluso aterrador.

Vivir hasta que el mundo vea su propia muerte, eso no es ningún privilegio, sino que, para mí, significa codicia.

Y, en realidad, los humanos somos codiciosos.

Incluso después de la muerte pedimos que se nos recuerde.

Por eso creamos arte.

Por eso, desde el principio, los hombres de las cavernas crearon arte en las cuevas.

Las huellas dactilares y los bloques de piedra permanecen grabados en los recovecos más profundos del mundo.

Los recordamos, tal vez no a quien dibujó los caballos o a las personas, pero ellos siguen vivos a través de su arte.

Por eso los poetas escriben y los autores crean novelas.

Desean mantener vivas sus palabras, para que, incluso cuando ya no estén, sus palabras puedan seguir tocando los corazones de muchos.

Así que, una vez más, me quedo preguntándome qué es

Sinceramente, en mi opinión, nuestra muerte no tiene un comienzo.

Físicamente hablando, sí lo tiene; podríamos enfermarnos, tener una enfermedad terminal, pero aparte de eso, para muchos de nosotros, la muerte nos llega en un día cualquiera.

Nos visitará en silencio una tardecita al azar, y el mundo seguirá girando.

Solo aquellos que nos conocieron nos llorarán.

Pero no la Tierra.

Seremos devorados por insectos, por gusanos que crearán un hogar dentro de nuestro cuerpo ya moribundo.

El tiempo mismo pasará, y nos descompondremos.

Entonces, ¿es la muerte el acto físico de morir?

¿Cuando el cuerpo es abandonado a su suerte y todo lo que queda son huesos?

¿O es cuando los recuerdos de nuestra existencia ya no existen?

Esto me hace pensar en el dolor.

En el momento en que te enteras del fallecimiento de un

¿Cuando nuestra voz se convierte en un susurro hasta que solo se oye un murmullo?

¿Es eso lo que nos lleva a la muerte?

En mi cultura, tenemos la creencia de que los que fallecen pueden regresar por unos momentos si les ofrecemos recuerdos de cuando vivían.

Comida, juguetes, ropa, bebidas o oraciones.

Las cosas que tenemos de ellos, fotos, memorias, les ayudan a volver con nosotros.

Esas "cosas" son la encarnación física de sus recuerdos, y estos recuerdos son lo que los mantiene vivos en nuestras vidas.

Entonces, si empezamos a olvidarlos, poco a poco, y estos objetos terminan dentro de una caja hasta que se venden un sábado por la tarde en una venta de garaje, ¿su muerte se convierte finalmente en el final?

Y si es así, ¿es ahí cuando el sufrimiento desaparece?

Pensando en el dolor, el cuerpo experimenta primero la ausencia de la persona.

Como suele decirse, el tiempo lo cura todo.

Pero el tiempo simplemente hace que los recuerdos de quienes una vez vivieron se desvanezcan.

Su existencia sigue presente, pero de forma débil.

Y, sinceramente, puede que te olvides de ellos por un instante, pero si pasa algo bueno, o si quieres desahogarte por algo, los llamarás.

Quizás grites su nombre, esperando una respuesta fuerte desde el otro lado de la habitación, o los llares esperando que contesten después del segundo tono.

He leído varios poemas que ven la muerte como algo hermoso, la describen como si fuera algo precioso; una flor delicada que florece y se marchita con el tiempo.

Es hermoso verla florecer, pero desgarrador ver caer su primer pétalo.

La muerte, como he llegado a aprender, no es solo física. No es solo cuando el cuerpo se enfría.

Es cuando los recuerdos empiezan a desvanecerse poco a poco.

Cuando el tiempo comienza a arrebatarle la vida de esa persona. Cuando el color de sus ojos empieza a desvanecerse de tu memoria.

¿Eran sus ojos de un marrón oscuro?

¿Tenían tonos verdes o amarillos?

Estos pensamientos me hacen sentir como si estuviera en un carrusel.

Pienso en la vida de mis seres queridos, en los recuerdos que ahora atesorar, en cómo mi propia memoria es fallida.

Olvido con facilidad, no guardo los recuerdos sentimentales con tanta fuerza como debería.

Temo que mi propia muerte no me resulte nada aterradora.

Es fácil morir, a veces doloroso, pero casi siempre, fácil.

Siento que la muerte me abrazará con ternura, así que no le temo.

La muerte debe ser amable con muchos, pero para quienes permanecen vivos, es la peor de las agonías.

Como dije, mi muerte no me asusta, pero la idea de que alguien a quien amo muera me produce una sensación de frío en el pecho.

Vivir después de que otro se haya ido; ¿cuánto dolor podrá soportar el cuerpo?

¿Se convierte esa muerte en la primera de quien se queda?

¿Acaso ellos también experimentan dos muertes?

¿Y acaso, como algunos artistas que han vuelto a la vida, llegarán a experimentar un renacimiento?

realmente la muerte.

¿Qué es exactamente lo que hace que la muerte sea muerte?

¿Es el hecho de que dejamos de respirar?

¿Que nuestro corazón deja de latir?

¿Es el acto físico de la muerte?

¿El momento en que nuestro cuerpo se enfría?

¿El momento en que nos entierran bajo dos metros de tierra?

¿Es eso lo que hace que la muerte sea real?

ser querido, de cómo el dolor resuena a través de las paredes y atraviesa tu cuerpo de manera inmensa.

El cuerpo reacciona.

Justo como cuando uno muere. Es verdaderamente una reacción física.

¿Pero es ese realmente el final de la muerte de una persona?

¿La ausencia de respiración?

¿La pausa infinita de su latido del corazón?

¿O es cuando se olvidan nuestras risas?

Pero la mente tarda en asimilarlo.

Una mañana te despertarás y querrás llamar a tu mamá, o a tu papá, o a tu hermana, o a un amigo.

No te darás cuenta de que ya no están.

Te resultará algo natural, porque esa persona aún no ha desaparecido de tus recuerdos.

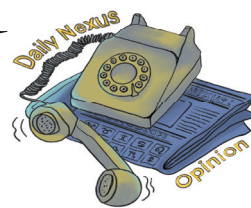
Quizás sus cosas ya no estén, pero los recuerdos de quienes fueron en vida permanecen.

Llevará tiempo.



CORTESÍA DE ADOBE STOCK

# OPINION



## Celebrated, but still unseen

Claire Kim  
Reporter

In the sixth grade, I wrote in my notes app: "Why even bother anymore? he doesn't like me, he'll never like me. if he has a girl like [her] who likes him vs a nerdy sixth-grade fugly asian who would ANYONE prefer? not me, that's for sure."

I know. Yikes.

It's embarrassing to look back on, but it creates a window into understanding something important: Racism doesn't only exist in laws, headlines or jokes but festers in the way a child learns to hate her own face before she's ever had the chance to grow into it.

I know what it felt like to grow up in primarily white schools and want to disappear into whiteness.

I know the burning sensation from taping, poking and prodding my eyelids until my skin turned raw.

I know the disappointment of looking in the mirror after listening to subliminals on YouTube that promised a tall nose bridge and blue eyes overnight.

I know what it felt like to believe that the parts of myself that made me Asian were the same parts that made me less beautiful, less desirable, less worthy of being loved.

So, yes, part of me wants to be grateful. I would be lying if I said that the rise of Asian cultural visibility didn't play a role in developing my own confidence. There is a certain pride in watching the things I once felt ashamed of become something admirable.

That pride isn't limited to me. I see it in my peers, in my family and in the way young Asian Americans are learning to take pride in things many of us once hid. Undeniably, there is joy in that, but another part of me knows that being admired is not the same as being understood.

But then, it feels strange to celebrate Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month when it seems like we are already doing it every day. The rise of Asian culture — the food, music and fashion — is undeniable, and for Asian Americans who grew up feeling ashamed of those things, it can feel good.

But, two truths can exist at once: Asian culture can be consumed without being understood. If we make the mistake of believing that selective celebration is the same as real belonging, we risk accepting the same stereotypes that make us visible as a trend but invisible as people.

The Asian American Foundation (TAAF) 2026 Social Tracking of Asian Americans in the United States (STAATUS) Index observes that the American public sees AAPI influence most in food, restaurants, online culture gaming, digital content, music, fashion and beauty; however, 53% cannot name a major event or policy in Asian American history. Asian Americans are hypervisible when our culture is useful, stylish, consumable or when the internet needs another trend to latch onto. However, we are often unseen when our histories, political activism, vulnerability and immigration struggles need to be recognized.

What does it mean, then, to be celebrated by a country that acts as though visibility is the same as acceptance? Should we still be grateful? Proud? Angry?

That tension became clear last summer, when United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (I.C.E) raids and deportations tore — and continue to tear — through immigrant communities across the United States. Online, criticisms began circulating that Asian Americans were not taking a loud enough stance against the raids — that while families were being

separated, some of us had forgotten our own histories that are rooted in migration, exclusion, detention and violence.

MYUNG J. CHUN / LOS ANGELES TIMES



I understood the frustration, and a part of me felt it too. I wondered whether we had become too comfortable in our cultures' newfound acceptance, too reluctant to trade that comfort for solidarity. The criticism jabbed at the part of me who feels ashamed for relishing in the attention that I once so desperately used to crave.

My first instinct was to ask why Asian Americans were silent. But after speaking with professors who study and teach Asian American history, I realized that this question was incomplete and perhaps I had the wrong question entirely.

Pei-te Lien, an Asian American author, political scientist and professor at UC Santa Barbara, pushed back against the framing directly. What gets counted as "political," she explained, is often limited by media coverage, immigration status, language, generation, culture and narrow definitions of political engagement. Even the category of "Asian American" is difficult to measure because it encompasses so many ethnicities, migration histories,

see Asian Americans as closer to white people, while Black, Hispanic and AAPI respondents are more likely to see Asian



Americans as closer to people of color. What it means to be Asian American shifts depending on who you ask and what story our country wants to tell us about race.

The model minority myth is part of that story. The same index observes that the public places Asian Americans near the upper end of the American social ladder, with 82% of U.S. adults placing Asian Americans in the top half. The public most often describes Asian Americans as "intelligent/smart/educated," "hardworking," and "respectful/polite." The words may sound complimentary, but they're restrictive and deliberate. Created in the context of Black freedom struggles, the myth was born as a byproduct of white supremacy: If Asian Americans could succeed, then structural racism couldn't be to blame for anyone else's struggles. It implied that the right formula was to work hard, stay quiet, be grateful and never demand too much.

detention and deportation. That assumption doesn't mean protection, just the illusion of it, which makes fear harder to see.

"I think there is a fear, and certainly, it's there in families that I know, that if we speak up, we're gonna be targeted," Spickard said.

This fear certainly lives in my own family when my mom texts me asking me to stay away from protests, or when my dad suggests I not write about anything potentially inflammatory — not out of apathy, but out of the fear of our own family being targeted.

And yet, even amid the fears of deportation, Japanese American organizers have marched, helped document arrests and lined streets surrounding schools to protect parents afraid to pick up their children. Many have built solidarity in drawing parallels between World War II Japanese incarceration and present-day detention centers.

Historically, Asian Americans have had a long history of activism. Spickard pushed back directly against the public's assumption of passivity. He pointed to other examples like the Committee of 100, a group of Chinese American leaders, and organizations like Stop AAPI Hate that tend to get overlooked.

"I have not seen Asians be particularly silent; the first organization to step up in public and demand that the American public not punish Muslims in general and Arab Americans was the Japanese American Citizens League because they remembered what had happened to them during WWII. And I think in general, it has been true, actually, that Asians have stood up," Spickard said.

Some of the stereotype of passivity comes from outside our communities. But some of it, I've realized, comes from internalized stereotypes about ourselves

— deeply ingrained in us from years of being told the same narrative about who we are supposed to be. When we criticize Asian Americans as if silence is natural to us, we risk further feeding the flames of the stereotype we are trying to dismantle. Talking to these

professors exposed how much was lacking from my own understanding of Asian American history and politics. The question I should have been asking wasn't "why are Asian Americans not speaking out?" but instead why, when we do speak out, our voices aren't heard. Why, when we speak out, are our voices flattened into stereotypes of passivity?

The same culture that once made me feel ashamed and insecure did not become beautiful on its own; it became beautiful when the West decided it was. I am the same girl I was at 12. The food is the same food. The music is the same music. But its value got decided somewhere else, by someone else, for reasons that had nothing to do with me.

Maybe, then, we are allowed to be grateful, proud and angry all at once. Grateful for the parts of ourselves we have had to learn to love.

Proud of the cultures that survived being mocked, excluded and used as trends.

Angry that those same cultures had to be approved by someone else before they were treated as beautiful. Angry that stereotypes about ourselves can be so deeply internalized, it takes research, reporting and interviews to dismantle them.

But gratitude cannot require silence. Pride cannot stop at visibility. And anger cannot only turn inward.

*Claire Kim learned to love herself before she could laugh at herself.*



CLAIRE KIM / DAILY NEXUS

languages and immigration statuses that generalizations flatten more than they reveal.

The confusion about where Asian Americans fit isn't new. We have historically been positioned between the harsh racial binary of Black and white. Quite literally, in the book "Myth of the Model Minority: Asian Americans Facing Racism," Chou and Feagin include the story of a Japanese American man who stopped at a McDonald's in Mississippi during the Jim Crow era. He recalled seeing "two lines, one for whites and the other for blacks," and after being rejected from both lines, he asked, "Ah, what am I!?"



COURTESY OF CBS NEWS

That question still hasn't been fully resolved. The 2026 STAATUS index finds white Americans are more likely to

to immigration enforcement, despite the fact that many Asian American families are deeply affected by immigration status,

## HOROSCOPES

The signs as past  
Extravaganza artists

ARIES

MARCH 21 - APRIL 19

Tinashe

TAURUS

APRIL 20 - MAY 20

Snoop Dogg

GEMINI

MAY 21 - JUNE 20

Drake

CANCER

JUNE 21 - JULY 22

Dayglow

LEO

JULY 23 - AUGUST 22

Disco Lines

VIRGO

AUGUST 23 - SEPTEMBER 22

MF DOOM

LIBRA

SEPTEMBER 23 - OCTOBER 22

Anderson .Paak  
and the Free  
Nationals

SCORPIO

OCTOBER 23 - NOVEMBER 21

Playboi Carti

SAGITTARIUS

NOVEMBER 22 - DECEMBER 21

Peach Pit

CAPRICORN

DECEMBER 22 - JANUARY 19

Kendrick Lamar

AQUARIUS

JANUARY 20 - FEBRUARY 18

Charli xcx

PISCES

FEBRUARY 19 - MARCH 20

Jack Johnson

VIEWS EXPRESSED ON THE OPINION PAGE DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THOSE OF THE DAILY NEXUS OR UCSB. OPINIONS ARE SUBMITTED PRIMARILY BY STUDENTS.



# SPORTS

## UCSB women's rugby claim first ever national championship

Izabella Nickerson  
Staff Writer

For fourth-year economics and accounting major Amber Lau, a national championship title wasn't originally on her 2026 bucket list. In its first appearance at a national championship tournament, UC Santa Barbara's women's rugby team made history by winning the College Rugby Association of America's (CRAA) Rugby 7s national title.

"Winning nationals was an insane moment; we never thought it would happen at that point," Lau said. For the team, making it to a national championship tournament was unexpected. "All of a sudden, we were going to nationals," Lau said. Beyond preparing physically for the tournament, the team leaned into its close-knit culture. According to Lau, some of her teammates dyed pink streaks into their hair. High-stakes bets were also made. "Now our coach is getting a tattoo ... someone is getting a mohawk, and someone's getting a mullet," Lau said.

The weekend began on Saturday, April 25, at the College Rugby Association of America (CRAA)

7s tournament. The Gauchos opened with a 12-0 win over UC Santa Cruz, sweeping the Air Force 33-5 and finishing off with a statement victory of 31-10 over San Jose State. The Gauchos carried their momentum into the Sunday semi-final match against UC Berkeley, narrowly winning 12-10. With a spot in the championship match secured, the Gauchos faced Stanford, dominating with a 22-12 victory. Sweeping through the weekend undefeated, the Gauchos claimed the national championship title, leaving broadcasters stunned. "Who's UCSB, the dark horse?" Lau recalled hearing broadcasters say.

Younger players were also astonished by the team's performance at Nationals. "It was so surreal," said Emily Tucker, a second-year environmental studies and economics major. Both Tucker and Lau entered the tournament with an open mindset. "We play the way we know how to play and see what happens," Tucker said. Lau, who began playing rugby during her second year at UCSB, said the title was especially meaningful because many players had zero prior experience with rugby prior to joining the team. "I ended up falling in love with the

game itself," Tucker said.

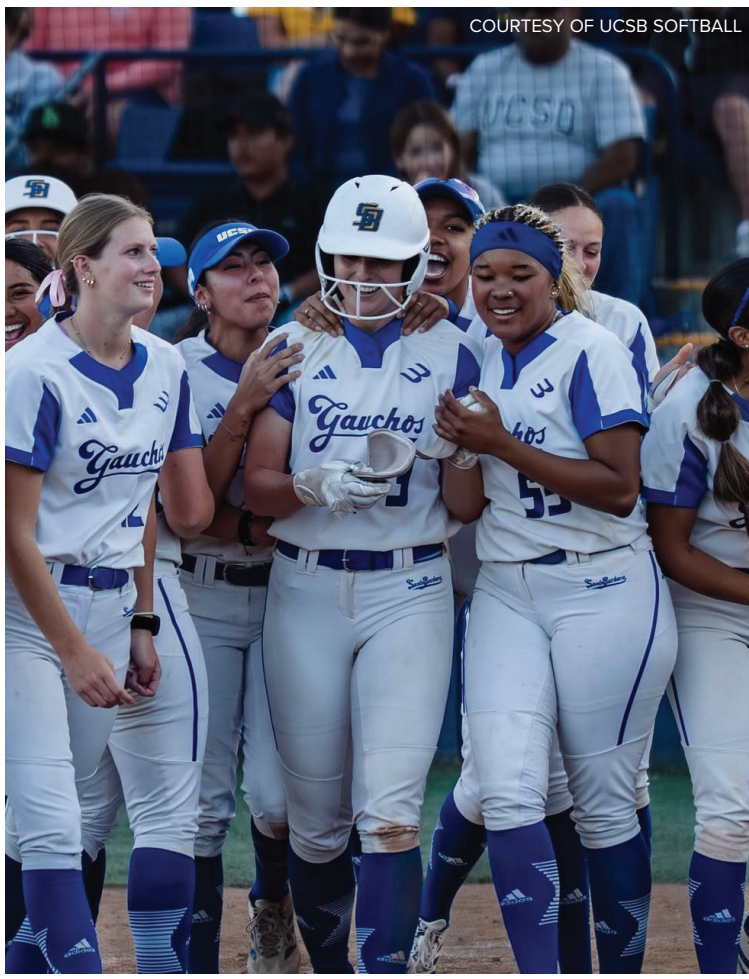
With the tournament taking place in Indianapolis, the team celebrated with some rest during their flight home and reflected on what set them apart. Lau and Tucker attest that the team's spirit got them through nationals. "Plenty of other teams put in a lot of hard work, just as much hard work as us, but the spirit is what carried us all the way to Nationals and through the champs," Tucker said. Additionally, both athletes attributed their team's path to victory as built upon teamwork. "The support and love that we have for each other and the passion for the game," Tucker said.

Celebrating at home, the Gauchos hosted a local 7s tournament on May 2, inviting five teams from the Pacific Desert conference. "National was such a high-intensity tournament," Lau said. "Now, here it is, much lower stakes, and we can just have fun with it." After an undefeated weekend and a historic title run, UCSB women's rugby returned home as national champions for the first time in program history, demonstrating how Gaucho spirit and teamwork is the key to success.



UCSB women's rugby team celebrates after winning the 2026 CRAA Women's Challenger 7s National Championship.

## UCSB softball falls in Big West Championship final despite memorable tournament run



UCSB softball players celebrate at home plate during the Gauchos' run to the 2026 Big West Championship game.

Sunita Zapata  
Sports Reporter

The No. 3 seed UC Santa Barbara softball team's 2026 Big West Championship run came to a close Saturday, May 9, falling 0-1 to No. 1 seed California State University, Fullerton in the title game. They finished the season 31-26, their second consecutive 30-win season, the first time the Gauchos have accomplished the feat since 2013 and 2014.

### Game 1: Gauchos 10, Tritons 9

The tournament opened with one of the more intense games of the season as UCSB and No. 6 seed UC San Diego went back and forth through nine innings.

The Gauchos got on the board first in the opening inning when junior utility player Emily Carr grounded out, allowing freshman infielder Dani Rauscher to score for a 1-0 lead. The Tritons answered with three runs in the third to be up 3-1, before junior pitcher Ainsley Waddell evened things up to tie the game at 3-3 with a two-run shot to right field in the fourth inning.

The Tritons surged ahead with four runs in the fifth to go up 7-3. Senior third baseman Bella

Fuentes hit a two-run homer to left field, and sophomore outfielder Giselle Mejia added an RBI walk to make it 5-7. Rauscher then tied the game at 7-7 on a fielder's choice.

UCSD reclaimed the lead with a solo homer in the sixth, but sophomore catcher Delaina Ma'ae's RBI double tied it again at 8-8.

After scoreless seventh and eighth innings, the Tritons got ahead in the ninth on another solo home run. Waddell responded with her second home run of the game to tie it once more. With bases loaded, freshman pitcher and utility player Ella Myers singled to bring home Mejia and seal the 10-9 walk-off win.

### Game 2: Gauchos 0, Rainbow Wahine 2

UCSB's momentum came to a halt against No. 2 seed University of Hawai'i at Manoa, who scored single runs in the first and second innings, shutting out the Gauchos despite nine UCSB hits.

Rauscher had three of UCSB's nine hits, with Carr and Mejia each chipping in two. The Gauchos put runners on base in five innings but couldn't capitalize, falling 0-2.

### Game 3: Gauchos 13, Beach 10

UCSB kept their season alive with a big offensive performance

against California State University, Long Beach.

After the Beach scored two in the top of the first, the Gauchos put up seven runs in the bottom half to take the lead. Rauscher singled, junior infielder Tehya Banks doubled to bring her home and Myers followed with a two-run homer. Additional RBI singles from Fuentes and Waddell capped the inning.

Waddell put the game away with a three-run homer to lead 11-7. Fuentes and Ma'ae added two more in the sixth, and the Gauchos held on to win 13-10.

### Game 4: Gauchos 8, Rainbow Wahine 6

In a rematch with Hawai'i, UCSB came out sharp. Mejia drove in Banks with an RBI double, and Carr followed with a single to give the Gauchos an early 2-0 lead. Fuentes then delivered an excellent three-run homer in the third to push the score to 6-3.

Freshman pitcher Sophia Clark started and gave UCSB two solid innings before senior pitcher Malaya Johnson took over. Johnson went the final five innings and struck out six, and the Gauchos closed out 8-6 and moved on to the championship game.

## UCSB baseball routs Pepperdine in an eight-inning show

Samia Agarwal  
Staff Writer

The UC Santa Barbara baseball team dominated the Pepperdine University Waves on Tuesday May 5, 13-3 and triggered the NCAA 10-run mercy rule to end the game an inning early. The win was punctuated by a grand slam in the eighth inning from senior second baseman William Vasseur. The Gauchos have now found themselves neck-and-neck for first place in the Big West Conference standings going into their final road series of the season.

Freshman pitcher Josh Jannicelli got the start for UCSB, allowing one hit and one earned run while striking out five batters in just over two innings of play time. The Gauchos' pitching was tight all

game, giving up only six hits and two earned runs in total.

The Gauchos struck early after a double for sophomore center fielder Rowan Kelly and two walks loaded the bases for sophomore left fielder Liam Barrett, whose bases-clearing hit down the right-field line gave UCSB an early advantage. Barrett himself later scored to give the Gauchos a 4-0 lead entering the third inning. The left-fielder finished with two hits and two RBIs in three at-bats.

The Gauchos had a run in the form of an unearned run for the Wave's graduate left-fielder Trey Dunn due to a dropped fly ball in the top of the sixth inning to bring the score to 5-3. Gauchos. Junior UCSB pitcher Cole Tryba entered in relief during the seventh inning and shut down the Wave the rest

of the way. The Gauchos played four pitchers on Tuesday and once again showed why they have the No. 1 ranked pitching group in the conference.

The offensive avalanche was capped off by Vasseur's first career grand slam after three consecutive walks loaded the bases for the second baseman, who made it look easy to left field. He added two total runs and four RBIs to the Gauchos' impressive performance from the hitting side.

After traveling to the California State University, Northridge for their final road-trip, UCSB will host the California Baptist University on Monday, May 11. They look to continue their momentum and extend their hold over the Conference's first place spot.



UCSB baseball players celebrate after a Gaucho home run during Santa Barbara's mercy-rule victory over Cal State Bakersfield.

# ARTSWEEK



## DOMINIC FIKE ANNOUNCED TO HEADLINE EXTRAVAGANZA 2026



SHENGYU ZHANG / DAILY NEXUS

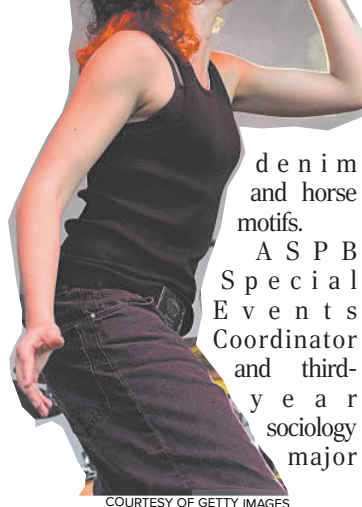
Dominic Fike will be joined by artists JT, Earl Sweatshirt and Jane Remover at the 46th iteration of Extravaganza, UC Santa Barbara's campus music festival.

Elijah Obando  
News Intern

UC Santa Barbara's Associated Students Program Board revealed the lineup for their 46th Extravaganza music festival themed "Wild Wild X" at Storke lawn on May 7. The lineup will feature Dominic Fike as the headliner, along with artists JT, Earl Sweatshirt and Jane Remover.

Extravaganza is an annual, student-only music festival put on by UC Santa Barbara's Associated Students Program Board (ASPB). The 2026 concert is set to take place at Harder Stadium on May 17.

Similar to last year's lineup reveal, ASPB began the event at the Arbor with a dedicated march to Storke Tower. On theme with "Wild Wild X," staff donned traditional western aesthetics such as cowboy boots and hats,



COURTESY OF GETTY IMAGES

Sariya Dyson clarified that contrary to popular belief, the theme selected for Extravaganza is more about aesthetics and has no relation to the event's artists.

"A lot of people think that our theme has to do with the artists, but really it's just about how we plan our release, like all of our graphics and how we want the show to look," Dyson said.

Initial reactions to the lineup were mostly positive — a notable contrast to the mixed reception following last year's Extravaganza. Stefanie Mendoza, a second-year sociology major, expressed her excitement for the artists performing.

"[The artist] I guess I'm less enthusiastic for, but still happy to hear [is] Jane Remover," Mendoza said. "But, I'm really freakin' excited for the bigger three like Earl Sweatshirt, Dominic Fike and JT — are you kidding, I didn't even think we could do that."

Headliner Dominic Fike, known for popular songs "Babydoll" and "3 Nights," had his break to mainstream culture following his role in season two of HBO's "Euphoria." Fike released his debut EP "Don't Forget About Me, Demos" in 2018, and released his debut studio album "What Could Possibly Go Wrong" in 2020. He has collaborated with a variety of notable artists, ranging from Justin Bieber to

Paul McCartney.

JT, known for being a part of the hip-hop duo City Girls, launched her solo career in 2023, collaborating with artists such as Doechii and Kali Uchis. While a part of City Girls, JT released the duo's debut album "Girl Code" in 2018, and collaborated with artists including Usher, Doja Cat and Cardi B.

Earl Sweatshirt is best known for his involvement in the Odd Future collective, a Los Angeles-based hip-hop group consisting of a variety of artists and producers. Earl Sweatshirt released his debut mixtape "Earl" in 2010, and released his debut studio album "Doris" in 2013. He has collaborated with artists

such as Tyler, The Creator, Mac Miller and MIKE.

Jane Remover, newer in comparison to the other artists on the lineup, is best known for their single titled "Dancing with your eyes closed," released in 2025. They released their debut EP "Teen Week" and debut album "Frailty" in 2021. Despite Jane Remover's lack of collaborations, they have discussed possibly collaborating with 2hollis, Che and Fakemink.

Despite the popularity of the 2026 Extravaganza performers, lineup reveal attendee Christopher Pettit, a third-year economics and psychological & brain sciences double major, expressed that he will not be attending. Pettit cited past mainstream headliners as contributing to his disappointment with the lineup. He mentioned how ASPB were able to have Playboi Carti and Steve Aoki (who performed at the 2019 and 2024 Extravaganzas, respectively), while this year's lineup didn't feature artists he knew.

Dyson

emphasized the work ASPB puts into hosting Extravaganza regardless of the negative responses they tend to receive on social media. She recollected how the team experienced the negativity of last year's Extravaganza.

"We did [last year's Extravaganza] and we felt so great about it, and then all of us were on Yik Yak for

hours just beating ourselves up and reading everything," Dyson said. "It was devastating to feel so proud of something and to know the work that we all put into it."

Even so, Dyson highlighted that "hate tends to be a lot louder" than the people who are supporting. Attendee Zach Mann, a fourth-year sociology major, expressed his satisfaction with this year's lineup and his enjoyment of last year's Extravaganza.

"I'm not super entrenched in the music scene, but I do know Dominic Fike, and I think it takes a lot of effort to get these artists, so kudos to them," Mann said. "I really enjoyed [last year's Extravaganza]. It was really cool to see Chris Lake and Aminé — some people I do know."

Extravaganza will take place on May 17 at UCSB's Harder Stadium.



COURTESY OF GETTY IMAGES

## Japanese Breakfast's Michelle Zauner talks memoir and 2026 UCSB Reads selection 'Crying in H Mart'

Lauren Chiou  
Artsweek Editor  
Stella Mullin  
Artsweek Editor

Zauner is the lead vocalist for indie pop band Japanese Breakfast. "Crying in H Mart," her debut memoir published in 2021, dives into themes of family, culture and loss, exploring Zauner's complex relationship with her late mother and self identity through images of food.

The May 7 event served as the closing evening to the 20th annual UCSB Reads program. In its history, the program has brought in books and speakers on topics ranging from family memoir, like "Crying in H Mart," along with politics, environmentalism and social justice. Book selections are made by the UCSB Library and Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost.

Since its publication, "Crying in H Mart" has received mass critical acclaim, receiving a 2022 American Book Award and spending 60 weeks on the New York Times bestseller list.

Zauner was joined in conversation with Sameer Pandya, Chair and Associate Professor of the UCSB Asian American Studies department. Together, the pair talked about their experiences and relationships with culture and identity, along with creative expression and artistry.

Half Korean and half white, Zauner spent her upbringing in a mixed-race household in



COURTESY OF DAVID BAZEMORE

"Crying in H Mart" is Michelle Zauner's debut novel.

Eugene, Oregon, developing a unique relationship with her culture. Her complicated and loving relationship with her Korean mother, who passed away from cancer in 2014, is the key theme of "Crying in H Mart." After the passing of her mother and a seemingly-failed music career at age 25, she moved to New York City and worked a corporate job, something she described as "deeply unfulfilling."

While working her office job and still reeling from the loss of her mother, music never left her mind. "I just thought, 'I'll do creative work on the side to feel

better about myself,'" Zauner said.

After being unexpectedly let go from her corporate job, Zauner took the opportunity (and a two-month severance package) to focus on her music career and creative endeavors. Zauner's music career began picking up and Japanese Breakfast entered full swing, embarking on tours, receiving critical acclaim and writing album after album.

To Zauner, her music was a way of expressing her grief, writing songs to understand and process the loss of her mom, her biracial identity and her relationship with her identity.

Her venture into creative nonfiction came about when she needed more words to express herself than lyrics allotted for.

"There was some very specific story happening with being biracial and connection to that culture. And something about food as a story could not be captured in a song anymore, and that was going to be a big idea," Zauner said.

Zauner began writing the essays that later became her memoir, "Crying in H Mart." Excerpts of her work were originally published in The New Yorker, after Zauner received advice to create an "interactive

website" to promote her second album, "Soft Sounds from Another Planet." While both she and The New Yorker editor she met with were unsure of what that meant, he offered to read any writing she had.

"[The essay] had such an amazing response," Zauner shared. "I reached back out to that agent and sold my book."

The success of both "Crying in H Mart" and Japanese Breakfast is something that is often overwhelming to Zauner. She talked about how she handles the mass attention toward her deeply personal artistry, and what it's like to navigate fame.

"Something that helps me is reminding myself that whatever I'm making is just an archive of who I am as an artist in that moment, and all I can do is my best in that moment and let it go fast," Zauner said.

Before closing the conversation, Pandya asked about two duets Zauner has done — her introduction to the 20th anniversary edition of David Foster Wallace's "Infinite Jest" and her collaboration with Jeff Bridges on her song "Men in Bars." The audience laughed when she mentioned both were inadvertently tied to masculinity in the music and literature industries.

The evening concluded with an audience Q&A session and a book signing. Several fans got the opportunity to speak with the author and share their relationship with the memoir.

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# NOTES TO NAILED IT

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