Campus Times

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Debate team displays speech styles

Erika Oceguera
Staff Writer

The University of La Verne's Lordsburg speech and debate team hosted a Spring 2025 Speech Showcase on April 24, offering an engaging evening of student-led presentations that blended humor, research and emotional storytelling.

The event took place in the Campus Center's Conference Room before an audience of about 30 La Verne community members.

Led by Mikayla Holzinger, director of forensics and instructor in the rhetoric and communication studies department, the event highlighted the team's growth and achievements this year.

"This is the first time in 23 years that the university has passed speech again," Holzinger said. "The team earned over 25 awards this year, with several students placing in the top 20 nationally. It's an incredible accomplishment."

Before each speaker, Holzinger offered the audience a description of the different types of speeches they would hear.

She explained that "after dinner speaking" is a humorous speech about a serious topic, designed to make complex issues more digestible through comedy. Communication analysis involves analyzing an artifact – such as a book, movement or event – through an academic model or theory.

Prose interpretation requires performers to adapt a piece of literature and relate its deeper meaning to personal identity or broader social themes.

The showcase began with senior communications major Kael Matias in the after dinner speaking category.

Matias used humor and anecdotes to address misogyny within the queer community, centering the story around experiences working at a U-Haul rental center and a favorite customer affectionately known as "Lisa the lesbian."

Through witty commentary, Matias highlighted how marginalized groups, particularly queer women and feminine-presenting individuals, often face discrimination within their own communities.

"Queer misogyny affects everyone, even within our own community," Matias said. "It's critical we recognize that and stand together."

Next, senior English major Annette Ruiz presented a communication analysis on "The Unburnable Book," a fireproof edition of Margaret Atwood's "The Handmaid's Tale," created in response to increasing book censorship.

Ruiz argued that projects like "The Unburnable Book" serve as buffer zones to combat historical amnesia and preserve women's narratives.

"If we don't protect these stories, history will repeat itself," Ruiz said. "Books like 'The Handmaid's Tale' aren't just fiction – they're warnings."

The third speaker, freshman sociology major Gelsey Chan, delivered a powerful prose interpretation performance drawn from a story about a young girl navigating the complexities of obedience, loyalty and self-identity within an Asian American household.

"In traditional Asian cultures, family loyalty often outweighs individual needs — even when it hurts," Chan said.

Chan described how Asian parenting styles often emphasize control over emotional expression, with love and governance intertwined — a dynamic that can lead to deep psychological scars across generations.

"Responsibility to break generational trauma often falls on the child," Chan said, reflecting on the broader societal implications of her piece.

Closing the evening, senior political science major Alexia Daniels delivered a sharp after dinner speaking performance that critiqued the evolution of Black conservatism.

Through humor and pointed commentary, Daniels argued that the movement often works against the very communities it claims to represent.

"The Black conservative movement is only a col- l e c - tion of gimmicks used to d i s - enfranchise Black people within the United States," Daniels said.

Tracing the movement's roots to historical figures like Booker T. Washington, Daniels connected those early ideas to modern leaders such as Clarence Thomas and Candace Owens.

She highlighted how contemporary Black conservatives, in her view, prioritize corporate interests over community empowerment.



Thatiana Gibbs

Lordsburg speech team member Gelsey Chan, sophomore sociology major, performs during the Spring 2025 Showcase on April 24 in the Campus Center Ballroom. Chan was among the team members recognized for their award-winning performances at the National Speech Championship.

"The policies coming from Clarence Thomas don't discriminate based on color — they discriminate based on whether you can afford a private plane," Daniels said.

Daniels' performance combined humor with a serious critique of how conservative rhetoric can limit liberation efforts for marginalized groups. Throughout the evening, Holzinger emphasized the importance of speech as a tool for social change.

"This activity changed my life," Holzinger said. "And it's clear it's already transforming the lives of our students."

As the event wrapped up, guests mingled over cookies and refreshments, celebrating the team's achievements and the powerful stories shared during the showcase.

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Retiring professor reflects on career

Xiaoyan Liu, professor of mathematics, celebrated her 33-year journey with University of La Verne and her pending retirement at the end of this academic year, during a talk Tuesday in the Quay Davis Executive Boardroom.

Alessandro Morosin, assistant professor of sociology and criminology, introduced Liu's presentation, "My Last Lecture: The Lessons I Have Learned."

About 30 University community members attended.

Liu's talk was personal and biographical, and she illustrated her talk by sharing pictures and taking the audience through the chapters of her life.

She said she had been excited for a career in math starting back in middle school thanks to an influential teacher.

The photos she shared illustrated the importance she placed on connections with students, and her fellow faculty members.

She also shared her travels throughout Asia.

Liu said in retirement she plans to spend more time with family and continue her mathematics research.

Audience members shared their appreciation for Liu's contribution.

"Before there were not many female faculty members, but Dr. Liu welcomed a lot of us and gave us a sense of belonging," said Amy Jiang, professor and head of emerging technology digital initiatives at the University."

—Isabella Huerta

On the Cover

Senior pitcher Justin McFadden warms up in the bullpen, smoothly switching his glove from one hand to the other. Born with one hand, he's adapted his game with determination and skill. / photo by Rylee Fournier

Crowd honors Armenian Genocide

Talar Sarkissian
Staff Writer

Nearly 50 students, faculty and community members came together to observe the 110th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide on April 24 in front of Founders Hall.

The event was organized by the Armenian Law Students Association, with help from Seta Whitby, professor of computer science and advisor to the undergraduate Armenian Student Association, whose members were also involved in the event.

The memorial took place at the Rock, which was covered in hand-painted Armenian symbols, such as a forget-me-not flower, the official symbol of Armenian Genocide remembrance.

Around it were crosses, pomegranates, letters from the Armenian alphabet and a painting of Tsitsernakaberd, the genocide memorial that stands in Yerevan the capital of Armenia.

Traditional Armenian music played in the background as people gathered, the sun setting slowly behind Founders Hall.

Law student Alex Kechichian, who serves as ALSA's president-elect, secretary and social media chair, MC'd the event.

Zandra Wagoner, University Chaplain, opened the ceremony with a prayer, setting a quiet, emotional tone.

Speakers from the Armenian Law Students Association shared what remembrance means to them and why it matters.

University Chief Financial Officer Avo Kechichian also spoke about the strength and resilience passed down through generations of Armenian families.

Law student, ALSA historian and social media coordinator Katherine Demirchyan, spoke about the need to keep standing tall.

"As Armenians, we have this gene in us. We feel the need to work harder, to be stronger, to prove our existence and our worth," Demirchyan said. "When we touch a place with our presence, it becomes better."

Whitby, who started the Rock painting tradition 10 years ago for the 100th anniversary of the genocide, shared why the tradition still matters today.

"This is one way to remember the lives that were lost," Whitby said. "We must never forget. Through this symbol, we bring awareness to the campus and the larger community."

Law student Aram Adamyan, ALSA's secretary-elect, spoke about how many people outside the Armenian community still know so little.

"A lot of people do not even know where Armenia is, let alone what happened to our people," Adamyan said. "When we tell our story, one person learns, and they tell another. That is how our story survives. Meeting other Armenians is an instant bond," he said.



Jai'la Counts

University of La Verne Chief Financial Officer Avo Kechichian delivers an emotional speech at Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day ceremony April 24 outside Founders Hall. Nearly 50 people attended the ceremony, which was hosted by the Armenian Law Students Association.

"Even those who are not Armenian, their support tonight matters."

After the ceremony, law student and ALSA president Menua Yesayan reflected on what it meant to see the community show up.

"One hundred and 10 years ago, our unity was attacked," Yesayan said.

"Today, seeing students honor our history shows that the seeds planted through our people's struggle are still growing strong."

The event ended with a candlelight vigil and a moment of silence.

As the campus grew quiet, the crowd remembered the 1.2 million Armenians who were forced from their homes, marched through the desert, and killed during one of the first genocides of the 20th century.

Small gift bags were handed out at the end of the night, filled with traditional Armenian sweets, pastries and stickers from the Armenian Student Association.

It was a powerful event to honor the Armenian culture and to make sure that even 110 years later, the memory of what happened is never forgotten.

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Title IX coordinator brings a positive change

Olivia Russo
News Editor

Editor's note: This interview has been edited for length

Chadwick Best was named the University of La Verne Title IX Coordinator in February 2025.

Title IX is a federal law that prohibits sex-based discrimination in schools and colleges that receive federal funding. It is most frequently applied in cases of sexual harassment and assault and in athletic programs for which the law calls for equal funding and resources between men's and women's sports.

Stalking, domestic violence, sexual assault, sexual violence and any type of harassment on campus are prohibited under Title IX. The law can also come into play for those who have other types of unequal treatment in the school setting based on gender and sexual orientation.

For the University of La Verne, reports may come from both on-campus and off-campus, but the latter may not receive a formal investigation because Title IX focuses specifically on on-campus misconduct.

Best was born in Michigan and completed his education in state, earning his Juris Doctor at the University of Detroit's Mercy School of Law.

His first job as a lawyer took him to North Dakota, where he moved from tax law to the state's Department of Labor and Human Rights and where he realized he liked to advocate for vulnerable populations.

He eventually focused on Title IX with positions at Arizona State University, the University of Miami, and University of Texas before landing at ULV.

As Title IX coordinator, he said he conducts formal or informal investigations once a complaint is filed.

For the formal process Best said he will meet with both sides and then hire an outside investigator, which will lead to a public hearing where a panel will give a verdict on the best outcome for the parties involved.

In an informal situation, he said, there will be no hearing or trial, but an investigation and then a decision from both parties on how to move forward. Certain issues cannot be dealt with a simple informal hearing, such as sexual assault, but a majority of complaints may be resolved informally.

Last month Best shared his thoughts about his Title IX work, what led him to the University and his concerns about how the Trump administration could erode Title IX protections, in an interview with Campus Times News Editor Olivia Russo.

Olivia Russo: What is the process after receiving a Title IX complaint?

Chadwick Best: Assuming that we have a formal complaint and they wanted an investigation, we would get what they experienced and then we would then meet with an alleged offender, we would get their experience and then deal with witnesses or whatnot and draft up a report.

OR: How long does this take?

CB: The policy states that it can take up to 120 days. But there's a lot of built-in timelines in the actual policy. And it's not a hard-and-fast rule. There are instances when it might go over that.

OR: Does that timeline change based on different situations?

CB: Our policy doesn't really provide for a separate process, for things that would follow outside of Title IX. Regardless of the institution, if there's one element that is Title IX then you're going to follow the Title IX process.

OR: What is the procedure after you receive an initial report?

CB: I can receive a report from a responsible party that would be any employee that works for the University. I would invite you to meet with me. We would just talk about the process and what's required, we then notice the respondent. I would put in a request for an investigator. And for a formal process or an informal resolution, it just depends on both parties agreeing to that and the egregiousness of the allegation because I would also need to sign off on it.

OR: How do you make sure that someone feels comfortable enough to talk about what they experienced if they didn't come to you themselves?

CB: Sometimes they won't respond and that's okay. In the letter that we send out to an individual, we just let them know there's certain things you're entitled to, even if you don't file a complaint. That could be a "no contact order" for someone, changing classes, changing dorm rooms.

OR: If they meet with you and decide they don't actually want to file a complaint, what happens from there?

CB: I would just let them know that I was going to close it out and I would confirm that. At that point, it just stays in our database. So just because they choose, let's say today, not to do anything, that doesn't change they could come back in a year or two.

OR: What happens if somebody has multiple Title IX complaints against them?

CB: If it continues to be a problem, the hearing panel, when they're evaluating all that, they're the ones that also determine the sanctions that are imposed. So they can look at the egregiousness of the situations.

OR: How do you manage to stay calm despite sometimes intense emotions in the room?

CB: Whether talking to a complainant, or when I am meeting with a respondent, that obviously can be anxiety producing. But for me, what keeps me grounded is one of the appeal bases in this process is whether or not there was bias in the process.

I can't really think of anything worse than someone coming forward, going through the process, it's determined that there's a violation and then there's an appeal, and it ends up being overturned because of some bias in the process.

OR: Has there been any changes in your application of Title IX since the change in presidential administration?

CB: In August of 2020, there were new Title IX regulations that were put in by the first term Trump Administration. So I became very familiar with those,

Continued on page 6

Café Review

Finding the best brew around

by Tati Foor
photography by Rylee Fournier

For University of La Verne students on the hunt for the perfect coffee shop, options abound within a short four-mile radius of campus.

After visiting five local coffee shops and sampling both signature drinks and a simple iced vanilla latte, I have put together the ultimate guide to the area's best spots.

Tucked away in the Claremont Packing House, Iron & Kin will provide you with the best vanilla latte. The perfectly balanced sweetness and strength of the espresso elevated a simple order to something that tasted great.

What sets Iron & Kin apart is the personalized experience. Baristas consistently greet customers with genuine interest, asking about their day and creating conversation. The coffeehouse ambiance provides lots of seating, though it can get crowded during peak hours, which range from about 8 a.m. to noon.

If you are lucky enough to snag a table, the aesthetic environment makes for a productive and enjoyable workspace.

The shop offers more than just great coffee and aesthetics though.

"Our most popular drinks would probably be the Graceful matcha latte or the strawberry matcha," David Opsvig, a barista at Iron & Kin, said. "But the strawberry matcha is a seasonal drink."

He later added that his personal favorite is their cortado.

After talking to David and trying it for myself, their matcha deserves a special recognition for its quality, especially for non-coffee drinkers.

Rev'd Up Coffee & Classics in Claremont claimed the title for the best specialty latte with the Easy Rider - an iced latte with cinnamon, vanilla, and cookie butter.

"The Easy Rider is definitely our most ordered," Ashton Vandenberg, a barista at Rev'd Up said. "It's one of my favorites too."

The drink lives up to its popularity with its balanced sweetness and spice that doesn't overwhelm the flavor of the coffee.

The spacious interior offers lots of seating, including outdoor options. Weekdays provide a quieter atmosphere for studying, as the barista mentioned they get busiest during the weekends, especially mornings.

Pomona's Wish You Were Here Coffee Roasters creates an immediately inviting atmosphere with its warm interior decorations and friendly staff. The layout of the cafe features lots of seating, making it a great spot for doing schoolwork.

"I'd say probably our Bourbon Caramel or our Spanish Latte," barista George Jimenez said when asked about customer favorites.

The Bourbon Caramel deserves every bit of its popularity – I tried it hot and it was so flavorful. I do not typically reach for hot coffee, but decided to give it a try since George recommended it, as the foam perfectly holds the sprinkled salt to give the latte a sweet and salty taste.

For students prioritizing convenience, French Press Espresso Bar and Nambah Coffee Co. in La Verne offer the shortest trips from campus.

"Our most ordered is the Matcha Bella," Grace Prentice, a barista from French Press said. "It's an iced matcha with vanilla and rose syrup."

The cafe stands out for its French themed interior and its extensive food menu, which is perfect for a longer study session.

Nambah Coffee Co. impresses with its spacious environment, including outdoor seating options.



Wish You Were Here Coffee in downtown Pomona puts their own spin on the classic vanilla latte. Known for bold flavors and a welcoming feel, the Latinx-owned shop is a go-to spot for good coffee and good company.

Their snickerdoodle latte deserves recognition as a dessert-like drink that does not overpower the coffee quality. The friendly baristas enhance the welcoming atmosphere.

Whether seeking the perfect vanilla latte at Iron & Kin, grabbing Rev'd Up's cookie butter latte, or settling in for a study session at Wish You Were Here, Nambah or French Press, these local shops offer something for anyone, adding the plus of not having to go more than four miles from campus.

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A Route 66 sign hangs at Rev'd Up Coffee and Classics in Claremont, a Latinx-and women-owned café known for its vegan menu, sustainable practices and welcoming atmosphere. The spot brings together a love for vintage style and a strong sense of community.



At Iron & Kin in the Claremont Packing House, the Graceful matcha latte and Worthy iced coffee sit ready to enjoy. Both are local favorites, known for their smooth flavors and thoughtful names.

HAPPENINGS

Big Sean

Lavernapalooza, the annual concert event, will be held at 7:30 p.m. Thursday at the Fox Theater in Pomona. This year's headliner is rap star Big Sean and the opener is Kyle.

Tickets are free for undergraduate students only. For others, it is $40.

For more information, visit **foxpomona.com/events/detail/921360**.

'Miss You Like Hell'

The University of La Verne Theatre Arts and Music Departments present "Miss You Like Hell," a musical written by Quiara Alegria Hudes and composed by Erin McKeown, the show follows a troubled teenager who embarks on a cross-country road trip with her estranged mother, who is an undocumented immigrant from Mexico. The musical performances are 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2:30 p.m. Sunday in Dailey Theatre.

Tickets are $10 for students, $15 for faculty/senior citizens, and $20 for the general public.

Ticket reservations can be made online.

'Into the Woods Jr.'

The University of La Verne Choral Organization is presenting "Into the Woods Jr.," an adaptation of the popular musical created by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine. The performance will begin at 7 p.m. May 10 in Morgan Auditorium, located in Founders Hall. Tickets will be sold at the door for $20.

For more information, visit the **@ulvvocalmusic** Instagram page.

Student and Faculty Stage

The music department will host this semester's student club concert, "The Student and Faculty Stage," at 6 p.m. May 17 in Morgan Auditorium. Admission is free.

For more information, visit the **@ulv_music** Instagram page.

—Zachary Grech

Reed Gratz performs Farewell send-off

by Marina Bravo

photography by Olivia Russo



Reed Gratz, professor of music, plays with his family and friends at his final concert with the University of La Verne on Sunday in Morgan Auditorium. The band features Michael O'Neill on guitar, Dio Saucedo on percussion, Arnold Jacks on bass, Brandon Fields on saxophone and Joachim Marcus Gratz de Lang on drums.

The University of La Verne said its goodbyes to professor of music Reed Gratz after 48 years as an educator and mentor at the University via a send-off concert Sunday in Morgan Auditorium.

The hall was filled with roughly 200 colleagues, students, family and friends who had come together to celebrate Gratz's distinguished career.

Gratz and his band played a total of 12 original pieces all written and composed by Gratz. "Stena Line," "Phineas," "Tom," "View From the South," "The Boulevard," "Cambridge Viewpoint," "Wit Haar Zachte Wind," "Bitez," "Child Play," "Fred Astaire," "Growing" and "Yo Quiero El Púlpito."

All songs were named after places Gratz has traveled, or after influential people in the music world that have inspired him.

Grace Zhao, professor and music department chair, opened the event and introduced Gratz, sharing her memories of Gratz from the start of her career at the University.

Zhao talked about Gratz' love for education but more importantly his love for his craft and playing gigs.

Gratz was accompanied by many prestigious musical talents throughout the performance, many who were ULV alumni and students of his.

They included Gayle Weiston-Serdan, pianist and chief music officer of the Youth Mentoring Action Network; composer J. Michael O'Neal; bassist Andrew Ford; bassist Arnold Jacks; drummer Mike Bennett; guitarist Michael O'Neill; saxophonist and former ULV faculty member Brandon Fields; saxophonist and long-time ULV music faculty member Steve Alaniz; saxophonist and member of Earth Wind & Fire Gary Bias; percussionist Dio Saucedo; tap dancer Aaron Williams; and Gratz's son, Joachim Marcus Gratz de Lang, on drums and bass.

Gratz was received with applause as he took the stage. Then he instantly immersed the audience in his gift of music, transforming the auditorium.

Guests and talents on stage were just as impacted by the performance with Gratz as he was.

Gratz shared how special it was to be able to perform along with musical legends to which they expressed the same emotion.

Throughout performance, Gratz was able to travel through time and reflected and highlighted his moments through his career with the people on stage and off. Many members of the band also shared their favorite moments.

> 'Dr. Gratz has inspired me to keep going. Being around him and hearing his stories made me feel like I wasn't alone in this world.'
> *—Claire Kostich, senior music major*

"Dr. Gratz has inspired me to keep going," Claire Kostich, senior music major, said. "Being around him and hearing his stories made me feel like I wasn't alone in this world."

Zhao honored Gratz with printed sheet music of all his music he has published and she even performed his piece, "Growing," which she shared was one of the pieces Gratz wrote out for her to play.

"He is excellent at his craft and so humble at the same time," pianist Michael O'Neal said.

O'Neal also shared how important of a figure Gratz had been in his life, not only as an educator but as a person.

O'Neal shared that Gratz's connection with his family and faith has always inspired and stood out to him.

"He plays like he is a person," Bennett said. "I have been so grateful that he is in my life. Even after 20 years since I've [...graduated] I still come to him for advice."

After the concert, many colleagues and friends expressed their gratitude with Gratz and congratulated him on his many accomplishments throughout the years.

Those who know Gratz, know that he is one of the most decorated ULV professors in history.

Beyond his talents as an educator, his musical talents shine just as bright.

Michael Ryan, adjunct professor of music, recalled the concert he arranged titled "A Night in Rio," and how he invited Gratz to perform.

"The band and the audience were completely stunned at Reed's brilliance and expressiveness and performance," Ryan said. "I'll never forget that amazing night."

Gratz also has something that is difficult to find to which many of his colleagues and friends were able to share. His giving and humble character.

"Dr. Gratz cares so genuinely about people and he is always about lifting people up, whether these are his students or colleagues," Zhao said. "I've always felt that this advice captured the true spirit of La Verne—and of great professors like Dr. Gratz, who helped shape the culture of this institution."

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Rich sounds embrace concert goers

Talar Sarkissian
Staff Writer

The Friday Noon Concert Series hosted by the Pomona Scripps Colleges Department of Music had their last show on April 25 with a final performance inside the Balch Auditorium in Claremont.

The concert started at 12:15 p.m. and took place at Balch Auditorium at Scripps College, offering students, community members, families and retirees a free musical experience.

Even with the colder weather outside this past Friday, Balch Auditorium was warm and filled with more than 110 people, leaving hardly any empty seats.

"I hope it was an enjoyable break in their day," Sarah Thornblade, a member of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra and a professor at Scripps, said. "Hopefully it transported them into different colors and made them feel like they traveled somewhere a little different than Claremont for a few minutes."

Throughout the semester, the concerts had a wide range of performances, bringing different styles and instruments to campus each week.

The final concert featured violinist Sarah Thornblade and guitarist Connie Sheu, who played a duet which filled the room with colorful and rich sounds. Thornblade said she enjoyed the freedom and connection she felt performing with Sheu.

The two musicians selected a program that combined familiar pieces with more modern selections. Sheu, who teaches group guitar and private lessons at Pomona College, said she aimed to show the range and versatility of the instruments.

"We're just trying to find a variety of stuff," Sheu said. "I tend to dig up a lot of music written by women composers. It's a nice contrast to the Tango, which is a little more accessible."

She also said she appreciates performing in an academic setting like Scripps, where the concerts are consistently well attended.

"I love seeing a mix of students and people from the community that come," she said. "We have such great facilities on our campuses — it's kind of a treat to play here."

The Friday Noon Concert Series was a joint effort by the Pomona and Scripps music departments, created to bring free, high-quality performances to both students and the wider Claremont community.

Matthew Cook, the concert manager, said the audience has grown and remained consistent throughout the semester.

"We have a very dedicated group of people who come every week," Cook said. "You might think certain concerts wouldn't draw as many people, but because people are excited about the series as a whole, we see pretty consistent attendance. People are just interested in the variety we offer."

Among those attending the final concert was Claremont resident Leanne Augsburger, who has come to the Friday concerts over the years.

"It's peaceful," Augsburger said. "It gives you a quiet break from everything crazy going on. I love thinking of the music in terms of color — like what each piece makes you feel."

Augsburger said returning to the concerts this year held extra meaning for her after losing her husband, who had attended with her in the past.

"My friends are supporting me, and now I feel like I've kind of broken through a little bit," she said. "I'm starting to do the things we used to do together."

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Gallery talk accommodates visually impaired

Monique Arambula
Staff Writer

On April 25, The Benton Museum of Art held a gallery talk focusing on the topic of alternative text, also known as alt text. It is a writing style that is a brief description to help make online images accessible. Inside one of the museum's galleries, a small group of about eight people gathered for an interactive lesson in describing art through words alone.

"All of these exercises we're doing might seem out of your comfort zone, but you probably already do a bunch of it in everyday life," Lea Wong, senior history major at Pomona College and education outreach intern at the museum, said. "If you're meeting someone and you text them, 'I'm at the store with the blue awning and wearing a striped shirt,' you're doing a visual description."

Wong passed out blank notecards and pencils and asked each participant to choose a piece of art in the room. They wrote down five factual words and five descriptive words about the piece they selected. Then, they used their lists to create a three-sentence alt text description.

Cards were then traded with others in the group and everyone tried to find the matching artwork based on the alt text they were given. The activity showed how alt text can help certain people imagine and locate a piece of art without seeing it directly.

"What I used today as a guide was the 'Alt-Text as Poetry Workbook,'" Wong said. "Alt text is specifically directed toward blind and low-vision audiences who are using a screen reader when they are surfing the web."

After the group activity ended, guests asked Wong a few questions about writing in alt text and how it is used in real-world settings. People were free to walk around the gallery and continue looking at the different pieces on their own.

"I think we have some really good exhibitions up right now this semester," Sam Hunter, Visitor Services staff at the Benton Museum of Art, said. "We change our exhibitions out every semester and I think that's one of the things that makes us stand out is that we've always got something to look at."

One of the artworks on display was "Wallpaper Eights" by Kari Gatzke, an acrylic painting showing two rounded, pill-shaped forms placed side by side against a soft background. His paintings encourage viewers to slow down and notice the ordinary objects we usually ignore.

"I would encourage everybody to come on in and take a look since it's free for the community," Hunter said. "Some of these shows that we have up right now are really engaging, so I would say come on by, take a look, and don't miss us next semester."

Another standout piece was "Vomit Study (Severed Hand)" and "Vomit Study (On Silver Paper)" by Julia Jacquette, two oil paintings on linen that reflected Jacquette's reaction to the 2016 presidential election, featuring strange scattered objects like a fake severed hand and plastic vomit.

"I've always kind of liked weird art," junior computer science major at Harvey Mudd College Cole Ellsworth said. "There's stuff like paper cutouts, words here, sculptures and strange stuff, which I really like. A lot of silent conversations about different forms of social commentary through art and early internet art, feminism and zines."

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Title IX...

Continued from page 3

those are what are in play. I haven't noticed an impact at this point with regard to Title IX, because we're using the same ranks that were in place when he was here the first time.

OR: If there was a change, how would you go about adjusting the process?

CB: We have an obligation to follow laws. So if there are changes that are required, then we would need to adjust our policy appropriately at the time.

OR: Have you had conversations about prospective policy changes and what you would do as a team to work with these?

CB: Not as of yet. And it's probably just because I've not been here a super-long time. Let's say that I hear something might be coming down the pipeline, the process for me would be to engage with legal counsel, to ensure that we are complying in the way that we need to comply.

OR: What made you choose La Verne?

CB: I have this whole system that I did. It needed to be a place that I would find interesting. I like climate to be warm. And I wanted a place that has a history of knowing who they are as an institution. And it seemed like they had principles that are guiding them through the years.

OR: What is your primary goal here?

CB: I want to leave it in a better place than it was. I don't mean to be critical of anyone of the past, I would think anybody would want to improve things for the better. Part of what I've been doing when I meet with people is trying to understand the previous interactions with the department, what worked and what didn't. At the end of the day, I think for a complainant or respondent going through the process, they want to feel like they have someone they can help guide them.

OR: Have you had any challenges in adjusting to this University?

CB: Policy guides me. I can't say that there's been anything that's been particularly difficult or that specific individual did that impacted my ability to learn the role. I'm still learning the role.

OR: What do you want people to know about Title IX?

CB: I think the biggest thing that we want them to know is that there is a process that's here. On the other side of the equation, there's a process that has due process. Both sides can get supportive measures.

To learn more about your rights under Title IX, visit laverne.edu/title-ix. To file a Title IX complaint, email Title9Coordinator@laverne.edu. If you are in imminent danger, contact Campus Safety at 909-448-4950, or dial 911.

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Play features family reconciliation



Olivia Russo

Beatriz, played by senior theater arts major Victoria Gaspar, forcibly combs her daughter Olivia's hair, played by sophomore kinesiology major Lauren Sandoval, during a dress rehearsal for "Miss You Like Hell" on April 22 in Dailey Theatre. "Miss You Like Hell" plays its next performances at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and 2:30 p.m. Sunday.

Pitcher succeeds with love of baseball

Zachary Grech
Calendar Editor

Justin McFadden, senior psychology major and a right-handed pitcher for the La Verne baseball team, brings energy and grit to the field. He is known for his tenacity to throw fastballs for cold strikes when he is on the pitching mound.

"Once I get into my groove, and I let a couple of fastballs just rip off my fingers, I know it's going to be a great day, and that all starts with my mentality of knowing that I have to deliver my best pitches each time," McFadden said.

Before even being born, McFadden was playing the biggest game of all, which was facing the obstacles of life's curveballs, as McFadden's mother, Patricia McFadden, was told during her ultrasound that her son's left hand didn't fully develop.

A condition called Brachydactyly, which causes fingers and toes to appear shorter than other parts of the body. This was McFadden's curveball, which only made him stronger and showed he had the heart of a fierce competitor from the start. Working hard and embodying resilience got McFadden to the collegiate level, and not just at any position, but the prime position in all of baseball.

One role model that McFadden closely followed was Major League pitcher Jim Abbott, who, like McFadden, only had one hand.

"I started watching videos of him for multiple hours of the day, and I would try to model my game after him," McFadden said. Fortunately enough, McFadden was able to meet his idol at the age of 12.

Abbot answered all of McFadden's questions and ultimately helped him improve his overall game.

> 'It's very tough mentally and physically to play this game, and they just have to remember that there is no one getting in their way except themselves.'
> *—Justin McFadden, senior pitcher*

Abbot taught McFadden that adversity doesn't define character and that the only person who gets in the way of consistent success is yourself. This winning mindset has allowed McFadden to compete at a high level and bring a competitive energy that his fellow teammates can rally behind.

A couple of teammates who get inspired by McFadden are catcher Nate Perry and fellow pitcher Ethan Galindo.

Perry emphasizes how McFadden is a grinder and how his work ethic always shows on the mound. In one game in particular against the University of Chicago, Perry felt the true form of McFadden's game.

"In the Chicago game, Justin had a lot of confidence, which rubbed off on me to get as many pitches as I wanted from him because he was playing at such a high level," Perry said.

From Perry's perspective, he expressed how he enjoys catching for guys who can throw hard at the plate.

"I enjoy catching for guys who can throw a lot harder, and for McFadden's best pitch, it's his two-seam fastball, which always reminds me to get behind the ball," Perry said.

The pitcher-catcher relationship is crucial to the game's outcome, and the number of reps McFadden and Perry took to develop fluid chemistry can be inferred.

It is also important for pitchers to help out fellow pitchers. McFadden and Galindo are big examples of that.

Playing the same position can often create a disconnect between people due to playing time, but for McFadden and Galindo, it is the complete opposite, as these two have a team-first mindset.

"I think Justin has a lot of great energy, he is a cool person to be around, and you always know that he will have your back no matter what," Galindo said.

Galindo also praised McFadden for always seeing the brighter side of life, especially given all the obstacles he has had to overcome. McFadden has always stayed true to himself.

It's one thing when teammates highlight a player's success, but when the head coach starts to hand out compliments, that's a whole other story.

Leopards baseball head coach Scott Winterburn has seen a lot of growth from his pitcher this season, and how he respects McFadden in the way he approaches the game daily.

"Well, I think, if anything, he gets pretty pumped up when he's out there on the mound, and he's learning how to calm himself down a little bit and pitch with a little more poise," Winterburn said.

Winterburn also highlighted how McFadden always shows up on time, which is very important to the program overall, and how he does all the things asked of him, and he even helps other teammates with their responsibilities.

Winterburn also explained that McFadden has never been treated differently because of his condition.

"He's a kid that has never asked me for any accommodations whatsoever, from fielding to pitching, to covering bases and doing all the things that we do as players, he's not limited in any capacity," Winterburn said.

The resilience in Justin McFadden is that of a true professional; despite his obstacles, his story is inspirational.

His advice to younger kids who want to play baseball but might have been treated differently than everyone else is to always believe in yourself because, ultimately, the biggest critic in life is the person staring back at you in the mirror.

"It's very tough mentally and physically to play this game, and they just have to remember that there is no one getting in their way except themselves," McFadden said.

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Reign taken out of playoffs

Leila El Sabbagh
Sports Editor

The Ontario Reign began their sixth American Hockey League Calder Cup Playoffs appearance April 24 at Crypto.com Arena where they lost to rivals, the San Jose Barracuda 2-0.The overall slow start to the game was what ultimately got the better of the Reign. The nearly empty Crypto.com Arena was a change of scenery for the team, being used to a full crowd at Toyota Arena, especially during playoff season.

"It was a bit unsettling," head coach Marco Sturm said. "I mean, the game totally felt different for us. Unfortunately we couldn't find a rhythm we wanted."

Within the first three minutes of the game, defenseman Angus Booth took a minor delay of game penalty giving the Barracuda a power play out of the gate. Goaltender Pheonix Copley stood his ground in the blue paint and the Reign defense were able to kill the penalty off.

Forward Kaleb Lawrence came up with a great chance for the Reign, slicing through the offensive zone for a late break and was shut down by Barracuda goaltender Yaroslav Askarov.

Askarov faced 17 shots from the Reign throughout the entire three periods of play, only facing one shot in the third.

"It's playoffs, whatever," Askarov said.

"If it's going to be zero shots, you still have to have pretty good focus. It doesn't matter how many shots. It's the playoffs, it's the best time in the season."

Around six minutes later, the Reign took another penalty, this time a cross-check, committed by forward Shawn Element. "Ref, you suck" chants echoed throughout the arena, giving it some character as only a few 100 level sections were sold.

After killing off another penalty, the Reign were able to make the Barracuda bite when center Colin White was caught with high-sticking. The Reign seemed to have control on the majority of the power play, with forward Martin Chromiak gliding through the ice.

San Jose was eventually able to kill off the penalty leaving a lot of time left in the period. In the dying minutes of the first, the Reign commanded the puck, passing with purpose.

The competitive nature of the game did not stop when Barracuda center Zack Ostapchuk was called on a roughing penalty at the very end of the period, giving the Reign a power play right at the beginning of the second period. The Reign left the game scoreless, allowing the Barracuda to kill off the penalty.

Shortly after, Onatiro took a hooking penalty that was eventually killed off. After another San Jose penalty the period ended leaving the score 0-0 after 40 minutes of play.

"I just don't think we're ready to go," Reign forward Taylor Ward said.

"Which is probably the biggest thing we need to change on Saturday, but we'll go back to work and be ready for game two."

The third period is where the game finally began to heat up. Ostapchuk took a double minor for high sticking just 20 seconds into the period. About a minute later, forward Samuel Fagemo took a slashing penalty. Shortly after killing it off the Barracuda were able to make one past Copley's blocker side.

"We've been patient and stuck with our plan," left wing goal scorer Pavol Regenda said. "For two periods it was 0-0 and then we finally broke it. I'm just happy to take that first hard step and you know, get ready for the next one."

Throughout the rest of the period, the Reign took a countless array of penalties which eventually led to another Barracuda goal on the power play.

"We talked about one of the things we wanted to be is discipline and then right away we took two penalties and I mean, that for me says it all," Sturm said.

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Leopards swept by Bulldogs



Christen Ziska

Julia Miramontes, sophomore second baseman for the Leopards, stretches for the out at first base April 24 against the Redlands Bulldogs. The Leopards fell short on the last play of the seventh inning, 4-3

Leopards celebrate seniors' reign

Lexi Giacobbe
Staff Writer



Ethan Anderson

Senior catcher Matt Rice and his family are recognized and congratulated in the rain on Senior Day on Saturday at Ben Hines Field. The Leopards then faced the Chapman Panthers and won 15-2, completing the sweep later on.

At Ben Hines Field, La Verne left no doubt about their dominance for their Senior Day, overwhelming Chapman in a doubleheader with commanding victories of 15-2 and 14-2. The seniors were honored before and after the game.

Chapman started game one with some early activity as junior designated hitter Matt Cristol reached base on an error and sophomore first baseman Matt Campopiano followed with a single. But La Verne's defense quickly clamped down, stranding both runners and setting the tone for what would be a long day for the Panthers.

La Verne wasted no time putting pressure on Chapman. In the bottom of the first, junior shortstop Ryan Vosika was hit by a pitch and advanced to second on a wild pitch. Senior catcher Matt Rice walked and then also moved up on another throwing error.

"Although I've only been here two years, the experiences and lessons I've gained at La Verne will last a lifetime. From moments on the field to memories off it, I am forever grateful for everything this place has given me," Rice said.

After another walk loaded the bases, junior catcher Nate Perry drove a sacrifice fly to right to plate the first run of the game. Senior right fielder Logan Reese followed with a groundout to short, scoring another run and giving La Verne a 2-0 lead without recording a single hit.

"It's an unbelievable feeling to win on Senior Day. To go out there with my brothers and come away with a win – it's something I'll never forget," Reese said.

While Chapman continued to struggle at the plate, La Verne exploded in the bottom of the second with a seven-run outburst. Vosika started the rally again with an RBI single to center. Then Rice smashed a double to the left-center gap, clearing the bases and picking up two RBIs.

After a fielder's choice by Perry added another run, senior third baseman Jason Givens came through with a two-run double to stretch the lead. Senior left fielder Nolan Anguiano tacked on one more RBI single, making it 9-0 La Verne by inning's end.

One of the game's biggest stories was La Verne's outstanding pitching, which effectively silenced Chapman's bats.

Senior pitcher Ethan Galindo kept the Panthers off balance through five innings, allowing no runs and striking out key hitters when needed.

"I'd do anything to relive these moments – some of the best of my life. I've made unforgettable memories with every team," Galindo said.

Even when Chapman threatened in the second and fourth innings, Galindo and the defense stepped up to leave runners stranded. While La Verne's pitching stole the show, several players also shined offensively. One of the spotlight players was Vosika, who constantly set the tone at the top of the lineup.

Vosika finished with a triple, a single, and multiple RBIs, while also showing off his baserunning instincts. Rice delivered in big moments as well, tallying three RBIs, including a booming double that cleared the bases during La Verne's second-inning rally.

Another standout was senior Jason Givens, whose two-run double in the second inning helped break the game wide open.

Givens also played strong defense at third base before being substituted later in the game. Finally, senior center fielder Benny Vogel deserves mention as he consistently reached base and scored twice, helping to extend rallies and keeping pressure on Chapman's pitching staff.

"These last four years flew by. I remember being a freshman, looking at the seniors on their Senior Day, thinking it would take forever to be in their place. I couldn't have been more wrong – it all passed in the blink of an eye." Vogel said.

La Verne continued to apply pressure even with a big lead, adding insurance runs in the fourth and fifth innings.

Sophomore second baseman Christian Takahashi stepped in and provided an RBI single and the Leopards capitalized on passed balls and wild pitches to pile on.

By the fifth inning, it was clear that La Verne was in full control, leading 15-0 before Chapman finally got on the scoreboard. Chapman's only bright spot came in the sixth inning when Brent Valentine singled and later scored on a wild pitch.

Junior pinch hitter Eli Biehl followed with an RBI groundout to bring in another run, but it was far too little and far too late.

When senior pitcher Kyle Noell took the mound in the top of the seventh and struck out three consecutive batters, it fittingly capped off a day of pure domination.

La Verne's complete performance from the mound, at the plate, and in the field left no doubt about who owned the day.

The La Verne Leopards honored their seniors after the games with a team and family BBQ to end the day.

The team picked up another win Tuesday, beating Pomona-Pitzer, 11-4.

The wins give them a seven-game winning streak and an overall record of 30-6.

The Leopards close out the regular season with a series against Redlands, with the action starting at 3 p.m. Friday at Ben Hines Field, followed by a doubleheader in Redlands starting at 11 a.m. Saturday.

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