Campus Times

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Inside

Tattoo shop rocks out for anniversary p5

Students question interterm move to May p2

Leopards win SCIAC baseball title p8

Spirit of La Verne honors core values

Marina Bravo
Staff Writer

The University of La Verne's Ludwick Center Sacred Space hosted a ceremony Tuesday to celebrate some very special Leopards.

About 50 attendees were seated for the 11th annual Spirit of La Verne Recognition Ceremony. The community members consisted of students, faculty and staff, all seated in support of the 11 award winners.

Award winners included students, faculty and staff, who exemplify the University's core values of ethical reasoning, diversity and inclusivity, lifelong learning and civic and community engagement.

Interim Provost Laura Hartley opened the ceremony, taking the time before anything to highlight that the ceremony was being held on the land of the Tongva people.

Hartley explained the meaning of the Spirit of La Verne Award and the importance of this annual recognition. Along with the 2025 Newman Civic Fellows Award and the Spirit of La Verne Special Honor Award, to one specific individual whose efforts in the community embodied the spirit of La Verne.

Matthew Markey, sophomore political science major, was the first student recipient of the evening. Markey received the 2025 Newman Civic Fellows Award for his contribution and dedication to civic and community engagement.

"Matthew embodies the core values of the University of La Verne," Interim University President Risa Dickson said. "His efforts remind us all that when we come together and uplift one another, we create meaningful change."

Julissa Espinoza, director of community and civic engagement, introduced the awards and explained how they represent the legacy of longtime community engagement through interactions with students, faculty, staff and local community connections. These awards not only highlight but also serve as a reminder of the crucial role and value of community building.

Each recipient of the award received a certificate, a spirit tote and a pin that is exclusive to winners of this achievement.

"I think it's important that we highlight the great work that these individuals are doing," Espinoza said. "Often times they're behind the scenes and I think it's important that we recognize and highlight individuals that exemplify the University's core values."

The nine recipients of the Spirit of La Verne Award were Gabriela Aragon, junior education major; Cherie Atalor, junior computer science major; Lindsey Preciado, senior digital media major; Kay "Connie" Soe, senior business administration major; Jonathan Reed, professor of religion; Stephanie Pruett, manager for the natural sciences; Esveiri Conchas, residential life coordinator; and Briana Smith, associate director of the Academic Success Center.

Sarah Prosenko, assistant director of academic services for the College of Law and Public Service, was awarded the Spirit of La Verne Special Honor Award.

Each individual was nominated by a specific member from each department of the Ludwick Center.

Award presenters were Myrna Hugo, program coordinator of the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life; Zandra Wagoner, University chaplain; Daniel Loera, director of multicultural affairs; Alesha Knox, director for cultural programming and Black student services; and Maribel Rodriguez, director of the Office of International Services

Continued on page 7



Olivia Russo

Maribel Rodriguez, director of the Office of International Services and Study Abroad, presents Connie Soe, senior business administration major, with a Spirit of La Verne Award on Tuesday in the Ludwick Sacred Space. Soe was the second recipient of the award given by Rodriguez for her work in the office and commitment to helping international students.

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Lecture shares social movement research

Monique Arambula
Staff Writer

The last faculty lecture of the semester was held May 1 in the Howell Board Room, where Alessandro Morosin, assistant professor of sociology and criminology, presented "The Death of Neoliberalism in Mexico? Perspectives From Teachers, Campesinos, and Independent Activists in a Conflict Zone."

The event was hosted by the La Verne Academy and co-hosted by the International Studies Institute. About 25 community members attended in-person and via Zoom.

Morosin began by thanking his colleagues and guests before diving into the presentation. He split the talk into three sections: why he started the research, the main ideas he used to study and what the situation in Mexico looks like now and where it might be heading.

He shared that his interest in studying social movements in southern Mexico began in 2006, during a protest in Los Angeles in support of political prisoners from Oaxaca.

"The teacher's strike became a general uprising," Morosin said. "Barricades had been erected throughout the city of Oaxaca and arbitrary arrests were mounting against the striking teachers."

He explained how Indigenous women took over the radio to speak out against the discrimination they had faced for years. Their voices helped shape the movement and inspired Morosin to look deeper into the struggles happening in Oaxaca.

In 2010, Morosin traveled to Oaxaca where he witnessed ongoing strikes and violence related to the fight for autonomy in the Indigenous region of San Juan Copala, which was under siege by paramilitary forces. He said this experience motivated him to bring his voice recorder and speak with people who had escaped or risked their lives to protest.

"I spoke with those people who were on hunger strike and I later published those interviews in a U.S. based alternative magazine," Morosin said.

He also talked about bigger issues like neoliberalism, extractivism and drug war capitalism. These helped show how some governments and companies caused problems focusing more on money and resources than on the people living there.

"Neoliberalism is an economic and political philosophy, which posits that governments should refrain from intervening in the economy," Morosin said.

He said this way of thinking made it easier for private companies and foreign investors to take over land and resources in southern Mexico.

Morosin shared stories from interviews he conducted in the region. He described how armed groups targeted Indigenous

Continued on page 7

On the Cover

Cynthia Garcia, lead vocalist of the melodic moshcore band Exutoire, performs during the Creator Tattoo one-year anniversary celebration Saturday behind the tattoo parlor at 922 E. Holt Ave. in Pomona. The event featured live bands, food vendors and discounted tattoos. / photo by Thatiana Gibbs

Interterm switch brings uncertainty

Admins and students put at odds

Olivia Russo
News Editor
Jordan Alcasas
Social Media Editor

University of La Verne administrators have rebooted the plan to eliminate the January term and replace it with a similar month-long May term.

This would change the academic calendar, with the spring semester starting in the middle of January, instead of the beginning of February.

It would end in late April or early May and would be followed by a month-long term similar to the current January term.

They are projecting the calendar change to start in the 2026-2027 academic year.

But similar to the plan that was presented-then-aborted amid student and faculty objections during the 2023-2024 academic year, many students and faculty members are concerned about the planned calendar change.

Among students' concerns, some say they may not have the stamina to do an intensive miniterm in May following a long academic year.

They are also concerned about May term's potential cost and whether May term tuition will be covered by their annual financial aid package.

January term has always been "free" to students, in that it offers them the opportunity to take up to five units above the fall and spring semester limits of 18 units per semester at no extra charge, allowing some students the chance to graduate a semester early, which is a substantial overall cost savings.

Interim Provost Laura Hartley said she was unsure at this point whether the proposed May term would be covered by students' annual tuition and financial aid packages, or whether it would be part of the summer term tuition, which is generally not covered in the same way.

"That's going to be part of the planning process to decide if May term will have the same sort of financial structure as Jan. term," Hartley said this week.

"So one possibly would be that May term is sort of attached to the spring semester in terms of tuition; the other possibly would be that it's kind of attached to the summer term."

> 'We'll certainly be giving students enough notice in terms of their planning for future years, so that they can sort of factor in how that night affect them. And so, hopefully, this is not something that we're doing quickly. We're not just announcing the change, but we're being deliberate and careful. And hopefully, we'll make the transition without a whole lot of challenges.'
> *–Laura Hartley, interim provost*

For those not using it to graduate early, some students said they appreciate January term to lighten their fall and spring semester loads, to complete an additional major or minor, or to take an overseas travel class at a time of year when airfare is lower.

"Based on the information provided to us by the provost's office, the primary reasons for the change include supposed low enrollment in Jan term and the desire to align our academic calendar more closely with surrounding institutions, particularly the UC schools," said Jayleen De La Cruz, senior communications major and member of the Associated Students of the University of La Verne.

De La Cruz was present when administrators spoke to ASULV in fall 2023 about the move to May term.

She was present again this semester when Hartley attended one of their meetings to discuss the rebooted plan.

"ASULV does have concerns," De La Cruz said.

"A major worry is that students who relied on Jan term for additional units, especially those trying to graduate early or stay on track academically, may now struggle to fit those courses into their schedules.

"There's also concern about how this shift may affect travel courses, student-athletes… So we are actively collecting student feedback to understand the full impact."

De La Cruz noted that following the student government's meeting with administrators in fall 2023, they were happy to learn that the calendar change had been paused.

The administrators from the offices of the provost and enrollment management who met with ASULV to present the calendar change in 2023 have since left the University.

"Then we were officially informed this semester that the change would be permanent," De La Cruz said.

"When we expressed concerns, we were asked to gather and provide student feedback."

ASULV is currently conducting a survey among students about the planned calendar change.

Administrators planning to move forward with the change with the belief that it will benefit both students and faculty because the summer break will be longer with more time to relax or earn money.

Faculty may be able to rework their programs and introduce new courses, and they will have more time to devote to their own research projects.

It should also give students a chance to apply to internships and get out into the job market earlier, they say, and it will better align the University's academic calendar with other schools.

Hartley said another reason for the change is a lack of interest in taking January courses.

"There were fewer and fewer students who were actually registering for Jan term courses to the extent that this last January only 30% of students took a Jan Term course," Hartley said.

Some students say they wish there were more January course offerings because classes fill up before they have a chance to register for them.

If the change goes forward, "it's going to piss off a lot of people," said Rick Hasse, instructor of accounting and finance.

"If I was a student, I'd be a little upset too, this is especially going to piss off our student athletes. They use January term a lot to make up for classes with their schedules."

While the finances of the move have yet to be announced, some believe the motivation for the change is at least partially financial.

"In January, there's no additional revenue being created," Hasse added.

"So one of the reasons they're (planning to move to) May is they want to find a way to make some extra money."

"I like that we get a break (in January)," said Mariela Flores, junior biology major.

"You get to come back and sort of start fresh for the spring, whether you did good or bad. You get one class that you can start over with and focus on. Personally, when I do good in those, I feel like it sets the tone for my Spring semester. If I can handle a class that is smashed into a month, I can handle the spring."

This summer, the administration will start the planning process of creating the May term session.

Faculty and administration will meet to flesh out the cost, what classes will be affected and any other changes to the academic calendar.

"We'll certainly be giving students enough notice, in terms of their planning for future years, so that they can sort of factor in how that might affect them," Hartley said.

"And so hopefully this is not something that we're doing quickly, We're not just announcing the change, but we're being deliberate and careful. And hopefully we'll make the transition without a whole lot of challenges."

ASULV has their fair share of concerns regarding this change as well.

They urge students to give feedback and complete the survey at end of the email sent to them by the dean of students account.

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Event raises more than $77,000 for scholarships

The University of La Verne hosted its 27th annual Scholarship Gala event Saturday outdoors on third street between Founders Hall and the Ludwick center.

It was beneath a tent to protect guests from the evening's light rain.

The event raised over $77,000.

"The work we do … is tremendous for our students and community," University of La Verne President Risa Dixon said. "Student success is community success."

The 2024 Gala was canceled. The 2023 Gala raised nearly $2 million.

The roughly 200 guests to the formal event included current students and faculty, retired faculty, community members and some members of the University's Board of Trustees.

The iconic Founders Hall stairway was decorated – perfect for photo ops, which guests took advantage of.

At around 6:30 p.m. the DJ called for everyone to start taking their seats for dinner.

The call came a bit early due to the dark clouds starting to form overhead as the event went on.

Among the speakers at the event was Alumna Taylor Puno who talked about the importance of her own scholarship to the University.

"Scholarships gave me access," Puno said.

Dinner came with three courses.

Tickets for this event were $400 a pop, with most of the funds going directly to the University's scholarship program.

To donate to University scholarship and other programs visit alumni.laverne.edu.

—Anthony Eramya



Anthony Eramya

Sheila Rodriguez, associate director of special events, poses for a picture with the La Verne leopard mascots at the 2025 Scholarship Gala on Saturday outside of Founders Hall and the Ludwick Center. The event raised more than $77,000 for student scholarships.

Funnel of Love among best at Fair

Fried fare remains popular

Olivia Russo
News Editor

The Los Angeles County Fair opened on May 2, which means the smell of sweets and fried foods are back until the end of the month. Food stands lined back to back down some lanes of the fair and more sprinkled throughout other sections.

While a lot of the fair food seems to be quite expensive, some of them tend to not even be worth the price. Here is a guide to some of the foods to skip the wait and others that are a must-try.

The first stop I made for food was at Chicken Charlie's, a booth that has been at the fair for a few years now and has many different ones set up around the grounds. This stand has many deep-fried foods – a staple of most fairs – on top of some regular menu items, including fried avocados and a triple-decker burger with doughnuts as the bun.

I opted to try a sweeter menu item, going with the fried cookie dough at almost $12.

However, the taste is not as good as you might imagine, it feels like biting into a crunchy cookie that is heavily underbaked in the center.

I attended the fair with two of my close friends, Allyson Villa and Janine Sevillana, reactions to the cookie dough were subpar at best.

After eating just one of the bites, it felt like enough. Villa noted that it felt like her stomach was going to hurt later, and not even 10 minutes after, it did.

Later, still feeling the effects from the fried cookie dough, I opted to get the Cowboy Tots, at Rowdy's which specializes in more meal-based fair foods. They are served steaming hot and feature cheese and bacon inside for $14.

I waited for 20 minutes to receive the food I ordered because the kitchen never received the ticket, all for a tater tot that lacked most of the ingredients it promised.

After exploring, we stumbled upon Funnel of Love, hidden away near the end of the grounds. Like the name suggests, the stand specializes in funnel cakes, another fair staple and my personal favorite.

The stand offers many options including a banana split, red velvet and our choice, strawberry, all in the cutest heart-shape.

The strawberry option comes topped with whipped cream and a chocolate drizzle.

Despite the price of $21, the taste was something I will never forget. It changed my life for good, as well as the lives of my friends. We all thought about the treat since we tasted it the first time all throughout the weekend.

Not only is the taste great, but the food is aesthetically pleasing making for the best pictures, for anyone who loves a photo opportunity.

Sevillana even said that she would go back to the fair just to have the funnel cake again.

After the life-changing food, we opted to take a break from eating and visit the animals. While fun at the time, this decision led me to pass on any other foods with meat for the rest of the night, including King Taco. But the pig was so cute, so I am not mad at the choice.

For our last moments at the fair, each of us chose a final food we wanted to try, Sevillana chose a bloomin' onion from Fresh Fry's, Villa chose an esquites supreme cup from Chicken Charlie's and I opted for a strawberry Dole whip from a Dole stand.

The bloomin' onion was tasty, but definitely not built for a fair, especially since the booth is located where there are no places to sit.

The size was too big for three people to have and the price was almost double the price of an appetizer at Outback Steakhouse, ringing in at $14. Sevillana ended up having to toss half of it for these reasons.

Villa enjoyed the supreme cup, which is a dollar extra for an added topping of Hot Cheetos.

With the one bite I had and the review from Villa, the warmth of the food helped with the slight chill in the air, but the food itself is hard to mess up. It was small for the price of $12.95, especially since a short trip to La Michoacana would give the same size for much cheaper.

The Dole whip was another highlight from the night.

For a little over $10, the frozen yogurt-like food is dairy and gluten free, making it an inclusive option for many guests. The presentation is great, and the workers pile a lot into the small cup. But the size makes it hard to walk around with, and one spoonful reveals that the inside is hollow.

Large turkey legs and ice cream seemed to be the most popular treat as they were common to see guests walking around with. Chicken Charlie's also produced a large baby bottle filled with Kool-Aid I passed on due to the $20 price.

However the standout item was the heart-shaped funnel cake, receiving 10 out of 10 possible points from us.

Olivia Russo can be reached at ***olivia.russo@laverne.edu.***



Christen Ziska

A heart-shaped strawberry funnel cake from Funnel of Love awaits hungry Los Angeles County Fair visitors Sunday. Funnel of Love stands out from the other funnel cake booths at the Fair as they make all their cakes in the shape of a heart.

Mini Maker event features creativity

The University's Mini Maker Fair Wednesday on Citrus Lawn featured about 20 creators' booths with everything from thrifted clothes to crocheted animals, handmade jewelry and candles.

The Churro Boss food truck was also on hand.

And after visiting three booths that checked the notecards visitors received upon check in, they could claim a churro.

About 50 La Verne community members attended the event to explore the unique booths, where some makers talked about how they got started on their individual crafts.

One of the booths, Made in Space, featured crocheted animals, candy, stickers and keychains.

Another booth, Tiffany's Jewelry Box, featured handmade beaded jewelry.

"I've had this business since my junior year of high school," said Tiffany Allen, freshman education major.

"I always like doing crafts and jewelry so I decided to make a business out of it. Today I'm trying to sell a lot of my backstock."

Another crochet booth by Arely Hernandez, a sophomore creative writing major, who started her crocheting business during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I'm really grateful for the … free space for vendors," Hernandez said.

"I like meeting other creators. It's just a nice little community."

—CC Flaherty



Jai'la Counts

Junior psychology major Ahsha Jones and sophomore psychology major Matthew Marquez speak with members of the Crochet Club members at the Mini Maker Fair on Wednesday at Citrus Lawn. Their table was one of about 20 at the event. Handmade items were on display.

Ink meets amp: Party on Holt Ave.

Ethan Anderson
LV Life Editor



Thatiana Gibbs

Resident artist Fernando Herrera tattoos customer Andrew Gonzales during the one-year anniversary celebration of Creator Tattoo in Pomona on Saturday. Herrera spent the day inking custom designs for customers at a reduced price.

Death metal and screamo music exploded through the neighborhood surrounding Holt Avenue and Reservoir Street in Pomona on Saturday evening.

Metalheads of all ages took over the residential parking in a half mile radius of Creator Tattoo, a shop celebrating its one year anniversary.

"The experience you are going to get here is more than just getting a tat," shop owner Rafael Delatorre said. "These guys are like family."

Creator Tattoo has done several of these shows, a move Delatorre credits to getting their name and branding out there to the Pomona community.

"I feel like it's really put us on the map, and helps us make connections with clients." Delatorre said.

Tickets were $25 and guests entered through an alleyway sandwiched between Reservoir Street and Loranne Avenue to get behind the shop. Behind Creator Tattoo is a lot that proves big enough for a show.

Local underground bands performed screamo and punk metal songs that had everyone on their feet. Some in the air, even off their feet amidst the moshing. Fans threw punches and kicks in this "crowd killing" style of moshing.

Rafael Delatorre, known as "Raff" by customers, hosted a similar event to celebrate the shop's grand opening, one year ago.

"It was about the same vibe, you know friends and family just hanging out, watching a good show," frequent customer Edgy Supan said. "It just seems like this event is an extension of that, but almost seems bigger, with more people," frequent customer Olivia Supan said.

Several hardcore bands including Exutoire, Sincerely Yours, Terror Ave and Desmadre performed live in front of one hundred-or-so tattoo enthusiasts in the lot of Creator Tattoo.

"The power of connection, being able to connect with different folks through the music scene, through hardcore," Raff said on the event's turnout. "Yea, they showed a lot of love."

When opening the shop and finding apprentices, Raff looked for people to align with the casual, loving, and even spiritual identity of Creator Tattoo.

"Man, it's like coming and hanging out with my friends here," Tattoo apprentice Kenny Sylvia said. "We get to do what we love."

The inside of the shop is rather small, the wall spaces serving as a portfolio of artists' work with hundreds of graphics lining the walls. Each artist's stations within the studio was customized to fit their identity.

The crowd at the show were of all ages from minors to senior citizens, and nearly everyone was dressed in black baggy clothes, embodying "mosh-friendly" attire.

Customers feel welcomed and often look more forward to catching up with their artists, than the tattoo itself.

"Getting a tattoo is like a relationship that you have with the artist and we have been getting tattooed by Raff for so long that you just feel comfortable with him," Olivia Supan said. "He treats all of his clients like they are respected, loved and family."

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Commentary

Met Gala outdoes itself



Olivia Russo

The first Monday in May is my favorite of the year, as it marks the annual Met Gala hosted by Vogue and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The Met Gala is a black-tie event that raises money for the Costume Institute – the only part of the museum that has to raise its own funding.

This year, the exhibit is titled "Superfine: Tailoring Black Style," taking its inspiration from the book Slaves to Fashion: Black Dandyism and the Styling of Black Diasporic Identity, written by Monica L. Miller.

For the gala, the dress code is "Tailored For You," which encourages guests to channel their personal style while allowing space for tailoring and menswear.

Celebrities tend to let me down, but the blame is never just on them: it can be on the designer, the stylists, their teams. Either the theme is interpreted incorrectly or they hope everyone temporarily forgets what the theme is. I don't.

While watching the carpet I was asking myself one question: "Where is the color?" Most looks were in black and white, which is too boring for a theme about being rebellious and striking.

My favorite look of the night was Teyana Taylor, who created her own design in collaboration with Ruth E. Carter.

Taylor shut down the carpet before it even actually began, pairing her extremely well-tailored suit with a cane, burgundy hat and (my personal favorite) a velvet cape. Safe to say, it fit the theme and fit her even better.

Ugbad Abdi, in Michael Kors, Tracee Ellis Ross, in Marc Jacobs, and Jodie Turner-Smith in Burberry executed the same concept. Not as well as Taylor, but I appreciated the bright colors or the extravagance.

Colman Domingo, in Valentino, started in a blue embellished cape which was pulled off to reveal a greyscale over-the-top suit, which achieved exactly what the theme intended.

Many details were more appealing for me than the whole ensemble. I loved the makeup and hair from Doechii more than I loved the Louis Vuitton suit.

The entire waistcoat of the BOSS suit Khaby Lame wore was decorated with pocket watches. Zendaya's Louis Vuitton suit was impeccably tailored and is something I keep returning to look at.

I also loved the styling from all of the guests wearing Thom Browne. Mona Patel had a spine detail on the back of her gown, and Janelle Monae had a classic reveal and monocle.

Rihanna looked perfect in a Marc Jacobs gown that reinterpreted tying a suit jacket. Dapper Dan used his own iconic logo designs for his look and legends Diana Ross, in Tom Ford, and Lauryn Hill, in Stella McCartney made a reappearance and a memorable moment.

Balmain, designed by Olivier Rousteing, chose to interpret the theme through construction of garments. Jenna Ortega wore a gown made of rulers and Rosalia looked like a mannequin.

But not every look fits the theme or even looks good. Sabrina Carpenter and Emma Chamberlain fit the theme (take that lightly), but the garments themselves left me disappointed.

Kendall Jenner and Hailey Bieber looked like they strolled in from brunch.

Megan Thee Stallion in Michael Kors, Gigi Hadid and Sydney Sweeney, both in Miu Miu all looked stunning but a gown, does not fit the theme of tailoring when talking about menswear.

Then there are the most egregious of them all: LISA, in Louis Vuitton, and Amelia Gray, in Valentino. Quite impossible to describe, they both have very similar elements including a bodysuit, blazer set and lace. It's not so much the design (however Gray's is an eye sore), but the meaning behind the design.

LISA's ensemble was created out of a lace pattern featuring what appears to be Civil Rights Activists.

This pattern was covering every aspect of the outfit, including places where these archivists do not belong.

Gray, on the other hand, completed her look with a durag and given her ethnicity it is in poor taste for her to wear one, especially with the theme of the evening.

While the Met Gala usually angers me with the horrible interpretations, I was pleasantly surprised with the lack of fashion disasters.

Olivia Russo, a junior journalism major, is news editor of the Campus Times. She can be reached at ***olivia.russo@laverne.edu***.

Arts, *etc...*

Happenings

'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. Saturday in Morgan Auditorium, located in Founders Hall.

Tickets will be sold at the door for $20.

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

'Best of Broadway'

The La Verne Symphony Orchestra will perform "Spring Finale: Best of Broadway," at 3 p.m. on Saturday in Morgan Auditorium.

It will feature music from Broadway shows such as "The Phantom of the Opera," "West Side Story" and "The Sound of Music."

The performance will also include special guests Michal Dawson Connor and Julia Hwang.

There is a $10 suggested donation.

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.

'SoCal Critters'

The American Museum of Ceramic Art in Pomona is hosting a new exhibition of ceramic animals by artist Howard Pierce.

The exhibit and event aim to raise awareness of local wildlife and conservation efforts.

The gallery is open from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., and the exhibit runs until June 29.

Tickets are $5 per person or $15 per group of four.

For more information, visit **amoca.org/events/critters**.

—Zachary Grech

Seniors get personal in Final exhibition

by Tati Foor

photography by Rylee Fournier

The opening reception of "Everything We Are," a senior thesis exhibition featuring the work of three senior photography major students – Christopher Rodriguez, Christopher Rogers and Camille C.Nan –was held Wednesday afternoon in the Irene Carlson Gallery of Photography in Miller Hall.

The exhibition, which runs through July 30, offers a glimpse into the students' artistic growth.

Rodriguez's collection focuses on the immigrant experience in Riverside, with pictures that highlight citizens and the citrus groves that were found throughout the city.

"Immigrants and the citrus eventually made Riverside one of the richest cities in the U.S. back in the day," Rodriguez said. "So I just wanted to highlight the community and where I'm from."

Rodriguez credits his time at ULV with helping him develop his photographic style.

"This series really helped me hone in what I gravitate to when I take a picture," Rodriguez said.

C.Nan's black-and-white self portraits overlaid with vibrant flowers tell a story of her personal transformation.



Camille C.Nan speaks to gallery visitors about her self-portrait series during the opening reception for "Everything We Are" senior photography exhibition Wednesday in the Irene Carlson Gallery of Photography in Miller Hall. Her work centers on self-acceptance and the journey of seeing herself with compassion. The exhibit will remain on display through July 30.

"I used to have a really difficult time with myself, my self image, how I even perceived myself," C.Nan said. "The root of that was that I was bullied when I was younger and that went on until I got here to La Verne."

The third featured artist, Rogers, presents a deeply personal collection that addresses trauma.

"It's essentially talking about how everybody's going through, or will go through some form of trauma in their life, and that you can't really compare traumas because the response at the end of the day will always categorically be the same," Rogers said.

Rogers aims that his project will spark conversation to be more mindful that everyone is going through their own struggles.

Visitors to the exhibition found themselves moved by the students' vulnerability and artistic visions, while also challenging their perceptions of photography as an art form.

"I didn't understand how the reception would work," Amy Sanchez, a visitor said. "I know they put a lot of hours into taking, collecting, and then portraying their work. It just makes me respect those students a lot."

Visitors also acknowledged how it takes an artistic vision to create a story like the ones displayed at the exhibit.

"I feel like you have to be a deep thinker to be able to do this kind of photography," Paola Hernandez, another visitor added. "Anyone can just take a picture, but you want a specific feeling to convey through the photo."

Through their distinct approaches and personal stories Rodriguez, Rogers, and C.Nan demonstrated the power of photography to document communities, process trauma, and foster self-acceptance.

"Everything We Are" not only showcases their technical skills but also invites viewers to pause and reflect on their own experiences, making it a must-see exhibition for the La Verne community.

For more of the artists' work visit their Instagram pages.

Rodriguez can be found at **@first_rate_archives**, C.Nan at **@camillecnanphoto** and Rogers at **@chrisrogersphotography**.

An exhibition of additional images from Rogers' project can be found in the West Gallery in the Campus Center.

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Defender proves greatness in water

Zachary Grech
Calendar Editor

Brianna Zapata, a senior psychology major and defender for the women's water polo team, won First Team All-Conference for the Leopards for her stellar performance during her 2025 senior season.

The standout player recorded 42 goals – ranked second on her team – 27 steals, 29 assists and nine blocks – ranking fifth in the Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference. What was impressive about Zapata's standout year was not just the eye-opening stats she tallied on paper, but the fact that she came back from a torn rotator cuff, which can be career-ending for many, that caused her to miss the entire 2024 season.

Interim head coach Robert Echeverria praised Zapata's work ethic, mindset and character to come back from such a difficult injury and have the determination to have a standout year.

"What impressed me was the fact that she goes from being out of the water for an entire year, to playing every minute for us this year," Echeverria said.

Zapata spent her year away from playing as an assistant coach at St. Lucy's High School, working under Echeverria. She said taking a coaching role for a year and learning to see water polo through a whole new lens helped her through the recovery process.

"I think just the coaching that I had done last year helped fully open my eyes to the game and seeing it in a different light," Zapata said.

She even got to coach Echeverria's daughter and help mentor her to progress in water polo. Through this shared experience, Echeverria said he has seen Zapata grow not just athletically but also in life, becoming a well-rounded individual who continues to find ways to impact other individuals in the community and even the younger generation.

This life-changing experience opened Zapata's eyes to returning to the game she loved so much, not just as an ordinary player but as a respected leader on the team, one that her teammates and her coaches can fully rely on without any sort of hesitation in their minds.

Zapata led her team by example through the way she played the game of water polo with high intensity and drive. Even though she wasn't as vocal as she said she wanted to be, she managed to inspire teammates in ways that she could have never imagined.

As two of her closest friends, senior goalie Kelly Jackson and junior attacker Brooklyn Young, both shared their personal experiences playing with Zapata in the water.

Jackson said playing with Zapata was one of the best experiences of her life, which started back when they played together in club water polo and on the same high school team at Alta Loma High School, at age 14.

"Growing up as a player with Bri, she always pushed me personally to just prove myself in the pool, and to put it all out there and leave it all in the water," Jackson said.

Jackson said she looked up to Zapata because of the raw talent that she displayed in the water, which helped motivate her to live up to Zapata's standards, which was exciting for Jackson.

"I was excited that we got to play together for another season because it just motivated me to meet Bri's standards, because she holds herself to such a high regard," Jackson said.

Jackson also said she looked up to Zapata because she truly shaped her water polo career. As Zapata taught her, hard work pays off.

"If anything, Bri taught me that hard work does get you places, it does get you far in life," Jackson said.

For Young, she said playing with Zapata has always been such a rewarding and inspiring experience. Both players started playing on the same club team together at the ages of 11 and 12.

"I have always known Bri as that rock star in the water; whether she meant to do that or not, she has always been that very strong player," Young said."She just makes a lot of the right decisions in the water, and she never panicked; she would always be three steps ahead of everyone else."

Young said she learned to have a mindset similar to Zapata's, which was to never overthink things in the water, and always trust yourself. This became the next play mentality.

"So, trying to have this similar mindset, like having patience and then also having fun at the same time while I am in the water," Young said.

Young also mentioned Zapata's overall legacy at the University of La Verne and the way she carried herself through her recovery process to return to her team.

"I would say strength, dedication, and perseverance because not many people go through injury like hers, especially like a shoulder injury in water polo is like a Tommy John injury for baseball," Young said.

Her teammates and coach agree that the legacy that Brianna Zapata shows is more than just the All-SCIAC selection, but the daily impact she made at the University of La Verne, and most importantly to herself.

"I think she's a great role model for these ladies playing the sport to look up to, because she is a great example of the true definition of a hard-working individual," Echeverria said. "Like you don't necessarily have to be the tallest, the fastest, but you can be one of the hardest workers in the water, and still be successful."

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Emily Casillas

First Team All-SCIAC defender Brianna Zapata describes water polo as a sport that requires ongoing physical endurance and mental focus. She said that what makes it more than simply a game but a test of character is the chaos that lies beneath the surface.

Spirit...

Continued from page 2

and Study Abroad.

Each presenter shares descriptions of outstanding character, work ethic and passion of each recipient. Each individual bringing something uniquely different to the University table.

Wagoner honored international student Atalor, highlighting how her efforts as interfaith leader at the University have been "blessings" for the department.

"Cherie has helped organize activities such as the interfaith dialogue dinners, the Winter Interfaith Celebration of Lights and the Interfaith Wellness Panel," Wagoner said. "She served as a guest presenter for the Belongingness Series on Diversity and Inclusion and has supported countless faith traditions with specific celebrations and special events."

Wagoner highlighted how Atalor uses her knowledge on Christianity, Islam and traditional Nigerian religions to bring diversity to the community.

"At heart, she is a really good human. Her spirituality, her values and actions are beautifully aligned, which makes her a trustworthy and inspiring role model for all of us," Wagoner said.

Atalor dedicated the award to her parents whom she said played a crucial role in her education and gave her the opportunities to be where she is today.

Atalor shared how honored she was to receive the Spirit of La Verne Award and how her work has only just begun.

"As an international student, I think that being an example for everyone on campus is something that's really important to me," Atalor said. "It's not about the recognition for me. It's about continuing to exemplify the values of interfaith and loving everyone without prejudice."

The ceremony was followed by a reception in front of the building, where award recipients and attendees congratulated each other and enjoyed a meal.

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Lecture...

Continued from page 2

communities to take over areas rich in natural resources like silver, which attracted companies, including Canadian mining corporations.

Students who attended the lecture were moved by Morosin's dedication and passion for the subject.

"I thought it was really nice how he started by sharing what motivated him to do the research," freshman chemistry major Haley Pham said. "He went really in-depth and interviewed a lot of people who were actually in the situation. I thought that was really cool."

"I just really liked how passionate he is about everything going on there," Taylor Courtney, sophomore chemistry major, said. "It's refreshing to see someone who really cares and isn't just doing it for research. It was really engaging and I learned a lot."

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Leos struggle but clinch playoff spot

Baseball wins finale at Redlands

Lexi Giacobbe
Staff Writer

The Redlands baseball team came out swinging and never let up, defeating La Verne 15–7 in a wild, high-scoring matchup on May 2 at Ben Hines Field.

Behind a hot offense, timely hits and capitalization on La Verne's defensive miscues, the Bulldogs controlled the game from the start and withstood a mid-game surge from the Leopards to secure the win.

Redlands opened the scoring barrage in the top of the first inning, putting up four runs on just two hits. Graduate student center fielder Luke DeVries and freshman designated hitter Rylan Morris led off with back-to-back singles, setting the tone early.

A throwing error on a fielder's choice allowed the game's first run to score, and two wild pitches brought home two more.

Graduate student first baseman Mark Kirkland added to the damage, scoring on yet another wild pitch to make it 4–0 before La Verne could record the third out.

The Leopards tried to respond in the bottom half of the inning, putting two runners on base with a single and a walk, but Redlands escaped the inning unscathed.

La Verne did get on the board in the second after senior left fielder Jason Givens walked, advanced on a pickoff error, and scored on an RBI groundout from junior catcher Nate Perry to make it 4–1.

"I think we battled really well in that game, but we just couldn't put up enough runs to match their offense," Perry said. "There were also several key moments where we had chances to capitalize, but we weren't able to take advantage."

In the third, Redlands continued to push. After senior second baseman Tyler Preece was hit by a pitch and Kirkland singled, both runners advanced on a wild pitch.

Graduate student catcher Kaiya Saito delivered in the clutch with a triple down the right field line and all around performed well during the game, scoring two and pushing the lead to 6–1. Though the Bulldogs stranded runners later in the inning, the damage was done.

La Verne's biggest spark came in the bottom of the fifth. Trailing by five, the Leopards erupted for four runs on five hits. Junior shortstop Ryan Vosika singled to extend the inning, and senior catcher Matt Rice brought in a run with a double.

Junior third baseman Logan Corthell followed with a clutch two-run single to pull La Verne within one, and senior first baseman Noah Garcia's RBI double made the score 6–5.

"I stay locked in by focusing on each pitch and staying ready every play," senior right fielder Logan Reese said. "Whether I'm at the plate or in right field, I trust my preparation and just try to compete."

However, the momentum would be short-lived, as Redlands wasted no time striking back in the top of the seventh.

After senior left fielder Will Cell and senior right fielder Gabriel Ceja reached base, Morris stepped up and drove a deep ball to right field that cleared the bases and gave the Bulldogs breathing room.

The Leopards' defense faltered again, and by the time the dust settled, Redlands had added four runs to stretch the lead to 10–5.



Ethan Anderson

Junior designated hitter Nate Perry checks his swing on a high pitch against Redlands on May 2 at Ben Hines Field. The Leopards lost the game, 15-7, but won the second game of Saturday's doubleheader to secure the Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference regular season championship. The Leopards finished with a SCIAC record of 18-6.

La Verne pushed across two more runs in the bottom of the seventh, thanks to RBI singles from senior left fielder Nolan Anguiano and Givens, but they couldn't stop Redlands' offensive machine.

In the eighth inning, Cell launched a solo homer to left field, and Morris followed up with a three-run bomb to break the contest wide open at 15–7.

Morris finished 4-for-6 with five RBIs and three runs scored, powering the Bulldogs from start to finish.The final two innings saw little resistance from La Verne as the Bulldogs' bullpen closed the door. Sophomore Gavin Duenez, freshman Aziz Bishop and the Redlands relief corps kept the Leopards off the scoreboard for the final three frames, preserving the win.

"The opposing team had success off me today because I left some pitches up, and they took advantage of it," senior pitcher Justin McFadden said.

"My fastball felt really good, but I left the slider up, and they didn't miss. I'll be making some adjustments this week in practice to get ready for the SCIAC Tournament."

Redlands finished the game with 15 runs on 14 hits and took advantage of five La Verne errors.

The Bulldogs also drew seven walks, extending innings and consistently putting pressure on the defense.

With the win, Redlands demonstrated their offensive depth and ability to capitalize on opportunities, even as La Verne threatened to swing the momentum.

The Bulldogs improved their standing with a confidence-boosting road victory, while the Leopards will look to regroup after a tough defensive outing.

The Leopards needed just one win in the series to clinch the Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference regular season championship.

They dropped the first game of Saturday's doubleheader at Redlands' home field, 7-6, but won the second game, 10-3, to earn their title.

"We're ready to go. We've had a great week of practice and have been preparing all year for this moment." Rice said.

"As long as we stay together and play Leopards baseball, I love our chances this weekend and throughout the playoffs."

The Leopards will have opened the SCIAC Tournament with a rematch against Redlands on Thursday at Ben Hines Field, and will continue against an opponent to be determined at 3 p.m. Friday.

Matchups on Saturday and Sunday will be determined based on the results of the first two games.

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LEOPARD SCOREBOARD

AT THE BUZZER

Softball, May 2
La Verne - 3
Whittier-0

Baseball, May 2
Redlands- 15
La Verne - 7

Baseball, May 3
G1 **La Verne - 6**
Redlands- 7
G2 **La Verne- 10**
Redlands- 3

Softball, May 3
G1 Whittier- 8
La Verne - 0
G2 Whittier- 7 5 Inn.
La Verne - 6

SCHEDULE

Friday
Baseball vs. TBD in SCIAC Tournament, 3 p.m.

Saturday
Women's Track and Field @ Azusa Pacific Franson
Last Chance Qualifier, all-day
Men's Track and Field @ Azusa Pacific Franson
Last Chance Qualifier, all-day
Baseball vs. TBD in SCIAC Tournament

Sunday
Baseball vs. TBD in SCIAC Tournament

BASEBALL STANDINGS

	SCIAC	Overall
La Verne	**18-6**	**31-8**
Pomona-Pitzer	16-8	27-13
Claremont-M-S	16-8	30-10
Cal Lutheran	16-8	27-13
Redlands	15-9	26-14
Chapman	10-14	11-28
Whittier	9-15	17-23
Caltech	5-19	8-30
Occidental	3-21	10-30