



# La Nueva Voz

The New Voice, a Bilingual (English/Spanish) Publication  
Pomona's *only* community newspaper!



Pomona Chamber of Commerce



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GRATIS

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## New non-profit 'Project Resilience,' elected officials join forces against human trafficking and sex workers

Nearly 100 supporters turned out this month – inside a small church in Pomona when an outside event was moved indoors due to rain – all to observe Human Trafficking Awareness Month throughout January and to continue a grass roots effort to get young women and men off the street and rid Pomona of human trafficking and sex workers.

Organizers were members of the 10-month-old non-profit group Project Resilience, whose “visionary” was Stephanie Sepeda, a member of Pomona’s Total Restoration Ministries.

The group is using its “Unity in Community” theme to help stop human trafficking.

Participants included Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval, Vice Mayor Elizabeth Ontiveros-Cole, and State Sen. Susan Rubio.

“I’m here to be a partner,” Rubio said. “That is my mission... getting people help. I will continue to do the work, I will continue to fight for victims because I know how isolating it can be.”

“It really does take the entire community to fight,” she added, explaining that she is



State Sen. Susan Rubio, at right, presents Project Resilience founder and CEO Stephanie Sepeda with a certificate of recognition for human trafficking awareness, recognizing the group's efforts to address the issue in the community and “encouraging discussion and exploring solutions to protect and support survivors.”

a survivor and for the past four years in the state Senate has been a strong advocate in combating domestic violence and human trafficking.

She said she has worked to change the laws to help the victims and the children, meeting with stakeholders and organizations to see how she can help and, to date, has been responsible for 15 laws protecting the victims.

Rubio, who said she worked as a teacher

for 17 years and saw the need for help in this area, said one bill was “something small” like requiring placing the state’s domestic violence hotline on the back of every identification card in California from the seventh grade to college.

She said her colleagues often believe that domestic violence and sex trafficking is an adult issue.

“It does not happen when you turn 18 – it starts happening when you are 10, 11, 12 and then the children that come out of that situation don’t know any better and it becomes a cycle with their children,” she said. “We need to break that

Project Resilience... pg. 2

## La Nueva Voz honored with 2023 Martin Luther King Project community service award

La Nueva Voz received the prestigious Zennie Cummings Award, a community service award, at this month’s 41st annual Pomona Inland Valley Martin Luther King, Jr., Project celebration at Pomona’s Pilgrim Congregational Church.

The award was created in honor of the late Zennie Cummings, who was a board member of the organization working into her 90s, to recognize a group, company or individual who over the years has helped strengthen the



Photo by Richard Darryl Nichols

LA NUEVA VOZ RECEIVES COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD AT ANNUAL MARTIN LUTHER KING PROJECT EVENT -- Renee Barbee and Jeff Schenkel of La Nueva Voz received the prestigious Zennie Cummings Award last week at the 41st annual Martin Luther King Jr. Project celebration. From left are committee members Dwayne Smith, LaShonne Mitchell, Cynthia Barnes-Slater, Rev. Natalie Shiras, Maggie Green and Madeline Ferrell, Schenkel, Barbee, who is also an MLK Project Board member, committee member Jamie Lindsay, State Sen. Susan Rubio, who presented certificates of recognition of her own, Board Vice President Gayle Claiborne, and President Sherie Rodgers.

La Nueva Voz honored... pg. 4

PAID ADVERTORIAL

### Tri-City announces grant opportunity for community well-being projects in Pomona, Claremont and La Verne

Being part of a community plays an essential role in fostering wellness for all individuals. Tri-City Mental Health Authority would like to support communities, groups and organizations in the cities of Pomona, Claremont and La Verne that are doing the vital work of maintaining and improving the well-being of their members. As a Tri-City Prevention and Early Intervention program, the Community Well-Being Grant (CWB) is dedicated to helping communities across the three cities develop and implement community-driven projects to help accomplish this.

“We are thrilled to launch the Community Well-Being Grant application once again in 2023 and we encourage all eligible organizations and communities to apply,” said Daisy Martinez, Community Capacity Organizer. “Past grantees have made tangible improvements that spark long-term change in their community’s wellness.”

Communities and groups which are either comprised of youth or fund projects that directly serve and support children and transition age youth ages 0 to 25 are eligible to apply. Prospective grantees must have a non-profit 501(c)3 status or partner with a 501(c)3 organization who will act as a fiscal sponsor for their community. Grant recipients can:

- Receive a grant of up to \$10,000 to fund tangible projects that enhance the well-being of their members
- Access community resources and ongoing support from Tri-City staff to achieve project goals
- Have the opportunity to network and share with other communities in the area

#### Communities are invited to attend the CWB Grant Information Night and Bidder’s Conference for the 2023-24 Grant Application

The CWB Grant Information Night is February 7, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom. This virtual event is open to groups and communities in the Tri-City area to learn more about the grant program and how it can support their community. Community organizations intending to apply for the 2023-24 grant are required to attend one Bidder’s Conference meeting for application and selection details. Two meetings are available for the public: February 21, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. or February 23, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom. This grant opportunity will accept applications for projects until April 3, 2023. To register and learn more about the work being funded by the Community Well-Being Grant, visit [www.tricityms.org](http://www.tricityms.org) or contact Daisy Martinez at [dmartinez@tricitymhs.org](mailto:dmartinez@tricitymhs.org) or (909) 326-4630.



## Project Resilience... from pg. 1

cycle, we need to bring resources, we need to... let people know we're here, we're not going to let this (continue)."

Rubio told the group she grew up in downtown Los Angeles in the early 1970s where there was a lot of drugs, gangs, violence and sex workers at the time.

"I'm not afraid of getting into a situation, because I grew up in it," she said. "I'm not afraid to go talk to gang members or sex workers... and so please know that you have an ally in me and this is something I'm very passionate about."

"I'm here to support you," she

said.

Sepeda thanked representatives of all the organizations in attendance – along with city officials – for the hard work they are doing.

"It's a team thing, it's true Pomona, it's not about one organization," she said. "We are coming together in unity to bring awareness about the epidemic that is taking place and we are here to come together and to find different solutions and it's time that we as the community of Pomona take our city back."

She added that her goal was to "bring the community together . . . and let us link arms to see how we

can join forces to make an impact and really get out (working with those on the street) like never before in 2023."

Several human trafficking survivors also were on hand at the event to tell their stories of being abused at home at an early age and hitting the streets by the age of 13.

Sepeda herself was a victim of molestation at home and went out on the street. She said her mother took her to clubs and around older men where she once was lured by a man who kept her captive for three days before she was able to escape, contact her family and file a police report.

Today, Sepeda is the founder and CEO of Project Resilience. She also works as an alcohol and drug counselor for an organization in Upland. She is a graduate of Total Restoration Ministries' women's recovery home, and her son attends



Pomona Vice Mayor Elizabeth Ontiveros-Cole, at left, presents a proclamation to Stephanie Sepeda declaring "Human Trafficking Awareness Month" during the month of January in the City of Pomona.

### Warning Signs That An Individual May Be Being Trafficked:

1. Physical abuse such as burn marks, bruises or cuts.
2. Unexplained absences from class.
3. Sexualized behavior.
4. Overly tired in class.
5. Withdrawn, depressed, distracted or checked out.
6. Brags about making or having lots of money.
7. Less appropriately dressed than before or new expensive clothes, accessories or shoes.
8. New tattoo (popular way used by pimps to brand victims. Tattoos of a name, symbol of money or barcode could indicate trafficking).
9. Older boyfriend or new friends with a different lifestyle.
10. Talks about wild parties or invites other students to attend parties.
11. Shows signs of gang affiliation (colors, notebook doodles of gang symbols, etc.).

*Project Resilience CA*



Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval

school at the church.

Vice Mayor Cole told the group that there are 24.9 million human trafficking victims worldwide in an industry with \$150 billion in annual profits internationally from illegal trafficking.

"She (Sepeda) is creating a movement," Cole said. "We're here for you – anything you need, because we're going to get rid of human trafficking in the City of Pomona."

Sandoval thanked Sepeda for what she is doing.

"I think that all of us know that

this problem will not be solved by city government," he said. "It will be part of an effort of working with others that will help solve this problem."

He said he and his friends saw women walking the street along Holt Avenue when they were riding their bicycles as children.

But when he saw it continuing when he became mayor in 2016, he said it is not acceptable.

Yet he said the solution will not come through criminalizing the activity.

Project Resilience... pg. 20

The following public service ad is courtesy of La Nueva Voz.

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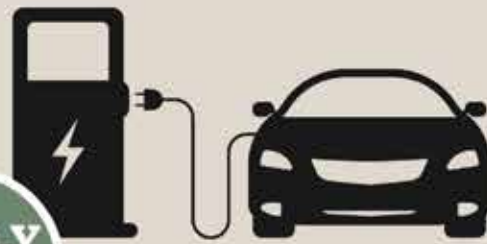
DECORATED FOR THE HOLIDAYS -- The fountain at Pomona's Sacred Heart Catholic Church was decorated with floral arrangements all the way around for the holidays last month.

La Nueva Voz is a sponsor of the 19th Annual Cesar Chavez Breakfast.



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of the San Gabriel and Pomona Valley



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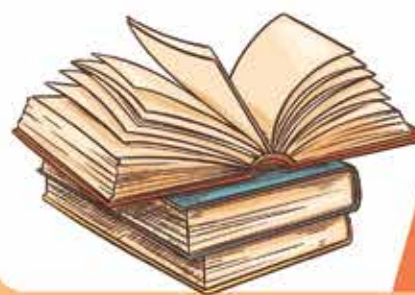
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# Latino & Latina Roundtable

of the San Gabriel and Pomona Valley



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## La Nueva Voz honored... from pg. 1

role of social justice.

Renee Barbee and Jeff Schenkel of La Nueva Voz were on hand to receive the award. Barbee has served as a long-standing board member of the Inland Valley MLK Project.

“Of all of the awards we have received, this one is among the most meaningful and, very frankly, cuts to the heart of exactly what we are trying to accomplish through our newspaper,” publisher Jeff Schenkel said after the event. “We just want to say thank you so much to President Sherie Rodgers and Vice President Gayle Claiborne for the recognition and for this honor.”

“We’ve covered this event every year since we’ve been here, in most years the story appeared on our front page and, until recent years after Gayle stepped down and handed the gavel over

to Sherie, I remember Jeff taking Gayle’s picture each year as the master of ceremonies,” Barbee said. “Neither Jeff nor I ever even thought we’d be selected as

Claiborne told the group they took over the old La Voz newspaper, which published for 28 years before them, in late 2009 and have “covered” the news of

from the Latino Media Collaborative for an on-going series of nine monthly “Stop-The-Hate” columns funded by the California State Library.

community people Renee and Jeff,” Claiborne said.

“We really appreciate both of you,” Rodgers said. “Thank you so much and congratulations.”

### 2023 Youth Social Justice Award Honorees



**Naomi Villegas**  
Garey High School



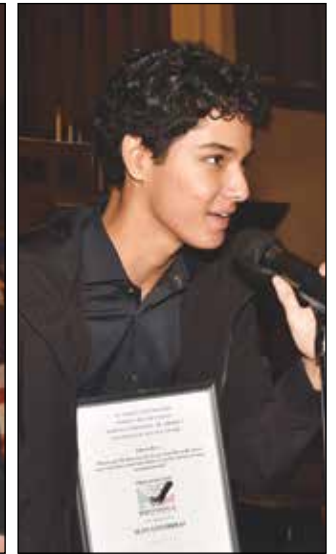
**Stephen Bonds**  
Cal Poly University Pomona



**Samantha Moreno**  
Etiwanda High School



**Mario Portillo**  
Diamond Ranch High School



**Alan Contreras**  
Kaiser High School

the recipient of this amazing and emotion-packed award. It is truly humbling.”

Claiborne nominated La Nueva Voz for the award and introduced Schenkel and Barbee to the more than 150 people in the audience.

the MLK Project celebration every year since beginning in 2010.

“They are here and they have real stories, positive stories, positive events that are happening in Pomona,” Claiborne said. “They are always there.”

“I am very honored to present this award to my friends and

### 2022 Youth Social Justice Award Honorees



**Ellis Stagg\***  
Mt. SAC

\*Not pictured for 2022 were Denny Duran-Flores, Bonita High School, and Luis Castro-Limon, Diamond Ranch High School.

According to the event program booklet, Cummings dedicated her life to helping others working tirelessly, thus encouraging others to keep the legacy of Dr. King and his dream alive for future generations throughout the Martin Luther King, Jr., Project.

“She believed wholeheartedly in our youth and took on many roles in the Inland Valley to affect change through the various community service organizations she served with,” it continued.

Past recipients of the award, beginning in 2015, were Webb Enterprises, Rev. Beth Bingham, Foothill Transit, City of Pomona, Pilgrim Congregational Church, National Council of Negro Women Pomona Valley Section, Latino/Latina roundtable and Church Women United.

La Nueva Voz honored... pg. 8

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## LA County Fair concerts announced

The LA County Fair this month announced the schedule for its 2023 concert series, featuring 12 nights of music ranging from classic rock to country to soul to Latin music.

WAR and Tierra Legacy are scheduled for May 5, John Fogerty and Hearty Har May 6, Billy Currington and Chris Janson May 7, The Ohio Players, Rose Royce and Evelyn "Champagne" King May 12, and Lady A May 13. May 14 will be announced at a later date.

Jelly Roll is set for May 19, Chaka Khan and George Benson May 20, Ramon Ayala May 21, The Isley Brothers and Lakeside May 26, Vanilla Ice, All 4 One, Color Me Badd, Tone Loc and Young MC May 27, and Justin Moore and Ashley McBryde May 28.

Tickets are on sale at ticketmaster.com, and all concert tickets include admission to the fair.

This year's fair runs from May 5 – 29, closed Mondays (except Memorial Day), Tuesdays and Wednesdays. This year's theme is "Spring into Fair: Where Fun Blooms."

## Metro Honda, Acura of Montclair teams with Montclair code enforcement for holiday toy drive

Metro Honda and Acura in Montclair held its annual toy drive for Christmas gifts for the kids last month and the result was more than \$6,000 worth of toys and other items for the holidays going to those in need in the community.

Everything donated filled two Hondas on the showroom floor where representatives of the City of Montclair code enforcement team loaded everything up for distribution.

"We actually adopted originally 20 families this year was our goal but since Metro Honda has come through for us we have a lot more that are on our e-mail and a lot more that have been word of mouth that we are helping," said Dianna Delgado, chaplain for Montclair's code enforcement team. "So this week we are going to be very busy."

She said with everything that was donated they will be able to reach out to about 45 families, each with between one and four children. And for adults, she said she received some gift card donations from her church for families to use for food.

Most of the gift cards were go-



**HOLIDAY TOYS AT METRO HONDA** -- Pictured last month going to work on loading up Christmas toys for the kids, from left, are Laura O'Neal, Metro's accounts payable and collections specialist; Pam Gordon, Metro's corporate secretary; volunteer Angel Delgado; Montclair code enforcement supervisor Gabriel Fondario; volunteer Raylene Delgado; Chaplain Dianna Delgado; and her husband Ray Delgado.

ing to two "families that have taken the kids whose only parents have passed away from COVID."

Part of her distribution list includes families who she works with throughout the year providing gifts for children's birthdays and other events, along with families of homeless residents she ministers to in the community throughout the

year.

Some are single parents or people who are in need at this time of year, she said.

"We have people right now that are living in the motels in the City of Ontario that have contacted me – they have a working husband, but they don't have enough money to get what they need for Christmas

time," Delgado added. "Kids don't understand, so here we come."

Donations came from everywhere, she said – employees of Metro Honda and Metro Acura, owners Mr. and Mrs. John Hawkins, members of the community and others.

"We're all a team," Delgado said.

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## Is Cal Poly's Soraya Coley under investigation for obstruction of justice?

The question of whether Cal Poly University Pomona President Dr. Soraya Coley is being investigated for obstruction of justice remained unanswered this month as top California law enforcement officials dodged the question and FBI agents refused to either confirm or deny they are looking into charges.

If any are filed, they could result from alleged actions by Coley preventing her own university police department from seeking search warrants, ordering campus officers not to ask the Los Angeles County District Attorney's office to file charges, and even instructing campus police not to issue press releases in connection with several on-campus investigations including two embezzlement cases, one of them totaling nearly \$1 million (see La Nueva Voz December 2022 issue, page one, at [www.lanuevavoz.net](http://www.lanuevavoz.net)).

Those allegations were part of a civil lawsuit filed in October in Los Angeles Superior Court by Cal Poly Police Sgt. Marcus Simpson against Cal Poly.

Meanwhile, Coley herself has declined to respond to questions from La Nueva Voz as to whether she has considered resigning her position either before or after charges or indictments if any are filed.

In addition, "The President is not available for comment on matters involving active litigation," according to university spokesperson Cynthia Peters.

Coley also clarified her position in a Dec. 12 e-mail to the campus, according to Peters.

"Neither I, nor the university, covered up or impeded investigations into these cases," Coley said in the e-mail. "In both cases, thorough investigations were conducted and we made changes to our policies and procedures to prevent reoccurrence."

The possibility of charges has been a topic of conversation at Cal Poly and among law enforcement officials both on and off the Cal Poly campus – including sources on campus and outside law enforcement officers off campus contacted by La Nueva Voz – since news of the million-dollar embezzlement inside the Cal Poly Foundation surfaced last month amid allegations Coley attempted to cover up details of the incident.

"From the time the (million dollar) embezzlement by a former foundation employee was discovered, the foundation CEO has proactively and consistently communicated the facts of the case to the foundation board," Coley added. "We have at all times operated legally, ethically and transparently, even when examining our own shortcomings. Any suggestion to the contrary is false."

The cover-up allegations were included in the Simpson lawsuit.

In fact, the former foundation employee was arrested, pleaded guilty, served her entire 16-month sentence, and was released before details were known outside of the university system.

Coley herself, responding to La Nueva Voz by e-mails through the university public information office, has maintained neither she nor the university have done anything wrong.

A resignation in the California State University system, the largest four-year higher education system in the country, would not be unprecedented – just last year, Joseph Castro, appointed chancellor of the system only

two years earlier to replace Tim White, resigned amid allegations that he had mishandled sexual harassment complaints against an administrator while he was president of Fresno State University.

Also last year, Sonoma State President Judy Sakaki resigned apparently due to an outcry among her academic senate and others over her leadership connected with a campus sexual harassment and retaliation scandal.

Coley's alleged actions came to light outside of university circles only when Simpson's civil lawsuit was filed against Cal Poly Pomona.

Simpson said in his filing Coley allegedly obstructed police investigations including preventing police in 2017 from reporting a second embezzlement and other matters on campus to the Los Angeles District Attorney's office.

According to the filing, in this second embezzlement case, a Cal Poly professor allegedly used grant funds to pay for a European trip that was unrelated to school activities, in addition to allegations the professor was keeping items that had been purchased

with grant funds.

According to the court filing, Coley ordered campus police to stop the investigation when they were preparing a search warrant to be served at the professor's house.

As a result, the filing continued, no documentation regarding the incident was submitted to the district attorney or any other prosecuting agency, and the professor was allowed to retire with no action taken.

"The university believes the allegations in the lawsuit have no merit and substantially misrepresent the facts," Cal Poly spokesperson Cynthia Peters said to La Nueva Voz in an e-mail response to a series of questions. "There was no cover-up of the (million dollar) embezzlement which was reported to the CSU (California State University) and CSU Board of Trustees Audit Committee."

"It was investigated, referred to law enforcement and prosecuted with the cooperation of Cal Poly Pomona and the CSU," Peters said. "Once the legal case was complete, the foundation's director presented reports about the facts and the improvements to the Cal Poly Pomona Foundation's financial procedures to the foundation's board and the Associated Students Inc. leadership."

The grant embezzlement case, Peters said, was "referred to the CSU and investigated by the Board of Trustees Audit Committee."

"There was no finding of illegality," she said, adding that the committee's report summarizing the results of the investigation was published on the CSU web site.

On the "million dollar" embezzlement, former long-time employee of the Kellogg West Conference Center Jeanette Bernardette Paredez, now 52, was charged in December 2020 in an 11-count federal grand jury indictment with a list of allegations including bilking Kellogg West in a complex "scheme to defraud," mail fraud and making and subscribing to a false income tax return.

Cal Poly Pomona Foundation, a non-profit organization separate from the university, owns and operates Kellogg West.

The embezzlement took place over a 10-year period, according to court documents.

Paredez was sentenced to 18 months in federal prison in a plea agreement but was released last month after serving 16 months.

None of this was reported to the news media by the university, ac-

**Obstruction of justice?... pg. 20**

### Ordained minister available for Gospel speaking appearances

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## YWCA San Gabriel Valley 'elderly nutrition' delivered meals program comes to Pomona

The YWCA San Gabriel Valley – which operates one of the two largest home delivered meals programs in the Los Angeles County elderly nutrition program – has come to Pomona to serve qualifying seniors, according to Pomona's Gayle Claiborne, past president of the organization's board.

Debra Ward, CEO for YWCA San Gabriel Valley, explained that Pomona and Azusa were added to her contract with the county's aging and disabilities department late last year and numbers of homes for deliveries are continuing to increase.

She said drivers deliver lunch to seniors participating in the program generally the most vulnerable who are 60 and older, homebound and disabled in some way – all at no cost to recipients.

Meals are delivered Monday through Friday year-round, but drivers generally leave extra meals for the weekend.

While the YWCA also now is providing "congregate" meals in Azusa and 21 other cities, where more active seniors may go to a central location such as a seniors facility for lunch, that aspect of the program in Pomona already is being handled by the city -- with a combination of city and county funding making lunches available without cost -- in Palomares and Washington Park community centers.

Ward said systemwide, throughout her 40-city service area, the local YWCA is now delivering just over a million meals a year in an area that extends from Pasadena to Claremont and Pomona.

Service in Pomona started last month and is already reaching 53 clients for a total of 1,701 meals in December.

The goal is to help participants reduce the risk of institutionalization by trying to keep older adults

in their home and make sure they have access to resources in the community – from housing, utilities, legal partners and legal advocates, and mental health.

She currently employs more than 50 people in the meals program. She contracts with food vendors to prepare the meals and deliver the food to central locations in Covina, West Covina and East Los Angeles. Her team members help with the packaging, transferring to delivery trucks and driving the completed meals to homes.

"We feel like we are living out our mission to empower not only women but communities to live their best lives," Ward said, through programs like meals, the shelter program, counseling and case management program, racial justice program and others.

She added that both she and her board are "collectively proud of the work that we do in the community, and we are continually trying to get better at it and respond to the needs of our community."

The mission of the YWCA San Gabriel Valley is "to eliminate racism, empower women, families and communities while promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all."

Interested in signing up or know someone who is? Call the YWCA San Gabriel Valley's senior services 24-hour message hotline at (626) 214-9465, leave your name and phone number and you will receive a call back.

The YWCA San Gabriel Valley was founded in 1980 and today has more than 100 employees with over 50 percent dedicated to senior services. The local YWCA also has more than 150 volunteers. Nationwide, YWCA was founded in 1858. It was originally founded in the United Kingdom in 1855.

## dA Center wins largest ever grant to take art to Head Start classrooms

The dA Center for the Arts in Downtown Pomona has received a \$125,000 U.S. Department of Education grant to bring art, music, movement and a puppet story time to every Head Start classroom in the Pomona Unified School Dis-

trict. It was the largest grant the dA has ever received, a spokesperson said.

The grant was made possible with the help of staff members for Congresswoman Norma Torres.

## Restorative practices in Pomona

By Julie Wheeler

### Compassionate Pomona

was satisfied, and the relationship was strengthened.

You may have watched Van Jones' The Redemption Project (9 p.m. Sundays on CNN), which is one use of restorative practices within the penal system. The collaborative is working only in the community right now. The Restorative Practices Collaborative is aiming to do the hard work of community, strengthening bonds, creating connections, engendering conversation, and learning how to listen to each other. All these things make a more just, fair, and kind system that brings people together and has them working for solutions that work for everyone.

The Restorative Practices Collaborative has two projects it is working on.

First off, we have a funded proposed pilot program for the Pomona Police Department to help manage citizen complaints through mediation instead of litigation. In our research, other police departments who have adopted mediation as a way to address citizen complaints have great success in three areas: it takes less time to resolve complaints, it takes less money to use mediation, and both parties, citizen and

I am writing this article on MLK Jr. Day. How better to speak of restoring community trust and building community resilience than by talking about Restorative Justice and Restorative Practices?

I'm Julie Wheeler, a resident of Pomona for the last six years. Nothing has spurred my spiritual and human development more than living in our beloved city. I get to see God's gritty reality, and I get to do something about it.

In 2018, a conference called Pomona Reawakening started a small team of people to inquire into what restorative practices/justice might look like in the city of Pomona. This team has formed into the Restorative Practices Collaborative. At that time, we had the police chief and deputy chief, city manager, and various folks take a four-day training which turned us into believers of a different way to resolve conflicts and to restore harmony in our organizations, city, and world.

The school district has seen the wisdom of using accountability and understanding as a first step in handling upset and harm. The collaborative hopes to expand this work into all parts of our community to create a robust and working network of people who can address harm and seek underlying issues.

Restoration is difficult to understand because most of us have been raised in a punitive worldview. When something goes wrong, we look for a culprit, punish that behavior, and feel justice has been served. In the Restorative Practices world view, we see two sides to the story, get all views, and problem-solve to find a solution that works for everyone involved.

Although a novel approach, these techniques are ancient practices used by people who couldn't send people "away." Indigenous societies had to decide how to bring that person back into the fold so that restitution was paid, the person harmed

officer, walk away with a higher degree of satisfaction. We hope to have more information soon.

Secondly, we are seeking funding for 13 non-profit organizations to get trained in restorative circles to build their internal capacity, strengthen diversity, inclusion, and equity practices, and also train their constituency in restorative listening.

As it has been said, it takes a community to raise, well, anyone! We need all of us to learn to listen, hear, and respond in ways that can build and grow us. If you are interested in finding out more about the collaborative, please attend our next quarterly meeting at 3:30 p.m. on Feb. 14, location to be determined. For more information, e-mail me at [jwheeler@laverne.edu](mailto:jwheeler@laverne.edu).

La Nueva Voz...

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8 am to 2 pm  
treasure hunters welcome  
(future date March 25, 2023)



## La Nueva Voz honored... from pg. 4

### Keynote speaker Rev. Tommy Morrow urges today's youth to create a 'flight plan'

Pastor, educator and former newspaper publisher Rev. Tommy Morrow, keynote speaker at the event, who said he has been fascinated by flight ever since he can remember, urged today's youth – including those in the audience – to create a “flight plan.”

Explaining that he was directing his comments to those in the audience who are “young people that have not quite taken flight,” he was using “flight” as a metaphor.



Rev. Tommy Morrow

“Do you know it is foolish to take flight into the wild blue yonder into your future without knowing where you are going?” he said. “So, you need a flight plan, you need to decide where you want to go in life, what you want to do and how you are going

to do it.”

“Too many of our young people want to take flight without a flight plan,” he added.

“Sometimes the weather will change, and you cannot use your visual indicators,” he said. “You need somebody who can see further than you can see to see through the clouds, the haze and rain.”

He told them once they had their flight plan on file they would taxi out and wait for clearance from the tower.

And he said parents and teachers want to help young people “because we want them to soar” and when they have been empowered to fly, “somebody has cleared you for takeoff,” a reference he said would be their high school diploma that says they have completed all the requirements for taking off into their future.

Morrow said their flight instructor at some point will tell them it is “time to climb” and they will be able to “gently lift the nose of the plane until you get up a little higher and you level out.”

“As you are leveling out and enjoying the view, you have to prepare for some unexpected tur-

bulence,” he said. “Trouble will come in your life. And when it comes if you are prepared . . . everything will be all right.”

“You don't have to face life alone, you have somebody in the

And the answer? First, they need to have someone in the tower who can operate under pressure. Second, in order to come in for a safe landing, they must be in “constant communication on the right frequency with someone who's got the controls in the tower. And third, “if you are going to come in for a safe landing . . . you must follow the instructions from the tower . . . and you need to know when it's time to let somebody else take the wheel.”

Morrow is founder and publisher emeritus of the Inland Valley News, an Inland Empire weekly newspaper.

The MLK Project event is considered one of Pomona's longest running, most revered and best attended gatherings each year.

Five students from Pomona and surrounding communities were recognized as winners of the organization's Youth Social Justice Awards.

The awards make it possible for the MLK Project to “acknowledge our youth who demonstrate Dr. King's vision to fight injustice and empower them to become our leaders of tomorrow,” Rodgers said.

Students selected have been actively making a difference in their community dismantling social injustice with their community and

school participation. The group's vision is to address the needs of local students striving to obtain their educational and community outreach goals in the spirit of King's vision of social justice reform.

The organization has supported more than 125 students over the years.

### Gov. Newsom proclaims Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Day

In a related action, Gov. Newsom issued a proclamation on King's birthday this month making Jan. 15 “Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Day.”

“More than 50 years after his passing, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s call to stand up against injustice and protect the most sacred tenets of democracy continues to inspire our work to build a better world,” he said in the proclamation.

“As we confront the many challenges our state and nation face today, we draw strength from his legacy and powerful example of the impact we can have by uniting across our differences,” the proclamation continued.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day has been observed as a national holiday since 1986.

### 2021 Youth Social Justice Award Honorees



Evelyn Aguilar  
Fremont Academy



L'Mio Edwards  
Diamond Ranch High School

tower saying ‘I've got you,’” he said. But “you've got to know how to come in for a safe landing.”



Board President Sherie Rodgers



Chara Swodeck . . .  
... introduced the winners

### MESSAGE OF THE MONTH

## Your Voice Matters

**It is a root cause of many health and social problems we face in our communities!**

**Consequences to children and to our society begin immediately.**

- 70-80% of sexual abuse survivors report excessive drug and alcohol use.
- One study showed that among male survivors, 50% have suicidal thoughts and more than 20% attempt suicide.
- Young girls who are sexually abused are more likely to develop eating disorders as adolescents.
- Both males and females who have been sexually abused are more likely to engage in commercial sexual activity (prostitution).
- CDC estimates that child abuse costs us billions annually.
- Sexually abused children who keep the abuse a secret or who “tell” and are not believed are at greater risk for psychological, emotional, social, and physical problems, often lasting into adulthood.



**Talk to your children!**

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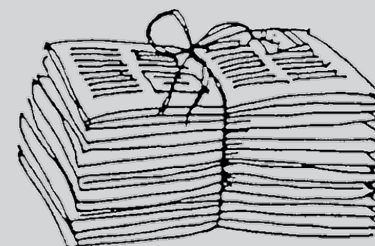






Photo by Renee Barbee

**POMONA OPTIMISTS STUDENTS OF THE MONTH** -- Members of the Pomona Optimist Club celebrated two outstanding students last month, both from Pomona's Kellogg Polytechnic Elementary School, as "students of the month" for October and November. Pictured, from left, are Optimist President Lorraine Canales, 4th grade student Hailey Valdivias (October student of the month), Kellogg Principal Sanita Shropshire, 6th grade student Adrian Sergio Hinojosa (November student of the month), and Past Pomona Optimist President and Past Optimist International District Governor M. Joyce Bakersmith. Not pictured were third grader Emerald Mejia (October) and fifth grader Jacqueline Mora (November). The students received certificates from elected officials and backpacks filled with school supplies.



Photo by Renee Barbee

**PALM TREES AT DUSK** -- Palm trees were silhouetted at dusk during a light rain with cloudy skies early this month. La Nueva Voz was driving southbound on Garey Avenue in Pomona across from the Garey High School tennis courts when this photo was taken.





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January 31

**74th Grand National Roadster Show**  
February 3-5

**RailGiants Train Museum**  
February 11-12

**Fairplex Garden Railroad**  
February 12

**Pomona Home Improvement &  
Remodeling Show**  
February 17-19

**Bubble Run**  
February 18

**The Great Junk Hunt**  
February 24-25

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**Editor's Note:** This page is the fourth in a series of nine special "Stop-the-Hate" features made possible by a La Nueva Voz grant awarded by the Latino Media Collaborative, a non-profit news media organization, and funded by the California State Library. The "Stop-the-Hate" program itself is administered by the California Department of Social Services as a statewide effort to increase public consciousness about hate incidents and hate crimes, their harmful impacts on individuals and communities, their prevention, and support and resources available for healing.

## 'Stop-the-Hate' -- A special La Nueva Voz feature series

### Building multi-racial unity through economic models targeting historical inequities

By Jose Zapata Calderon

President, Latino/Latina Roundtable

Emeritus Professor of Sociology and Chicano/a and Latino/a Studies

It is important to point out that race is a social construction where human beings have been categorized largely on the basis of their skin color and that it was created by those with power to use skin color or other physical attributes to give more privilege and resources to one group while exploiting the labor and resources of another. It is important to point out that race, as an ideology, has been used to set the identities, culture, and institutions as a basis for dominating and placing one group higher than another. As a result, there are those who are given privilege and believe that this privilege is manifested and derived from their own efforts and that others are where they are at because of their own lack of "assimilating" or doing what the system calls for. This can result in an internalization where the oppressed truly believe that they are lesser than others and that their liabilities are due to themselves. With this in mind, it is important to point out that structural and systemic racism has resulted in an unequal stratification system that has divided people on the basis of wages, wealth, and opportunity.

In the last four decades – although the U.S. economy has doubled in growth – the bottom half of households have seen no income gains. In these same years, the top 1 percent had their annual income go up from an average of \$400,000 to 1.3 million.

The result of this is that workers have had to work longer hours, take on more debt, and see more numbers in the family forced to work. The reality is that one of every seven persons in this country live below the poverty line.

These growing inequalities of income bring to the fore the racial inequalities of income and wealth, particularly historic inequalities when comparing Black, Latino, and white households. According to the PEW Research Center, the median wealth of white households was 13 times that of Black households. White households had 10 times more wealth than Latino households. And race-blind interventions do nothing to do away with racism's legacy of incarceration, segregated housing patterns, and discrimination in access to resources.

As an alternative, it is important to advocate for racial equity and ensure that our communities and our families have the same opportunity to reach their potential. This means prioritizing quality of jobs, workforce training, and investment in programs that can ensure our working families, and particularly people of color, get opportunities that historically have been denied because of discriminatory practices. This takes the development of leadership in our communities where we can have a voice in making the policies that decide where profits go and how they are used.

It is important to relate to systemic equity where there are possibilities for advancing social justice with equitable power, resources, strategies, and outcomes where people, regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation, mental/physical limits, or where they come from, have access and opportunity to the tools and resources needed to achieve the fullest of their potential in life.

Racial equity is about understanding that this is not an equal playing field and that there are specific structural inequities that our communities confront every day in their lives. As Education Trust - West has shown in its data: "Educational opportunity depends on income more than test scores ... the achievement gap among children shows up in tests on the first day of kindergarten, at age 5 – and it depends on family income. It shows up in how almost two-thirds of affluent children have access to informal mentors outside their families (family friends, teachers, coaches, church leaders or counselors) but fewer than 40 percent of poor children have that similar mentoring.

The disproportionate numbers from our Black and Latino communities who have died from COVID-19 have further exposed the economic and racial inequalities that have historically existed in our communities. It is no coincidence that our Latino and African American communities have been three times as likely to become infected as their white neighbors and that Latino and Black people have been nearly twice as likely to die from the virus as white people. These realities are only symptoms that are the result of years of racial and economic inequities and disparities (inequities that this country still has not dealt with).

The opportunities are there with a growing movement throughout the country that is building multi-racial unity in our common fight for equality and multi-racial solidarity against systemic racism and white supremacy. Movements are emerging that are advancing a common struggle in opposing the school to prison pipeline, unjust detention centers, voter suppression, and acts of genocide that are seeking to keep our communities from using their growing political power.

In this context, it is refreshing to see the building of multi-racial coalitions and a leadership that is standing against the divisions being created by unjust scapegoating of everyone from our AAPI (Asian American Pacific Islander) communities to undocumented immigrants and refugees (and advancing transformative policies that are in the interests of providing a quality of life for all and not just profit for a few).

A good example right now is the Poor People's Campaign that is demanding full employment for all our communities and employment assurance programs especially in this time when there is talk about rebuilding with new economic model.

At the local level, we do need a social movement that is about building models of democratizing wealth based on the collective and not just the interests of the individual. This takes us into the realm of cooperative models such as that of the New Green Deal (proposed by Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez) to shift to 100 percent renewable energy in 10 years, to create tens of thousands of new jobs, and to advance the implementation of publicly owned banks like the North Dakota Bank. Already, New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy and California Gov. Gavin Newsom have committed to establishing state public banks. This follows with the thinking that a whole new economy is emerging that includes models of economic development with racial justice in the forefront. The rise of this new economy includes worker-owned cooperatives such as the "Si Se Puede" cooperative (a Brooklyn house-cleaning enterprise owned primarily by Latinas) and union cooperatives such as the Communications Workers of America Local 7777 in Denver (Green Taxi) where the leadership and board is made up entirely of immigrant drivers from East Africa and Morocco. Further, worker co-ops are being implemented now in Cleveland, Albuquerque, Milwaukee, New York City, Newark, Oakland, Rochester, and Madison. These economic innovations include more than 6,600 employee stock ownership plans (ESOPs) throughout the country with \$1.4 trillion in assets and "businesses owned by the people they serve" (that include credit unions, agricultural cooperatives, and consumer cooperatives) that represent \$500 billion in revenue and employ more than 2 million people.

There are four principles that involve moving in this direction of racial equity: One, thinking of new ways to democratize wealth. Two, placing the building of community and what is in the interests of community in the forefront in all development. Three, decentralizing power in general – so that there is community input. And four, planning in the interests of quality of life.

Rather than a culture of greed and selfishness in the forefront, there is the capacity for a new kind of planning with a culture of collectivity in the forefront – to use the earth's resources and local partnerships between schools, cities, businesses, and community-based organizations to build multi-racial unity in advancing concrete models that get at the systemic sources of unjust and historical inequities.



Jose Calderon

## Little Hamilton Park undergoing massive \$2.7 million upgrade

Hamilton Park, a little park located pretty much right in the geographical center of Pomona, is getting a new lease on life to better serve families including children and grandchildren of one of the city's oldest barrios.

And some of the same people who worked with the city 50 years ago on the park's first development planning were back for a grass roots ceremonial groundbreaking the day before the bulldozers came in to go to work.

Martin Perez, who grew up in the area, told La Nueva Voz he was part of a group of residents who worked with the city – with the help of environmental design students from Cal Poly University Pomona – on plans to develop the original Cherrieville Park, as it was called when it was completed 50 years ago. His dad was born in 1932 in the neighborhood of about 300 people surrounding the park.

He said round one of the park's development in 1970 was funded



Heavy equipment operators -- working in the rain -- went to work on Monday morning the day after the groundbreaking at Pomona's Hamilton Park. Before the end of the day, the old basketball court, several lighting poles and other fixtures had been cleared for work on the on-going upgrade at the park.



Picking up shovels for a grass roots groundbreaking for a \$2.7 million upgrade project at Pomona's Hamilton Park are, from left, David Ybarra, Martin Perez, Oscar Perez and Rudy Gutierrez.

with the help of federal revenue sharing monies and a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Perez moved out of the area, had a career as a union organizer with Kimberly-Clarke in Fullerton and had just retired in 2016 when he drove by the park and saw that things had changed.

"We did an assessment and . . .

saw the park was in disarray, overgrown with weeds," he said, adding that he heard rumors that the city wanted to use the property for commercial buildings.

So, five years ago, residents organized, started cleaning up the park, pulling the weeds and calling on others to help. Around the same time, the city was looking at the park as a law enforcement pri-

ority because of nighttime activity with homeless individuals, gang members and drugs.

But Perez said he believes that when the positive comes in, the negative goes away.

"Folks around here would ask them to move on and . . . they are not here," he said. "We want the kids to have a clean, shaded place

Massive upgrade... pg. 18

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Photos by Renee Barbee

**POMONA POLICE PROMOTION CEREMONY** -- Members of the Pomona Police Department held a promotion ceremony in the Pomona Unified School District auditorium with a total of 26 promotions on the agenda. Pictured in top photo is Lt. Brian Hagerty introducing new Detective Jorge Aleman. At center, Deputy Chief Christian Hsu introduces new Sgt. Jesus Cardenas and, at bottom, Hsu introduces new Sgt. Christopher Lewis (with Chief Mike Ellis pictured at far right). Other promotions included Captains Todd Samuels and Ryan Rodriguez; Lieutenants Alyssa Bostrom, Deon Brown and Iain Miller; Sergeants Blake Jensen and Adrian Rodriguez; and Detectives Joseph Deleo, Martin Enriquez and Alex Nguyen. Nine new corporals were promoted, along with three promotions in dispatch, two in the jail and two in department administration.

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Recipients of the annual PEARLS of Service “renewable scholarship” awards, announced last month, are, from left, Daysia Kee, a 2021 Lake Elsinore High School graduate attending Spelman College in Atlanta; Jada Hansen, a 2020 Etiwanda High School graduate attending UC Riverside; and Talen Cobb, a Pomona High School 2021 graduate attending UC Santa Barbara. The scholarships are \$1,000 per year for up to four years as long as the recipients remain in school. Two new renewable scholarships are awarded each year. For on-line donations, visit <http://www.pearlsofservice.org> or, for Zelle, [info.pearlsofservice@gmail.com](mailto:info.pearlsofservice@gmail.com).

Photo by Renee Barbee  
Board members of the non-profit PEARLS of Service, Inc. (Promoting Education and Reassuring Loyal Services), from left, are Endy Farrow, new board member Ta Lese Morrow, and CEO Mattie Johnson. Not pictured are Cheryl Mayhorn, Carlese Waddy, and new board members Lori Rucker, Aaron Bratton, Tiffany Dennis and Kevin Marshall. The group’s annual installation of officers event was held last month at Pomona’s Sheraton Fairplex Hotel.



Recipients of the PEARLS of Service “on the spot” scholarship recipients are, from left, Anan Mohammed, a senior at Kennedy High School in Norco; Chelsi Hendricks, a senior at Centennial High School in Corona; Jordan Green, a senior at Colony High School in Ontario; Nyeima Kay, a senior at Pomona High School; and, bottom row, from left, River Crowder, a senior at Kennedy High School in Norco; and Terrissa Bygrave, a senior at Pomona High School. Recipients of the \$100 scholarships were selected based on an essay contest. The competition, designed to motivate students to think about their goals and accomplishments, started in 2018 and PEARLS of Service has granted 67 “on the spot” scholarships in Los Angeles, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties.

## Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz appears on Andy Quinones’ first-ever podcast

Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz is on the air, or actually on a podcast, with Pomona volunteer and host of the program Andy Quinones who recorded his first-ever podcast this month, and it was a podcast in partnership with Pomona’s Promise, a non-profit working to create strong families and safe neighborhoods.



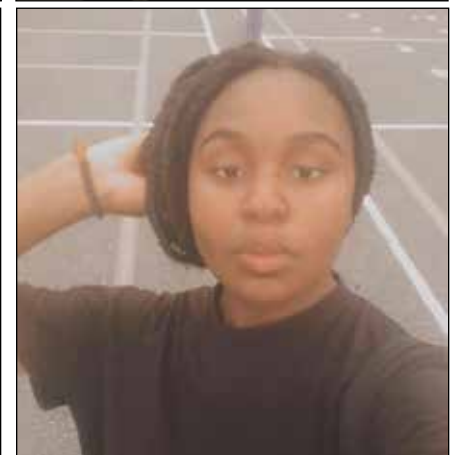
Photo by Jonathan Williams  
Podcast host Andy Quinones, at left, records his first-ever podcast segment with Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz.

Quinones, of SoCal Service Corps, who created a professional recording studio for the project, Pomona’s Promise Network Podcast, a community led podcast, has assembled a three-member production crew including a still photographer.

Barbee’s roughly 20-minute segment focused on the history of La Nueva Voz, Pomona’s only community newspaper, and how listeners can submit articles or advertising to appear in the monthly paper.

The monthly podcast will highlight the positive aspects, resources and development of Pomona. For more information, contact Quinones at [aquinones.scsc@gmail.com](mailto:aquinones.scsc@gmail.com).

To tune in to the podcast, go to <https://spotifyanchor-web.app.link/e/8sVRYnTExwb>.



Please visit our web site at [www.lanuevavoz.net](http://www.lanuevavoz.net) to see the latest issue of La Nueva Voz, past issues and more!



## San Manuel grant funds new interactive therapeutic playground at Casa Colina

The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians has awarded Casa Colina Hospital and Centers for Healthcare a \$450,000 grant toward a new interactive musical playground providing therapeutic and rehabilitative services to children who have or are at risk for acquired or developmental delays in health, communication and cognitive or social-emotional development.

Construction already is under way on the project which includes an innovative play structure where objects become musical instruments like “magical” pebbles or a musical water harp.

Everything is connected using interactive software to help children on speech, motor and social skills.

“The overarching goal of the musical playground is to enhance our ability to provide pediatric therapies while increasing access

### Latino/a Roundtable ‘Cesar Chavez Breakfast’ set for March

Pomona’s Ion Puschila will receive the “Community Star” award at this year’s 19th annual Latino and Latina Roundtable Cesar Chavez Breakfast in March, according to an announcement from the group.

Other honorees will be Pomona Unified School District Board member Arturo Jimenez, the Pitzer College Workers and Student Alliance, Lopez Urban Farm and National TPS Alliance.

Scholarships also will be awarded to local students working on improving their communities.

Awardees are selected based on how their contributions to the community mirror the values that Cesar Chavez lived by – non-violence, service to others and respect for life and the environment.

The “in person” event is scheduled for 8 a.m. Friday, March 31, Cesar Chavez Day (a federal commemorative holiday) at Pomona’s Fairplex.

It honors the legacy of Cesar Chavez and brings together community members from throughout Southern California.

Tickets are available on Eventbrite or by calling (909) 480-6267. Sponsorship opportunities also are available.

to music for children with disabilities – a historically marginalized population,” said Michele Alaniz, director of Casa Colina’s children’s services center.

“By adding this first-of-its-kind clinical tool, we not only improve our ability to keep young clients engaged and having fun during therapies but we now have a customizable clinical tool that can be adjusted to meet each child’s unique needs.”

The playground features museum-quality sculptures and tactile pieces, all embedded with a network of sensors that provide exciting audio-visual interactions to users. The hardware and software were designed with input from Casa Colina’s team of licensed physical, occupational and speech therapists, all to help motivate and engage a pediatric clientele that includes children with autism and other neuro-developmental disabilities.

The grant made possible the software and supported clinician training, as well as the actual playground components.

Completion is expected late this year.

The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians has partnered with Casa Colina since 2002.



**WELCOMING GOLD CREST TO POMONA!** -- Members of the Pomona Chamber of Commerce and Pomona city councilmembers last month welcomed Gold Crest Industries to Pomona with an official grand opening and ribbon cutting. Gold Crest, which manufactures quality cushions and patio umbrellas made to order, had been located in Ontario for the past 30 years. And before that, a family member operated California Umbrella in South Pomona. Pictured, from left, are Frank Castillo, general manager; owners Silvia Jimenez and Jenaro Garcia; at rear, Chamber Executive Board member Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz and Board member Jeff Johannsen of Pomona Hope; Pomona City Councilmembers Elizabeth Ontiveros-Cole and Victor Preciado; Jenny Macias, representing Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez; and, in front, Chamber President and CEO Monique Manzanares. The company, which has about 30 employees, is located at 510 W. Monterey Ave., Pomona, and is open to the public.



**MANUFACTURING COMPANY MOVES FROM ONTARIO** -- Pictured, at right, are samples of custom outdoor cushions produced by Gold Crest Industries of Pomona. And the samples of fabric, at left, are part of a huge inventory with most rolls stacked in racks against a wall behind an entire assembly room filled with industrial sewing machines.



**Photo by Tom Zasadzinski, Cal Poly Pomona**

**HEADING FOR PASADENA** -- Cal Poly University Pomona’s float in the 134th annual Rose Parade in Pasadena makes a wide turn at 9 p.m. Dec. 19 off of Kellogg Drive onto University Boulevard after leaving the Rose Float Lab on campus, driving very slowly on the way to the Rose Bowl where students and volunteers worked on it day and night until the parade getting all of the flowers, seeds and other decorations in place for the trip down Colorado Boulevard. During Design Week in the Rose Float Lab, after half of the float arrived in Pomona from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, some 90 students welded, sheeted, glued and worked on animated mechanisms. This year’s 23-foot-high Rose Float “Road to Reclamation” featured gigantic snails, a towering red-capped toadstool, and a scene from the forest floor, decorated with a rainbow of oversized fungi, moss and lichen converting a fallen log into nutrients for the community. This year’s float was the first in the parade line-up, following the opening show, the U.S. Marine Corps Mounted Color Guard and the USMC West Coast Composite Band. Since 1949, students from Cal Poly Pomona and San Luis Obispo have decorated an entry for every Rose Parade, winning 62 awards. This year’s float won the “Extraordinaire Trophy” for the most extraordinary float.

## New Year's week rainfall plus broken pumps and gutter trash result in flooding at Reservoir underpass

A combination on Jan. 5 of heavy rainfall, broken pumps and trash in the gutter apparently resulted in five-foot-deep flooding in the Reservoir Street underpass in Pomona, prompting a word of caution from the city – don't drive around the "road closed" signs to try to get through. You just might get stuck.

And a second piece of advice from the city is don't toss trash in the street because it eventually can clog the storm drains and cause even more flooding.

Pomona Police Department spokesperson Aly Mejia, responding to an e-mail from La Nueva Voz, said Reservoir under the First Street bridge was closed to traffic around 7:35 a.m. on Jan. 5. She said at the time of the closure, no one was trapped in the water, although one driver passed through the barricades a little after 11 a.m. and got stuck in the water.

The water was still rising at the time the photo from city staff was taken.

Mejia did not have a record of the time the street was reopened to traffic.

La Nueva Voz received a "Nix-

le" notification from the Pomona Police Department regarding the Reservoir road closure at 8:28 a.m. and, because flooding at that relatively new undercrossing seemed unusual, contacted the public information office of the Alameda Corridor-East Project.

The ACE project was established in 1998 by the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments generally to prevent car versus train accidents and delays from trains crossing local streets by re-routing tracks either over or under those streets.

Rail lines through the region became a problem since 16 percent of all ocean-going containers coming in through the ports in Los Angeles and Long Beach travel by rail through Southern California to reach the rest of the nation.

And, according to Ricky Choi at the ACE project, two underpass projects in Pomona – Reservoir Street and East End Avenue – were constructed in a single \$77.7 million contract.

Reservoir was opened to traffic following construction in 2006 and East End opened to traffic in 2008.

And yes, he said for \$77.7 mil-

lion, the city received pumps down there to take care of water when rainfall exceeds the capacity of drainage alone.

He also explained that ACE managed the construction and, upon completion, turned the keys over to the city for on-going maintenance.

La Nueva Voz reached out to Pomona public works officials and, in a telephone interview with Chris Diggs, Pomona's water resources director, learned that there was no flooding reported at the East End underpass, although he said there has been flooding there in the past.

And on that five feet deep water, he said the city has placed measuring gauges on the side of the underpass making it easier to determine the depth when flooding occurs.

But on the pumps, the real problem was that Reservoir has a pumping station made up of three large pumps and one

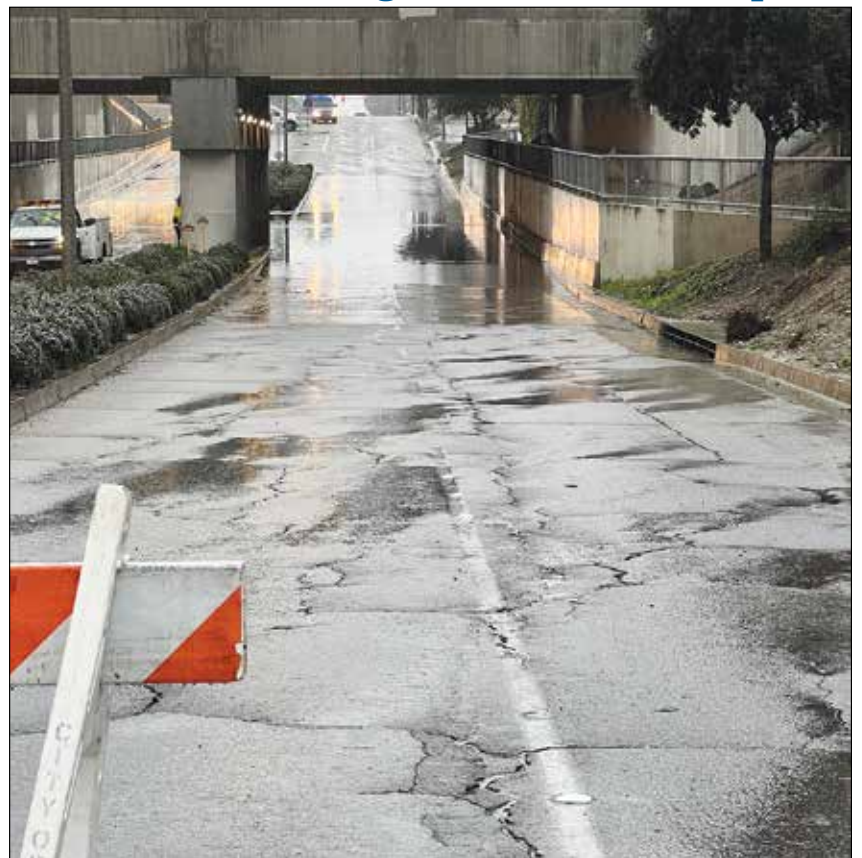


Photo courtesy of the City of Pomona  
Pumps out for repairs, trash in the storm drain and lots of rainfall resulted in flooding and a road closure this month at the Reservoir Street underpass in Pomona. Pictured is water collecting early in the storm, although levels rose to five feet deep, according to city officials.

small pump. Diggs said all three large pumps – each 24 inches in diameter and "a pretty good-sized

pump" – were out for repairs on Jan. 5 because they failed during

Flooding... pg. 20



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**CELEBRITY IN THE HOUSE** -- Show of hands, how many readers knew we had a celebrity in the house at the Pomona office of the California DMV? Yep, pictured is DMV employee Rebecca Hudson, whose son, Kyron Hudson, of Duarte, was a red-shirt freshman in 2022 who was playing wide receiver for USC. Her son, number 10 on his jersey, is 6 feet 2 inches tall and weighs in at 210 pounds. Pictured here is his mom along with an action shot of Hudson from the USC web site. This all came to light when Jeff Schenkel and Renee Barbee happened to run into La Nueva Voz friend Bernard Roberts at the DMV office and Schenkel and Roberts just, well, started talking to DMV staffers who mentioned the USC connection. Best of luck to No. 10 when football season starts this year!



## Cal Poly's Soraya Coley calls Kwanzaa principle of 'unity' a mandate for solidarity

Cal Poly University Pomona President Dr. Soraya Coley, speaking on "Umoja" or "Unity" at this year's Kwanzaa celebration on New Year's Day at Pomona's Fairplex, told participants that African studies Professor Maulana Karenga, the creator of Kwanzaa, "described unity as a principle and practice of togetherness in all things good and of mutual benefit."

"It calls on us to stand in solidarity with the oppressed, with suffering and with the struggling peoples of the world," she said. "Unity helps you to grow. No one can grow alone. We need support for one another and if we want to grow a business we need team members."

She added that unity provides motivation and encourages people to work harder, and it inspires.

"We cannot get inspiration by being in isolation," Coley said. "We as a country are challenged by and unable to reconcile that

fundamentally there is no unity without diversity."

"Unity enables us to understand that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts," she said.

Coley told the group she grew up in a very segregated environment in North Carolina.

"It was the unity of the community that said you can and that you will not allow others to define who you are or what you will become," she said.

"As African Americans, we understand that our achievements come as a result of unity," she said.

"May you be a voice that connects with the unity of all, may you see and define your



Dr. Soraya Coley



The music of the ancestors was part of this month's Kwanzaa celebration at Fairplex.



Chara Swodeck



Robert Butler

beauty and your unique power, may you embrace and advance your heritage, may you understand your purpose for being, may you find and elevate your creative energy, and may your presence on this earth be a blessing to us all and a catalyst for human rights and well-being," she said.

### History of Kwanzaa

Robert Butler, speaking on the history of Kwanzaa, told the group he was involved in the early days of the formation of Kwanzaa in 1966 in the African studies depart-

ment at Cal State University Long Beach.

"We wanted something to call our own, something that we created," he said, as he and his fellow Black students worked to define themselves and create for themselves.

He said he gave credit to the Black church and the civil rights movement at the time.

"But we youngsters, 20, 19, 21 years old, we were a little impatient," he said. "We noticed that all of those had in common one thing and that was to seek recognition and approval from the European dominating culture of this country."

He said Black students began

to take on Swahili (East African language) names and out of that group Kwanzaa was founded.

Today, he said even the U.S. Postal Service has recognized Kwanzaa with a series of stamps, and the organization has chapters all around the country after its beginnings here in Southern California.

The Pomona celebration, Kwanzaa Joy Celebration, was billed as the third annual celebration although it was the fourth year because of a break last year.

It was produced by Pomona volunteer Chara Swodeck and held in the Millard Sheets Center for the Arts at Fairplex. The program was designed to cultivate an on-going conversation and movement in the African-American community inspired by African celebrations of heritage, new beginnings and cultural unity.

## Survey shows Pomona residents call for grant spending on homeless, infrastructure, anti-crime and youth services programs

Homeless prevention, public infrastructure, youth services and anti-crime programs were among the highest categories selected by residents citywide in Pomona's 2021-2022 community needs survey.

The survey is used each year to assist in the development of priorities for the following year's "annual action plan," a one-year "roadmap" for spending funds available through Community Development Block Grants, HOME Investment Partnership Act programs, public infrastructure and community development activities for low to moderate income

persons.

Of those responding, 83 percent selected homeless prevention, while 82 percent selected public infrastructure, including alleys, streets and streetlights.

Some 76 percent of the respondents selected youth services including recreation and educational programs, and 77 percent selected anti-crime programs such as community oriented policing.

Also in the homeless services category, 76 percent of respondents checked street outreach and 74 percent selected case manage-

ment and counseling for homeless individuals.

Under public services, 74 percent selected senior services such as wellness, physical and nutritional programs, and under community development, 76 percent asked for more efforts in the area of economic development including job creation and new business.

Also in the community development category, 78 percent of respondents called for more resources for parks and community centers.

And in the housing category, 59 percent called for additional spend-

ing in the area of affordable housing, and 57 percent selected special needs housing (for seniors or persons with disabilities).

In the city core values category, the top pick was 34 percent selecting investments in public safety, community programming and property maintenance to ensure safe and clean communities. And in the same category, 33 percent asked for improvements in infrastructure by investing resources in streets, sidewalks, parks, landscaping, water systems and public facilities.

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## Massive upgrade... from pg. 12

to play but there's nothing here."

"The reason that we're here is we care about the neighborhood and the people that live in it," said Rudy Gutierrez, who organized the group 50 years ago that advocated for the original park project.

Perez explained the park had no bathrooms, the basketball court needed work, the handball court had roots in it, and lighting at night was dim at best.

The group went to Pomona's Parks and Recreation Commission asking for the city to seek grants to revitalize the park. And they received support – particularly from Vince Carpio and Donna Manzanares Otero, both commis-

sioners who live near the park. wide parks measure making available some \$21 million in funding) was asking for," he said.

Fast forward and the city was successful in obtaining funding – an original \$1.5 million budget using Prop. 68 grant funding plus \$650,000 in Los Angeles County regional parks Measure A funds, another \$272,294 in Prop. 68 funds and \$280,000 in Los Angeles County Measure W "safe clean water" funds, for a total of \$2.7 million.

And while the process was slowed for three years

during the pandemic, the story has a happy ending – the grassroots groundbreaking for the city's park upgrade project was held last month on Sunday, Dec. 18, and the next day, Monday morning, bulldozers and other heavy equipment went to work clearing the park for a complete renovation.

Included will be fenced playground equipment for children ages 2 to 12, energy efficient solar lighting, upgraded irrigation, renovation and resurfacing of the basketball court, public art, resurfacing of walkways ensuring Americans

with Disabilities Act compliance, drought-tolerant native landscaping and a rain garden, barbecues, benches, a gazebo, bathrooms and even a piñata pole.

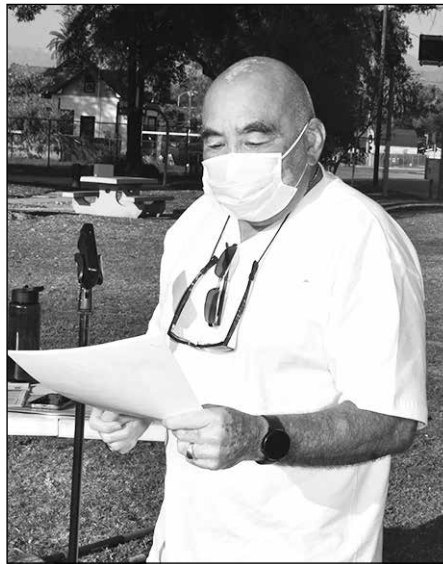
"The benefits for the community will be priceless," Perez said. "This will be a gem right smack in the middle of Pomona."

He said the grass roots group simply wanted to build "structure" for the kids.

"That builds leadership – this is where the kids are going to learn their leadership skills," he said.

Work on the park upgrade is expected to be completed by August.

Hamilton Park is located at 825 W. Monterey Ave. at Hamilton Boulevard just south of Holt Avenue.



Martin Perez



Pomona Parks and Recreation Commissioner Donna Manzanares Otero blesses the land with the ceremonial burning of sage.

sioners who live near the park.

Carpio participated in the original park planning effort 50 years ago.

Perez said it was relatively easy for the park project to meet the requirements for grants – the area had been "redlined" (discriminatory lending practices impacting low income areas) for real estate financing since before the 1930s, had a high percentage of minority residents and a lack of greenspace.

"So, we hit all the parameters that Prop. 68 (California's state-

### La Nueva Voz 'Top of Page One' stories for 2022

|           |                                                                                                                                                 |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| January   | COVID surge rattles Pomona schools                                                                                                              |
| February  | Year-long Gold Line traffic delays reach Pomona's Garey Avenue                                                                                  |
| March     | War in Ukraine comes to Claremont with protests                                                                                                 |
| April     | Experts at Pomona Chamber 'Legislative Luncheon' say federal funds coming to help the homeless, median home prices in county approach \$900,000 |
| May       | LA County Fair celebrates 100 <sup>th</sup> anniversary                                                                                         |
| June      | L.A. County Supervisor Hilda Solis, retiring Pomona Unified Supt. receive top honors at Mayor's Gala fundraiser for Pomona Public Library       |
| July      | Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez secures \$17.1 million for Pomona schools, historic preservation                                               |
| August    | Pomona City Council adopts rent control, caps increases at 4 percent                                                                            |
| September | Director of U.S. Patent Office visits Garey High School to present patents to graduates for their 2017 invention of medical device              |
| October   | Pomona City Council candidates forum held with most controversial suggestion to put homeless residents in jail                                  |
| November  | Unofficial election results show city's incumbents returned to office                                                                           |
| December  | City Council awards \$29.3 million per year 10-year exclusive trash collection franchise agreement to Athens Services                           |

Editor's Note: Complete stories are in the La Nueva Voz archives at [www.lanuevavoz.net](http://www.lanuevavoz.net) under "Past Issues."

## dA Center for the Arts to honor Supervisor Hilda Solis

Pomona's dA Center for the Arts will present its 2023 "Arts Advocate Award" to Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda Solis in March at a special 2nd annual d'ART for ART benefit at the dA.

"Supervisor Solis is an outstanding civic leader whose prodigious leadership has elevated the L.A. County's commitment to arts, culture, and diversity," the dA said in a news release.

"Supervisor Solis along with her amazing team proactively supports the dA's mission," the release said.

Solis, a lifelong resident of the San Gabriel Valley, was sworn in last month for her third and last four-year term as supervisor for the first district of Los Angeles County. She assumed office in

2014 after serving as Secretary of Labor under President Obama from 2009 to 2013 and as a member of Congress from 2001 to 2009.

The benefit fundraiser to support the dA will be held at 6 p.m. Saturday, March 18, at the dA, located at 252 S. Main St., Pomona, and will feature music, food, refreshments and opportunities for guests to pull a number out of a hat and, when their number is called, select an original work of art on the wall to take home.

Tickets including a work of art are \$125 and up per person or \$75 per person without the art.

Visit the web site at [www.da-center.org](http://www.da-center.org) or call (909) 397-9716 for tickets or more information.

### Gas company triples contribution to 'Gas Assistance Fund'

Southern California Gas Co. this month announced a \$1 million contribution to the gas assistance fund, a program that helps income-qualified customers pay their natural gas bills.

Gas company officials said in a news release the move will help customers who will be facing bills that could be double or higher compared to last year's winter bills.

The high bills are a result of historically high natural gas prices in the western U.S., according to the release, which added that the company does not set the prices.

"Instead, natural gas prices are determined by national and regional markets," it explained. "SoCal-

Gas guys natural gas in those markets on behalf of residential and small business customers, and the cost of buying that gas is billed to those customers with no markup. SoCalGas does not profit from gas commodity prices going up."

Prices have climbed because of below-normal temperatures, high natural gas demand for heating, reduced supplies to the West Coast and reduced interstate pipeline capacity due to pipeline maintenance activities in West Texas.

The gas assistance fund is a joint effort between SoCalGas and United Way of Greater Los Angeles and offers one-time grants of up to \$100 per household.

### A new La Nueva Voz publishes each month on the fourth Thursday of the month.

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- Pomona Unified School District administration building lobby
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- Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center maternity lobby, outpatient services, emergency room
- Gold Strike Market Carniceria, 412 N. Park Ave., Pomona
- Fairplex Chevron, Fairplex Drive and San Bernardino Freeway, Pomona
- Discount Market, Philadelphia Street and Towne Avenue, Pomona
- LaundryLand Coin Op Laundry, 744 E. Holt Ave., Pomona
- American Legion Post #30, 239 E. Holt Ave., Pomona
- Pomona Eagles, 854 W. Mission Blvd., Pomona



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## Improve your recovery after joint replacement surgery

By Luis Corrales, MD, Board-certified orthopedic surgeon  
Program Medical Director, Revive Joint Replacement Program  
Casa Colina Hospital and Centers for Healthcare

In my years of practice, I've come to understand that the most important factor for having a great outcome after joint replacement surgery is simple: health – meaning your body's ability to heal!

Healing is a function only your body performs, and it is vital to a successful surgical outcome. So how can you improve your body's healing potential and accelerate your recovery? Focus on three main areas: one, existing health problems; two, nutrition; and three, sleep/stress management. These domains directly impact your recovery from surgery.

First, you must understand your own health problems and the condition of your body. Common medical problems such as diabetes, anemia, and obesity need to be controlled or corrected whenever possible. Addressing such issues prior to surgery will greatly reduce risk and improve results. This means being open and honest with your doctor.

Nutrition is a key and often overlooked factor. Evidence shows nutrition at the time of surgery greatly impacts your outcome. So, avoid fried foods, processed options like fast food, and refined sugar. Increase protein intake (but avoid too much red meat). Fish, such as salmon and tuna, are great protein sources. Add walnuts, kale, broccoli,

blueberries, and sweet potatoes to your diet. Make sure you have adequate vitamin D and zinc. Cut out alcohol and increase water intake. These simple changes will decrease inflammation in the body – which slows healing – and will give you essential nutrients needed to recover.

Lastly, if possible, select a time for surgery when there is less stress in your life. High stress negatively affects blood pressure, suppresses the immune system, and impacts your mood – all of which hamper your body's function and recovery. Good sleep is also crucial for tissue growth and repair, and a lot of regeneration happens during sleep. Your mental health is critical, and I highly recommend seeing a therapist if needed to address stress and anxiety.

As a patient, you have the power to greatly improve your surgical outcome and speed up your recovery. Work together with your surgeon and take measures to improve health, optimize nutrition, and be mentally well for surgery. You will be glad you did!



Luis Corrales, MD

*Editor's Note: Are you preparing for a joint replacement surgery? Learn more about getting a great surgical outcome by joining Luis Corrales, MD for a free community seminar titled "The Importance of Wellness Before Joint Replacement Surgery," Tuesday, Feb. 28, from 6 to 8:30 p.m. at Casa Colina Hospital and Centers for Healthcare in Pomona. Seating for this seminar is limited, and refreshments will be served. To reserve your space, call 866/724-4132.*



Photo by Renee Barbee

**BINGO!** -- It was all about bingo Saturday afternoon at Pomona's First Christian Church as the Pomona Host Lions held a "Fundraising Fiesta," their first fundraiser of the new year. There was everything from bingo and raffle prizes to a 50/50 drawing and a silent auction. Proceeds went to benefit Lions charities including free books for first graders and monthly feeding the homeless. Pictured in the front of the room are President WendyAnn Stuard, at left, and Second Vice President George Kopiloff calling the numbers. A total of 95 people attended the event including 16 Pomona Host Lions members and a couple of associate members from neighboring clubs.

## Tubman statue may be permanently installed in Lincoln Park by March

The statue of American icon and abolitionist Harriet Tubman that was unveiled in ceremonies in Pomona's Lincoln Park on the Fourth of July and then placed in storage now is expected to return to the park and be installed on its permanent pedestal by March.

Ray Adamyk, of Pomona's Spectra Company and organizer of the project, responded to a La Nueva Voz request for an update early this month.

"We are working with the city and plan to have this installed by March," Adamyk said in an e-mail.

The statue originally was expected to be installed in time for the July 4 ceremonies but ran into delays as the city grappled with the amount of its contribution to the effort out of its public art fund.

A story in the Oct. 27 issue of La Nueva Voz said officials were estimating permanent installation within 30 or 60 days, or the end of December.

At the time, city councilmembers had just voted in September to scale back the city's contribution due to procedural issues since the applicant already had selected an artist and created and funded the project before seeking funding from the city.

The city council essentially voted to allocate \$42,250 to cover the costs of producing the pedestal and installing the statue in the park.

Final permits were obtained and, according to Anita Gutierrez, Pomona's Development Services Director, the city prepared an "artist contract" with Manuelita Brown, who created the sculpture, which was expected to be

sent to Brown early this month. "Once executed, they will have 60 days to install the artwork," Gutierrez told La Nueva Voz in an e-mail.

The city's contribution was about a third of the \$119,000 originally requested for the creation and installation of the 80-inch bronze statue honoring Tubman, who was known in American history as the "conductor" of the Underground Railroad aiding slaves escaping to the North in the 1800s.

The statue was placed on a trailer in Lincoln Park for the unveiling but was removed and temporarily placed in storage pending completion of final arrangements.

Adamyk, according to his spokesperson, covered \$80,000 in costs of the artist and the foundry where the mold was created before final review by the city's Cultural Arts Commission.

The remainder was to go to the cost of the base or pedestal for the statue which eventually will be placed in the center of the park's rose garden, a location already approved by the city's Parks and Recreation Commission.

As part of the process, the city will require Adamyk to enter into a contractual agreement to transfer ownership of the statue to the city as "city art" once it is installed, according to Gutierrez.

By law, specified new construction projects in Pomona are required to either incorporate works of public art into their building design or contribute specified amounts to the city's public art fund to pay for projects somewhere in the city by contributing artists.

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## Flooding... from pg. 16

an earlier storm just before Christmas.

And to make matters worse, he said, “That’s a long wait item to have repaired because it is a specialty pump.”

But wait, there’s more!

“The smaller pump that we have, that one works when the flow isn’t too significant but because of some of the trash that flows off of the street and into the wet well where the pump suction is, that trash got inside that pump and caused it to fail,” Diggs said.

So, by a little rough math at La Nueva Voz, it looks like three pumps out for repairs and one out of commission when clogged by trash equals five feet of water under the underpass.

Then on the maintenance side of the equation, Diggs said trash flows in from all of the tributaries feeding that area.

And, while the city provides regular street sweeping, “it’s the homeless (and others) throwing their debris in there and everything else that’s rolling down the street that’s going into that pump station,” he said.

“When those rags and things of that nature, that’s really the bad stuff that clogs,” he said, adding that it will likely be another two to three months before those three large pumps are back in place.

He said even their regular “run of the mill” pumps the city uses for its wells “are taking months to get, simply because of the supply chain issues that I think most people are being faced with.”

What about those huge vacuum trucks the city has with those orange hoses on the front?

Diggs said the city has two of those and leaves in the drain are no problem, since they go right

through the pump without difficulty.

He said the city does cleaning of the storm drains with those trucks on somewhat of a regular basis.

“But again, we can have that thing cleaned up tip top and all you need is a bunch of trash being washed in from the storm and you’ve just filled it right back up,” he said, adding that the city cleans the drains before major storms “but new stuff is constantly coming in.”

“We are in the process of installing trash capture devices on our storm drain inlets and those are designed to catch anything as small as cigarette butts and to prevent all of that from going into the piping network,” Diggs said. “And we’ve got hundreds of those installed and those will certainly help in the future.”

Those are similar to leaf screens available for use in residential gutter systems, and they have an overflow ability allowing water over the top even if they are filled with debris.

That way, the first “flush” of trash in a new storm would be captured and the overflow, a cleaner water, would go down the drain.

Crews go around and clean those out after each storm.

Diggs said the city is even placing “road closed” signs at the trouble spots before the storm as a precaution.

“What we’re seeing is that people are moving those barricades out of the way, driving around them and going through the flooded area and when that occurs, that’s when we see those cars that they can’t make it through,” he said.

“It’s important for the public when they see that we have a road closed to heed that warning and

to just simply take another path to where they are trying to travel,” he said, adding that it may look like it is only a few inches high but in reality, it is several feet high.

“Heed the warnings that we’re putting out there, drive around, you’ll get to where you want to go,” he said.

Then what’s the single most important piece of advice regarding tossing trash of any type into the street?

“Everything from a McDonald’s bag to a cigarette butt at some point is going down the storm drain,” Diggs said. “So put your trash where it belongs, put your trash in the trash can, and at the end of the day you know this is your community and you’re paying your staff to clean those things.”

“The more you can properly dispose of your trash, the more we can spend our efforts doing things to better the community, not just to simply maintain it,” he said

*Editor’s Note: The flooded underpass story reminded La Nueva Voz Publisher Jeff Schenkel of flooding stories at the San Gabriel Valley Tribune when he was a reporter there from 1971 to 1973. Heavy rains at the time created similar flooding at the Vincent Avenue and Sunset Avenue underpasses beneath the San Bernardino Freeway, soon after that section of the freeway was widened from three lanes in each direction to four, beginning back at the Puente Avenue offramp. That flooding issue, which could have been connected to the construction project itself, has since been corrected.*

## Project resilience... from pg. 2

“It has to come from a place of compassion, it has to come from a place of love, it has to come from a place of care,” he said, adding that the city council already has added more police officers to the street who are working with organizations in the city to resolve this effort.

“I guarantee you working together, collaborating, that we can say we are part of an effort to humanize this issue but also to put an end to it in the City of Pomona,” Sandoval said.

The church is working at “restoring one person, one family and one community at a time.”

The mission of Project Resilience, officially founded in March 2022, is to help recover, rebuild, support and empower victims of sexual exploitation.

The group provides services to women along with gift cards, water bottle cases, feminine hygiene products and monetary gifts to human trafficking victims, and it is beginning its human trafficking awareness training this month.

For more information on Project Resilience, call (424) 236-6464 or e-mail [projectresilience22@gmail.com](mailto:projectresilience22@gmail.com).

Total Restoration Ministries is located at 420 N. Reservoir St., Pomona. For more information, visit the web site at [www.totalrestorationministires.com](http://www.totalrestorationministires.com).

A “CyberTipline” for reporting the sexual exploitation of children is (800)-The-Lost (843-5678) and the national human trafficking hotline is (888) 373-7888.

## Obstruction of justice?... from pg. 6

according to the civil lawsuit.

La Nueva Voz contacted the office of the chancellor at the California State University system asking if the interim chancellor or CSU board was reviewing the matter and considering taking any disciplinary action at Cal Poly Pomona or has even been in contact with Coley on the developments.

“The university believes the lawsuit is without merit and that the allegations it contains substantially misrepresent the facts,” said Michael Uhlenkamp, senior director for strategic communications and public affairs for the CSU office of the chancellor.

“President Coley has made several public remarks regarding the allegations and has stressed three consistent points – there was no ‘cover-up,’ no student fees, tuition dollars or taxpayer funds were involved, and proper reporting procedures were followed,” he added in an e-mailed statement.

“The university takes seriously any and all allegations of misconduct, policy violations and fiscal improprieties,” he said. “When such allegations are brought to our attention, we take appropriate action.”

La Nueva Voz also reached out to contacts at the Los Angeles office of the FBI and the regional

headquarters of the U.S. Attorney’s office, two agencies that were able to provide full details related to the million dollar embezzlement for the story in last month’s La Nueva Voz.

This month, however, an FBI spokesperson replied only that “the FBI can neither confirm or deny the existence of an investigation,” said Laura Eimiller, media coordinator for the FBI’s Los Angeles field office.

The press office of the California Attorney General had a similar response.

“Nothing to share at this point of time,” a spokesperson said in an e-mail. “Again, we’re unable to comment on, even to confirm or deny, a potential or ongoing investigation, to protect its integrity.”

“We suggest you reach out to the U.S. Attorney’s Office on your inquiry,” the spokesperson added, introducing the possibility that perhaps the U.S. Department of Justice not only was investigating but was the lead agency in the matter.

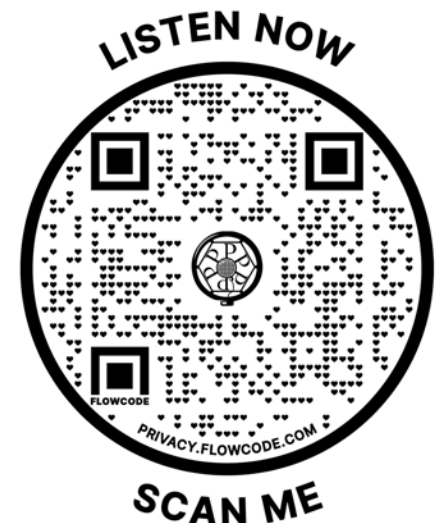
La Nueva Voz had already reached out to that office for comment but, as of press time this month, had not heard back.

Coley took office as president of Cal Poly University Pomona in January 2015.

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### Assemblymember Rodriguez introduces bill to make possession of gun without serial number a felony

Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez this month introduced Assembly Bill 97 which would make the possession of an unserialized firearm or firearm with an altered, removed or obliterated serial number punishable as a felony offense.

These firearms are referred to as “ghost guns,” and many police departments have reported increases in their seizures and recoveries.

“The serial numbers on firearms are critical to law enforcement’s ability to prevent and investigate gun violence,” Rodriguez said in a news release. “Since ghost guns are untraceable, they are especially attractive to criminals, and current law does not provide an adequate deterrent for those in possession.”

“We must increase the current punishment to ensure the safety of our communities,” he said.

As of July 2018, California required residents who assemble their own firearms or possess an unserialized firearm to obtain a unique serial number from the California Department of Justice and to inscribe it onto the firearm.

One year after the law’s enact-

ment, only 2,214 unserialized firearms were registered in accordance with the law. However, that same year, law enforcement recovered nearly 10,000 of these unserialized firearms, the news release continued.

Many communities have started banning ghost guns, including Los Angeles County.

“Unfortunately, these efforts focus on the supply of ghost guns in our communities rather than addressing the firearms currently in one’s possession,” Rodriguez said.

He said in 2020, California accounted for more than 60 percent of all ghost guns seized by the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

“Unfortunately, law enforcement only expects these numbers to continue increasing at this exponential rate,” he said.

“As Chairman of the Emergency Management Committee, I find it of the utmost importance for all Californians to feel safe from gun violence in their everyday lives,” he said. “AB 97 is a first step in making a change to protect our communities.”



**A NEW CHILD CARE CENTER IN DOWNTOWN POMONA** -- Members of the Pomona Chamber of Commerce cut the ribbon last month to officially open Kudos Child Care Center, at 640 S. Garey Ave., Pomona, just across the street from the Pomona Public Library. And both owners have plenty of experience -- Aida De Jong has operated her own facility for 17 years out of her house, and Johana Davila has worked as a teacher for Los Angeles Unified School District for 15 years. The new 1,200 square foot child care center serves children up to 24 months of age. Pictured, from left, are Jeff Johannsen of Pomona Hope and a Chamber Board member; Ron De Jong and co-owner Aida De Jong; co-owner Johana Davila; Chamber Executive Board member Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz; Chamber President and CEO Monique Manzanaras; and Chamber Board member Joe Perez of Credit Union of Southern California.

**Do you have a news story?**  
**We want to hear from you or your organization.**  
**Send your news tips to: [reneebarbee7@gmail.com](mailto:reneebarbee7@gmail.com)**

COVID-19

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Members of the Pomona Unified School District choir, featuring students in grades 6, 7 and 8, performed under the direction of Mike Smith-Ryan last month at the annual Christmas Celebration concert at Pomona's Garey High School.

### Girl Scout cookie season begins Sunday

Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles will kick off the 2023 Girl Scout Cookie season on Sunday, giving cookie lovers a chance to provide invaluable opportunities for Girl Scouts such as service projects, travel and summer camp with every package of cookies purchased.

Billed as the world's largest entrepreneurial program for girls, the cookie program helps develop skills in the area of goal setting, decision making, money management, people skills and business ethics.

And for customers, a Girl Scouts news release said the new "Raspberry Rally" cookie will join the nationwide lineup for the 2023 season. The thin, crispy cookie is a "sister" cookie to the popular Thin Mints, infused the raspberry flavor instead of mint and dipped in the same chocolate coating.

Girl Scout cookie season continues through April.



The amazing Garey High School Symphonic Orchestra, under the direction of music director Anthony Bonner, played to a standing room only gymnasium at their school last month for their annual Christmas Celebration concert, produced by the Garey High School music department.

Jeff Schenkel and Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz just happened to sit next to the family of the newspaper's designer Dora Cruz -- and didn't even know it until Dora showed up! Pictured clockwise from bottom right are Dora, Thomas Sajinovic, Edna Sajinovic, Rebecca Arreguin, Logan Sajinovic, and Moises Arreguin.



ACOMPANANOS EN NUESTRO PROGRAMA DE RADIO

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**LUNES**  
4:30 P.M.  
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4:30 P.M.  
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|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|

## Pomona's Dr. Vo joins in anniversary celebration of Vietnam Human Rights Network in Westminster

Pomona's Dr. Huu Vo, president of the Vietnamese Community of Pomona Valley and president of the executive committee of the United Council of Vietnamese Homeland and Overseas, presented special certificates of merit recently to the Vietnam Human Rights Network and U.S. Congressman Alan Lowenthal recently at the 25th anniversary



**50TH NATIONAL DAY OF QATAR** -- Pomona's Dr. Huu Vo, at right, president of the Vietnamese Community of Pomona Valley and also President of the executive committee of the United Council of Vietnamese Homeland and Overseas, spoke last month on the 74th commemoration of International Human Rights Day at a 50th National Day of Qatar banquet organized by the Consulate of Qatar at the Maybourne Hotel in Beverly Hills. Pictured, at left, is Consul General of Qatar Mansoor Abdulla Al-Sulaitin. Dr. Vo presented a special plaque to the Consul General at the event on behalf of the United Council of Vietnamese, recognizing the 50th anniversary of Qatar's independence from Great Britain. About 400 officials attended the event.

celebration of the human rights organization in Westminster.

Lowenthal, whose district includes Westminster, has worked to promote and defend human rights for Vietnamese human rights activists and "prisoners of conscience," according to a news release.

In a related action, the United Council of Vietnamese Homeland and Overseas last month adopted a joint declaration from

civil society organizations in both Vietnam and abroad reaffirming that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights."

The declaration, adopted on the 74th commemoration of International Human Rights Day, added that "throughout history, many cruel and inhumane dictators have deprived people of those endowed rights."

The declaration fully support-

ed the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights," and condemned "Vietnamese Communist authorities for defying international laws on human rights."

It also condemned current dictatorships in both Russia and Beijing.

Dr. Vo, listed as the first signatory, signed the declaration on behalf of the United Council along with representatives of 21 other organizations.



Photo by Renee Barbee

**BEST SELLING AUTHOR OF YOUNG ADULT NOVELS** -- Matt de la Peña, a New York Times best selling author who has written seven young adult novels, visited students at Pomona's Garey High school last week to talk about his life and his book "Mexican WhiteBoy." Garey Principal Roddy Layton told La Nueva Voz the author was contacted by Garey English language arts teacher Cynthia Sanchez. He said she and other teachers have formed the Cafecito con Libros club to strengthen literacy and the passion for reading. De la Peña was the third author to visit Garey. He talked to 600 students in the reading club and taught several workshops. Pictured, from left, are Layton, De la Peña, Pomona Unified School District Deputy Supt. Lilia Fuentes; Pomona Unified School Board member Dr. Roberta Perlman; and Pomona Unified Secondary Education Director Monica Principe.

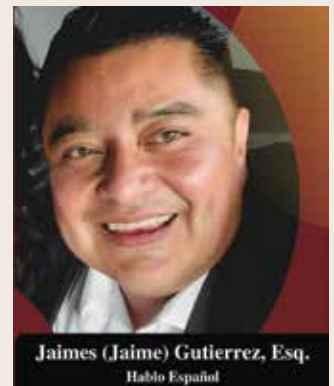


Photo by Renee Barbee

**POET LAUREATE LEADS DRUM CIRCLE AT GANESHA HIGH SCHOOL** -- Pomona's new poet laureate Ceasar Avelar teamed up last week with Ganesha High School independent studies teacher Paul Knopf (working with students taking classes remotely) for a drum circle presentation for students in the school library during lunch hour as a Martin Luther King Jr. Day observance. Students had an opportunity to experiment with a variety of instruments. Avelar took over as Pomona's second poet laureate on New Year's Day. He hosts the monthly open mic "Obsidian Tongues" program on Second Saturday each month at Cafe con Libros Press in Downtown Pomona and his new collection of poetry "God of the Air Hose and Other Blue-Collar Poems" is expected to be published by El Martillo Press. Pictured from left are Avelar and Knopf.

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Foothill Gold Line

KIEWIT-PARSONS, A JV

# NOTICE: Full Street Closure

**GAREY AVE. AT RAILROAD CROSSING NORTH OF ARROW HWY. (CITY OF POMONA)  
FEBRUARY 1 - MARCH 17, 2023 (45 DAY FULL CLOSURE)**

## CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY

As part of the 9.1-mile Foothill Gold Line light rail project, KPJV crews will be fully rebuilding the railroad crossing on Garey Ave. in the city of Pomona for the new light rail system. **This work requires a full closure of Garey Ave. at the railroad crossing north of Arrow Hwy., beginning February 1st for approximately 45 days.** During this closure, access to the Metrolink Pomona North Station will not be available from Garey Ave.; see map for alternative access routes.

## WHEN

**Beginning Wednesday, February 1st and continuing thru Friday, March 17th**, Garey Ave. will be fully closed to all traffic (vehicular and pedestrian) at the railroad crossing (north of Arrow Hwy.) 24 hours a day. Arrow Hwy. (south of the crossing) and Bonita Ave. (north of the crossing) will remain open and accessible by way of detour routes, see map.

- Daily Work Hours: 6:00 AM - 11:00 PM. Overnight work and Sunday shifts may also be required.

## TRAFFIC ADVISORIES

- Garey Ave. will be fully closed to vehicular and pedestrian traffic at the railroad crossing north of Arrow Hwy.
- Access to homes and businesses on Garey Ave. within the closure area north and south of the railroad crossing will be maintained at all times, as well as access to the Metrolink Pomona North Station from Arrow Hwy. and Fulton Rd. or Pine St.
- Bus stops may be temporarily relocated, for more information:
  - Foothill Transit Bus: (800) RIDE-INFO / (800) 743-3463 or [foothilltransit.org](http://foothilltransit.org)
  - Metro Bus: (323) GO-METRO/ (323) 466-3876 or [metro.net](http://metro.net)

## STAY SAFE

Please obey all posted construction signs and do not enter the construction work zone.



# AVISO: Cierre de Calle Completo

**GAREY AVE. EN EL CRUCE DE FERROVIARIO (CIUDAD DE POMONA)  
1 DE FEBRERO - 17 DE MARZO DE 2023 (CIERRE COMPLETO DE 45 DÍAS)**

## ACTIVIDAD DE CONSTRUCCIÓN

Como parte del proyecto de tren ligero Foothill Gold Line de 9.1 millas, equipos de construcción de KPJV reconstruirán por completo el cruce ferroviario para el nuevo sistema de tren ligero en Garey Ave. en la ciudad de Pomona. **Este trabajo requiere el cierre total de Garey Ave. en el cruce ferroviario al norte de Arrow Hwy., a partir del miércoles 1 de febrero a el 17 de marzo, por aproximadamente 45 días.** Además, la entrada al estacionamiento de la estación Metrolink en Garey Ave. estará cerrada. Por favor vea el mapa para accesos alternativos.

## CUANDO

**A partir del miércoles 1 de febrero y hasta el viernes 17 de marzo**, Garey Ave. estará completamente cerrada para todo tráfico ya sea vehicular y peatonal en el cruce ferroviario (al norte de Arrow Hwy.) las 24 horas del día. Arrow Hwy. ubicado al sur de el cruce al igual que Bonita Ave. ubicado al norte del cruce estarán abiertos y disponibles como rutas alternativas de desvío. Por favor consulte el mapa de arriba

- Horas de trabajo: Horas de Trabajo Diarias: 6:00 AM - 11:00 PM. También se puede requerir trabajo nocturno y turnos dominicales.

## ADVERTENCIAS DE TRÁFICO

- Garey Ave. estará completamente cerrada al tráfico (vehicular y peatonal) en el cruce ferroviario al norte de Arrow Hwy.
- Acceso a hogares y negocios ubicadas sobre Garey Ave. dentro del área cerrada ya sea al norte y al sur del cruce ferroviario se mantendrá en todo momento. Al igual como el acceso a la entrada del estacionamiento de la estación Metrolink por la Arrow Hwy. y la calle Pine o Fulton.
- Las paradas de autobús pudieran ser reubicadas temporalmente, para más información:
  - Autobús de Foothill Transit: (800) RIDE-INFO / (800) 743-3463 o [foothilltransit.org](http://foothilltransit.org)
  - Metro Bus: (323) GO-METRO / (323) 466-3876 o [www.metro.net](http://www.metro.net)

## TENGA CUIDADO

Obedezca todos los letreros de construcción publicados y no ingrese a la zona de construcción.

## QUESTIONS? / PREGUNTAS?

Project Construction Questions Hotline / Línea de preguntas sobre construcción: (626) 513-5788 Email / Correo electrónico: [CommunityRelations@Kiewit-Parsons.com](mailto:CommunityRelations@Kiewit-Parsons.com)  
General Project Questions / Preguntas generales sobre el proyecto: (626) 471-9050 Email / Correo electrónico: [PublicAffairs@Foothillgoldline.org](mailto:PublicAffairs@Foothillgoldline.org)

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