

# KICKING OFF NEW SEASON

## LEADING THE CHARGE:

*Accompanied by his three quar-  
terbacks, girls flag football head  
coach Dylan Kuhn holds out the  
pigskin that commemorates the  
teams first win in the inaugural  
season.*

*SEE PAGE 25 FOR MORE  
ABOUT KUHN*



photo by NOAH LEE





## EDITOR'S NOTE

**T**hank you for picking up the first issue of *Accolade*, formerly known as *The Accolade*.

After our first year of producing four, all-color, glossy specialty magazines, the new editorial team and our adviser, Tommy Li, decided to add another change for this year's publications.

Instead of focusing on one topic in each of our issues, our publication will go back to how we presented information to our readers when we used to produce newspapers. That means a return to having News, Feature, Opinion, Arts & Entertainment and Sports sections.

However, our specialty magazine will not be lost in history. Instead, it will return next month in the form of a 16-page publication titled, *Spotlight*. That issue will release in October and focus on the November elections, with another topic planned for February.

Going back to the transition to a news magazine format, my staff and I are excited to bring you fresh perspectives, vibrant stories and insightful content that reflect the promise and possibilities of the year ahead.

So here are some highlights of what this issue has to offer: Upon our return from the summer break, we learned that some of our students who took Advanced Placement [AP] tests had received an email from the College Board notifying them of their canceled scores under suspicion of violation of test-taking conduct (page 4).

Also upon our return from summer break, we saw a sequel to last year's campus makeovers with new signage throughout the campus, and our staff editorial (page 21) praises our administration for beautifying our campus in that way.

To truly "kick off" another new school year, we've put together a photo essay of the many "firsts" that returning students saw and experienced (page 8). Because of the new conference and leagues our sports teams will compete in — including the inaugural season for girls flag football (see cover page) — we've put together a quick preview of our fall athletics with a teaser for readers to go to our online website to read the full stories (page 22).

Finally, I want to express our gratitude to the administration and the Associated Student Body for financially supporting our program; without the funding we receive, it would be much more difficult for us to raise money to cover the cost of printing six magazine issues for this school year. Even though the amount we get won't pay all the bills, we are also grateful for our donors who have been willing to contribute (page 31).

As this year's Editor-in-Chief, I look forward to exploring this year with you — one page at a time.

*Alexxa Berumen*  
Editor-in-Chief

## accolade

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story by ALEXA BERUMEN

# CANCELED:

*AP scores face an increase in voided tests with an unspecified number of SH students affected*

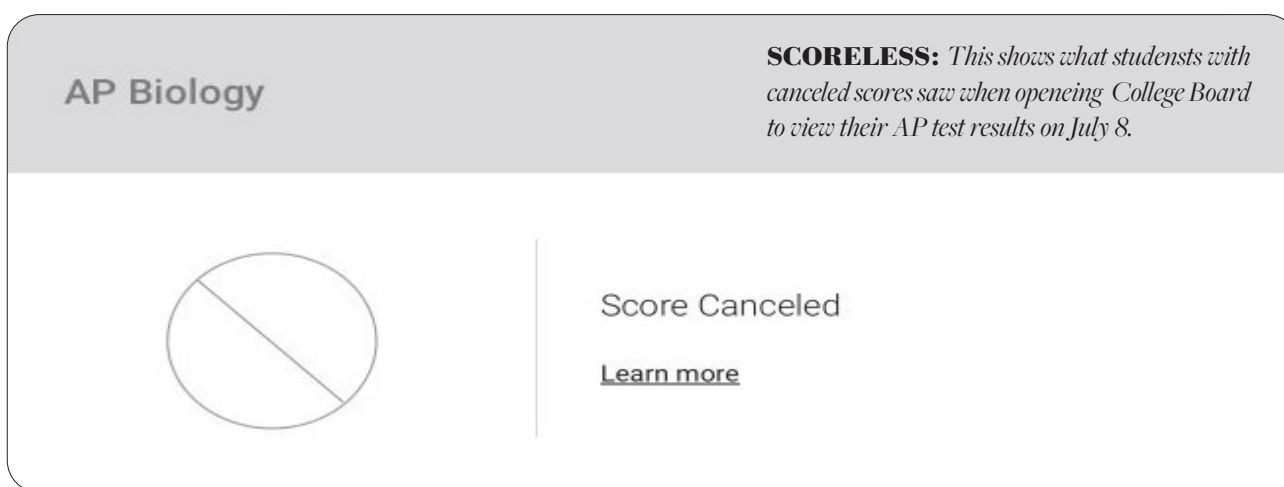


image used with permission by Anonymous source

College Board has noticed a slight increase in cheating on some Advanced Placement [AP] exams from last semester and has notified suspected violators — including an unspecified number of Sunny Hills students — of their canceled scores.

“We have canceled more AP Exams than usual after identifying students who participated in unethical conduct,” College Board’s executive director of media relations Holly Stepp said in a July 12 online article from *Inside Higher Ed*.

*The Accolade* has tried to contact Stepp and other College Board officials but has not received a response for several requests to be interviewed as of Sept. 11.

Sunny Hills principal Craig Weinreich said that he had little knowledge on the subject matter as he has not seen any figures regarding this year’s cancellations.

AP testing coordinator, head counselor Beth Thomson, also declined to comment on the matter for the same reason Weinreich gave.

Weinreich and Thomson said they could also not comment on any emails that Sunny Hills students received the week of July 1 sent by College Board.

*The Accolade* determined that multiple students on campus were subject to this increase in cancellations. However, it was only able to confirm with one student that they have received such an email over the summer and has decided to use pseudonyms to identify them for confidentiality.

One such digital correspondence was sent July 2 to a senior who took the AP Biology test in May. It reads:

“Your AP Biology Exam scores have been canceled. This decision follows a comprehensive investigation where we determined that testing misconduct occurred.”

The email then further delves into what could be considered as misconduct in the eyes of College Board, including the following:

- Analysis of answers that conclusively demonstrate copying or collusion
- If testing digitally, having any applications running on your device other than the Bluebook application
- Direct observation of the test security violation by testing staff
- Or a combination of these and other pieces of evidence

Before ending the message, the test security team reiterated the organization’s testing conduct and policies that were first relayed to the recip-



ient during the official AP exams.

“Test takers are bound by the College Board’s policies and procedures, and violations of the security terms and conditions can result in the immediate dismissal from a test center; cancellation of scores, being banned from taking College Board assessments and other potential consequences.”

The student, whom *The Accolade* will identify as John Smith, denies any wrongdoing and will continue to take AP exams next May.

“If they are going to accuse me of cheating, I would rather them have a more specific reason or give me a valid reason other than saying there was extensive evidence,” said Smith, who sent an appeal to the organization, which was denied on July 7, upon receiving notice. “I know that I did not cheat, and I am being accused of something that I believe I gave no excuse to be accused of.”

Despite the small percentage of emails sent to alleged violators of College Board’s testing policy, the numbers were not high enough to warrant an overall nullification of any one test subject, according to information *Inside Higher Ed* had obtained from Stepp.

Among the leaked essay prompts and multiple choice questions was the AP Language and Composition [AP Lang] test, which was administered on May 14 and featured three free-response questions, students said.

Senior Charles Kearney said he found out about the cheating the day after taking the test.

“When I was on TikTok and saw [news of] the leaked tests after I

had already taken it, I started panicking a little, wondering if my score would get canceled,” Kearney said. “I would have been frustrated because if they did cancel mine, it would have been a lot of work that I put into it for it to just be nothing.”

According to College Board’s AP website, in order to deter the possibility of more leaked questions total of 28 tests will convert as many print exams to digital-only ones using College Board’s Bluebook app.

Sophomore Sarina Desai, who took the AP Human Geography test last semester, said that the push for digitalization might not be for the better.

“I feel like it could stimulate cheating,” Desai said.

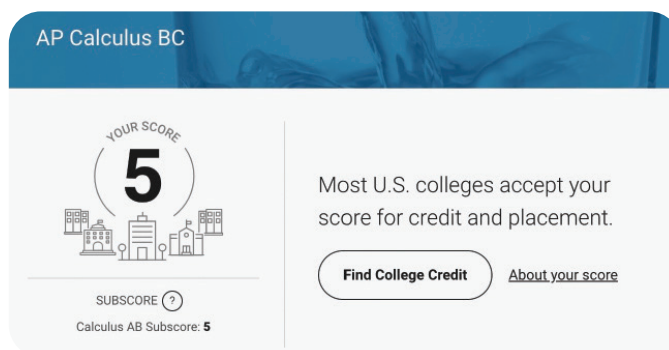


image used with permission by Seowon Han

# WHY CHEAT?

*Professor and students provide insight on the phenomenon that caused the uptick in AP score cancellations this year*

story by **CHRISTINE YOO**

*Because of the sensitive nature of this article, names of student sources will remain confidential, and generic pseudonyms will be used instead.*

Note cards. Apple Watches. Arms.

Several anonymous SH students who cheated on different school exams in the past said these are common assets students equip to cheat. Whether they scribble answers on a note card, text their friends through their smartwatch or peek at the words written on their arm, different creative ways have been thought out to commit this fraud.

“I know some people would wear long sleeves and try to peek inside to see the math formulas they wrote on their arm,” sophomore Robert Jones. “I think trying to communicate with friends during the test is

another big way too, especially since there’s so much technology that can be used to do that.”

Although academic dishonesty is not a novel topic, an evident increase in AP score cancellations last May because of cheating expresses a growing trend. Despite media releases that the cheating from this past May’s scores represent “a fraction of 1%,” College Board officials acknowledged their concern about this bump and has claimed it as one of the main reasons for its push toward digital exams.

Research professor of sociology at the University of Virginia, and author of several behavioral papers such as *The Basis of Everything: The Fragility of Character in a Truth-Challenged World* published last spring in *The Hedgehog Review*, Joseph E.

Davis expands on this phenomenon and the psychology behind the growing disposition toward cheating.

Based on his research, the reason as to why students feel so inclined to commit this act lies in three major factors, Davis said.

## AN ACADEMIC RACE

“I want to get into top schools like an Ivy league or a private school, and I felt like cheating on the AP exams was the best way to secure a good score on my exam to help me with this goal,” senior Mary Hart said.

**TO PAGE 6  
WHY CHEAT?**

## FROM PAGE 5 WHY CHEAT?

Important tests such as the AP exams and the SAT, although still optional for many schools, can put pressure on students because of its impact on your application, the professor said.

"I talk with a lot of young people, and it's like their life depends on them getting a good grade or getting a high SAT score," Davis said. "If you're not sure how you're going to do, then there's a kind of incentive to cheat, buy access to the test or whatever you can do that will help you get a better score."

Payments ranging from \$45-\$100 per hour for SAT and test prep and \$100-\$200 per month for tutoring centers in Fullerton, California, according to Tutors.com, can also add to the stakes of College Board tests.

"My mom pays a lot of money for me to get tutored for a lot of my AP classes, so I feel pressure that I need to do even better on the AP tests to make the money worth it," Jones said.

### HONESTY IS FADING

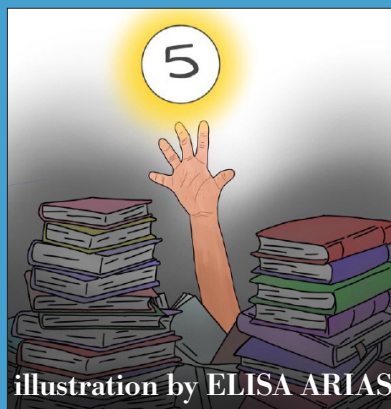
Fifty-nine percent of high school students admitted to cheating on a test in the past year and 34% said they cheated many times, according to a 2010 survey conducted by the Josephson Institute of Ethics.

"Honesty is a kind of absolute value," the professor said. "You don't tell the truth to get something, you just tell the truth because it's [an] absolute value; the problem is, in our society, truth has lost that quality."

According to Harvard Business School, cost-benefit analysis is the process of comparing the estimated benefits that are connected to a decision.

"When you put honesty in a cost-benefit analysis, the answer seems to be cheap because the chance of getting caught is so low and the reward is seemingly high," he said. "So instead of thinking of honesty as an absolute value, you say 'Well, I'll calculate my interest, and if the truth works for me, fine.'"

This system of analysis can nudge



students to buy questions to AP exams ahead of time, believing they would get a large advantage with low risk.

According to College Board, cheating on any exam could result in individual's score getting canceled, potentially banned from future testing and no retesting is allowed. Cheating on an AP exam will also prohibit the student from taking the SAT or CLEP exams.

According to the organization, it has the right to share information about a students' cheating record with their high schools and interested colleges.

"I feel like a lot of students think they can cheat successfully because they don't see a lot of people actually getting caught," Jones said. "I also think people aren't aware of the consequences College Board lists out."

For the AP exams, Sunny Hills has no control over the consequences for tests unaffiliated with the school, assistant principal of Instructions & Operations Sarah Murrietta said.

"If our proctors feel like any students might be doing something suspicious during an AP exam, they can report it to College Board directly who would then deal with the issue separately on its own," she said.

### WELL, EVERYONE DOES IT

Social pressure can also affect the trend of academic dishonesty.

"Sometimes when I see people cheating on tests and quizzes it makes me feel less guilty to cheat since I'm

not the only one," Hart said. "So I guess when I heard that some people had the answers to AP exams and that I could also get the answers, I felt more driven to do so."

Davis said this widespread tendency to cheat undermines the value of truth.

"You might say, 'Well why should I be Mr. Goody Two-Shoes when everybody else is cheating,'" he said.

### THE SOLUTION LIES IN US

As a response to the increase in cheating on last May's AP Exams, College Board plans to push for almost all AP subjects to be fully digital, according to a July 25 article from EducationWeek.

Despite these protocols, Davis said switching to digital-only AP or SAT/ACT exams is like just putting a band-aid over the wound that doesn't solve the problem.

"Certainly, at some level, making it harder to cheat and increasing the penalties would have the effect of decreasing the cheating," he said. "But overall over time, it doesn't seem to

## HONESTY IS A KIND OF ABSOLUTE VALUE

- University of Virginia  
sociology professor Joseph  
E. Davios

have had that big of an impact since people still are able to find a way to cheat."

Instead, he suggests a different approach.

"What we really need is not more rules but a strong moral wall you won't cross," he said.



# HOMECOMING PREVIEW



accolade file photo

**PASSING THE TIARAS:** Six then-seniors hold their roses as they celebrate being selected for the 2023-2024 homecoming court in the quad. This year's court will be announced during the half time at the Oct. 4 football game.

story by **SEOWON HAN**

With a record crowd of over 1,600 attending last year's homecoming dance, the Associated Student Body [ASB] aims to surpass that number with its Oct. 5, Swan Lake-themed event in the quad.

"The expectations for homecoming are always high, especially with a record-breaking dance last year, so we were motivated to exceed that level in all aspects," said social commissioner senior Tiffany Kim, the head of the homecoming committee.

Although not Disney-related, the story of Swan Lake is based on the famous ballet composed by Russian composer Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky.

"At first, I thought the theme was niche and too unique, but I realized that it's good to get out of the box and try something different because there's always going to be people that like and dislike it," she said. "I honestly really like the theme."

The committee plans on decorating with props like chandelier, lights and pillars for an ethereal feeling, Kim said.

Before the 7:30-9:30 p.m. dance, the ASB promoted the event

with its Sept. 16 theme-release video shown in students' Period 2 classes. Dance ticket holders will receive food and dessert; besides dancing in the quad in front of the stage, as of Sept. 11, Kim said the committee is still working on finalizing other activities.

Even before the theme release during the week of Sept. 9, homecoming buzz had already started to pick up.

"I feel like I just want to go to every single homecoming, and it's like part of the high school experience," sophomore Leona Ashley said. "It's always just fun to see everyone dressed up."

Similarly, junior Elliot Pop said he has decided to go again after what he perceived to be a great turnout the previous year.

"I'm most excited to try and take a date to homecoming instead of just going with my friends," Pop said.

Tickets went on sale on Sept. 16 in the webstore, with the prices starting at \$25 with the ASB Gold Card and \$30 without. The final prices by Oct. 1-5 will be \$45 with and \$50 without.

"As an organizer, I hope that many people come and enjoy, especially those that usually don't come out to school events," Kim said.

Fenstermaker said he has confidence in his ASB students that they will bring in a high number of ticket sales.

"I picked these guys because I trust that they're gonna do what's best, and I just support them after they pick the theme," he said.



illustration by **LINDSEY UM**





**IN THE CROWD:** Students gather in the quad on the first day of Club Rush during break on Sept. 3 to explore potential clubs for the year the halfway point of the textbox.

all photos by NOAH LEE

# DECLINING ENROLLMENT

*School faces 1.2% dip compared with previous year*

story by AASHNA DIALANI

**F**or the first time in nearly six years, student enrollment for the 2024-2025 school year dipped by 1.2% compared with the previous term, school officials said.

Principal Craig Weinreich attributed the decline to a trend that's been happening nationwide since the COVID-19 pandemic starting in late 2020.

"It's not a huge dip, but we did hear about the district as a whole seeing a slow decline and it's finally getting to us," Weinreich said.

For the 2023-2024 school year, state records show the school had 2,434 enrolled students. As of Sept. 10, the total number of students at Sunny Hills reduced to 2,337 with a breakdown of 536 freshmen, 582 sophomores, 605 juniors and 614 seniors.

With the small dip, teachers are having mixed experiences with





**BY THE BREEZEWAY:** Students spend their lunch in groups by their lockers in freshman hall, located between the 20s and 40s wings, on Sept. 10.

the size of their classes and their thoughts regarding the future of the school.

Honors and Advanced Placement [AP] Biology teacher Kelly Kim said she does not see the slight dip as something to fret about.

"We are a strong school academically, and I know a lot of people who have transferred here say that it is the best decision they have made," Kim said.

AP Psychology and U.S. History teacher Troy Nelson said he has noticed his class sizes have decreased since the last school year with one of his classes only having 28 students.

"I also know that there were fewer freshmen at orientation over the summer, so that could also be a contributing factor to my class size," Nelson said.

Students also shared some minor concerns.

Senior James Sy, who's on the swim team, said Sunny Hills joining the trend downward in student enrollment causes him to worry about the number of teammates he'll have and the strength of the program.

"How many people we have on the team is directly correlated with how strong the team is, so hearing about the decline strikes a little worry," Sy said.

Weinreich said he does not plan to do anything to address the enrollment issue.

"[The decline] is nothing school-related, but more so external factors that are causing this to happen," he said. "The district as a whole has been seeing a slow, steady decline for the last 15 years, but it's not a huge jump."

The principal shared these additional factors that he cannot control as to the cause of enrollment declines:

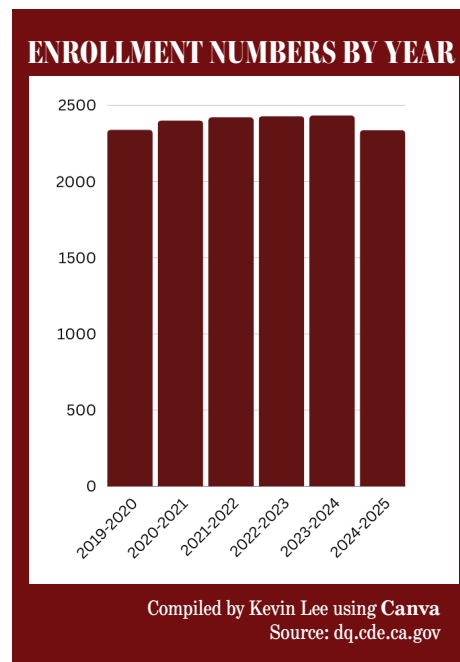
- Many families with younger children

are moving out of North Orange County into cheaper areas.

- Such movement has fueled a decrease of students enrolling in elementary and middle schools like Parks Junior High School that in turn lead to fewer students to come to the high schools in the district.

Despite this trend, Weinreich said Sunny Hills managed to increase the number of students over the years with events like Open House and campus visits for parents and students within and outside of the district that showcase the programs Sunny Hills has to offer such as video production, Engineering Pathways to Innovation and Change and Conservatory of the Fine Arts.

One area Sunny Hills remains strong is drawing transfer students, the principal said.



## EXTERNAL FACTORS ARE CAUSING THIS

-principal Craig Weinreich

He said that the number of students who have come to Sunny Hills through transferring from other school districts and the open enrollment process also assisted in preventing the student population from dropping lower.

"We have a lot of permit transfer students who come to [Sunny Hills] from other districts," Weinreich said. "A lot of them transferred from Norwalk, La Mirada, Anaheim and Whittier."

One such example of a transfer student is senior Reagan Stagg, who came from Chatsworth Charter High School in the Los Angeles Unified School District during the second semester of her sophomore year.

Stagg said her decision to transfer came primarily from the lack of importance given to standardized testing, the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress. She said she found out about Sunny Hills since her grandpa lived by Sunset Lane Elementary, School and Sunny Hills happened to be her home school after moving to this area.

"Since I didn't do well on the testing, [the school] put me in lower classes," Stagg said. "My learning got really poor because of that, so I decided to move to Sunny Hills to get a better education."

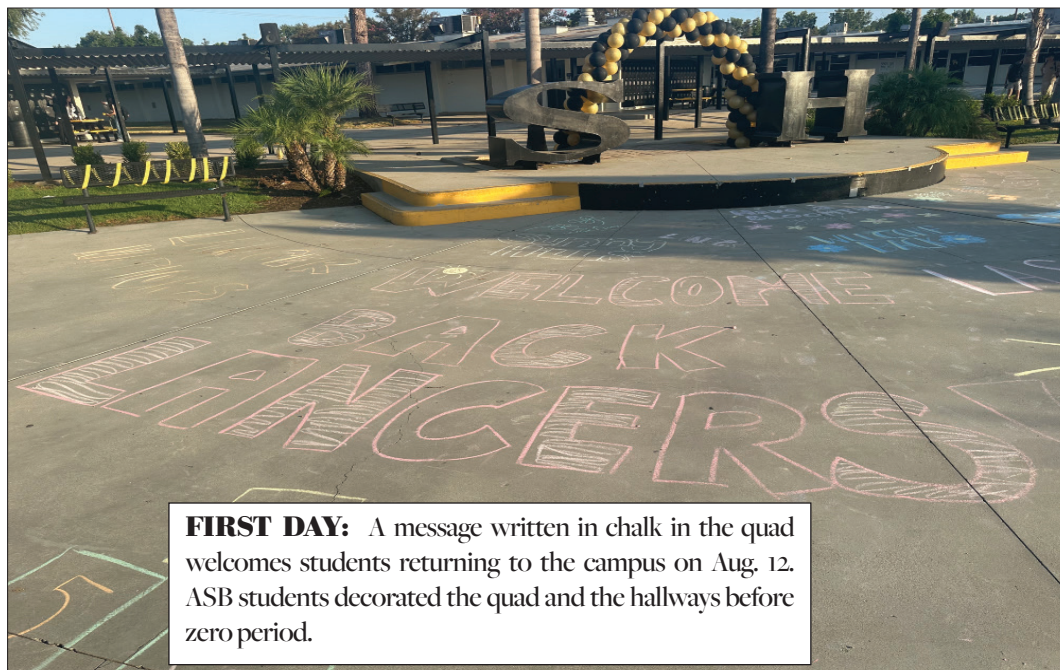
With transfer students and the various programs offered to help make Sunny Hills unique, Weinreich said he does not feel as though this issue will negatively impact Sunny Hills.

"We're still above projected enrollment and fully staffed, and kids are able to get all the classes that they need," the principal said. "At this point, it's not going to affect anything because it would take a pretty significant decline [for that to happen], and I don't foresee that right now."

# 2024-2025 FIRSTS

*From day one to week one of the school year to Back to School Night, students and staff show their enthusiasm and focus in and out of the classroom*

all photos by **KATIE LEEM**







**FIRST PURPLE CARPET WALK:** With their mix-and-match school spirit outfits, seniors from the Associated Student Body, Kastuv Aryal (left) and Jennie Jeong, support senior Elaine Chung as she waves while being hoisted up in the air during break on Aug. 13.



**FIRST GUESS:** Sophomore Evan Shinmei (left) squints his eye as he uses a line ruler to measure the height of the jar filled with jelly beans to estimate the amount with sophomore Hassan Hassan for the ASB's first week of school activities held in the quad on Aug. 15.



**SO, WHAT'S NEW?:** Math teacher Dorothy Cheng explains her class rules and guidelines to parents and guardians using a slideshow in Room 45 during Back to School Night on Aug. 27.

|feature

# DID YOU KNOW? THE GOLDEN TICKET

*Card that benefits students with discounted prices to sports games, dances dates back to nearly six decades*

story by **IRENE PARK**

photo by **NATHAN LEE**



*As a continuing feature, The Accolade delves into the origins, purpose and benefits of the Associated Student Body [ASB] Gold Card, sending News editor Irene Park to investigate.*

The American Express Centurion Card, also known as the Amex Black Card. The Chase Sapphire Reserve Visa card. The Capital One Venture X Rewards Card.

According to [wallethub.com](https://www.wallethub.com), these are among the most coveted plastic spending options for perks such as “VIP access to events, airport lounge access and elite status with multiple travel providers and hotels.”

Amex and Capital One don’t even have a spending limit, which is why they are known as luxury items. Nevertheless, these banks charge users anywhere from \$395-\$5,000 annually to possess the credit card.

Fortunately for Sunny Hills students, the price to possess an ASB Gold Card is not that high (it costs \$50 and can be purchased on the

school webstore).

“We look at it as your investment in the school; the rewards are the opportunities to get other things like cheaper yearbooks and reduced dance costs,” ASB adviser David Fens-termaker said, referring to the card’s give-and-take principle.

The ASB receives money from Gold Card sales and allocates to different programs on campus, ASB junior class treasurer Aaron Green said. In return, this funding allows students to attend certain events like dances and sports games for free or at a discounted price.

But how long has this funding source been around for? And how did it become part of the school culture? According to past *Accolade* articles, the Gold Card, known in the past as just an ASB Card, has existed since at least 1965.

## **DEALS, DISCOUNTS GALORE**

Senior Charles Kearney said he finds the card a key part of his high school experience.





**GOLDEN BENEFITS:** Senior Gunnar Okerlund uses his Gold Card for a free admission to the football game held at Buena Park High School stadium against Long Beach Wilson High School on Sept. 6 at 7 p.m.

photo by NOAH LEE

## NOTABLE NUMBERS

- **Early 1960s:** Concept of ASB Card established
- **Late 2000s:** Student-athletes no longer required to purchase card
- **Early 2010s:** Sold for \$35 and renamed "Gold Card"
- **Mid-2010s:** Price change to \$40
- **2023:** Sold for \$50

"I enjoy going to dances and games with my friends, and the money I would have to spend to do that without a Gold Card would be a worse deal," said Kearney, who's been getting the card since his freshman year.

Its features have remained mostly the same with only its price fluctuating from \$35 in the early 2010s to \$40 in the mid-2010s and its current price of \$50 since 2023.

The price change happened in July 2022 when every school in the district received a chance to raise its prices for its student body card to help fund the new athletic leagues, Fenstermaker said.

Each school has its own version of an "ASB Card," such as Fullerton High School's IFL Card, the ASB adviser said.

### THE CARD'S BEGINNINGS

Until around 2008, officials recognized which students would get discounts to attend games or dances based on a sticker placed onto a laminated piece of paper – the student ID – with a student's name on it, Fenstermaker said.

Improvements in machines and printing technology allowed for actual plastic, photo IDs and the option of a golden color accent.

The change to an official ID with a color distinction made it more exclusive to each student and cost-effective because the company

doesn't charge extra for the design addition, compared to the stickers, Fenstermaker said.

"It's better now 1,000% because it's like a legitimate ID compared to the old laminated paper card," the ASB adviser said.

Before, the card was called "ASB Card," before it got dubbed as the "Gold Card," Fenstermaker said.

Accolade files don't show when the change from ASB Card to Gold Card started. The change was present by the time he had arrived in 2013 as the new co-ASB adviser with Mike Paris, who retired two years ago.

Fenstermaker said he suspects the name switch occurred when bank credit cards introduced luxury plastics like gold and silver. "To make it a bit easier and not spend as much money on stickers, we just distinguish the two different IDs with gold for a Gold Card and black for a regular card," he said.

The Gold Card is also connected to the 5-Star app, and the barcode in the app profile is the same one on a student's card. This allows the ASB to easily scan students into dances with 5-Star and provide perks like giveaways.

While some schools, such as Great Oak High School in Temecula, have gone fully digital with 5-Star, Sunny Hills will keep physical IDs since some students don't have phones, the ASB adviser said.

### GOLDEN BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

Many coaches encourage their student-athletes to buy the Gold Card because it helps to fund for referees and tournaments.

"We make a big push with the coaches because this funding is substantial," Fenstermaker said.

Junior Rayna Tam said her cheer coach recommends her team to purchase a card.

But not every student prefers to take advantage of the "golden benefits."

"I didn't think that I would go to any events this year since my junior year will be super busy," said junior Serena Wen, who only had the card her freshman year.

Science teacher Mason Morris said he bought the ASB Gold Card annually for both his sons, with his Class of 2024 eldest in the baseball program before graduating and the sophomore youngest still attending Sunny Hills and playing the sports.

"I think it's a good idea to have one because it supports a variety of programs on campus, and it's good for sports and other



photo by NOAH LEE

**HARD AT WORK:** *New assistant principal Betty Vutang works on her computer in her office in Room 6 on Sept. 6.*

**T**here's a new sheriff in town. Well, more like a new administrator, as Betty Vutang has transferred from her assistant principal position at La Habra High School [LHHS] to work here, taking over for Peter Karavedas.

Karavedas replaces Katie Wright, who was appointed as an assistant principal here for the past two years before getting promoted to educational services coordinator after she had earned her doctorate in K-12 educational leadership.

Though her start date was July 1, Vutang didn't make her presence known to the student body until the first month of the 2024-2025 school year. That's when she put the hammer down regarding the student dress code, which district officials updated two years ago and bans attire showing midriffs, cleavage and inappropriate designs.

"[Enforcing] dress code is just my job, and when I'm in my role, I just make sure I do my job," the assistant principal said. "I do feel bad sometimes, especially since it's been really hot lately, ... but rules are rules."

As of Sept. 10, Vutang said school officials have identified around 30-40 dress code infractions among students on campus. When students are found violating the dress code, they are required to change into a provided Sunny Hills T-shirt or forced to be sent home.

The first offense results in a warning and a call home to a guardian, before further disciplinary action such as detentions.

One student who received a warning was junior Jane Doe, whose identity was kept anonymous for confidentiality reasons.

"I don't think it should be that big of a deal — everyone wears this kind of stuff," said Doe, who received a warning for wearing an outfit that exposed her midriff. "Having to wear the

# DRESS FOR SUCCESS

*New assistant principal  
hopes to strictly enforce  
clothing regulations*

story by **JUSTIN PAK**



the shirt was really over-the-top.”

Similarly, a sophomore, whose identity is kept confidential, said she received a penalty after wearing a crop top.

“I was super mad when I got dress coded, and I was also mega mad when I had to wear the shirt over because it was ugly, and I literally had a jacket, but they wouldn’t let me put it over,” the sophomore said. “I do not like the new dress code [enforcement] because now it’s super strict, and we have to wear ugly clothes.”

### FIRST ASIAN ADMINISTRATOR AT SUNNY HILLS?

According to the Helios yearbook, Sunny Hills has never had an assistant principal work here with Asian heritage.

“For others, it may be more impactful that I’m the first, but for me, I don’t really think about that stuff,” Vutang said. “I mostly just think about making sure I take care of the students and teachers and that everybody here is happy and safe.”

## ENFORCING DRESS CODE IS JUST MY JOB

- assistant principal  
Betty Vutang



**HELPING HANDS:** Assistant principal Betty Vutang (right) assists junior Jessica Choi with schedule-changing concerns in the Lyceum during Lancer Days Tuesday, Aug. 6.

photo by KATIE LEEM

### ADJUSTING TO THE CAMPUS

So far, the newly appointed assistant principal said she has had a positive experience on campus.

“It’s been wonderful,” Vutang said. “I think the staff is fantastic, and the students are very respectful.”

Associated Student Body president senior Sean Lee, who worked with the assistant principal in one of her first experiences with the campus and its students during Lancer Days, appreciated her willingness to help.

“She was extremely easy to work with,” Lee said. “She is helpful to all students, putting helping students before other work.”

Having worked with principal Craig Weinreich when he was an assistant principal at LHHS in 2021, Weinreich said he felt more than satisfied with who the district chose to take on the role.

“She’s very enthusiastic, does a great job relating with students and has a good experience level,” he said. “She’s been doing administrative things for almost 10 years, so she’s got a lot of good background with that.”

Moving forward, Vutang said she wants to work efficiently to help students.

“I want to let students know that we’re all here for them and we’re here to support them regardless of what struggles they have,” Vutang said.

## LANCER ADDITIONS



William Allgeier: Social science, girls soccer coach, Room 26 (Part time)



Hannah Batchelor: English, Room 33



Find the full story in the online Feature section at [shhsaccolade.com](http://shhsaccolade.com)



Mark Stewart: PE (Part time)



Aaron Eide: Biology, Room 105



Find the full story in the online Feature section at [shhsaccolade.com](http://shhsaccolade.com)

photos by KATIE LEEM and RACHEL YOON

# Q&A Lancer Life

For the start of the 2024-2025 school year, The Accolade introduces a new segment inspired by the “Humans of New York” project in which programs nationwide randomly select individuals in a community to be photographed and interviewed.

The idea is that everyone — not just those in prominent positions — has value and a story to tell.

For the first “Lancer Life,” assistant News editor Kevin Lee interviews senior Isabelle Garcia to find out about her story.

## INTERVIEWEE: SENIOR ISABELLE GARCIA

**Q** What are you most looking forward to in your senior year?

**A** “[Joining] a lot of clubs and [experiencing] high school in general. For example, I didn’t really go to a lot of football games last year, so I’m hoping to do all that this year and just make really good memories with my friends.”

**Q** What is one thing you want to make sure you accomplish before leaving high school?

**A** “I want to meet as many people as possible because it can allow me to be a more open individual and make lifelong friends.”

**Q** In a few words, what advice would you give to students on the Sunny Hills campus?

**A** “Just do your school work.”

**Q** What’s one thing you’re determined to enjoy this year despite the stress that might come with being a senior?

**A** “One thing that I am determined to enjoy is the simple moments like my classes and learning medical-related subjects so I can pursue such a career.”

**Q** What is your dream job?

**A** “I want to be a radiologist or an anesthesiologist.”

**Q** Which fictional character would you want to be your desk partner at school?

**A** “The fictional character would probably be Gumball from ‘The Amazing World of Gumball’ because I feel that it would be really interesting and fun.”

**Q** If you could have one superpower, what would it be and why?

**A** “I think I would like to control water because of how resourceful it can be and I really like swimming.”



photo by **KATIE LEEM**



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|opinion

# CHRISTIANITY IN CRISIS?

*From Louisiana's new law to display the 10 Commandments in every public school classroom to the outcry of reaction after Paris' opening ceremony for the Olympics, two Accolade staffers address religion's impact on the summer*



illustration by JOANNA JOO



# ONE STATE UNDER GOD:

*Bayou state governor's push to display God's laws in education gets failing grade*

story by **SERENITY LI**

**S**tarting Jan. 1, 2025, every public school classroom in Louisiana must display a poster of the Ten Commandments. Just northwest in Oklahoma, the state superintendent mandated that at the start of the 2024-2025 school year, all public schools must incorporate the Bible into their curriculums for grades 5-12 or face having their teaching credentials revoked.

These states are not alone in their approach toward enforcing Christianity onto the next generation through education. They are blindly following similar actions that other Bible Belt states tried to implement in their education sites.

In 2023, a Texas bill attempted to post the 10 Commandments in public schools but did not garner enough support to advance. Besides Texas, more than 14 states, including Alabama, Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Nebraska and Maryland introduced bills to bring chaplains to counsel students in public schools.

Among these states, all but Florida are part of the Bible Belt. Alabama and Florida are part of it, along with

**TO PAGE 20**  
**ONE STATE UNDER GOD**

"Colossal statue of Antinous as Dionysus-Osiris"  
by Carole Raddato  
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# DIONYSUS' LAST SUPPER:

*Conservatives overreact; should heed artist's explanation honoring Greek god Dionysus*

story by **NATHAN LEE**

**"I**t's a mockery of our beloved Jesus' last supper."  
"They cannot depict our Lord in that manner."

"It was a shameful attack on Christianity."

Those were among the initial reactions posted online or reported in the media among Christians expressing anger toward the Paris Olympics committee for what they perceived as an LGBTQ+ portrayal of a sacred moment described in the Gospels of the Bible.

Although Paris Olympics committee officials issued an apology to those of Christian faith, the artist who came up with the depiction clarified that it had nothing to do with that scene at all.

"It was not my inspiration, the Christian Last

Supper," said Thomas Jolly, the Paris Olympics opening ceremony artistic director, according to *today.com*. "There is [Dionysus], who is at this table. He is there because he is the god of celebration in Greek mythology, the god of wine, who is one of the jewels of France."

Christians believe in following the doctrines of Jesus Christ and holding truth to his very words: Do not judge, or you too will be judged.

In the face of sinful actions, Christians often weaponize religious dogma but fail to understand the hypocrisies involved.

Their response to the 2024 Paris Olympics open-

**TO PAGE 20**  
**DIONYSUS' LAST SUPPER**



**FROM PAGE 19**  
**ONE STATE UNDER GOD**

Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina and Tennessee.

Separation of church and state proponents took legal action to protest against the movements to a more Christian-based education. Parents, representatives from church and state separation organizations and other state citizens filed lawsuits against the bills' proposers, claiming it goes against their religious freedoms.

These issues will linger in court until the Supreme Court hears arguments from both sides. Meanwhile, these religious zealots from the South and their campaigns to restrict religious freedom are doing more harm than good to their own religion, Christianity.

Supposedly, the bill exists because the 10 Commandments influenced U.S. history, which justified why it deserved attention in schools.

"[Moses] is the original giver of law," said Jeffrey Landry, the Louisiana governor who signed the bill into a law. "Most of our laws in this country are founded on the 10 Commandments, what's the big problem?"

“

**[MOSES] IS THE  
ORIGINAL GIVER  
OF LAW**

- Louisiana Governor  
Jeffrey Landry

”

Though Landry argues that the 10 Commandments deserve a place in classrooms, he is wrong. The more teachers and students are forced to pay attention to the Bible, the more they will show adversity to wanting to have it in their curriculum.

In Oklahoma, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Ryan Walters is responsible for ordering public schools in the state to include the Bible in curriculums. While it is true that this book is involved in the country's history,

the only thing Walters is doing is favoring one religion over others. Oklahoma already allows public high schools to have elective classes on the Bible but also requires religious neutrality in the course.

The fact that this law exists nullifies Walters' claims about it. Further pushing this religion onto students will prevent them from wanting to know more about it because schools already require them to.

Fortunately for those of us living in Blue states like California, the movement to showcase an uneven balance between the amount of Christianity and other elements in public schools will most likely never see the light of day. Christians in California get uncomfortable when hearing of Bible Belt politicians challenging the separation of church and state boundaries.

Not only Christians, but many people would find it awkward to find Bible verses in their food wrappings or bottom of their cups and containers from the school cafeteria, as a result of a politician's efforts to mimic In-N-Out Burgers.



For the full versions  
of both stories, go to  
[shhsaccolade.com](http://shhsaccolade.com)

**FROM PAGE 19**  
**DIONYSUS' LAST SUPPER**

ing ceremony was one instance of such hasty and uneducated judgment.

Amid state-of-the-art exhibitions, a supposed parody of Leonardo Da Vinci's painting, The Last Supper, during the ceremony stirred controversy with many Christians angrily judging the performance as an attack against their religion. However, the act had nothing to do with their religion but instead was referencing an ancient Greek tradition.

Rather than adhering to dogmatic practices and quickly succumbing to feelings of anger and hate, Christians should take time to examine the facts and gain a better understanding before inflicting their "divine judgment."

However, the negative opinions online users expressed spread like a chain reaction of false information from one another.

Jolly repeatedly clarified that this exhibition was not a parody of The Last Supper but instead drew inspiration from Dionysus, the Greek god of festivities and wine.

“

**GOD IS THE  
ONLY ONE WHO  
SHOULD JUDGE**

”

So essentially, Jolly intended this "supper" to be an ancient pagan feast deriving from a Greek religion, Hellenismos, in hopes of reflecting France's festive and artistic culture.

Jolly's backlash for false interpretations represents an online culture's tendency to take sides while ignoring opposing views quickly.

It is ironic that Christians, who were outraged by the LGBTQ+ influence, are judging the unprofessionalism and supposed mockery of their religion, in which their sacred text says

that God is the only one who should judge.

Some may argue that the Olympic committee should have considered the potential backlash of the Christian community when making decisions that could conflict with widely held religious values. However, the artistic director should not have to limit his freedom of expression to accommodate religion at an event that focuses on artistic and cultural representation.

Furthermore, Da Vinci's artwork does not have a sacred correlation to Christianity; it was created 1,400 years after the New Testament during the High Renaissance era.

In light of this case, a portion of angry Christians appear egotistical in terms of owning whatever appears to tie in with their religion, disregarding other people.

Instead of spreading hate and waging online wars over misunderstandings, it's important to remember what the Olympics are truly about: uniting nations for peace and representing pride for their athletes.



# STREAKS OF IMPROVEMENT

STAFF EDITORIAL

**The Accolade commends ASB for its successful second year of school renovations and looks forward to future improvements.**

**The Accolade Editorial Board unanimously praises the Associated Student Body [ASB]'s decision to use its campus improvement funds to continue the school's makeover that started two summers ago but urges administrators and the ASB to spend money adding partitions between urinals in boys restrooms on campus.**

Students regularly walking past the 130s building should have noticed the colorful logos adhered next to each classroom door.

Parents regularly driving their teenagers in and out of the school's west parking lot should see a newly animated digital screen at the front entrance of the school.

Other visitors shouldn't miss seeing the Lancer-themed banners hanging from certain light poles upon arriving at our parking lots.

These changes follow after the makeover from two years ago when assistant principal Sarah Murrietta oversaw the repainting of the campus, such as making the lockers black instead of off-white yellow and installation of new directional signs. The latest improvements, also overseen by Murrietta, included installing more new signs and upgrading pre-existing ones. For example, the dance room in the 130s building now has curved lettering of the words, "Sunny Hills Dance," with Lancer gold in the background whereas previously it had a logo of a ballet dancer on one side of its wall.

With the addition of new signs comes an equally new reminder to non-participating students about the existence of these programs, potentially giving them the push to register for these

school activities.

Unfortunately, not all work was completed upon our return to the campus. Those entering the west parking lot saw an unsightly metal pole that used to feature a digital sign board. A wall outside the PE locker rooms, previously featuring a lance, was scratched up with no announcements to the campus about why.

By the second week of the fall semester however, these enigmas were answered. Upon speaking to *The Accolade*, ASB co-adviser David Fenstermaker explained that a technology upgrade was also necessary to replace the old sign board from around the year 2000, which is why the metal stand was without its "head" for a while; the impressive modern replacement costing \$125,000-150,000 features a video screen like a mini-jumbotron, which allows for ASB students to advertise for ASB gold cards, something that they couldn't do with the archaic, two decade-old device.

By Aug. 26, students noticed that the scratched up wall near the boys locker room now has an upgraded sign that reads, "Sunny Hills Athletics Home of the Lancers," and now complements the new mural completed over the summer by the Art Club, behind the new digital sign board.

By adding distinctive emblems to the outside of each room in the 130s, future campus visitors, including enrollment-considering parents, and Sunny Hills alumni can clearly see the thriving Lancer culture through the varied programs we offer, ranging from eSports to *The Accolade* to Video Production, auto tech, Dance Production and student athletics. The new markings provide these student programs a visual distinction from each other — a much-needed addition to our original stretch of cream colored walls.

Thanks to ASB's Campus Improvements bond measure, now funded partly from locker purchases, the ASB adviser and officers were able to approve or disapprove of fund spending — one being campus renovations. And now that the program has improved the school's public image, *The Accolade* looks forward to different future developments.

Although the new murals and logos paint-



photo by  
AASHNA DIALANI

**PAINTING IT GOLD:**  
*Class of 2024 alumnus and former member of the Art Club Timothy Che paints the new mural on the west side of campus June 13.*

ed on electives' or after school programs' classroom buildings serve as worthy investments in the school's public image, future efforts could be put into more useful improvements on campus.

For example, the boys restrooms around campus lack urinal barriers. The absence of privacy in such close proximity makes students uncomfortable, leading them to seek better options, such as using one of the three closed stalls. Additionally, installing urinal barriers may resolve traffic issues in the facilities and even in hallways.

We know that barriers are possible for men's restrooms for our male teachers here, so we can do the same for students. However, to bring about this campus-wide change, the students would have to show overwhelming support for the cause, principal Craig Weinreich told *The Accolade*. Weinreich added that he would have to look into whether this change would violate federal codes, such as the Americans With Disabilities Act.

Given that the ASB was willing to pay for these recent renovations for an unspecified cost, the boys restroom problem should be affordable.

The Accolade Editorial Board is made up of the top editors and section editors on the 2024-2025 staff with the guidance of adviser Tommy Li. If you have a question about the board's decision or an issue for the board to discuss and write about, please send an email to [theaccoladeshhs@gmail.com](mailto:theaccoladeshhs@gmail.com).



photo by NOAH LEE

**INVESTING IN A FUTURE:** *The newly upgraded jumbotron by the front of the school advertises Gold Cards for the 2024-2025 school year.*

OPINION 21

|sports

# START OF A NEW CENTURY

*With girls flag football's inaugural season and changes in leagues, The Accolade offers a preview of what lies ahead for fall sports*



For the full Sports stories, go to [shhsaccolade.com](https://shhsaccolade.com)

All images except for flag football player were taken by *Accolade* photographers. Image with girls soccer player senior Sloane O'Connor used with permission from LUKE LAWRENCE.



## 1 | BOYS WATER POLO

**Head Coach:** Jordan Jaime

**Outlook:** The Lancers hope that their younger players get more experience and their seniors to play a season they're proud of. The head coach is currently working on trying to implement speed into the team's game strategies.

**League:** Freeway

**Quote:** "We have a highly motivated and experienced team this season," Jaime said. "Staying resilient and willing to put in hard work will help us achieve the goals we have for the season."

— By Serenity Li

## 2 | FOOTBALL

**Head Coach:** Frederick Gambrell

**Outlook:** Through introducing a new perspective on leadership, the new head coach hopes to create a team determined to be the best version.

**League:** Lambda

**Quote:** "I really want to establish a culture of hard work, dedication and commitment, but also build leaders as servants that establish servanthood," Gambrell said. "They'll want to be there for their teammates, serve their teammates, but also sacrifice."

— By Emily Kim

## 3 | GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

**Head Coach:** Amanda Donaldson

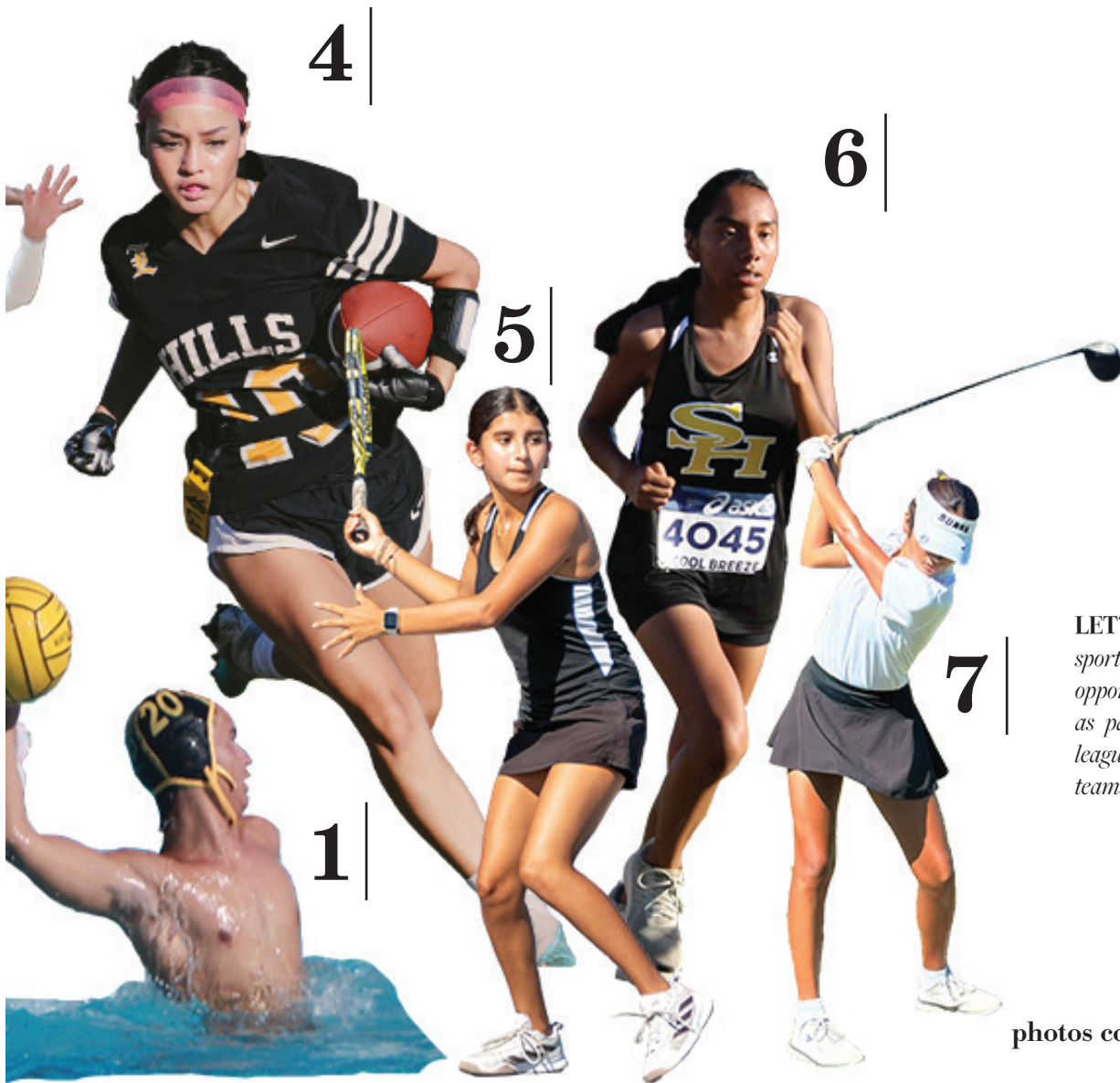
**Outlook:** Lancers aim to prove themselves as tough competition in the newly formed Crestview League, which includes Foothill, Canyon, Crean Lutheran and El Dorado High School after coming out of a victorious season.

**League:** Crestview

**Quote:** "I'm proud of them for being able to set those standards early and make a statement to the team and say effort is acceptable and no effort is unacceptable," Donaldson said.

— By Lauren Kang





**LET'S GET IT, LANCERS!:** *Fall sports athletes get ready to take on new opponents in the Century Conference as part of the CIF's restructuring of leagues — except football, which faces teams in the Lambda League.*

photos compiled by NATHAN LEE

## 4 | GIRLS FLAG FOOTBALL

**Head Coach:** Dylan Kuhn

**Outlook:** Sunny Hills flag football team looks forward to compete for the first time in the league this school year. Following the success of the powderpuff game between the senior and junior girls last school year, Kuhn collaborated with the SH athletics program to officially create a girls flag football team.

**Quote:** "As far as just them being athletes and being ready to compete when the time comes, when the whistle blows and the game starts, the girls are going to be ready," Kuhn said.

— By Yena Oh

## 5 | GIRLS TENNIS

**Head Coach:** Christopher Ghareebo

**Outlook:** With strong returners and newcomers, the girls tennis team hopes to strengthen their skills on the court.

**League:** Freeway

**Quote:** "I welcome a new challenge and new teams we will be playing; every team is good in our league, so we need to be ready every match to play our best," Ghareebo said. "The team is young and hungry to win, but sometimes, we have a tendency to make a few unforced errors."

— By Emily Lee

## 6 | CROSS COUNTRY

**Head Coach:** Hannah Batchelor

**Outlook:** Compared to past seasons, the new coach emphasizes working on improving through more mileage and speed work.

**Boys:** North Hills League  
**Girls:** Freeway League

**Quote:** "I hope we continue to grow the positive team culture I've seen over the past several months," Batchelor said. "My goals are to build up a team that's passionate about the sport and working together to succeed since this sport is so challenging mentally and physically."

— By Ellen Hwang

## 7 | GIRLS GOLF

**Head Coach:** Scott Enrico

**Outlook:** Although Yurang Li graduated last year and Troy remains as a strong competitor, the team seeks another league championship title while adjusting to an entirely new league this year.

**League:** Crestview

**Quote:** "I really want to see our girls stop being so hard on themselves," Enrico said. "I want to see them pick themselves up, work on what they need to work on and get out there again and compete."

— By Nicole Park

SPORTS **23**

# TAKING A GAMBLE ON GAMBRELL

*School officials offer San Clemente defensive assistant his first head-coaching job to guide Lancer football team*

story by NICOLE PARK



photo by ALEXA BERUMEN

**MAKING THE CALLS:** *New head football coach Fred Gambrell walks the sidelines during an Aug. 30 away game against Buena Park High School at Buena Park stadium.*



photo by NOAH LEE

**HUDDLE UP:** *Head football coach Fred Gambrell (center) talks to his players during the Aug. 23 game against the Troy Warriors at Buena Park stadium.*

To serve and not be served. This is new head football coach Fred Gambrell's mantra he preaches to his players.

This motto has been deeply rooted in him ever since the beginning of his football career, and after becoming a Christian.

"I asked Jesus Christ to be my Lord, since then, that's been my goto," said Gambrell.

"[Football] allowed me to get aggression out," he said. "And the other aspect of being a part of a team, the camaraderie with your teammates, having to battle together."

After playing football at Lamar High School in South Carolina, Gambrell attended Charleston Southern University to play Division 1 football as a walk-on in 2004.

"[That] was the hardest thing I ever did because I constantly had to prove myself," he said.

He then played one year of semi-professional football with the Charleston Knights before ending his playing career.

Gambrell served as Darlington High School's special team coordinator, defensive back coach and the strength and conditioning coach.

"I think once I started it was difficult," he said. "But being part of a team and being able to guide young men in their daily lives to grow up kept me driving."

In 2012, the head coach returned to his alma mater and coached offense line and tight end.

Then, Gambrell moved to California and started coaching at Dana Hills High School from 2015-2018. His subsequent coaching jobs were at Kennedy and San Clemente High School from 2018-2019 and 2020-2023 respectively.

In January 2024, Gambrell was hired for the head coach position at Sunny Hills.

SH athletic director Paul Jones said he was deeply inspired by Gambrell's serving attitude.

"He was easily our number one candidate," he said. "His coaching experience, his playing experience and his coaching philosophy [made him stand out]."

Jones also said he noticed the positive atmosphere Gambrell creates in his team.

"The kids are having fun, it's positive and they're building a new culture," the athletic director said.

Wide receiver, cornerback senior Grant Rabe said Gambrell holds great knowledge of football and shows great care for his players.

"He gets super in-depth on how to do it, or what we're doing wrong and what we need to do," he said.

The newly hired head coach hopes to build the SH football program up.

"I saw potential to build this program up and that whole family style of support and being there for each other is what gravitated me toward [the school]," Gambrell said.

More specifically, Gambrell aims to help his team improve in every aspect of the game.

"[We want to try] to take it one game at a time and also learn how to navigate through the ups and downs," he said. "One thing I always tell [my team] is that we can't be a roller coaster — we've got to stay up and be cool, calm and collected."



For the full story, go to [shhsaccolade](https://shhsaccolade.com).



# TIME OUT

story by ASHLEY KANG

*Math teacher appointed head coach for SH first girls flag football team*

photo by NOAH LEE

**PEPTALK:** Girls Flag Football Coach Dylan Kuhn gives a pep talk to his three quarterbacks, freshman Soliao Arredondo (left), junior Samantha Apolinar and sophomore Amelia Herbert, on the field during lunch before their Sept. 11 game against Troy High School.

New girls flag football coach Dylan Kuhn had always been interested in football.

While he had spent most of his childhood playing baseball, the coach said he had a fond spot for the sport, recalling nights spent watching the San Francisco 49ers.

So when he learned of the development of a flag football team at Sunny Hills, Kuhn said he knew the program was something he wanted to be a part of despite his limited experience.

"With the big push for integrating flag football, I just saw it as an opportunity to get involved in something else on campus," said Kuhn.

Having coached the junior team for Powderpuff last year, Kuhn said he learned about the new girls flag football program through the Jan. 18 informational meeting with athletic director Paul Jones.

While there were multiple applicants, Jones said Kuhn was best fit for the position.

"Last year was his first year here, but he's also a Sunny Hills alumnus, so it made it pretty easy [to appoint him]," Jones said.

## HIS DEDICATION

"He has a solid grasp on the game," said varsity safety and co-captain senior Michele Pacheco. "[His strategies] really help when we need to intercept the ball and when we have the rusher run to the [opposing team's] quarterback and pull her flag before the team throws."

His athletes also recognize his support-

iveness and commitment to the sport during practices.

"He provides good feedback and tailors the approach to individual needs," said sophomore Saraya Jhawar, the wide receiver and quarterback of the varsity flag football team.

“

**IT'S BEEN A  
REALLY  
EXCITING  
EXPERIENCE**

- coach Dylan Kuhn

”

## HIS OUTLOOK

Although the additional role increased his workload, Kuhn said he does not regret his decision.

"I have taken on a lot this year with not only coaching a new sport, but I have started the program from the ground floor," he said. "It has been a lot of work, but fortunately I have always been a teacher and a coach, so I have learned how to juggle the two."

The flag football coach said he also counsels with Troy Nelson, a prior frosh/soph football coach and his current assistant coach.

"The best resource is just going to be from any coaches who have experience," Kuhn said.

For their league games, Kuhn said the team plans on utilizing strategies such as misdirection, a tactic in which players deceive opponents of where the play will be heading. For defense, he stresses the importance of zone defense—guarding not only a single player but an entire area.

With the Lady Lancers currently holding a 2-3 record, Kuhn said he looks forward to the upcoming season.

"I'm excited, it's been a fun experience, just getting to do everything from the ground floor," he said. "It's been a really exciting experience."

As the coach of a new sports team, Kuhn hopes to win the league championships and further increase participation in the flag football program.

"The main goal is to make sure that the girls that are playing, they enjoy themselves and that the non-seniors have a good enough time and want to make this something that they do long term," he said. "I want them to make flag football something that they do while they're here at Sunny Hills."



For the full story,  
go to shhsaccolade.





photo by KATIE LEEM

**A GIVING HEART:** As a girls volleyball team tradition, sophomore Melody Sonboli (left) and senior Dyllyn Williams exchange containers of snacks and drinks Sept. 5 before leaving for an away match during fifth period at the parking lot in front of the baseball field.

# Hey, SISTERS

*Gift bag exchanges in some girls sports help produce positive team bonding*

story by LAUREN KANG

**A**t 3.75 inches tall, the miniature Funko Pop of Lakers basketball legend LeBron James sits on girls basketball player junior Ayah Maaytah's dresser and to this day, it's one of her favorite gifts she has received from a teammate.

"He's one of my favorite players on my favorite team, so it showed how much my teammate knew me," Maaytah said.

As a part of her final sister gift exchange during her sophomore year girls basketball banquet, she obtained this prized possession from then-freshman Rihanna Jones.

"It helped us grow closer, and it made me more excited to give my gift to my person," Maaytah said.

Maaytah is one of many girls on Lady Lancer sports teams who have established such connections through their traditions of gift giving.

In fact, of the 13 sports comprising girls teams at Sunny Hills, only seven participate in such activities.

Although each sport has its own way of doing this, each

typically assigns two teammates together to prepare gifts for each other on game days; the games players decide to do the exchange varies for each team.

Some teams do the tradition a little differently and have secret sister gifts — girls tennis, girls water polo, girls basketball — in which the athletes are unaware of who they're receiving their gifts from.

In girls volleyball, for example, junior opposite hitter Rielynn Brimmer said all three divisions — frosh/soph, junior varsity (JV) and varsity — in the program are assigned to each other. Players only bring each other gifts — usually consisting of snacks and one or two drinks — when they have away matches.

"We first get randomly assigned a sister by our coaches, and our sister must be in a different grade and team," Brimmer said. "Every away game that we have, we always bring a small gift for them."

Girls volleyball head coach Amanda Donaldson has seen



## Which snacks are given most often?

23.5%  
Chips

23.5%  
Drinks

52.9%  
Candies

Source: Google Form responses from 17 girls fall sports players

illustration by Lindsey Um



Image used with permission from Amanda Donaldson

**FOREVER MEMORIES:** Girls volleyball team members hold up their sister gifts in the bus transporting them to their match against La Serna High School on Aug. 23.

its effectiveness over the years since she's been guiding the program for nearly a decade.

"It's a fun way to make sure people are really bonding in a different sense than just playing volleyball," Donaldson said. "It's cool to have a senior wave at someone in the quad, and it makes people feel really involved."

### A LONGSTANDING TRADITION

For girls basketball, this exchange among teammates started more than 20 years ago or possibly longer, coaches said.

"I did not implement this, but it's been a longstanding tradition," said Christina Chong, the girls JV basketball coach. "I participated in it as a player [here]."

Contrary to this, some sports have just recently begun to implement this practice.

For example, girls volleyball only started this bonding practice in 2015 when Donald-

son was hired as the new head coach.

Girls cheer organizes sister gifts in its own way.

Cheer team president Aly Chow said cheerleaders are assigned one or more "littles" from the JV or frosh team and exchange gifts only on the day of a big football game: Battle of the Nations and homecoming.

"I think sister gifts are super fun, and everyone in the past years has had only good experiences from it," junior JV cheerleader Rayna Tan said. "I enjoy the sister system because it lets the JV and frosh girls have a role model and someone to look up to."

### CROSSOVER SISTER GIFTS?

Though junior girls soccer player Elly Sweeney said she loves what sister gifts does for her team, she hopes that it could be run like girls volleyball.

"I wish that the selection was with other teams as well," Sweeney said. "I know volley-

ball does that and mixes up a varsity player with a frosh because it would make the entire program closer."

Donaldson said the sister gifts create unity across the entire program.

"Last night before the set started, our varsity and frosh/soph kids were in the stands, doing this crazy, loud cheer all together for the JV team," said Donaldson, referencing the Aug. 27 volleyball game at Rosary High School. "It was like we got your back from whatever level, doesn't matter if it's frosh-soph, JV or varsity."

### LOOKING IN FROM THE OUTSIDE

No boys sports teams use gifts as a form of bonding, but some are open to it.

"I definitely think it would benefit the bonding experience of the [boys]," track and field senior Dante Rosete said. "When I see girls getting random gifts, I wish I could also get one, too."

photo by SEOWON HAN



**HANDOFF:** English teacher Teresa McCarty (left) takes senior singles girls tennis player Amy Roh's secret sister gift for another teammate in front of Room 32 during first period on Sept. 11. The plan was for the instructor to give the surprise bag to the student in McCarty's fourth period class.



Find the full story in the online Sports section at [shhsacolade.com](http://shhsacolade.com)

# Lighting up the stage

*Lancer Theater Department  
prepares for heartwarming  
adaptation of “The Old Man  
and the Old Moon”*

**PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT:** Theater students seniors Celeste Lopez-Garduno (left) and Ian Kim rehearse on Sept. 10 in the Performing Arts Center for the upcoming play “The Old Man and the Old Moon.”

story by **JENNA KIM**

Audiences watching this year’s fall play in the Performing Arts Center [PAC] will notice right away that this is not being produced in the traditional format.

Instead of curtains remaining open for viewers to watch how characters interact with each other, they will be closed to decrease the depth of the stage, theater teacher Christian Penuelas said. Lights will also remain dimmed to allow one source of brightness to project through the curtains so as to create a shadow effect, also known as shadow puppetry.

Originating from China, the term arises from the ancient form of storytelling using cutout figures held between a source of light and a translucent screen, according to Wikipedia.

“I’ve been wanting to do a show like this for a long time,” Penuelas said of “The Old Man and the Old Moon,” which debuts Nov. 7 and runs through the next two days. “It’s really storytelling at its core, which is what we do here; it embodies the Lancer Theatre Company’s statement that we’re storytellers at heart.”

The 2012 Pigpen Theatre Co.-produced script of “Old Man” will also feature singing from some of the 14-member cast, nine of whom will perform as puppeteers, according to the drama department’s Instagram page. As of the week of Sept. 9, none of these puppets have been completed.

Senior Connor Woolley plays the drama’s narrator named Matheson, who tells the audience about an elderly man (played by senior Elliot Park) setting out on a quest to find his missing wife (played by senior Celeste Lopez-Garduno) and discovering new places while confronting his own past along the way, cast members said.

The production also creates a fictional world in which the elderly man’s job is to fill up the moon with gold liquid — an aspect that will be presented through sound and shadow puppetry.

“This show is definitely very different from the other Lancer Theater Company shows I’ve either been in or seen,” said Woolley, who got cast last spring as Pugsley in the musical, “The



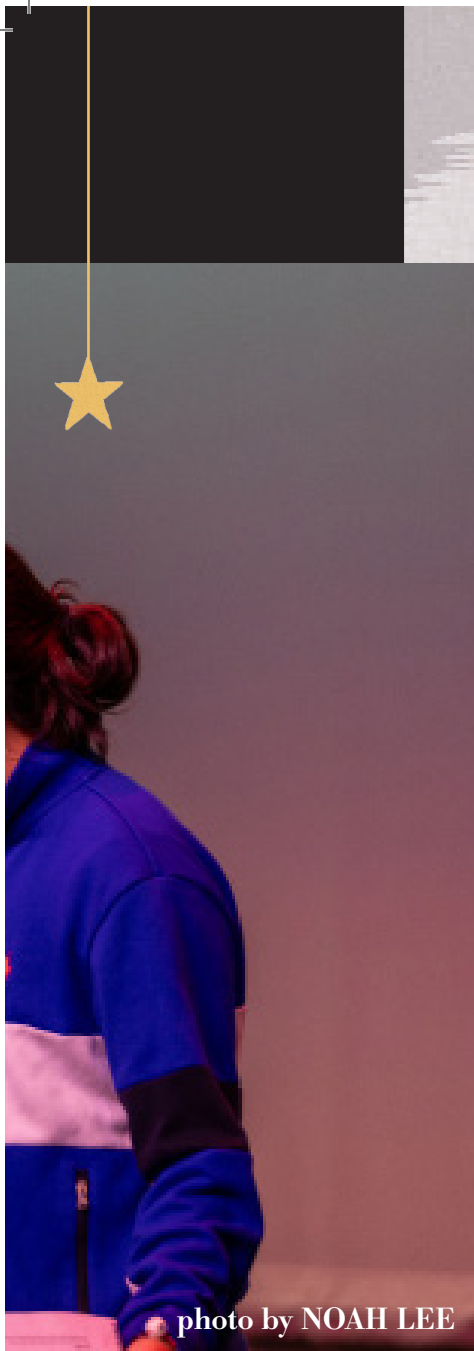


photo by NOAH LEE

## UPCOMING COFA EVENTS

Nov. 18-19

--> Spring Musical Audition

Nov. 20-21

--> Visual Arts Exhibition

Dec. 4

--> "12 Acts" Theater Production

Dec. 5-6

--> "Sounds of Season" Winter Choir Concert

Addams Family." "From the shadow puppetry to the live music to the rapid storytelling, this show brings a lot of new challenges that I'm excited to work with."

Senior Katie Handley got cast as Llewellyn, a young sailor the old man meets and comes to mentor on his journey. Handley said she also wants to take on the challenges of mixing shadow puppetry with live characters in this production.

"We are trying to be more creative in the way we do our sets," she said. "Especially for this new kind of performance; I'm excited for how the story's going to unfold."

Handley said she was inspired by the creative direction the play was taking, using it to shape her own audition, which was held on Aug. 29 in the PAC.

The script itself was also very open to interpretation, so I'm interested in seeing how it's going to play out on the actual days of our performances," she said.

Among the characters, set design and overall vision of the play, another point of focus is the show's singular progression, Penuelas said. Without an intermission in between, the play marks the department's first such type of performance that will last 90 minutes.

"The Old Man and the Old Moon' is told in one kind of seamless flow, and there aren't any scene changes as it moves from beginning to end," the instructor said. "I do think this is the best way to convey the narrative."

Woolley said he shared the theater teacher's excitement for the show's artistic creativity.

"I'm definitely most interested in seeing the shadow puppetry when the show finally goes live since it's a completely new and unique thing that the Lancer Theater Company has never put on stage before," he said.

Prices will range from \$15 for general admission and \$12 for students with an Associated Student Body Gold Card, he said.

"We are hoping for a full house," Penuelas said. "Funny, adventurous and heartwarming it's a really beautiful story that I think audiences will engage with really nicely."

# SIP BACK & STUDY

*As we passed the first five weeks of the fall semester, A&E co-editor Claire Lee comes up with five suggestions for where students can productively study throughout this school year*

story by CLAIRE LEE

## Sip & Savor



This cafe deserves the title as a local favorite that blends its vibrant atmosphere with its delicious drinks.

The interior of the shop exudes warmth, with rustic decor and cozy seating that make it an inviting place for studying. It's a go-to spot for students who need a quiet place to work because of its underrated reputation.

The large windows allow sunlight to flood the space, which creates an environment that is ideal for focus and relaxation.

This charming cafe is known for its beverages such as the Tiramisu Matcha Latte, which is topped with cold foam and a ladyfinger biscuit.

The cafe offers an enticing selection of tasty baked goods. A popular choice is the Matcha Cookie, which pairs perfectly with any drink.

Whether guests are there to dive into their studies or simply enjoy a cup of coffee and friends, Sip & Savor is a welcoming spot nearby.

### Criteria

- Volume
- Seating
- Drinks/Food
- Accommodations



all illustrations by LINDSEY UM

photo by KATIE LEEM



**FIRST:** Many go to Sip & Savor, a coffee shop located in Downtown Fullerton to study and converse, on Sept. 4.

# 2



photo by KATIE LEEM

**SECOND:** Visitors study on an afternoon at The Mugs, a cafe located in Downtown Fullerton known for "quality coffee and art" on Sept. 4.

## The Mugs



This popular cafe, located in downtown Fullerton offers delicious and innovative coffee drinks, such as its signature Iced Black Sesame and Tiramisu Lattes.

Since its opening, the cafe garnered many customers, specifically high school students because of its spacious tables and woody interior. Free Wi-Fi is available, ensuring efficiency when using technology devices.

The cafe serves flavored milk, premium tea such as the Berry Hibiscus and refreshments like Blood Orange Tonic to order during studies.

If looking for a snack, the Blueberry or Earl Grey Scone is served with a side of butter and strawberry jam.

However, because of the popularity it gained as a close-by study spot, it is difficult to find seats on the weekends.

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photo by NOAH LEE

**THIRD:** Two customers place their orders at Stereoscope Coffee at 4542 Beach Blvd. on Sept. 5.

3

## Stereoscope



Known for its crafted beverages, this coffee shop offers a unique experience with their Madagascar Vanilla Latte or Ly-chee Peachy drink.

It has an extensive menu, with many types of coffee beans and matcha to cater to every taste. The cafe offers seasonal drinks, such as the Spring Sakura or PiaColatte drink line.

Stereoscope has a sleek and minimalist interior design. The airy space has communal tables – perfect for solo studies and group sessions. With its calming atmosphere, it is easy to focus and stay productive.

High-speed Wi-Fi and outlets are available, making it an ideal spot for students who need to get work done.

Because of its popularity, particularly among high school students and remote workers, finding a seat is a challenge during early afternoon hours on both school days and weekends, so plan accordingly if hoping to secure a spot.



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