Campus Times

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Speech and Debate wins 26 awards

Jordan Alcasas
Social Media Editor

The University of La Verne's Lordsburg Speech and Debate Team has seen great success in the 2024-25 academic year, having won 26 awards.

Led by coach Mikayla Holzinger, the Lordsburg Speech and Debate team has grown in size this year from less than ten people to 18, including students who act as competitors and judges in competitions. Holzinger, a La Verne alumna who graduated in 2019, was later hired in 2022 as an adjunct professor.

Later on, in the summer of 2024, she was hired full time as the director of forensics and an instructor.

The team's biggest success this year came from the National Speech Championship Tournament at Bradley University in Illinois in March, where they earned five awards.

There is a sense of great improvement and high morale amongst the team thanks to their coach's encouragement and their success.

"I have heard from students that this year has allowed them the opportunity to grow in a way that they could have never imagined," Holzinger said. "The ability to use your voice to advocate for issues that are near and dear to their hearts is something that they will take forward into their futures."

"This team has a long legacy of incredible awards and accomplishments. I believe that this year was the catapult to bring this team and community back to its pre-pandemic success and collaboration."

One of the team's firm beliefs is that a lot of their success comes from the sense of community they've acquired over the course of the year. They preach acceptance and friendship, with what they describe as a family-like bond between its members and coach.

"Of course, I want them to win, they deserve that," Holzinger said. "Consistency and community is the beautiful thing about speech and debate. You have a team of people to explore ideas with, talk about identity and things happening in the world with, and you can't get that just anywhere."

The team's members feel a similar way. They have specific bonding rituals and traditions before every competition they go to. The team goes out to get boba together before competitions or they'll spend time doing warm-ups together to encourage each other the day of competition.

The group's leadership tries to emphasize community as much as possible as well. Holzinger has a friendly relationship with her team and the president of the club, Annette Ruiz, a senior English major, sees herself as no different from anyone else with her role.

"Honestly, I think that my leadership isn't like a dictatorship," Ruiz said. "I don't micromanage because it's a collaborative effort. My role is mostly that if anyone needs help, I'm always the person to turn to with speeches or organizing events and informing. It hasn't impacted my ability to just be a member."

"I think tournaments and seeing people win awards and feel good about their speeches is the most rewarding part of this for me," Ruiz said. "I've been on the team and seeing everyone grow has been extremely rewarding to me. Not just watching them feel good, but bonding has been especially rewarding."

One of the many things that bonds the team together is the desire to grow confidence and skill with public speaking or in judging roles.

"I would say, for sure I struggled with my confidence," Alexia Daniels, treasurer of the club and senior political science major, said. "Coming off the high of debate and going into speech can be so different. If August Alexia was here, she would say she is terrified. Trying something new is always hard for everyone, and we deal with it differently, but it got me a lot, so shoutout to my confidence."

Others were brought into the team in different ways, but the desire to hone their public speaking skill remained constant between team members.

"For me, it was a general interest that brought me into the team," Rania Kartouch, a junior political science major, said. "Speech and debate really falls into the expectation of my major, and I love public speaking. I wanted to be better at it, and I heard a lot of good things about the speech and debate team in high school."

Daniels and Kartouch alone placed in the top 20 nationally in four different speech events just over the course of this year, proving that people looking to join can start at any level of skill. The community bonds and the determination to hone your public speaking skills is what determines success, not an inherent talent.

The team also has an inclusion of judges as well, who are necessary to attend competitions and receive funding.

Their job is to judge a set amount of people, write feedback, and hand it back to competitors, making them an important part of the process.

"I think a lot of it is body language and presentation. Some speeches require blocking– which is acting with your body– while some can be more clean without much movement," Lily Bower-Moore, a sophomore creative writing major and judge on the team, said. "Good eye contact, holding a strong tone, and commanding the room's attention when necessary is all important."

The team has had a complicated history over the years as well. The team was founded in 1912, but there have been times where the speech or the debate team have not existed.

"The last time there was a speech team on campus was in 2003," Holzinger said. "This year there was a decision to change the team back to speech because of the state of debate on the competitive circuit. I think that this switch has been much more beneficial for our students."

Looking forward, the team is aware of their success and aiming for consistency. The Lordsburg Speech and Debate Team is excited for a bright future and to take on new members next semester.

"Going into next year, not being a novice team but having experience, I think this team is going to be unstoppable," Holzinger said. "That's especially true with the students coming to the team next year that are freshman."

Jordan Alcasas can be reached at ***jordan.alcasas@laverne.edu.***

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Journalism students sweep CSPA awards

Karina Rodriguez
Arts Editor

The Campus Times and La Verne Magazine cleaned up in the Columbia Scholastic Press Association's annual contest for the 2023-24 academic year, each winning the prestigious Silver Crown award for overall publication excellence in their respective categories.

Additionally, the publications won a total of 22 Gold Circle awards for individual stories and photos published during the 2023-24 academic year.

The Silver Crown wins put the publications among the top seven college newspapers/online hybrid publications and among the top three college magazines across the U.S. and Canada.

Among other newspaper Crown awardees were Indiana University's The Indiana Student, Baylor University's Lariat, and Texas Tech's The Daily Toreador; additional magazine winners included the University of Wisconsin's CURB, and the University of Miami's Distraction magazines.

The annual contest, based at the Columbia University School of Journalism, had nearly 7,000 total entrants across its various categories. Awards were announced during the CSPA's annual convention earlier this spring.

Professor of Journalism Elizabeth Zwerling advises the Campus Times, and Professor of Journalism George Keeler and Adjunct Professor of Communications Randy Miller advise the La Verne Magazine in fall and spring semesters respectively. Eric Borer, journalism operations manager and adjunct professor, is photography advisor for both publications.

"It makes me so proud of my students to know that I have the best in the country, and that they have the ability to rise to that level," said Keeler, who is also program chair of journalism.

"I am very proud of the good work the students have done," said Borer, whose photography staffs were responsible for the majority of individual Gold Circle awards.

Journalism majors and 2024 alumnae Sarah Van Buskirk and Taylor Moore served as editor-in-chief of the Campus Times in fall 2023 and spring 2024 respectively; journalism majors and 2024 alumnae Abelina Nuñez and Samira Felix were magazine editors in fall 2023 and spring 2024 respectively.

Van Buskirk said she was delighted to hear news of the awards.

"I think employers will be very impressed," said Van Buskirk, who is currently freelancing.

Moore attributed the big wins to the great team she got to lead last spring.

"All the editors and all the staff writers (brought) their A

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On the Cover
Hip-hop artist Saweetie interacts with the crowd while performing "Tap In" as the headliner for Lavernapalooza on May 8 at the Fox Theater in Pomona. More than a thousand University students packed out the theater for the annual concert. / photo by Vicente Rodriguez

Event showcases various research

AI project, yoga on display

Erika Oceguera
Staff Writer

The University of La Verne hosted its second annual Celebration of Scholarship on May 9, bringing together students, faculty and staff to share research and creative projects developed over the academic year.

Held from 8 a.m. to 3:45 p.m., the day-long event featured presentations, poster sessions and interactive demonstrations, showcasing work from a variety of disciplines. Open to the entire campus community, the conference highlighted collaborations between students and faculty, discipline-based research and innovative teaching strategies.

University President Risa Dickson opened the event by recognizing the importance of research in shaping academic and professional success. Dickson emphasized the University's commitment to supporting collaborative work that makes a difference on campus and in the broader community.

"This event reflects who we are as a community, one dedicated to pushing ideas forward and making meaningful contributions," Dickson said.

The conference kicked off with a continental breakfast in Fasnacht Court before attendees moved to Founders Hall for the first of three research sessions.

The first session opened with "Well-Being Interventions in U.S. Colleges: A Scoping Review from a Positive Higher Education Perspective," presented by Grace Zhao, Nicole Mahrer and students Ashley Robbins, Caitlin Bean and Anna Christie. Their presentation explored how U.S. colleges define and implement well-being initiatives to address the rising mental health challenges faced by students.

Grace Zhao, professor of music and music department chair, shared that their review analyzed 40 studies to examine how colleges integrate well-being into student experiences.

"There's a role that universities need to play," Zhao said. "We have a responsibility to do something to support our students beyond treating issues after they arise. We need to promote prevention and holistic care."

The research team identified six broad types of interventions in higher education, including mindfulness practices, psychoeducational workshops, positive psychology exercises, interpersonal skills training and physical well-being programs such as yoga. However, they noted that only a small number of universities embed these programs into the curriculum, raising questions about long-term sustainability and institutional commitment.

Next, Ruoqi "Violet" Zhang presented "Financial Transparency in the Age of Algorithms: The Super-Individual Emerges," a study examining how artificial intelligence is transforming the financial industry. Zhang introduced the concept of the "super-individual."

"AI is reshaping finance by increasing efficiency and data-driven decision-making," Zhang said. "But it's the human role, the super-individual, that ensures oversight, accountability, and ethical decision-making."

Zhang argued that while AI can process massive data sets at speeds impossible for humans, human users must critically evaluate AI-generated outputs to maintain transparency and prevent misuse. She warned of the risks of data manipulation, noting the importance of independent oversight beyond government or corporate control.



Rylee Fournier

Associate Provost Suzanne Beaumaster honors Professor of History Kenneth Marcus at the Celebration of Scholarship awards ceremony in Fasnacht Court on May 9. Marcus, who presented at the conference, teaches courses in European and Los Angeles history.

The second session began with Kenneth Marcus's presentation "Sound History: A Classroom Context," which explored the role of sound in shaping historical understanding. Kenneth Marcus, professor of history, discussed how integrating music and other auditory elements into coursework can enhance student learning and empathy.

"Sound can offer students new ways of connecting with historical periods and events," Marcus said. "Whether through music, spoken word, or ambient sounds, auditory experiences help deepen understanding in ways that visuals alone cannot."

Marcus shared findings from his research on using arts-based methods to engage students in history courses, including the use of music recordings, film and visual art to improve retention and critical thinking.

The session continued with "Path to Progress: Empowering Students on Academic Probation to Succeed," presented by Alesha Knox, Savannah Garcia, Briana Smith and Brooke Grasso Lavin.

The team described their three-week academic support series designed to help students on academic probation develop time management, study habits and self-advocacy skills.

"We were seeing too many students getting disqualified and not returning to good standing," Brooke Grasso Lavin, academic advisor and adjunct professor, said.

"We wanted to find a way to break that cycle and give them the tools they need to succeed."

"We have a moral obligation to support our students all the way through their education," Grasso said.

Their data showed promising results: 90% of participants who completed the program returned to good academic standing, a 35% improvement over typical rates.

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Awards...

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game," Moore said. "Everyone brought 100% to every single meeting, every Thursday production, and we were all so in sync."

Felix, who served as news editor for the Campus Times for the entire 2023-24 academic year in addition to serving as magazine editor in spring 2024, credited her professors.

"I won this award because of Elizabeth, George, Eric and everyone in general in the journalism department," said Felix. "I wouldn't be where I am today without their support."

Crown Awards are considered at Columbia by panels of invited judges made up of professional journalists and academics from across the nation. Working in small groups, the judges scrutinize the publications for depth and breadth of coverage, writing, editing, photography, and design. Zwerling said she was very proud of her students, and she added that the awards were not totally unexpected.

"While we are thrilled with this year's showing in the prestigious contest, the honors are not a complete surprise," Zwerling said. "Our publications have been consistent winners in CSPA contests for more than two decades."

The CSPA is an international student press association uniting student journalists and faculty advisers at colleges. Owned and operated by Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, the Association founded in 1925 is one of the oldest, largest, and most prestigious student journalism associations.

"At a time when journalistic independence and academic freedom are under threat as never before, we're proud of our publications, which serve the La Verne community and beyond with objectivity and fierce independence, training the journalists of tomorrow to hold the powers that be to account," Zwerling said.

Karina Rodriguez can be reached at ***karina.rodriguez@laverne.edu.***

CSPA Gold Circle Winners

Campus Times:

• Samira Felix, First Place for News Writing for "Adjunct faculty emphasize need for contracts."

• Samira Felix and Sarah Van Buskirk, Second Place for Alternate Story Form for "New President Mahdavi shares personal story and plans for the university."

• Kelli Makenna Kuttruff, Certificate of Merit for General Feature Writing for "LV houses go all out for Halloween."

• Lindsey Pacela, Certificate of Merit for General Feature for "Hikers experience magic of the sea."

• Jonas Holt, Third Place for Photo Story for "Swim teams drop senior day meet."

• Amanda Torres, First Place for Single Feature Photo for "Headbanging at the Glass House."

• Olivia Modarelli, Second Place for Single Feature Photo for "Sluttony Concert."

• Christopher Rodriguez, Third Place for Single Feature Photo for "Magic Show."

• Nareg Agopian, First Place for Sports Photography for "Football vs. CMS."

• Christopher Rodriguez, Second Place for Sports Photography for "Softball vs. Redlands"

• Sheridan Lambrook, Third Place for Sports Photography for "Softball – Taylor Gray Celebration."

• Sarah Van Buskirk, Certificate of Merit for Sports Photography for "Women's Water Polo vs. Chapman"

• Nareg Agopian, Certificate of Merit for Sports Photography for "Women's Soccer vs. Caltech"

• Sheridan Lambrook, First Place, Photography Portfolio of Work

• Amanda Torres, Second Place, Photography Portfolio of Work

• Nareg Agopian, Third Place, Photography Portfolio of Work

• Sheridan Lambrook and Amanda Torres, Third Place Single Subject Feature Package, Double-truck (two-facing pages), for "University of La Verne inaugurates 19th president."

• Sarah Van Buskirk and Lindsey Pacela, Certificate of Merit, Single Subject Feature Package, Double-truck (two-facing pages) for "Sex Workers: Stepping Out of the Shadows."

La Verne Magazine:

• Olivia Modarelli, Second Place for Single News Feature Photograph for "Making Music and Memories at The Haven"

• Chris Rogers, Third Place, Photo Illustration for "The Best Pizza in La Verne."

• Kim Toth, Certificate of Merit, Cover Design for General or Feature Magazine, for La Verne Magazine Winter 2024

• Chris Rogers, Certificate of Merit, Cover Design for General or Feature Magazine, for La Verne Magazine Summer 2024

HAPPENINGS

‘Student and Faculty Stage’

The music department will host this semester’s student club concert, ‘’The Student and Faculty Stage,’’ at 6 p.m. Saturday in Morgan Auditorium.

Admission is free.

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

Friday Nights Live

The Friday Nights Live Concerts will start at 6 p.m. at three outdoor locations in the Claremont Village Friday.

The Calypso Pirates will play at the Claremont Square public plaza at 101 N. Indian Hill Blvd.

Swingin’ Doors will perform at Shelton Park at the corner of Bonita and Harvard avenues.

‘’Solid’’ Ray Woods will perform at the Claremont Chamber patio at 205 Yale Avenue. Admission is free.

For more information, visit **discoverclaremont.com**.

Flyway at Fox

The hip-hop vs. reggaeton party at the Flyway at Fox Rooftop in downtown Pomona from 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. May 23.

You must be 18 years or older to enter. The event is presented by Eightblockent.

For more information, visit the Flyway Instagram at **@flywaynightclub**.

‘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 exhibit runs through June 29.

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

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

—Zachary Grech

Lavernapalooza gives Sweet send-off

by Marina Bravo

photography by Vicente Rodriguez

The Pomona Fox Theater was once again orange and green, for the University’s most anticipated event of the spring semester: Lavernapalooza. Amid finals season and commencement preparations, the end-of-year send-off did not disappoint.

The May 9 event featured rapper Saweetie with KYLE as the opener. With students lined up and ready at 6 p.m., for the shuttles to the Fox; with doors opening at 7:30 p.m., DJ Screwloose was ready to get the night started.

With over 1,000 Leos in attendance for the Lavernapalooza show. It consisted of traditional undergraduate students, graduate and adult students, alumni and the general public.

The event was hosted and organized by Associated Students of University of La Verne and the Campus Activities Board. With the announcement of this event dating back to March 10 via Instagram with the artist reveal which followed on March 21.

Students were surprised when rapper Big Sean had been announced as headliner. However, the day of the event, at 6 p.m., the Lavernapalooza account on Instagram released a statement:

‘’Regretfully, Big Sean will be unable to perform due to illness. He was truly looking forward to being part of this event and is disappointed to miss it. Big Sean sends his sincerest apologies to the University of La Verne community and appreciates your understanding and support.’’

Many students had mixed feelings with the last minute announcement of rapper Saweetie, however that didn’t stop the attendees from having fun.

Many even expressed how excited they were by the sudden change.

‘’I know a lot of people were mad, but I personally love Saweetie,’’ Arlene Moore, junior biology major said. ‘’I am excited to hear ‘Back to the Streets’.’’

KYLE took the stage and got things started, making sure the energy continued. Songs like ‘’Playinwitme,’’ ‘’Hey Julie!’’ and ‘’Don’t Wanna Fall In Love’’ had attendees dancing and singing along. ‘’iSpy’’ was the last song KYLE played and everyone was singing the lyrics.

KYLE expressed how much he enjoys doing things like this and how much it meant to him being there celebrating with ULV.



Hip-hop artist Saweetie performs ‘’Best Friend’’ as the headliner for Lavernapalooza on May 8 at the Fox Theater. Her set included a variety of her hits.

Saweetie took the stage and she brought all the energy with her. Singing her hit songs ‘’Best Friend,’’ ‘’My Type,’’ and ‘’Tap In,’’ she encouraged all guests to have fun and channel their inner ‘’ICY girl/boy.’’

‘’We are so glad that Saweetie came out to play,’’ Rebekah Hong, ULV law student graduate, said. ‘’Because you know, she represents the baddie girls.’’

Hong expressed how she sent her best wishes to Sean and hoped for a speedy recovery, but that Saweetie was the next best choice.

Students were encouraged to dance the night away, some individuals even being invited to show off their moves on stage with Saweetie.

Lavernapalooza was a classic ULV send-off celebration before finals week and graduation leaving many students excited for next year.

‘’It was really fun,’’ Penelope Jimenez, junior philosophy major, said. ‘’I had a good time with my friend/roommate tonight. I really enjoyed Saweetie.’’

‘’I think Saweetie put on an enjoyable performance,’’ Isabel Batista, senior criminology major, said. ‘’I think I would attend another event like that in the future.’’

*Marina Bravo can be reached at **marina.bravo@laverne.edu**.*

Exhibit gets musical

The Claremont Lewis Museum of Art's current group exhibition, "Sound Formations," displays the work of local visual artists, musicians and instrument makers.

The show is spread through several rooms of the museum, and includes hand-carved violins made of beautiful rustic stained wood, big colorful wooden drums and more.

The exhibition centers around instruments and their makers, and it also acknowledges the important contributions of the musicians who call Claremont their home.

"Claremont has a really interesting history of art makers in general, but we also have a large group of people who are hands-on and make instruments," said Thea Whitaker, community engagement coordinator for the museum. "(We're) putting a spotlight on the artist legacy of Claremont.

"These makers bring a wealth of craftsmanship and attention to detail that cannot be replicated by an assembly line," Whitaker said.

Some instruments in this exhibition were custom-designed for specific musicians, reflecting their individual preferences and desires, Whitaker said.

"To have all these really fantastic artists all in the same place is really special and we just wanted to shine the light on that… We're treating these musical instruments, not only as tools of four artists but pieces of art themselves."

Wooden electric guitars, in all different shapes and sizes, hung on the wall in one room.

Each one was hung in a certain way as if it was telling a story.

Underneath all the guitars were wooden sound boxes and speakers that looked worn out, which gave it more life.

"I am a drummer, so I am interested in instruments," said Maria Quici, who attended the exhibit.

In another room with dark green walls and dim lighting, hand-carved and painted violins and electric guitars hung on the wall.

The instruments were made from various woods and other materials, including cedar, spruce, bone, ivory, nickel and more.

The "Sound Formations" exhibit runs through July 13.

The museum is at 200 W. First Street in Claremont. Museum hours are noon to 4 p.m. Thursdays, noon to 7 p.m Fridays, noon to 4 p.m. Saturdays and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sundays. Admission is $5 for adults, and free for students and kids under 18.

—CC Flaherty

Senior artists share final show

The department of art and art history hosted a senior art exhibition Tuesday in the Harris Gallery.

The show, "Fragments of Becoming," featured nine senior art majors.

Student artists included Samantha Lujano, Andalusia Overman, Gabriela Guzman, Charlie Rodriguez, Jonathan Martinez, Maya Sanchez, Malachi Hawkins, Crystal Neitman and Elizabeth Aguirre.

In the far corner of the gallery, an installation by Rodriguez, featured shelves of roses and vines, an easel with a painting on it, paint pallets and blank turned-over canvases.

In another part of the gallery Guzman's installation featured art pieces hanging on the wall and from the ceiling.

"it was a personal experience… I learned to experiment," Guzman said.

Each piece told a story of sorts, like the series of paintings by Martinez, who incorporated lights into the back of his three paintings inspired by the Los Angeles fires that took place earlier this year.

"My art dives into certain topics of idealism, socialism and over-sexulization of the human body," Aguirre said of her pieces also on display. "Two of them are not titled, but the one in the middle is called 'Piece of Me.' So that one goes into oversexualization of the female body, and to certain men."

Working with the students "was a great experience," said Keith Lord, professor of art. "It always is… It is great to see them as soon as they start reading their artist statements to each other and showing each other their work. They start feeling like they are on a team, and they are all backing each other up."

—Alicia Naranjo



Rylee Fournier

Senior studio art major Liz Aguirre's work, featured in the senior art exhibition "Fragments of Becoming," explores themes of identity, mental health and emotion through multimedia pieces.

Venturing 'Into the Woods'



Vicente Rodriguez

The University Chorale and Chamber Singers perform "Into The Woods Junior" on Sunday at Morgan Auditorium. The show was a condensed version of the Broadway hit that retells the story of Cinderella and Little Red Riding Hood.

Research...

Continued from page 3

Following the morning sessions, attendees gathered on Citrus Lawn from 11:30 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. for lunch and a poster session featuring student and faculty research projects. Live music provided by LeoFM set a lively tone as guests explored posters on a wide range of topics, including mental health, relationship dynamics, environmental science, social justice and artificial intelligence. Research showcased ranged from studies on the impact of light pollution on wildlife to machine learning models for predicting geomagnetic storms.

The conference resumed with Session 3 at 1:30 p.m. in Founders Hall 211. Loren Dyck, Gareth Craze and William Luse opened the session with their presentation, "Vietnamese Student Commitment: Impact of Exercise Self-Efficacy and Collectivism," which examined cultural influences on student motivation.

Sheila Bonfa followed with "Understanding Loss of Medicaid Benefits in U.S. States: A Qualitative Comparative Analysis," addressing healthcare policy and access challenges across the nation.

The final presentation of the day, "The Art of Financial Storytelling: CFO's Narrative Techniques," by Ehsan Danesh, explored how chief financial officers craft strategic narratives to influence organizational stakeholders.

The event concluded with a dessert reception and awards ceremony in Fasnacht Court, where attendees gathered to celebrate outstanding contributions in three categories: student-faculty collaboration, discipline-based research and teaching innovation.

Organizers recognized the hard work of presenters and encouraged continued participation in future celebrations of scholarship, reinforcing the university's mission to support lifelong learning and academic excellence.

Erika Oceguera can be reached at ***erika.oceguera@laverne.edu.***

Featured art adds personal touch

Fair goers explore creativity

Monique Arambula
Staff Writer

The Los Angeles County Fair this year featured more than just traditional displays of art on walls.

It included hands-on workshops, cultural storytelling and handmade creations scattered across the various expo halls.

Whether it was thread and fabric or stained glass, the fair's art scene proved that creativity can thrive anywhere.

Kristen Huizar, an embroidery artist from Expo 6, was part of the Eastside Arts Initiative, which invited artists who previously received grants from the organization to return and showcase their work.

She noted that all her materials were thrifted and that her love for stitching came from learning how to sew her own pants as a kid.

"My pieces are the embroidered ones where I'm doing an embroidery workshop and Andres is doing live painting," Huizar said.

"You can take embroidery anywhere since materials are very cheap, which is something good to instill into young artists, that you don't need a lot of money or space to do art."

"If I could do hand stitching, I can make it into a line," Huizar said. "It's like drawing in slow motion."

Alongside her was Andrés Vela, a painter who also participated through the Eastside Arts Initiative. Instead of showcasing a full gallery, Vela led a hands-on workshop where visitors were invited to draw on top of a sketched eye he provided.

The eye served as a fun starting point for people to add their own ideas, like Mike Wazowski, Minions and even Bill Cipher from "Gravity Falls." The central eye acted on Vela's own monster-themed artwork.

"This monster came out of the sketch… I call them little monstros," Vela said. "My mom's Mexican, my dad's Guatemalan, so I take parts of Mayan and Aztec stonework and make it my own."

While Expo 6 mostly resembled a typical vendor space with jewelry, bags and stickers for sale, the art corner stood out.

Even though it was tucked away in the back near a collection of vintage typewriters, it still created an inviting space for people to slow down, participate and connect with the artists behind the work.

A more dedicated art space could be found in Expo 5, which featured the widest range of handmade pieces.

There were stained glass displays, sewn dresses, decorative Christmas trees, edible art like cakes and handcrafted blankets. It felt more like a community craft fair than a vendor market.

Jane Tickey-Williams, who has taught stained glass for years through Claremont Adult Ed, was one of the artists offering live demos in Expo 5.

"I figured this way, we're showing them what we can make out of glass and show that it's good for you mentally," Tickey-Williams said.

Tickey-Williams explained that she first learned stained glass in the early 1980s through adult education programs. Eventually, her former teacher stepped back, and Tickey-Williams knew what she was doing, so she took over the class.

Now, decades later, she teaches her own students and continues sharing the benefits of hands-on craft at events like the Fair.

During her demo, visitors could enter a raffle for a free handmade stained-glass spinner.

Tickey-Williams shared how she loves being able to show people that learning a new craft is not just about the end result. It's about discovery and personal growth.

"I still teach," Tickey-Williams said. "And for people to get out and do a craft, it's very good for you."

One visitor, Cera Ramos, a sophomore pre-nursing major at Pasadena City College, was compelled by the creativity of the table art in Expo 5.

"I really liked the Wicked table and I enjoy how it was brought to life in this unique way," Ramos said. "It was beautiful. It was very creative. It was a way to capture the movie without physically capturing the movie."

"I didn't notice the brushes at first in the art table, I just saw the flowers, but then I noticed the brushes and thought that was very cool," Ramos said.

Monique Arambula can be found at ***monique.arambula@laverne.edu.***

Final dance team performance highlights skills

The University of La Verne Dance Team hosted a showcase last Friday in the Campus Center Ballrooms.

There were 15 performers, and most also had a hand in the show's choreography.

The show opened with "Party Girl," which was choreographed by Michael Gonzalez.

Next was "The Calico Trio" choreographed by Bre Bogan, then came "Pasion" choreographed by Ana Gonzalez.

Among the 15 total dance pieces were five solo dances featuring Gonzalez, Kevlyn Martinez, Jeniyah McCarty and seniors Alex Soltero and Emily Saldivar.

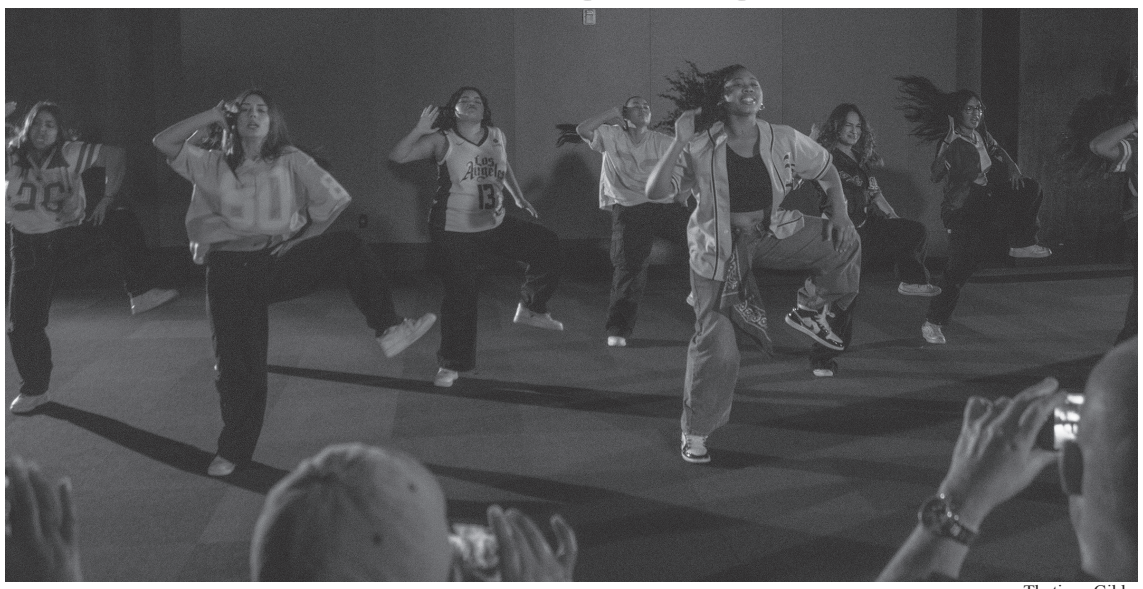
Other dances included, "From a Woman," choreographed by Janai Johnson and Alexis Deleon; "Where Did You Go?" choreographed by McCarty; "Conceited," choreographed by Johnson, Deleon, Paola Gamboa and Caesar Lopez; "Long Way to Go," choreographed by Taylor Fukunaga; and "So Long, London," choreographed by Emily Saldivar.

"When I hear a piece of music as a dancer, and it really speaks to me, Imagine the choreography when I am listening to the song," Saldivar said.

The last piece before the finale was set to "Reign Game" and was choreographed by Fukunaga.

All the dancers took the stage for the finale.

—Alicia Naranjo



Thatiana Gibbs

Members of the University of La Verne Dance Team bring energy to the stage with their group performance to "Conceited" by Remy Ma. The performance was part of the annual Dance Team Showcase and was held May 9 in the Campus Center Ballroom.





Alumna helps Gen Z-ers find work

Biz offers resumé help and more

Monique Arambula
Staff Writer

Careers with Kelli is a small business designed to help Gen Z with creating resumes, preparing for interviews and landing their dream job.

It aims to offer a personal affordable job hunting support resource, and it is geared toward students and early career job seekers with tips and hacks for navigating the competitive career market.

The company was founded this year by January 2025 ULV alumna Kelli Makenna Kuttruff, who goes by Kelli Makenna professionally.

Makenna has an interest in human resources, and the business was born out of a need she saw when she began job hunting.

Makenna is certified by the Society for Human Resource Management.

She saw many of her friends struggle with creating resumes, completing college applications and presenting themselves professionally in interviews. She knew there was a clear need for career support in the Gen Z community.

"I saw a need, in Gen Z particularly, that were struggling to bridge the gap between their educational journey and their career with finding those entry-level jobs, those internships, or whatever they were looking for," Makenna said. "I feel like it's almost become normalized to get a college degree, that sometimes it can be hard for people to know how to stand out among the competition."

The new company is already beginning to build a foundation. Makenna runs the business solo but gets marketing and promotional help from Michael Roccia, a senior communications major at ULV, who serves as the head of PR for Careers with Kelli as part of his senior project.

"Instagram and TikTok are the hardest with our social media because through our research we found that those are the two platforms that Gen Z is drawn to the most," Roccia said. "Gen Z entering the workforce for the first time is our primary audience."

Unlike traditional in-person coaching, the business is entirely online.

Clients start with a free 15-minute consultation before choosing from one of six packages, which start at $29.99 and include resume help, interview coaching and LinkedIn makeovers.

"I have noticed that even with the most basic career packages, some of them are upwards of several hundred dollars, which seems to exclude a lot of the younger generation who might not have those funds yet," Makenna said. "I understand the Gen Z experience, and a lot of people who have been career coaching for a long time don't understand that the job market is very different than it was 10, 20, 30 years ago."

Daniella Carpinelli, a nursing student at Citrus College currently completing her prerequisites, worked with Careers with Kelli to build a resume for school applications.

"Kelli had me send all my experience like volunteer work, school history, licensing - and then she decided what to include," Carpinelli said. "We proofread it together, and it was super helpful."

Carpinelli said she was accepted to the schools she applied to and believes the polished resume helped her stand out.

"I'd definitely go back to her again," Carpinelli said.

"My resume was all over the place and she totally helped me fix it up," Giana Froio, a longtime friend of Makenna and recent ULV graduate with a degree in communications and a concentration in public relations, said. "She's so sweet, and you never feel any judgment with her. I was literally texting her the other day about a Roth IRA account, like asking what bank to use."

Froio now works at the Volunteer Center of San Gabriel Valley and said Makenna's guidance during her job search was a big help.

Competitors include larger resume-writing platforms and career coaching services, but Makenna believes her age and personal approach give her an edge.

"I understand what it's like to be in their shoes," Makenna said.

"I want to make sure they're confident in telling their story, and that their resume reflects what they actually bring to the table."

To learn more or book a consultation with Careers with Kelli, visit careerswithkelli.com.

Monique Arambula can be found at ***monique.arambula@laverne.edu.***

Goats charm Fair goers

Leila El Sabbagh
Sports Editor

Since 1922, the Los Angeles County Fair has been home to a variety of attractions.

The fair not only has rides and food, but plenty of animals that guests can get up close and personal with.

The farm and gardens, located near the back of the Fairplex in Pomona, is home to plenty of animals like pigs, goats, sheep, cows and horses.

The absence of chickens and dairy cows were due to the spread of H5N1 Bird Flu in California.

The Big Red Barn and servies were provided by the Huntley College of Agriculture from California State Polytechnic University, Pomona.

"Most of the bottle feeding ones (goats) I have strong connections with," Madison Carranza, a Cal Poly Pomona volunteer, said. "One's name is Little Peppa Steppa, I've been feeding him for I think two days. I've really gotten attached."

Plenty of the animals were laid back in the shade due to the extreme weather, with highs of 102 degrees Fahrenheit from noon to 6 p.m.

Alongside the walls of the barn were plenty more goats to be seen right when you step in.

Towards the center were piglets accompanied by their sow, snuggled up against the fence of the enclosure.

"One of my favorite parts of the fair is seeing the animals," visitor Amy Fitzgerald said. "I would like to see more accessibility to being closer to them. Maybe more feeding stations."

Near the back corner of the barn was a Petting Farm where guests could experience small goats and sheep running around and feel their thick coats in the heat.

Guests could also purchase $3 cups of food to feed the animals.

Small children accompanied by their parents had a hard time getting further into the enclosure due to eager and hungry goats and sheep.

Nevertheless, plenty of fun was to be had watching each animal prance from guest to guest trying to get their fill on food.

If any of the animals saw you did not have any, they would simply move on to find food elsewhere.

Barnyard racing pig races took place from noon to 10 p.m. towards the back corner of the Grandstand where little pigs would race for a small Oreo cookie as their prize.

A breeding sheep show at the competition barn was held at 1 p.m. to crown the most regal sheep and award them with a blue ribbon.

Fair goer Brianna Ramirez shared her animal experience with her young niece, showing her different baby animals.

"She loves the animals, it just makes me happy to see her very excited. I love animals too so whenever I get to visit them it's very fun," Ramirez said.

More bottle feeding took place throughout the day for guests to watch as well as the Los Angeles County Beekeepers Association Bee and Honey Display.

Horses could also be seen prancing around their stable towards the back of The Farm and Gardens section.

Thummer made short appearances due to the heat, greeting guests and taking pictures to commemorate their time at the fair.

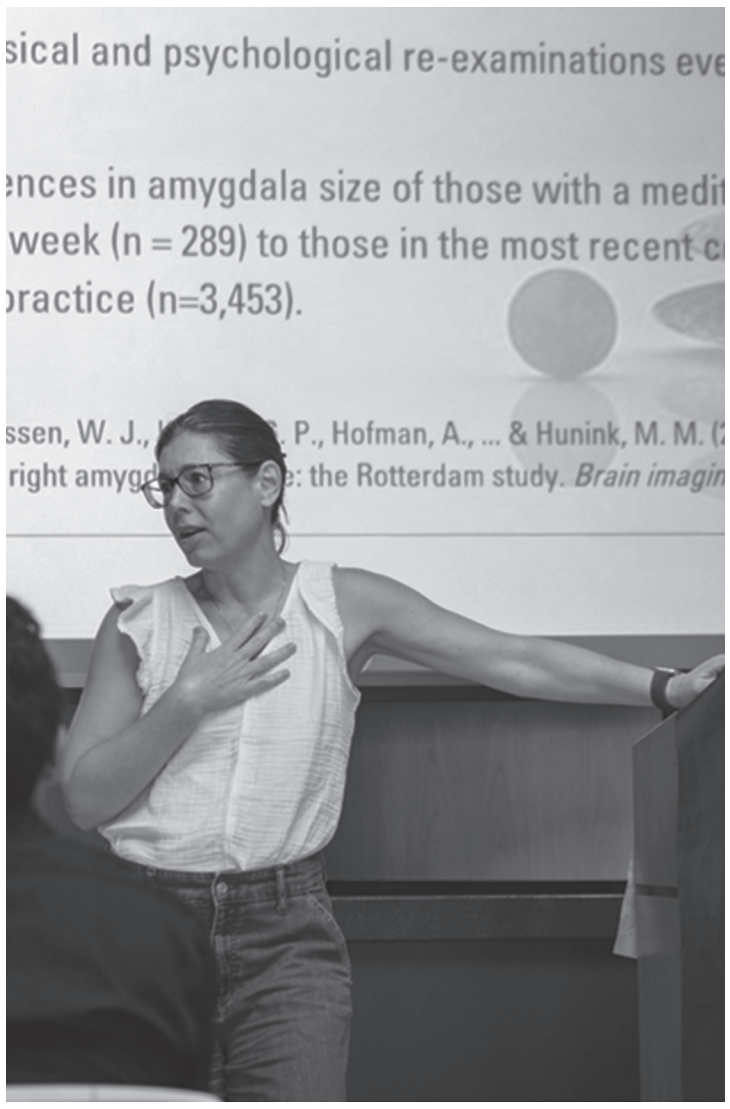
"I've been working for Cal Poly for about four years, since I started at the school," Cal Poly Pomona volunteer Sky Rodriguez said. "It's pretty fun. I like being with the animals and taking care of them, making sure people don't ride them, things like that."

The animals were continuously out during the day with often check-ins from different volunteers and workers, doing the best they could to give them proper care in the heat.

Animals will continue to be showcased for the remainder of the fair, until May 26 with weather conditions looking cooler for them to be moving around in their respective enclosures.

Leila El Sabbagh can be reached at ***leila.elsabbagh@laverne.edu.***

Psi Chi hosts research conference



Jai'la Counts

Professor of Psychology Amy Demyan presents her latest research at the Psi Chi research conference Saturday in the Ludwick Center Sacred Space. The annual conference gives students and faculty from the psychology department an opportunity to present their research from throughout the academic year.

Reid succeeds on and off the track

Zachary Grech
Staff Writer

Three-time Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference 110-meter hurdles champion Zachary Reid has etched his name at the very top of the La Verne record books. The graduate student has had a stellar track record of nothing short of excellence displayed in his four-year career at La Verne.

In 2022, 2024 and 2025, Reid became the SCIAC champion in 110-meter hurdles. Reid also set the new school record in the same event at the 2024 SCIAC Championship meet with a time of 14.31 seconds. His time in that same race also shattered the SCIAC meet record of 14.48 seconds, which had stood since 1976.

The hurdler was taken aback, knowing that the 50-year-old meet record showed how dominant the SCIAC conference is.

"It was kind of a surreal moment looking back at the board, which ultimately set the tempo for the entire team and me that day," Reid said.

Reid has relied on his coaching staff, who have pushed him to new heights and have helped him become a more balanced athlete. Reid credits his father, head track and field coach Kevin Reid; his high school coach, Johnny Deryeghiayan; his several coaches at La Verne, including sprints coach Christian Carter; and head strength coach Matt Durant.

All of these coaches have helped Reid perfect his craft in hurdling, which has allowed Reid to keep building on his success and hone in on performing at a high level.

"I have the best support staff humanly possible between everyone, coaches, teammates, different staff amongst everyone so it's been really great," Reid said.

Reid emphasized that La Verne was the perfect place for him to continue his hurdling career despite many offers from other colleges. Reid ultimately chose the University of La Verne because he was confident he would find early success and continue to excel in his hurdling events.

Reid's pursuit of excellence pushed the whole La Verne track and field team to new heights and a new standard when competing.

Current teammates, junior decathlete Hunter Bond and graduate student sprinter Ivan Estrada, talked about their personal experiences with Reid.

For Bond being an all-around athlete on the track – decathlon includes events like sprints, jumps, pole vault and hurdles – he has looked to Reid for guidance with technique and competitive motivation during practice.

"He's been helping me a lot with hurdles, and it has been great to have someone very knowledgeable in a lot of areas on the track, and for me as a decathlete, that's all you could ask for in a teammate, which makes me very grateful," Bond said.

Estrada said witnessing Reid's dedication to his craft inspired him to compete at a higher level.

"Zach was one of those dedicated guys, coming here every day, every morning, every night, hitting the weight room, and just leaving his all on the track," Estrada said. "This has positively impacted me, because when I first got here, I never really thought I'd be running the times that I did. Working alongside Zach helped me, and I am happy to say that I am also a SCIAC champ."

One key to Reid's success is his offseason approach. Unlike many athletes, Reid shifts his focus after track season, trading his spikes for a new mindset as a Wildland firefighter in northern Nevada.

"I go from being a sprinter to hiking up hills to doing long five to six mile runs," Reid said. "This takes the majority of my time during my offseason, and it helps me separate myself, which honestly has been the big key in kind of getting my mind back to the school and track mindset."



Anthony Eramya

Graduate student Zachary Reid is a three-time SCIAC champion in the 110m hurdles. Reid broke the SCIAC record set in 1976 with his time of 14.31 seconds.

Reid said this annual soft reboot has helped him tremendously the past four to five years on the track, making him an even better athlete because it has made him more disciplined in his sport, and it has also allowed him to seek other talents beyond the sport.

This legacy of Reid has helped the track and field team, and it has also left a huge impact on Reid's father, who is also the head track and field coach at La Verne, Kevin Reid.

He has had the biggest job of all in his son's career, balancing the act of being a coach and father.

Kevin Reid emphasized the importance of trusting his staff to set clear boundaries between the father-son relationship and the coach-athlete relationship, which has helped both grow stronger.

"I have a couple of pretty good assistant coaches step up and help coach Zach when things got a little bit tense between us at practice, which this approach has become a pretty good dynamic between the other coaches and me," Kevin Reid said.

Kevin Reid also said that he never put pressure on his son to come to La Verne, and that he wanted Zachary to make the decision solely based on what he wanted for himself.

"It needs to be your choice and not just a fallback option because it would be an easy one," Kevin Reid said.

With over 40 years of experience in track and field, Kevin Reid has built global connections, won numerous championships, worked with Olympic gold medalists, and contributed to USA Track and Field at several meets.

But he said one of the biggest highlights for him is sharing the love of the sport with his son.

"He's a track nerd and he loves to follow the sport," Kevin Reid said.

"He will actually probably come to me and say, 'Hey, did you see this happen today?', and he's probably more on top of it than I am when it comes to current events."

Looking into the future, Zachary Reid plans to use his knowledge in the sport to pursue a career in the business side of the track and field industry as a sports agent. He said that unwavering support from his father, coaches, and teammates has helped him excel during his time at the University of La Verne.

Zachary Grech can be reached at ***zachary.grech@laverne.edu***.

Leos win SCIAC tourney, advance to regionals

CC Flaherty
Staff Writer

With a third straight regular season title under their belts, the Leopards entered the Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Tournament. The team won three of their four games to earn a bid to the NCAA Regionals this weekend.

The Leopards started off strong in the tournament with a win over the Redlands Bulldogs, 4-3, on May 8 at Ben Hines Field, in front of over 150 fans from each team. On the mound, senior pitcher Matthew DesMarets was a key factor in the early lead to this game as well.

"My last start against them wasn't too good so I was pretty much just trying to be controlled, not move too fast, and just be with myself," DesMarets said.

Sophomore pitcher Justin Ries also came in for 2.1 innings of relief and took care of business earning his fourth save.

The Leopards were able to smoothly hand off that lead to the new pitcher stepping in.

"I knew my name was going to be called early, so I had to prepare myself to stay mentally tough." Ries said. "Just trying to win it and keep going trying to get to the next game… and become tournament champions." Ries said.

The Leopards' goal was to jump on Redlands early in the game to get them fired up and rolling fast.

"Our mindset was to come in and be aggressive and we did that and we got the lead," head coach Scott Winterburn said.

"Our pitchers hung in there and we were able to hand the lead off to Justin Ries and Ries did a great job for us. As you saw, he closed out the game for us. We felt like our pitching would give us a chance to win late if we could give him a lead, and that's exactly what happened."

Senior first baseman Noah Garcia credits good communication for the team's success.

"Just having consistency with our offense the whole time and each picking each other up and being for the guy after or before him." Garcia said. "We just need to be talking to each other about what we are trying to do and what's going on in the game and not being silent and just sitting there. So we can share what we learned."

Redlands made a late push and hit a home run in the eighth inning but came up short, 4-3. The Leopards followed on Friday with a dramatic walk off win against Claremont-Mudd-Scripps, 11-10, in 11 innings. La Verne will host the NCAA Regionals this weekend at Ben Hines Field, with Whitworth, McMurry and Pomona-Pitzer. The Leopards open up Regional play with Whitworth at 1:30 p.m. on Friday.

CC Flaherty can be reached at ***catherine.flaherty@laverne.edu.***