Campus Times

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Baha'i lecture shares power of youth

Cassidy Diaz
Assistant Editor

In the annual Baha'i Pathways to Peace lecture series, speaker Erica Toussaint highlighted the impact and power of the youth to create a better world both civilly and spiritually.

The lecture took place at noon on April 9 in the Campus Center Ballroom and an audience of roughly 40 attended.

Baha'i community members are committed advocates for the promise of a world of peace, and they have developed strategies to encourage peace through the values of oneness, unity, harmony, justice and the nobility of humanity.

"The Baha'i are working towards the first step to bring unity into the world together but unity is rather complicated," Toussaint said. "We now have enough experience that I can say without youth we are really going to struggle for humanity to move forward."

The Baha'i community also believe that the youth aren't the future, but think of them as the now.

Through education, volunteering and contributions the youth are already creating social change.

"From the Baha'i perspective we're talking about the practical application of spiritual principles in your everyday lives," Toussaint said. "In the Baha'i teachings faith is defined as first, conscious knowledge and second the practice of good deeds."

By doing these good deeds, Baha'i implements these principles into their everyday lives of teachings of the Baha'i faith. Their concepts involve a collective of consultation, collaboration, mutual assistance and support is one of those huge pathways to peace the Baha'i believe in.

"Your generation is really drawn to learning how to be collective and to have a normal posture of learning and how to appreciate the diversity amongst you in your thoughts, views, cultural and backgrounds," Toussaint said.

Toussaint also spoke about how Baha'i can be incorporated into education and mentoring the youth by walking through a pathway together.

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Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

The student-run grassroots organization Lordsburg Liberation urges the University to reform its inadequate ICE policy in response to escalating aggression of immigration enforcement in the surrounding areas. While an active policy exists, its lack of detail, absence of community input, and lack of alternative solutions leave campus community members vulnerable. Despite the university's public forums, more questions remain regarding procedures for when ICE is on campus.

With Trump's inauguration and his subsequent reinvigoration of immigration control strategies, the university has not taken sufficient enough action to establish itself as a true safe haven for mixed-status students and students of color. As it stands, the protocol is a superficial four-step process ("calm, report, inform, and follow protocol") that fails to be broadcasted, account for commuters, or provide mandatory training for students, faculty, and staff. A full Q&A overview can be viewed on the university website.

As a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), there are deeper expectations for the university to stand by its students by all means. The "Know Your Rights" trainings we host are appreciated, but not enough. The campus must be more effortful as we are located next to heavily ICE patrolled areas including Pomona, Montclair, Claremont, Glendora, and Upland.

Lordsburg Liberation created a petition as an outcry from students, its list of demands go as such:

1) We demand there is rejection of any and all collaboration between the University of La Verne and immigration enforcement agencies, even on third party platforms such as Handshake. We expect the university to publicly condemn immigration enforcement presence on campus.

2) We demand that the administration be effortful in solidifying a stronger school safety protocol that is widely disseminated to students and faculty through active initiatives such as drills, workshops, public forums for community discussion, and trainings. While there is a current protocol in place due to California Senate Bill 98 (the SAFE Act), there is little campus knowledge on the safety rules.

3) We demand that there be flexible learning alternatives when immigration enforcement is detected on campus or within the surrounding area. This entails remote class options being offered for individuals who feel as though the campus is unsafe. Furthermore, the university should dedicate necessary time and resources to support these educational adaptations with no academic penalties."

Our organization invites the university to review these demands and take tangible action to protect its students.

Lordsburg Liberation

Dear Editor,

For the past five years, teaching at the University of La Verne has been incredibly rich in professional developments and personal fulfillment. My students are inspiring, my colleagues are collaborative, and my supervisors are supportive. The ULV community at large has proved to be welcoming and encouraging.

Simply put, this university is an institution where I can envision myself happily working for the duration of my career. Or at least it was.

As an adjunct instructor, I've grown weary of being poorly compensated for my labor in a fashion that fails to honor my credentials.

When I started working at ULV, adjuncts had just been shifted from semester contracts to hourly wages. I did not understand then that under this arrangement I was being paid significantly less per class when compared to part-time faculty at other similarly sized private institutions. Yet I quickly felt the frustration of teaching within a system that only allows a certain allotment of billable hours per class that never seems sufficient for the kind of instruction I strive to provide – personally tailored, highly engaging, and socially compelling. Each semester, administration delivers a mixed message: bill the time you work, but don't exceed this kneejerk estimation of needed instructional hours. This often results in a wealth of unpaid work each academic term when I am forced to choose between shortchanging my students or myself.

Last summer, these frustrations with my compensation as a part-time instructor were compounded when ULV shifted to live clock ins and outs. Wounded professionalism aside, this additional stipulation isn't pragmatic for instructors. Teaching is an artform that isn't easily quantifiable. Instruction is an ongoing focus and preoccupation that rarely pauses during the flow of the semester. It does not march to the beat of a timeclock and resists clearcut categorizations. How do you log hours for your dream about lesson planning or that realization you had about a student situation while walking your dog or cooking dinner? Which current class code do you bill when writing letters of recommendation for past students?

Unfortunately, the last straw for me is the fact that starting next semester contingent faculty's billable hours at ULV will be belatedly based on a sliding scale tied to student enrollment in their courses. This means that an already vulnerable population will now have to shoulder an extra layer of economic precarity, uncertain of the actual amount they will be paid per class until after the semester is already underway.

Sadly, this is a bridge too far for me. I think my efforts as an instructor are worth more, that I deserve far better working conditions. I firmly believe that we all do. Yet as an institution, when it comes to paying adjunct faculty ULV continues to move in the wrong direction.

Administration has expressed their desire to eventually move adjuncts back to contract pay. And I sincerely want to believe them. But the communicated target date for this promised shift keeps evaporating further into the future while adjuncts continue to struggle in the present. Without subsequent action, honeyed words still ring hollow. The proof is in the pudding.

To my fellow adjuncts who remain at ULV, continue to push for positive change. Full-time faculty, continue to support your contingent colleagues by advocating for improvements to part-time pay. And administrators – please work toward a swifter resolution that lives up to the university's core value of ethical reasoning.

Hopefully adjunct instructors at ULV will soon enjoy better working conditions. Perhaps I'll have the opportunity to return and work under these improved conditions.

Brock Rustin
Adjunct Instructor,
Writing Program

On the Cover

Drag queen Disco Dollie performs Monday night in the Campus Center Ballroom during "Call It Queen," a Campus Activities Board pride event. She was one of two drag performers at the event. / photo by Mia Byington

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If you find a mistake in the Campus Times, please let us know at **ctimes@laverne.edu**.

Letters to the Editor

The Campus Times encourages readers to submit letters to the editors regarding topics covered in the paper. Letters should be no more than 400 words in length and are due by Tuesday at 3 p.m. The Campus Times reserves the right to edit letters for clarity, space and libel. Letters may be sent to **ctimes@laverne.edu**.

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Lavatori reflects on 34-year career

Marina Bravo
Arts Editor

After 34 years at the University of La Verne, Gerard Lavatori, professor of French and associate dean for the College of Arts and Sciences, is retiring in May.

At noon on Tuesday, Lavatori delivered his last lecture in La Fetra lecture hall, titled "What I Learned While Teaching."

Lavatori reflected on a long-time career as an educator and as an educator at ULV.

The College's Associate Dean Ngoc Bui introduced Lavatori to the audience of about 30 students and colleagues who attended in person and via Zoom.

"Gerard has been a supportive colleague to me and to many," Bui said. "He has been an engaged faculty member and an inspired mentor to many students. He was also a good friend to anyone who had known him."

Lavatori shared that this title came from the quote, "Docendo Discimus" Seneca (4BC - 65 AD), that he connected with and still has remained connected to.

"By teaching we learn," Lavatori said. "I always told students, or tell students that they have three teachers. I'm one of them, but also the book and ourselves."

Lavatori took us to the very beginning of his career when he was a student studying French at Boston College. He shared that his parents let him study abroad his junior year in Paris.

As an educator his first job was at Louisiana State University where he taught both French I and II, and Intermediate French.

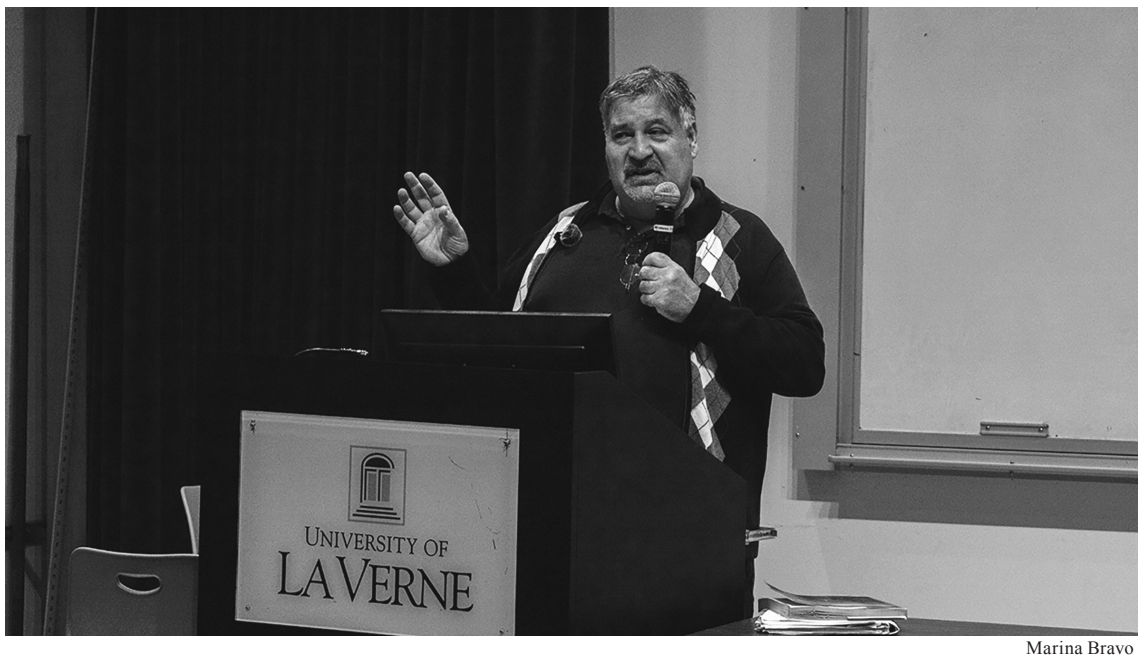
His career then took him to Washington State University where he taught French I and II, Graduate Seminar in French and Renaissance Prose.

These experiences then led him to becoming a Leopard in 1991. The time he spent here at the University was fundamental to himself, each student and colleague. He reflected on teaching his first ever January Term, which was something he had never done before coming to La Verne.

"I really got to innovate a lot," Lavatori said. "I had people doing dramatic readings. We read 'Dangerous Liaisons,' which is a novel composed of letters. I had my students write letters that were left out of the novel that would change history. One of my students, who later became my colleague, I'll never forget his letter."

Alongside his long career as a professor, he also reflected on his research he uncovered throughout his career.

Lavatori also shared other creatives that inspired him in his studies. He shared some of their works that he found through his research that impacted him.



Marina Bravo

Gerard Lavatori, professor of French and associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, delivers his last lecture Tuesday in La Fetra Lecture Hall. Lavatori reflected on his professional career, memories with colleagues and students and his experience with his research.

Senegalese film director Ousmane Sembène and Belgian novelist Amélie Nothomb were two people that he highlighted in his presentation.

Something Lavatori also prided himself in was his opportunity of taking his classes to Study Abroad during Jan Term. He highlighted the experiences as being one of a kind. He shared photos and memories he made this year in January 2026.

Not only was this experience unique to him but also for his students.

"My experience studying abroad was life changing," Vicente Martin Rodriguez, senior photography major, said. "Having Gerard as my professor for the class made the experience better. He was helpful with suggesting places to go and see. He always wanted us to get the most out of our experience."

"He was a great person to chat with and rely on while I was there," Rodriguez said.

Lavatori had a long and decorated career full of experiences. Now with retirement the next question is: What is next for Lavatori?

"I haven't really thought too far ahead," Lavatori said. "I am going to take a step back from a lot of things but I may teach part-time. I will definitely continue to read and maybe do some writing. I'd love to travel some more, we will see."

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Faculty grapples with AI's increasing ubiquity

Anisa Salazar
Senior Editor

Artificial intelligence, with its rapid development and increasingly easy access the past few years, has crept into the college classroom, causing many within and outside of education to question what this may mean for the future.

Many professors at the University of La Verne have adjusted their curriculum and assignments with the goal of upholding academic integrity by limiting students' AI use. Though at this point, some say, it is difficult to know whether AI overall may support and enhance learning, or harm it. They worry about how it has begun to change education as a whole.

"If we let AI do our writing, we're really in a way letting it take what's most human about us," said Jason Neidleman, professor of political science.

Although professors from different disciplines have different opinions on how AI should or shouldn't be used in the classroom, something they all agree on is that using AI has increasingly limited students' critical thinking and creativity, which are essential in higher education.

Sean Bernard, professor of creative writing, gives all readings and their written responses in class. He said he gives more creative activity assignments, so students don't feel pressured to resort to AI to receive a good grade. For example, he will give them two paintings, and students are required to imagine a novel based on those paintings.

He said he has shifted focus to less popular texts for online and lower-level classes where students aren't all creative writing majors, but instead taking the class to fulfill their general education requirements.

"The whole thing that I'm trying to teach is exercising the creative muscle of our brains," Bernard said. "Using AI is a shortcut around that."

Neidleman, similarly, has made his classrooms AI- and technology-free, with the hope of being able to get a sense of his students' personalities, who they are and how they express themselves.

"The human being is reflected in their writing style," Neidleman said. "And you don't get to know the person unless you can see their actual writing. This is about guarding what makes us human against the incursions of the machines."

Faculty in the College of Business have similar views when it comes to writing papers and analyses, such as case studies. But some differ when it comes to brainstorming ideas and using AI as a source for information.

Omid Furutan, professor of management, said he has made changes so that most of his assignments are now oral or have a presentation element, so students must defend what is written. As long as his students understand the content, can defend what they are saying and can expand on it, the possible usage of AI would be okay, Furutan said.

"The best strategy is to help them understand … what is the best way to use (AI)," Furutan said. "It is here to stay, it is not going to go away."

He allows students to generate ideas and ask AI various questions, such as whether there are holes in their analysis of a case study. Furutan believes this shows him they are researching existing information and better informing their analysis.

Rick Hasse, instructor of accounting and finance, also sees AI as a tool when it comes to learning and research. But he has also observed that more students are lacking skills in writing and critical thinking because of their increasing dependency on AI.

"My issue with AI is that it creates laziness in the mind," Hasse said. "I don't mind the sophistication of technology, but it makes people lazy."

Hasse said he believes that students' learning is not based on AI as a tool, but on how they interpret the data the tool is giving them. He questions whether we will be able to apply these tools for good as AI continues to develop and become more sophisticated.

Overreliance on AI is a concern across disciplines.

Faculty across the University are concerned that it will prevent students from acquiring the skills they need to be successful in careers after graduation.

With a lack of AI policy or regulation, faculty here are rushing to adjust and adapt to its ubiquity to maintain the integrity of the college education.

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Baha'i...

Continued from page 2

"Mentoring happens because one person is one step further down the path, and they're not going to lecture you about it," Toussaint said. "They're going to accompany you as you're ready to take the next step."

Dane Sawyer, instructor of philosophy and religious studies, who emceed and organized the lecture series incorporated his course of Honors Colloquium II. The course focuses on strengthening the community through acts of service.

"There is a lot of pain and suffering, but there's ways in which we can heal it and we can support it," Sawyer said. "It's not about making the world better, it's not about making the world perfect but to have some kind of goal, which is oneness or unity."

Sawyer's students have the opportunity to volunteer with the Baha'i community to engage in elevated and spiritual discussions. These conversations help remove prejudice and bias in society.

"Our volunteering is going to events held by the Baha'i and just putting yourself in this community that you're most likely not I know I'm not so familiar with," Vivian Orozco, sophomore criminology major said. "We're all putting ourselves in each other's shoes and teaching each other things and not being a one-sided conversation."

Orozco is currently volunteering with the Baha'i Faith and exploring what it really entails and hearing the experiences of those who spent their whole life in the Baha'i faith.

"I really enjoyed just the approach to change and not suffocating the youth from making the changes that we may not think that they're old enough to make yet," Hannah Palpant, senior director of advancement services and strategies, said.

Palpant expressed that the teachings and the Baha'i frameworks have allowed her to implement them into her community and job here at the University.

"Alongside walking with people who may be different from us and learning from them and creating change together," Palpant said.

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New fire chief is seasoned veteran

Cassidy Diaz
Assistant Editor



Ronald Banks

New La Verne Fire Chief Brandon Coatney took over the position Feb. 2. Coatney brings more than 30 years of experience in fire and emergency medical services. He was the department's deputy chief for four years prior to taking the new position.

The La Verne Fire Department has a new chief. Brandon Coatney, a seasoned fire fighter of 30 years, took the helm on Jan. 8.

Coatney had been the department's deputy chief for four years prior to taking the top job here. And he served the city of San Bernardino for 18 years previously, where he climbing the ranks from paramedic to engineer to fire captain.

He also served as a captain and battalion chief in Fullerton.

Coatney, who grew up in Rialto, said he began to consider a career in fire fighting after a high school career day. Seeing the fire engine and speaking with Rialto fire fighters piqued his interest, he said.

"One of the biggest things when I looked at careers is I always liked having complex problems to work on where you work in a team," Coatney said. "I think that's what drew me to the fire services."

As a teen growing up in Rialto, he got involved with the Fire Explorer program, which gives young people early training in what's involved in fire fighting, starting at age 15.

He always knew he wanted a hands-on career, he said.

"I really liked working with my hands and for all intents and purposes, that was kind of what I wanted to do was be a mechanic or drive or operate heavy equipment," Coatney said.

After enrolling in Crafton Hills College in Yucaipa, he entered into the fire academy where he took fire and EMT classes.

Shortly after Coatney went to work for a private ambulance company and later got hired as an apprentice firefighter in the city of Brea.

Coatney said his career choices have been guided by his commitment to his family.

"My number one thing is that I make them proud," he said. "The things that I do, it takes a special family to do this job because of the amount of time that you spend away."

Coatney, who has been married for 27 years, has two adult children, who have followed his lead. His daughter is an ICU nurse and his son is a firefighter and paramedic.

"We're all really close and their successes, I mean, overshadow me," Coatney said. "Becoming the fire chief here was a big thing, but I'm still more proud of the accomplishments of my family than for me."

Coatney worked closely with former La Verne Fire Chief Chris Nigg, with whom he'd previously worked at the Fullerton Fire Department.

"I was so proud of all the work he had done here, and when the (deputy) spot opened up, I was like man that'd be really cool to come and work with someone I've grown up with in the fire department," Coatney said.

"One of the other things that drew me here is quite frankly my son works here as an ambulance operator here and it was an opportunity for me to work with him for my last few years," Coatney said.

Taking on this new leadership role Coatney shared the excitement he has for leading the fire department alongside everyone who works there.

"He blends well the idea of managing the business of the fire department (while) also still being a firefighter," said Jennifer Brown, the La Verne Fire Department's senior management analyst. "It's great because he has a lot of knowledge in both of those worlds."

Brown reports directly to Coatney and handles the department's budgets and training services.

"He makes sure that we manage our time well but still have that work-life balance, which is nice," Brown said.

"He's well-versed, he's educated, he knows what he's talking about and is very supportive of the different departments," said Fire Marshal Fred St. Ange.

"A leader like him, you see him supporting the entire city Fire Department, along with the city … It's pretty awesome."

Coatney, who has a few years left before retiring, said he hopes to leave the Department better than he found it.

"This place was already in a great position," Coatney said. "No matter what challenges we face (the hope) is that we come out of the other side in the best way possible," Coatney said.

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Gas prices likely to stay high until Iran war ends

Olivia Russo
Editor-in-Chief

University of La Verne students are feeling the crunch of paying about $20 extra to refill their gas tanks.

Most commuter students are spending more on gas than they ever had before.

"I think I paid almost $80 to fill my tank and it wasn't even close to empty," Valleria Estrella, sophomore psychology major, said. "At least I'm building my credit score. That's the only plus."

California is currently the state with the highest gas prices across the country.

Prices have slowly declined in the past few weeks. But according to Kandance Redd, spokeswoman for the American Automobile Association in Los Angeles, the prices have dropped by just 5 cents in the last month. This slight decline comes after President Donald Trump's announcement of a ceasefire in the Iran war, which he started in February.

The conflict is what sent gas prices surging in the first place, with Iran closing the Strait of Hormuz disrupting the global trade.

Jason Niedleman, professor of political science, compared Trump's plan in Iran to what he had expected from Venezuela earlier this year. Trump thought killing Iran's leader would result in a swift regime change that would favor American interests.

"So when that didn't work, he didn't really have anywhere to go," Niedleman said. "That explains why the U.S. wanted this ceasefire because it was costing us a lot and we weren't gaining anything. We never were really going to gain anything."

Currently, the Strait of Hormuz is still closed and until it is opened, people can expect the gas prices to stay inflated.

"It's a global commodity," Niedleman said. "If the price of gas goes up in one part of the world, it goes up everywhere in the world."

Eighty percent of the gas that comes through the strait goes to Asia, so even though the United States does not rely on Iran for their export of gas, the prices will still climb because it is needed by the entire world.

Now, according to Redd, the national average price for gas is $4.1. The average has not been more than $4 since August of 2022. California's average is currently $5.88, so drivers are paying $1.77 more per gallon than the national average.

Today's price is just shy of $1 more than drivers were paying at this time last year, Redd said

"We know that gas prices are slightly decreasing," Redd said. "That's because oil prices dropped after the announcement of the ceasefire, which did help ease some of the pressure in the market. But gas prices typically follow crude oil costs, and it is really the biggest factor in what we pay at the pump."

Redd explained that for every $1 drop in crude oil prices, there is usually about a two cent decrease in gas prices.

Gas prices also increase in California in the spring and summer months, because people are outside and traveling. Additionally, there is a seasonal shift, when the state goes from a winter blend to a summer blend that can meet the different environmental needs of the hot weather.

There is not a clear answer as to when the prices will start to go back down to the prices that drivers are used to paying.

"It really just depends on how long this conflict in Iran continues," Redd said. "And you have to keep in mind about the seasonal factors as well. Here in California, drivers end up paying the most for gas compared to any other state."

According to the Lundeberg Survey, an independent market research company that offers coverage on gas prices, even if these oil prices decrease, it is likely that the gas prices will remain relatively high. The wholesale gasoline prices have cut retailers by 20 cents a gallon, so these places will be forced to spike their prices if they want to stay open.

For those looking to cut costs on their gas, Redd has some suggestions including looking into discounts for gas, because often places like grocery stories will offer discount programs. She also advises to keep track of the regular services and fixing issues when they arise.

"Remember that bad driving is not just unsafe, it is expensive," Redd said. "That means really just drive smarter…just do your best to plan ahead, especially if you are looking into doing a road trip."

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Winternationals return to Pomona

Clockwise from top: Chad Green from the Bond-Coat team races in the funny car competition at the NHRA Winternationals on Saturday at the In-N-Out Burger Pomona Dragstrip. Green beat Paul Lee in the opening round but lost to Jordan Vandergriff in the quarterfinals.

Funny car racer Alexis DeJoria from the Bandero Cafe team beats Bluebird Turf's Dave Richards in the opening round of Saturday's races. DeJoria later lost to Ron Capps from NAPA Auto Parts in the quarterfinals.

Crowds make their way to the grandstands at the NHRA Winternationals on Friday. Besides the races, fans could eat, visit vendors, see cars on display and get a chance to meet their favorite drivers.

Flames erupt from the engine of Tony Stewart's R+L Carriers top fuel dragster at the NHRA Winternationals on Saturday. Stewart went on to beat Justin Ashley in the top fuel finals on Sunday.

NHRA technicians repair the track so that racers can race on it again safely, smoothly and successfully on Saturday.

Crew members from the John Force Race Team work on one of the team's top fuel dragsters before a qualifying race on Friday.

photography by
Joseph Nocero















Dustin Cowen, who works on cylinder heads for the Mac Tools Team, helps driver Doug Kalitta prepare for his race Saturday.



Josh Hart and Shawn Reed face off at the starting line during Saturday's action of the NHRA Winternationals at the In-N-Out Burger Pomona Dragstrip at the Fairplex.

Botanic Garden opens kids play area

Anisa Salazar
Senior Editor

The California Botanic Garden in Claremont hosted the grand opening of its Children's Woodland on April 10 and 11. This new space is now dedicated to giving children the opportunity to explore their connection to nature in a native habitat while engaging in safe, imaginative play.

The woodland is free to access with a garden admission ticket. Those who attended the grand opening were able to enjoy free play in the Woodland, face painting, storytelling, crafts, guided walks and more.

"We're hoping this space will serve as sort of an entry into joy, discovery and curiosity in nature for kids all around this area," Lauren Stobel, assistant director of visitor engagement, said. "It's designed to be pretty flexible and open-ended, so kids can come into the woodland space and discover how they want to play or lie in the hammocks and look up into the tree canopy… it's a place of discovery and curiosity."

When first entering the woodland area, the first booth available to visit was face painting. There was a variety of floral and animal designs that the kids could choose from. It was pay what you can, which allowed all the kids to feel included and join in on the fun.

One of the children who enjoyed the grand opening was Ophelia Mattox. She said that she is excited to come back and play in the Woodland more.

"My favorite is the face painting," Mattox said. "I'm coloring a squirrel right now and leaves, and the butterflies."

Throughout the woodland, there are hammocks, benches and picnic tables for families to relax. As well as a circle of senses, which gives children the opportunity to learn how to identify plants by name, sight, touch and smell through the signs posted within the circle.

Mattox's mother, Catherine Mattox, appreciates the freedom that this new space gives her children without having to worry about them disrupting the native ecosystem.

"We come here and want to be up against nature and walking around, but a lot of times I'm saying, 'Oh, don't touch that,' or 'Don't go in there,' so it's nice to have an open space where they can literally do whatever they want," Catherine Mattox said. "I think it's a great place to come and spend our days and just let them experience nature."

For children who like to build, there is a section where they can build their own woodland home. Provided with different animal home examples such as birds, squirrels and spiders, the children are free to use balance logs, stumps and sticks.

The more relaxing activities include a book bin and a small rock fountain for climbing and water play.

Unlike the rest of the garden, in the woodland, children are encouraged to respectfully and safely explore wherever they would like. This allows them to form a connection to native ecosystems, which Stobel said is important for the kids' personal development and curiosity.

"I think it's great that it keeps them off of screen time," mother and visitor of the grand opening Scarlet Huang said. "I can see that for a seven or eight-year-old, screen time is going to be most of their education and life, so I keep it outdoors as much as I can."

In honor of the new Children's Woodland, the garden also has a youth community art exhibit that features art by local kids between two and 18 years old. "Joy in the Garden: A Celebration of Play, Adventure, and Native Plants" has over 100 pieces that are inspired by the garden and native plant life. It will be open to visit until June 30 during regular Garden hours.

The Children's Woodland is now open to visit.

Current hours are from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday at the California Botanic Garden.

Hours change seasonally. For more information, visit **calbg.org**.

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Career Expo offers job opportunities

Kalayah Frazier
Staff Writer

The first Career, Community and Internship Expo hosted by the Academic and Career Services Office, College of Business, history and political science department and Office of Civic and Community Engagement was held Wednesday at Sneaky Park.

The event included internship opportunities with tables of different businesses around the Pomona area such as Pomona Valley Pride, Tri City Mental Health and Pomona Hope.

About 60 guests attended the event.

Guests got to enjoy refreshments alongside taco restaurant catering called Ask 4 Tacos.

Multiple organizations attended with active hiring needs.

Pomona Valley Pride employee Adrianna Lopez talked about the goal of the business, which is to keep people that are a part of the LGBTQ+ community safe. This is done by providing support services in the program.

"We serve the LGBTQ community and allies in the Pomona Valley area," Lopez said. "We offer different resources like therapy, for example. We also host community pop ups where we give out free clothes and harm reduction materials. The only thing that we require when you apply is to have experience working with people beforehand."

"We provide behavioral and mental health services to the cities of Pomona, La Verne and Claremont," Tri-City Mental Health employee Michelle Robinson said. "We're advertising some of our volunteer programs today, which is our peer mentor program that students can get involved with and or our service learner program."

Pomona Hope employee Shantee McKella shared that their business helps multiple communities by offering workshops for students to attend and possibly lead.

"Whether it be your area of study, or just an area that you're personally passionate about, you can lead a workshop on it," McKella said. "We also have federal work study opportunities where you can actually be compensated to come in and be a workshop leader."

Junior political science major Rania Kartouch thought this was a great event that really helped her think about her future opportunities that are there for her.

"I do think that most of the recruits that they send out here are advertising their internships or their jobs or things like that," Kartouch said. "They're really genuine about it."

Kalayah Frazier can be reached at ***kalayah.frazier@laverne.edu.***

Students enjoy drag performances



Mia Byington

Drag queen Godoy strikes a pose Monday night in the Campus Center Ballroom during "Call It Queen," a Campus Activities Board pride event. She was the second drag queen to perform at the event.

Aniyha Williams
Staff Writer

The Campus Activities Board hosted "Call It Queen," a drag queen bingo event Monday in the Abraham Campus Center.

About 30 people attended the event, which featured Lip Sync performances by drag queens Disco Dollie and Godoy, who was featured on the Netflix show "Next in Fashion."

The event was in honor of Gaypril, when the University celebrates the LGBTQ+ community. June is Pride Month.

Tables were decorated with rainbow flags, and mocktails were served to bingo players.

"I really enjoyed the (drag) performance," said Robert Saxton, freshman business major.

Aniyha Williams can be reached at ***aniyha.williams@laverne.edu.***



Mia Byington

Sophomore English major Savanna Castillo and sophomore psychology major Katalina Martin get a visit from drag queen Disco Dollie during her performance Monday night in the Campus Center Ballroom during "Call It Queen," a Campus Activities Board pride event. About 30 people attended the event.

Happenings

Poetry Reading

The creative writing program will present a poetry reading from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. April 22 in the Ludwick Center Sacred Space.

Jennifer Espinoza, finalist of the 2025 Lambda Literary Award for Transgender Poetry and the 2026 Kingsley Tufts Poetry Awards, along with La Verne poetry students, will read their work.

Lavernapalooza

Lavernapalooza, the annual concert event, will be held at 7:30 p.m. May 7 at the Fox Theater in Pomona. One of this year's headliners is Latin EDM DJ, BOLO.

Other performers are to be announced by the Campus Activities Board.

Tickets are free for undergraduate students only. For others, it is $44.

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

Unity Through Rhythm

The University of La Verne music department will present Unity Through Rhythm at 3 p.m. May 18 in Morgan Auditorium. This will be the finale for the Sundays at the Morgan music series.

It will feature music from Igaba, Ron Powell, Nat Scott, Cory Hogan and Homero Chavez.

Suggested donation is $20.

For more information email **music@laverne.edu**.

'Fired in Revolution'

The American Museum of Ceramic Art is showing "Fired in Revolution: Ceramics from the People's Republic of China." The exhibit features ceramic art including molded figures, vessels, wall hangings, posters, molds, and sculptures. It is curated by Jamie Kwan and Cooper Hewitt. The show runs through May 3.

For more information, visit **amoca.org/current-exhibits/fired_in_revolution.**

—Cassidy Diaz

Ceramics showcase

Social issues

by Lila Gongora

photgraphy by Jasmine Lyn



Yoon Hwang is one of the artists-in-residence featured in the "AIR 2026: Compulsion" exhibit at the American Museum of Ceramic Art in Pomona. Hwang uses traditional ceramics techniques to combine both western and eastern art to create works that are reminiscent of nature and ancient art. The exhibit will run through May 31.

The "AIR 2026: Compulsion" exhibit at the American Museum of Ceramic Art in Pomona features work by artists Maxwell Henderson, Yoon Hwang, Bianca MacPherson, and Kristy Moreno made during their time in residency at AMOCA. The exhibit serves as a commentary on various societal issues through colorful vessels and intricate textures.

All four artists spent a series of months at AMOCA where they worked on their pieces.

Henderson serves as the AMOCA Ceramics Studio manager and MacPherson and Moreno remain in residency offering artist workshops. Hwang is currently renting out a studio here, while his work remains on display in the exhibit.

"This is what I do, I have to do this," Hwang said. "Clay is fun because it feels natural to me since it's from the Earth, it's what we're from and will come back to."

Hwang uses a playful style in his ceramics, composed of abstract colors and textures. He includes human elements in his ceramics like big eyes or tongues sticking out of mouths that he says has a lot to do with his son and being able to create something with elements he can easily identify then interpret like an eye or mouth. Coming from a Korean household, Hwang combines forms of western and eastern ideals when creating art as a necessary part of his life.

Hana Hunter, a senior at Pomona College, attended the exhibit and explained that she is taking a ceramics class currently. She enjoys pieces that reflect parts of human characteristics.

"I've really enjoyed making things with my hands," Hunter said. "I really like the pieces that look like faces, I love the big beady eyes in 'Toon Omni' by Hwang."

Moreno portrays a unique vision for future women of color through statue-like figures often dressed in crop tops, bold makeup and holding spray paint bottles. Her work conveys reimagined future ancestors heavily influenced by her own previous illustrative work and her upbringing in the Los Angeles and Orange County areas, which she was submerged in Chicanx culture that she adapted from her own aunts and uncles.

She stresses the importance of having a Latinx community filled with people who are emotionally well, especially in sisterhood for women, and friendships for all people in her art.

"I think it's important to keep touching base on that heritage, that culture, and background to have people understand where I come from and what our community has gone through," Moreno said.

Both Hwang and Moreno started their journey in ceramics about ten years ago when a professor from each of their institutions presented them with an opportunity to hone in on their skills in ceramics.

MacPherson has a background in photography and works with archival materials that reflect the American, specifically Los Angeles, landscape. Her work consists of lots of mirroring with a mixture of glazes and how they function in the lives of women and people of color; by setting them in clay they become undeniable.

For this exhibit, MacPherson conducted research with the Miriam Matthew Photograph Collection drawn to the partially recorded lives of Black and mixed-race families. This inspired her pieces with a feeling of obligation to tell these people's stories. The pieces by Henderson display a wheel spun contradiction of dark and bright colors displaying structured societal systems through vessels and an unpredictable visible movement and push back of the glaze or "goop." The glaze that spills over their proper position exemplifies joy in deviating from normalities.

One piece portrays a large roughly textured vessel with colorful melted glaze around it. Here, a structure is present as the glaze adds life to the piece, representing playfulness and a part of oneself that desires abnormality.

The exhibit runs through May 31, with an artist panel happening on May 1.

Artists MacPherson and Moreno offer artist workshops at AMOCA.

The museum is open from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Friday to Sunday.

*Lila Gongora can be reached at **lila.gongora@laverne.edu.***

Softball secures conference victory

Daniel Franklin
Staff Writer



Baljot Rathor

La Verne senior right fielder Annica Luna scores in the bottom of the seventh inning to give the Leopards a walk-off victory over Cal Lutheran on April 10 at Campus West. Luna's run secured a 2-1 victory, and the Leopards then split a doubleheader with the Regals at Thousand Oaks on Saturday. Their next conference clash is against Chapman at 3 p.m. on Friday in Orange.

The Leopards, in a mid-season conference clash, defeated Cal Lutheran, 2-1, at Campus West on April 10. The team also had a doubleheader the next day against the Regals in Thousand Oaks, winning game one, 6-3, and falling short, 9-4, in the final game.

La Verne sophomore third baseman Janelle Vega hit a walkoff single to win the Friday game while sophomore pitcher Briana Vasquez recorded her sixth complete game and seventh win of the season.

"I think the win shows the fight this team has," Angelina Ratzlaff, freshman second baseman, said."It definitely sparked some momentum for us to come out the next day and take the series."

The Leopards came out hot, scoring early in the first inning. Junior center fielder Allie Colenzo started off the game with a single, stole second base and advanced on a groundout to the pitcher.

La Verne junior shortstop Brooke Petretti then grounded out to first base, and Colenzo rushed home to score the game's first run."My mindset going into this game was to know what my team needed from me and to get that job done," Colenzo said. "I also knew that this was a series that we could take, so I had confidence in my team."

In the top of the sixth, the Regals hit a single and a double to tie the game at 1-1, setting the stage for the Leopards in the seventh.

The Leopards were given some help for their rally, as senior right fielder Annica Luna was hit by the pitch and Ratzlaff reached base on an error.

"Our mindset going into the game was to come out ready to play our game and to make intentional adjustments throughout the game, which we did," Allison Gutierrez, freshman designated player, said. "We carried this mindset going into the rest of the series on Saturday and it got us the series win."

Junior pinch hitter Mikayla Galaviz executed a perfect sacrifice bunt to move both runners in scoring position.

Then, with the shortstop and second baseman shifting to the right and left, Vega was able to hit a grounder up the middle and beat out the throw to lift the Leopards to their sixth Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference win.

"Every game we are getting closer to each other and bonding," junior first baseman Kileah Lologo said. "You can see it when we play on the field. We all play knowing we can trust one another to pass the bat and perform."

La Verne junior left fielder Kylee Knight, Ratzlaff, Vega and Colenzo combined for the four singles the Leopards needed for the win. Vasquez was excellent in the circle. She continued her strong campaign by tossing seven innings with three punchouts, while allowing just one run on three hits.

La Verne now has an overall record of 13-18, and 7-5 in SCIAC. The Leopards are currently third in the conference behind Chapman in second and Redlands in first place.

The Leopards will have another conference clash series against Chapman this weekend, the first game is at 3 p.m. on Friday in Orange, followed by a senior day doubleheader at noon Saturday at Campus West.

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LEOPARD SCOREBOARD

AT THE BUZZER

Women's Water Polo
La Verne – 10
Cal Lutheran – 25

Softball, April 11
La Verne – 6
Cal Lutheran – 3

Softball, April 11
La Verne – 4
Cal Lutheran – 9

Baseball, April 11
La Verne – 10
Cal Lutheran – 6

Baseball, April 11
La Verne – 13
Cal Lutheran – 5

SCHEDULE

Friday
Softball @ Chapman, 3 p.m.
Baseball @ Occidental, 3 p.m.

Saturday
Baseball vs. Occidental, 11 a.m.
Softball vs. Chapman, noon
Baseball vs. Occidental, 2 p.m.
Softball vs. Chapman, 2 p.m.

BASEBALL STANDINGS

	SCIAC	Overall
Claremont-Mudd-Scripps	12-6	22-8
Redlands	12-6	18-15
Cal Lutheran	9-6	21-10
La Verne	**9-6**	**17-12-1**
Pomona-Pitzer	9-6	19-11
Chapman	8-7	18-13
Occidental	6-9	18-13
Whittier	6-12	13-18
Caltech	1-14	4-27