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Pomona Chamber of Commerce



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Thursday, June 27, 2024

Fairplex, Pitzer College receive top awards at 'Mayor's Gala' that nets \$50,000 for Pomona library

Pomona's Fairplex was the recipient of this year's "Mayor's Award" and the "Foundation Award" went to the Pitzer College Community Engagement Center at the Pomona Public Library Foundation's annual 2024 Mayor's Gala that raised more than \$50,000 for the library this month in the Sheraton Fairplex Conference Center.

Fairplex President and CEO Walter Marquez accepted the top award from Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval at the event.

Sandoval listed some of the

events that are held at Fairplex each year and called the organization "a major sponsor of community organizations for tens of years."

And he reminded the audience that during COVID, Fairplex was involved with COVID testing and quarantine sites and, more recently, at the request of the federal government, providing housing for unaccompanied minors crossing the border.

"The Fairplex is a pillar in this community -- they've been here since 1922 and they'll be here for



Fairplex President and CEO
Walter Marquez

until hundreds and hundreds of more years," Sandoval said. "Perhaps it'll look very different since we're working on this amazing specific plan that I'm so excited about."

"I can just tell you we are so fortunate and blessed to have Fairplex in our community," he said.

"What a privilege it is for me to stand here and represent a great organization, the Fairplex," Marquez said. "I will tell you when we got the call from (the U.S. Department of) Health and Human Services of potentially using our grounds for the unaccompanied minors, I

met with them and I told them you guys better be ready for a community that's going to care for these kids."

"Because it's not just you're renting space here at Fairplex to use, it's going to be a space that you will not be able to forget, the kids will not forget, and this will be the model that really needs to be used across the nation," he added.

Marquez said the community "stepped up" to care for the kids -- "so much so that (U.S. HHS) Secretary (Xavier) Becerra came, he had a press conference here . . .

Mayor's Gala... pg. 2

Garey's 349 graduates, after surviving pandemic, told their 'humble beginnings' will not limit their dreams

Stanford University-bound Hector Camaton, Valedictorian and senior class president at Pomona's Garey High School, told his classmates at graduation ceremonies last month in the school's Viking Stadium that their ability to survive the challenges of the pandemic four years ago "shows that no barrier is too great to overcome."

"We come from humble beginnings but it does not override how far you can dream or how high we can go," he said. "Legacy is what we created the last four years -- legacy for our school, legacy for

No limit to dreams... pg. 15



It was a traditional "hats in the air" moment at last month's Garey High School graduation ceremonies in Pomona as students celebrated by making it official the old-fashioned way -- tossing their mortar boards high in the air.



SEN. RUBIO TALKS TO DEMONSTRATORS IN WEST COVINA -- State Sen. Susan Rubio poses for a cell phone photo outside of her office last month in West Covina where nearly 1,000 demonstrators were protesting the Governor's May budget revision that delayed increases for "Regional Center" service providers for a year. Rubio said she and her Senate colleagues are on board with efforts to restore the increases. (See story and additional photos on page 5.)

PAID ADVERTORIAL

July is BIPOC Mental Health Awareness Month

At Tri-City Mental Health Authority (TCMHA), we are dedicated to advancing mental health equity to ensure that quality mental health services are accessible for all individuals and families in Pomona, Claremont, and La Verne, regardless of a person's race, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, socioeconomic status, gender identity, or sexual orientation. Recovery is possible, treatment is available, and healing happens.

While any individual can experience symptoms and behaviors of mental illness, Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) individuals are disproportionately impacted due to a variety of factors including, trauma, socioeconomic status, stigma, and displacement. Established in 2008, July is Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month, currently known as BIPOC Mental Health Awareness Month. BIPOC Mental Health Awareness Month aims at increasing awareness of these realities and reducing the gap between communities of color and overall wellness and mental health.

Mental health and wellness is for everyone, and there are practical resources and services that anyone can use to improve their well-being and to support the people they care about. Mental health services and supports are available to Pomona, Claremont, and La Verne residents. Please call us at 909-623-6131, visit our website at www.tricitymhs.org or follow TCMHA on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn to learn more.



Mayor's Gala... from pg. 1

and in front of everyone and all the cameras and everything basically said just that, that this place, Pomona Fairplex, was the model for the location of the unaccompanied minors going forward.”

“Now at Fairplex, we get to have a lot of fun and we just wrapped up 16 days of the (LA County) Fair, brought in over 750,000 guests to the Fairplex,” Marquez added. “But I will tell you one of the things that we get to do at Fairplex that is very much tied to what happens at the (Pomona Public) Library is education.”

He said it may be called the Fair, a music festival, an antique road show and more.

“But the premise behind it all is education as proven by our Child Development Center . . . or our career tech program for our high school kids,” he said. “They can get the automotive training, they can get the welding training that are high school credits so that they can graduate and move on in their careers.”

“Fairplex is more than just the Fair -- you all know that,” Marquez said. “Mayor, it is a pleasure, to the foundation, thank you so much for all that you do to continue to push education forward for the library, it is very much appreciated.”

Accepting the Foundation Award for the Pitzer College Community Engagement Center were Dr. Tricia Morgan, the center’s managing director, and Dr. Jessica Kizer, a professor at Pitzer, who were introduced by Pomona Uni-



Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval

fied School District Board member Dr. Roberta Perlman, who has been involved in the center’s work at the library from the beginning.

Perlman thanked them for their unwavering support for the foundation’s “Homework Club” and for demonstrating to both Pitzer and to the Pomona Unified School District students “that connection and compassion are the driving forces of positive change in our community and the world.”

Morgan, who accepted the award, said Pitzer is “deeply rooted in social responsibility and the ethical implications of knowledge and action and I think that our partnership with the Homework Club absolutely exemplifies this.”

And she thanked the students at Pitzer who value this type of work.

The program provides essential support for the library’s drop-in, one-on-one “Homework Club” tutoring offering with Pitzer students and faculty as an endless stream of tutoring.

The center was established in 1999 through support from the W.M. Keck and James Irvine Foundations.

“Libraries provide our children a place to grow, the curiosity to travel the world through books, and increase their imagination to transform themselves and perhaps in the process transform the world,” Sandoval told 200 guests at the event. “That is why we do



Pomona Unified School Board member Dr. Roberta Perlman presents the Foundation Award to representatives of Pitzer College. From left are Professor Jessica Kizer, Dr. Tricia Morgan and Perlman.



Ron Vander Molen

what we do so that our next generation can make Pomona even a better place for the next generations to follow.”

Library Foundation President Bree Hsieh added that research shows stress levels drop from

Mayor's Gala... pg. 8

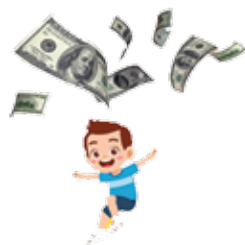
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Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz, at left, interviews Cal Poly Pomona student Olivia Burgess at Athens Services' offices in Pomona this month. Burgess was one of two Cal Poly students to receive a \$2,000 scholarship after writing a 500-word essay on environmental studies.



Representatives of Athens Services present a \$2,000 scholarship check this month from Athens to Frida Verdugo. Local students were asked to write a 500-word essay on environmental studies. Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz, working with Iso Nakasato, Athens Director of Government Affairs, contacted Cal Poly Pomona Professor Kristen Conway-Gomez, who helped select five Cal Poly students to compete. Pictured, from left, are Nakasato; Barbee; Liz Saldivar, Vice President of Government Affairs; Frida Verdugo; Yvonne Velazco, Director of Customer Services; and Brandi De La Torre, Customer Service Supervisor.

Assessor Jeff Prang reports L.A. County taxable property values expected to increase 4.75 percent over 2023

Los Angeles County Assessor Jeff Prang's office is in the final stages of completing the 2024 assessment roll which shows taxable property values for this year are expected to increase about 4.75 percent over 2023, marking 14 years of continuous growth and, for the first time in history, breaking the \$2 trillion ceiling for net total value.

"This has been a challenging few years as the local and

national economies respond to a variety of factors, whether it be residential or commercial," Prang told members of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors in May.

"Our analysis indicates that property values are going to grow for the 14th consecutive year, which is good news for property owners and for local government because they rely on property taxes to pay for vi-

tal public services," he said.

But he added that sales volume declined significantly in 2023 and commercial properties, especially downtown Los Angeles, have experienced "huge declines in value."

"I also want to remind residents that the growth does not mean property owners will be subject to a corresponding increase on their annual property tax bills," Prang said. "Most

property owners will see only a 2 percent adjustment prescribed by Proposition 13 (the state-wide measure adopted by voters in 1978 which limits a property owner's general levy tax to 1 percent of the assessed value).

The May forecast is an important tool for local governments as they prepare their annual budgets in anticipation of property tax revenues. It is a comprehensive tally, expected

to be completed by June 30, that values more than 2.5 million real estate parcels in Los Angeles County including 88 cities along with the unincorporated areas.

Last year's tally included 1.9 million single-family homes, 250,511 apartment complexes and 248,123 commercial and industrial properties, making an estimated \$20 billion available for public services.



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**Arturo Jimenez,
President**

Developmentally disabled demonstrators, service providers protest proposed state budget cuts

Nearly 1,000 demonstrators chanting and holding placards as cars drove by honking their horns gathered last month in West Covina to protest Gov. Newsom, in their words, breaking a promise to fund increased payments to service providers working through California's network of 21 community-based Regional Centers to serve the state's population with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

And they got the attention with their "Keep the Promise" community rally of State Sen. Susan Rubio who told them the California State Senate was supporting them in their fight for services originally promised in what was called

the Lanterman Act.

The state's apparent change in tactics to develop a budget was evident in the May "revise" of the proposed \$288.1 billion budget which was able to eliminate a \$27.6 billion budget shortfall.

"The reason we're here today is to have our community and our voice be heard that our service providers who provide critical and necessary services every single day to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are supported," said San Gabriel/Pomona Regional Center Executive Director Jesse Weller.

"Specifically, we are here today because of the proposal to delay a much-needed rate increase that is supposed to happen July 1 and we're here to say we need it now, we need it July," Weller added. "Don't wait a year to make this happen."

Responding to a question from La Nueva Voz, Weller clarified the increases had been promised not to the Regional Centers but to the service providers -- "our vendors, our community that serves people, individuals that have intellectual and developmental disabilities."

He explained that while the rate models have different complexities depending on the type of service it is, in general the service providers get the money from the state which is funneled through the Regional Center system.

Weller said rates under the current structure are no longer sufficient.

"The current pro-

posal that went out early in January this year was to delay or cut until next year until July 1, 2025, when the promise was July 1, 2024," Weller said. "What we're trying to say here is don't make us wait a whole year, make this happen now."

Nancy Bunker, director of an independent living program called Independent Community Resources, told La Nueva Voz a survey of the system completed nine years ago found it was underfunded by \$2.2 billion. A plan was developed over a period of five

years that recommended funding parts of the budget over another five-year period with the final piece of that payment expected next month in July.

She said Newsom was proposing postponing that because of the deficit "and we don't even know where that will turn after that."

"So we're all kind of saying this is out of control," she added.

Bunker pointed out that the state gave health care workers starting pay of \$25 an hour and fast-food workers \$20 an hour to start.

"Our average pay, not everybody, is \$16.50 to \$17 for front line workers -- and they are dealing with health issues and behavior issues," she said.

The minimum wage in California now is \$16 an hour.

The demonstration itself, outside of Rubio's district office at Vincent Avenue and Plaza Drive in West Covina, included sign-wielding protestors on every corner when Rubio herself came out to the sidewalk with a staff member to greet participants and speak

Demonstrators protest cuts... pg. 8



Demonstrators last month lined all four corners of the intersection of Vincent Avenue and Plaza Drive in West Covina protesting proposed state budget cuts for "Regional Center" service providers for a year.



State Sen. Susan Rubio, at left, chats with former San Gabriel/Pomona Regional Center Board President Sally Milano, whose 57-year-old son has been a Regional Center client since he was 7, during last month's demonstration in West Covina.



San Gabriel/Pomona Regional Center Director Jesse Weller, at left, is interviewed by Los Angeles television station KTLA Channel 5 during last month's demonstration in West Covina.



Photo by Renee Barbee

SAFETY TIPS FROM POMONA VALLEY HOSPITAL -- Dr. Michael Jimenez, trauma center medical director at Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center, demonstrates hands-only CPR at a "safe swim tips" news media event last week at the hospital's pool in a physical therapy facility in La Verne. According to a hospital spokesperson, it is estimated that 23 percent of child drownings happen during a family gathering near a pool, and drowning is the leading cause of death among children ages 1 to 4. In addition, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, drowning rates among children ages 1 to 4 were 28 percent higher in 2021 and 2022 than they were in 2019. And there are 250,000 swimming pools in Los Angeles County, with 96 percent of them attached to single-family homes.

Harmony and history merge at Historical Society's summer concert

The Historical Society of the Pomona Valley will host live music, appetizers and libations next month at "A Summer Concert at the Phillips" featuring "The Star Dust Trio," merging, as a news release noted, "Harmony and

History" as only the Historical Society can do.

The event is scheduled for 5 to 8 p.m. Saturday, July 20, at the historic Phillips Mansion and Courier House, located at 2640 Pomona Blvd., Pomona.

Music will be from "The Great American Song Book" and the "Era of Dance Halls and Big Bands" under the avocado trees.

Visitors can stroll the grounds and tour Phillips Mansion and the

Harmony and history... pg. 6

Realize Dr. King's dream of unity, community, and service

By Joe Shim, Service Awards Coordinator, Pomona Unified School District

Member, Compassionate Pomona

The legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., lives on through a campaign created in collaboration between The Drum Major Institute and Legacy+ called "Dr. King -- Realize the Dream 100 for 100 Campaign." Martin Luther King III and his family have called on the country to get involved in their communities and volunteer 100 million hours by 2029 to mark the 100th birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The campaign promotes three pillars to bring the movement to life. The first is promoting local volunteerism. Realize the Dream seeks to unify students, parents, businesses, houses of worship, and any member of the community who believes in the same vision. Their second initiative is for a message of unity, community, and service through town

CLARIFICATION

'Gender neutral' Spanish causes bit of a stir

The use of a "gender-neutral" word in last month's La Nueva Voz created a little discussion and we wanted to try to clarify things this time around.

We published half a page of story and photos on "Dia del Niño," a celebration of the children, on page 22 of our May 23 issue. The story can be viewed on our web site under "past issues" at www.lanuevavoz.net.

The event was held at Pomona's Martin Luther King, Jr.,

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Courier House.

Dancing will be permitted.

Price of admission is \$35. Reservations can be made on-line at pomonahistorical.org or by calling (909) 623-2198.

hall meetings in places where Dr. King, Jr. spread his messages. The last pillar is to amplify this movement through partnerships with the National Football League and other media partners. This will grow to a national event on Jan. 15, 2029, at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Pomona Unified School District was part of the soft launch from January through April of 2024 and registered more than 18,000 hours of service. Our district was recognized by Martin Luther King III for its leadership with the campaign. Students, community, and staff were involved in multiple local efforts such as writing letters and cards for veterans, cards and bracelets of affirmation for the Orange County Ronald McDonald House in the City of Orange, creating comfort bags for PUSD's



Joe Shim

Family Support Services, raising money for the Inland Valley Humane Society in Pomona, working to clean various parks and schools across the community, and completing individual acts of volun-

teerism.

Our students, community members, and staff were given recognition for their hard work. We gave out more than 200 Dr. King Realize the Dream certificates and more than 100 Presidential Volunteer Service Awards. We look forward to a new school year when we hope to double the number of volunteer hours towards the Dr. King Realize the Dream Campaign.

In order to amplify the message of service, we are creating a competition that will honor our local heroes. Students will be able to showcase a local hero through an artistic expression tied in with a video or written biography about why their nominee is deserving

of recognition. Top honorees will be invited to our local celebration and will additionally be shared on a national level with other heroes that are recognized through cohorts across the country.

Our district will support this effort through the Community Kickoff Expo to connect students with community organizations. Additionally, support is available for students to find the right places to volunteer time. If you are interested in learning more, feel free to e-mail joseph.shim@pusd.org.

Editor's Note: Joseph Shim, a teacher at Pantera Elementary School in Diamond Bar, was named "Teacher of the Year 2024" for Pomona Unified School District.

La Nueva Voz

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and go to page 2 for La Nueva Voz.

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Join Partnership for a Positive Pomona (P3) for the 3rd annual Pomona Youth Fest happening on Friday, August 2, 2024, from 5pm-10pm at the Millard Sheets Art Center at the Fairplex. This is a drug and alcohol-free event for teens aged 13-18! Enjoy live music from bands and solo performers, plus a DJ spinning your favorite tunes. There's more than just music! Challenge your friends at the video game station, try out different wellness activities, and capture memories in our photo booths. Follow us on Instagram for more details @pomonayouthfest.

La Nueva Voz...

Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, Linked In and Yelp!

Editor's Note: This page is the third in a series of a Phase Three statewide program with three focus areas -- "Anti-Hate," "Socioeconomic Justice and Equity" and "Health." The program is supported in whole or in part by funding provided by the State of California, administered by the California State Library in partnership with the California Department of Social Services and the California Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs as part of the "Stop the Hate" program. To report a hate incident or hate crime and get support, go to <https://www.cavshate.org/>.

Hate, Justice, Equity and Health – Phase Three of an on-going series as La Nueva Voz participates in a statewide program as newspapers attempt to help make a difference

Substance use is an issue in Pomona as in the rest of the country, but Pomona Valley Hospital has network in place to help

By Jeff Schenkel, Publisher

The entire issue of substance use, which is making headlines week after week nationwide, is continuing to attract attention in Pomona, as well.

Fentanyl overdose deaths increased for all races/ethnicities from 2016 to 2022 in Los Angeles County, according to the County Department of Public Health.

And in 2022, Whites accounted for the largest percentage of fentanyl overdose deaths with 735 incidents (38 percent), followed closely by Latinxs with 707 (37 percent).

Blacks were at 396 (21 percent) and Asians were at 41 (2 percent), according to county figures.

At Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center, figures showed in 2023 there were 113 overdose-related admissions -- 49 were Hispanic or White, 31 were non-Hispanic or White, 19 were Black, 2 were Asian and 12 were categorized as "other."

But on the positive side, Pomona Valley Hospital has an entire network in place to do something about it -- and they seem to be doing more in this area than any other hospital in the region.



Sherrie Cisneros, MSN, RN-BC

In a nearly hour-long telephone interview last week, La Nueva Voz was able to reach out to Sherrie Cisneros, MSN, RN-BC, the substance use navigator and clinical quality program coordinator in the hospital's emergency department.

It turns out Pomona Valley Hospital has been addressing substance use and abuse not only more than neighboring hospitals but for a longer period of time thanks to state grants provided in this important area.

"We started our program, Medication for Addiction Treatment (MAT), in March 2020 when the pandemic hit," Cisneros said, explaining that a state Department of Public Health grant at that time provided support to the hospital's emergency room for opioid use disorder in partnership with the California Bridge Program.

Fentanyl is considered an opioid, along with heroin, morphine, Vicodin, Percocet and others.

The program was launched for people with opioid use disorder who could come into the emergency room while going through withdrawal so physicians could administer a medication called buprenorphine.

The medication, Cisneros explained, is not a full opioid but is administered orally to work on the receptors to allow patients to eliminate withdrawal, reduce effects like cravings and reduce respiratory depression and incidences of overdose.

And it is less potent, for example, than methadone, which is used on a daily basis over a prolonged period of time to help patients who are addicted to heroin.

In addition, the patient simply has to walk into the emergency department, check in at the desk and tell hospital staff they are in opioid withdrawal -- no urine screen is required, and the emergency room team can accept the patient based solely on their symptoms.

Patients are given a full assessment and screening on their substance use and, if they qualify, they are given a two-week prescription for buprenorphine to "cover them" until they receive a follow-up visit with a "navigator," typically Cisneros, for a referral to the type of treatment facility the patient selects.

She told La Nueva Voz when she finds the best treatment for them, patients can select an inpatient facility, outpatient facility, clinic or other option based on what works best for the patient's set of circumstances.

Are there facilities located right here in Pomona?

Cisneros said there are clinics "right across the street" from the hospital where patients can receive primary care as well as medicine for their substance use, "and it is a full-service medical clinic."

While the program was launched essentially for people in withdrawal, Cisneros said the fentanyl crisis "hit" and with fentanyl overdose patients coming in, the program now offers options for those patients as well.

Patients may be given the same buprenorphine in cases of accidental overdoses. And while patients may not be ready for this type of regimen, the hospital staff is trained to talk to them to determine the best course of action for the most favorable outcome.

In fact, that training is an important part of Cisneros' job -- not only to make certain emergency room staff has the information but to make sure they are aware of stigma and biases that may impact the outcome.

She said they even have a "words matter" campaign regarding terminology they use with patients -- even asking how long the patient has been "clean" can imply they were "dirty," with the result of poor word choice potentially making harm reduction more difficult.

"It all comes into the rule of a patient coming in front of you as a nurse -- sometimes you have your own biases and experience with patients," Cisneros said, adding that the patient might be a "return customer" who left with less than a good experience.

"So there's a lot of biases and stigma regarding substance use," she said.

"Medication for Addiction Treatment" patients, Cisneros said, are coming into the emergency room and being referred for treatment at a rate of about 10 to 20 a month. And it can be for opioid use, alcohol use or something else.

To a large degree, Cisneros is focusing her efforts on training -- training of hospital staff and even the community through outreach events. She mentioned she just completed a training with community outreach workers at Pomona's Just Us 4 Youth, a non-profit providing long-term support and care to youth and families in urban inner cities, working with students at local schools.

And her emergency room team has been trained on the free distribution of naloxone (Narcan), a nasal spray used to treat a narcotic overdose emergency. She said anyone at all -- patients, family or friends -- can walk into the hospital emergency room 24 hours a day, ask for Narcan and receive it at no cost -- "no questions asked" -- because of a grant from the state Department of Public Health.

Two doses are in each package and, in the four years of the program, the hospital has distributed more than 1,600 packages.

Even so, there's still a stigma, Cisneros said -- people don't want others to know about their substance use.

"We are doing our best in community outreach to talk to a parent, to community members, (telling them) that this is something that happens across all social (levels), races, economics," she said. "We've seen so many overdoses and it's not just the homeless person on the corner" taking substances.

Part of the process, she added, is actually changing hospital culture.

"It takes years and years to change hospital culture, and our hospital really made great advances in the first two years," Cisneros said. "I have to say it's been wonderful."

The hospital emergency room even provides free fentanyl test strips, which are similar to COVID test strips or even pregnancy tests. These also are available under a state health department grant.

Patients simply add water to whatever drug they are using and dip in the test strip, which will indicate whether they have fentanyl or something else that may be laced with fentanyl. This can be especially important if the patient is using a substance recreationally and is unsure exactly where the drug is coming from.

And it doesn't have to be opioids -- it can be side effects to different drugs, and marijuana is no different. One thing she sees a lot of is an anxiety

Mayor's Gala... from pg. 2

reading a story -- more than taking a walk in a garden or having a cup of tea.

"How does our imagination change unless we . . . can just step away from the world for a little bit," she said. "When you're in a library, there's something special about a space where you can walk around and you can explore."

Hsieh said the library has amazing programs and offers one of the few "drop in" tutoring programs in the area.

"It's a part of our city that you just can't get any other way," she added.

Deputy Director of Library Services Anita Torres told the group that her parents took her to her first library at the age of 4.

"Something in them told them that bringing us to the library was going to make a difference in our lives and it absolutely has," she said, adding that the Pomona library has been in its current location since 1965.

And she said she has had the privilege of watching "this generation of kids of all ages have their lives positively impacted by this place and the people in it."



Bree Hsieh



Anita Torres

"We provide a place for students when they go after school, maybe to do their homework, or just to be with friends," Torres said, "or we provide a . . . place for jurors (from the nearby courthouse) . . . looking for a place to have their lunch . . . (and for) the unhoused in this community."

"What you are doing is going for a very good cause that absolutely is still relevant," she told the group of library supporters. "We're all serving the same community and that's the purpose of what we're all

doing, to make Pomona uplifted and the best city it can be."

The Garey High School Jazz Band under the direction of Anthony Bonner performed at a reception before the event.

This year's event brought in \$107,000 before expenses this year compared to about \$87,000 last year.

Funds raised at the gala will go toward on-going renovations, the after-school tutoring program, and summer cultural excursions to landmarks around Los Angeles.

Demonstrator's protest cuts... from pg. 5

to the crowd over a public address system, telling them this is an issue that is personal to her as a legislator and as a family member since she is a twin whose brother "had a challenge navigating the school system" in special education, and it was difficult for her parents to get the resources her brother needed.

"This funding is critically, critically important to all of you and to me as well," Rubio said. "Please know that the Senate is committed to keeping the funding. So we are still negotiating the budget, we are still trying to fight for the funding, and so the budget is not finalized but the Senate did express how important this funding is."

"And so we are rejecting the governor's proposal to delay the funding," Rubio added. "We will continue to fight."

"We appreciate all of you -- it is so important what you do for our community, it is so important what you do for our families, and we will continue to fight to ensure you have the resources, the funding," she said. "I want you to know again it's just not me here, it's my Senate colleagues are very vocal about this issue, so you are not alone, we're with you, we'll continue to fight with you."

Following Rubio's comments, Weller told La Nueva Voz they were "ecstatic."

"I think the fact that we have

legislative support is tremendous," he said. "The fact that Sen. Rubio took time today to come out and speak to our community and interact with our community shows that people are knowledgeable of our system and that they care."

"So to me, it means let me talk about advocacy -- advocacy works and so that's why we're here today. I don't have enough gratitude and appreciation for Sen. Rubio and also for the other senators and assemblymembers who are supporting our mission here."

Susan Stroebel, a resident of La Verne and a parent of a 30-year-old Regional Center client, said her son had been making his way through public education with Regional Center support until the last two years when he has been unable to continue to live independently and is living with her at home again because Regional Center has been unable to find adequate staff.

"So for the first time we're really worried about the future of our children," she said. "We're not going to live forever and if the system is falling apart, what's going to happen to our children?"

A San Gabriel/Pomona Regional Center spokesperson said similar demonstrations were held at the same time in San Diego, Irvine and Van Nuys.



State Sen. Susan Rubio greets a demonstrator with a fist bump at the demonstration outside of her West Covina office last month protesting proposed budget cuts for payments to service providers caring for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities.



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Photo by Renee Barbee

HEALED WOMEN HEAL AT 'PULL UP' -- Representatives of Pomona's non-profit organization Healed Women Heal, a group that works to nurture self-esteem in youth, women and families to create healthy relationships, participated in this month's "Community Pull Up" in the Pomona Pride Center parking lot. The event was presented by Project Hope, Pomona City Councilmember Victor Preciado and Three Valleys Municipal Water District Director Carlos Goytia and provided community resource information, free haircuts, "basic essentials" and more. Pictured, from left, are Alexandra Palmer, Healed Women Heal CEO and Founder Tracy Evanson-Norwood, and Essence Guss. For more information, call (909) 846-8362 or e-mail info@projecthopeca.org.



GRAND OPENING OF BERRI'S BEAUTY SUPPLY -- Members of the Pomona Chamber of Commerce gathered this month for an official ribbon-cutting ceremony to officially open Berri's Beauty Supply and Salon, a new business and Pomona Chamber member located at 2252 S. Garey Ave., Pomona. Pictured, from left, are Chamber President and CEO Monique Robles, Leah Asberry and her parents, owners Chanise and Donell Asberry, Chamber Board member Victor Caceres of the Youth and Family Club of Pomona Valley, Chamber Executive Board member Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz, and Chamber Ambassadors Joselyn Ruiz, a loan officer with Statewide Funding, and Tracy Evanson-Norwood, CEO and Founder of Pomona's Healed Women Heal (at rear).

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Photos by Renee Barbee
JAZZ ZONE AT JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION -- Jazz enthusiast Roscoe Owens' Jazz Zone exhibit was on display featuring paintings for sale and music for events at this month's Juneteenth Festival in Pomona's Ganesha Park. For more information, contact Owens at (626) 798-6848 or visit the web site at jazzzone.net.

POMONA'S JUNETEENTH FAMILY JAZZ AND ARTS FESTIVAL -- Pomona's 34th annual Pomona Valley Juneteenth Family Jazz and Arts Festival was held this month in Ganesha Park with opening flag ceremonies conducted by Donna Jackson-Houston, at right, president and founder of the Nogales Buffalo Soldiers Legacy Association. She was accompanied by members of The New Buffalo Soldiers, re-enactors wearing replica uniforms who perform throughout the year and have appeared in the Rose Parade in Pasadena for more than 30 years. They also rode last year in the Downtown Pomona Christmas Parade. Juneteenth is the celebration of enslaved people, Jackson-Houston told the audience, and in 1866 right after the Civil War, Congress created an act to have all Black segregated units be called Buffalo Soldiers. Those units not only fought in the Civil War but helped rebuild the country afterwards. Her grandfather served in the U.S. Army's 25th Infantry in World War I in Nogales, Arizona, where Jackson-Houston created a non-profit organization to preserve the legacy of the Buffalo Soldiers.



Photo by Renee Barbee
SINGING AMONG THE ROSES -- Purpose Church pastors Ashley Beckford, at left, and Larry Walker perform the songs "Glorious Day" and "Amazing Grace/My Chains are Gone" among the rose gardens at Pomona's Lincoln Park last week at a "Juneteenth Freedom Day" organized by Ray Adamyk and featuring speakers including Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval and others. The event was held next to the new statue of abolitionist Harriet Tubman, which was created for the city by an artist commissioned by Adamyk. Adamyk has hosted a variety of events in the park including his annual "Unity Day" celebration.



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Fall Session begins August 12, 2024

Las clases de Otoño comienzan el 12 de agosto hasta el 20 de diciembre, 2024.

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The way trash is managed in California is changing. It's no longer just one trash truck picking up everything and taking it to a landfill to be buried—out of sight, out of mind, right?

Wrong—these decades long practices have had a direct effect on our environment and have led to an increase in climate super pollutants, such as methane, being released into the air. Methane is one of these greenhouse gases (GHGs) that trap heat in our atmosphere and change the temperature of our environment.

A large contributor to methane is when organics materials, such as yard waste, food scraps, and food-soiled paper, decay in a landfill. Imagine burying a banana next to a shampoo bottle (i.e. something inorganic) and waiting one year. The shampoo bottle will still be there, but the banana would have decomposed. This naturally occurring decomposition process creates methane gas.

Consider this, landfills are the third largest source of methane in California, according to CalRecycle, and organics waste is responsible for one-fifth of the state's methane emissions.

Four Main GHGs

- Carbon Dioxide
- Methane
- Nitrous Oxide
- Fluorinated Gases

<https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/overview-greenhouse-gases>

In response, California passed Senate Bill (SB) 1383, the Short-Lived Climate Pollutant Reduction Strategy, to help reduce methane and other GHGs emissions statewide. SB 1383 was signed into law in 2016 and implemented in the City of Pomona on July 1, 2023, with the city's exclusive hauler, Athens Services, helping lead the charge.

In order to comply with SB 1383, residents and businesses must sort waste into three color-coded containers: green for organics waste, blue for recyclables, and black for regular trash. These three distinct waste streams help minimize "contamination," which would reduce the amount of material that can be recovered. Contamination refers to placing incorrect waste in the wrong container.

Each year, Californians send more than 11 billion pounds of food to landfills, according to CalRecycle, with much of that food still safe to eat. At the same time, there are millions of food-insecure individuals who have limited access to food. SB 1383 aims to bridge this gap by directing businesses, such as supermarkets and restaurants, to donate edible food to food banks, soup kitchens, and food recovery organizations who can help distribute the food to those in need.



Going forward, everyone in California will have to separate their waste into three separate containers to maximize the amount of materials that can be recovered. There may be a slight learning curve for residents and businesses in figuring out what goes where. To learn more, visit AthensServices.com/SB-1383 or call the Athens Customer Care Center at (888) 314-0061.

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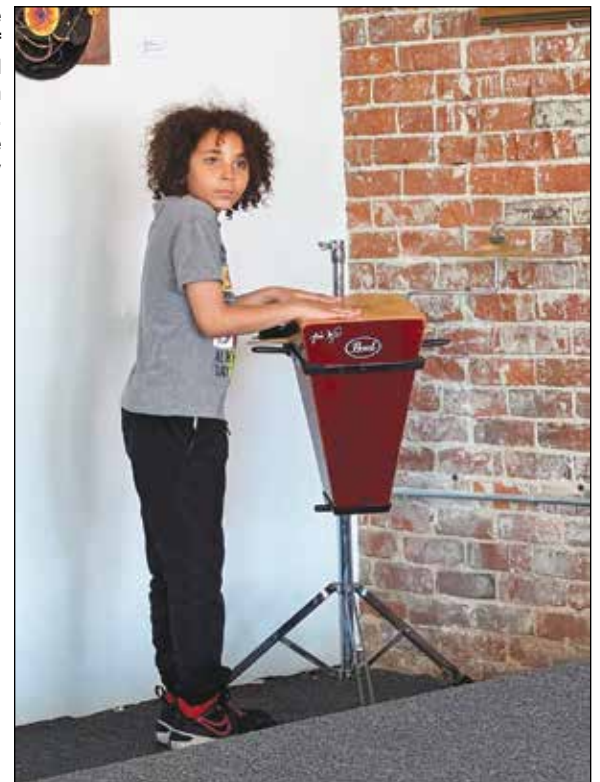
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Photo by Renee Barbee

POMONA OPTIMISTS STUDENTS OF THE MONTH -- Members of the Pomona Optimists honored students of the month last month in a presentation in the Pomona Eagles banquet hall. From left are Optimist Past President and Past Pacific Southwest District Governor M. Joyce Bakersmith and Optimist member Ramona Valenzuela, student of the month program coordinators; April students of the month Carolina Estrada, 5th grade, and Hailey Sintora, 4th grade; May students of the month D'Andre Thomas, 1st grade, and Leeah Aguirre, 2nd grade; and Pomona Optimist President Lorraine Canales. All students were from Pomona's Washington Elementary School.

Photo by Renee Barbee
Jackson Swodeck gets the hang of a wooden Pearl cajon drum, donated by La Nueva Voz to Pomona's African American Advisory Alliance, 406 W. Second St., Pomona, where it can be used by, well, pretty much anybody backing up performers on the stage.



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No limit to dreams... from pg. 1

our friends, legacy for our family.”

“As your valedictorian, I’m proud of each and every one of you for graduating high school,” Camaton said. “And as your senior class president, I’m very happy to see who you’ve become and who you will be in the future.”

Salutatorian Felix Gil also spoke of the challenges members of the class have had through their four years of high school.

“We should all remember where we came from and all of those who helped us along the way,” he said.

Vanessa Martinez Lopez, also a salutatorian (there was a tie), added that she applauded her classmates for all they have accomplished.

“Many dealt with hardships and tough days,” she said. “Despite these challenges, you persevered and worked endlessly to accomplish your goals.”

“Your life ahead of you will be full of wonderful opportunities,” she said. “I encourage you to step out of your comfort zone and pursue your dreams no matter how crazy or ambitious they may seem. A new chapter of our life awaits.”

Garey also had two Associated Student Body presidents this year.

Jonathan Castaneda, the first, told students “The cool part is that



Associated Student Body Co-President Amy Benitez



Valedictorian and Senior Class President Hector Camaton



Associated Student Body Co-President Jonathan Castaneda



Salutatorian Vanessa Martinez Lopez



Congratulating Garey graduates as they receive their diplomas are, from left, Principal Roddy Layton, Assistant Supt. Fernando Meza and Pomona Unified School Board member Dr. Roberta Perlman.

hensive high school in the district that showed successful growth on the state exam in both English language arts and mathematics,” he added. “It was the Class of 2024 from Garey High School who made the CIF playoffs in 13 of the 15 sports we competed in. It’s the Class of 2024 from Garey High School who this year won eight varsity league championships. It was the students from the Class of 2024 from Garey High School who were competing and winning band and pageantry competition.

And it’s a student from the Class of 2024 from Garey High School who will have their artwork on display at the national Capitol in Washington, D.C.”

And he quoted Kobe Bryant who said “the most important thing is trying to inspire people so that they can be great in whatever they want to do.”

“I hope we have inspired you, students of Class of 2024,” Layton said. “I hope you are walking out of Garey High School proud

No limit to dreams... pg. 20

you get to decide your own path.”

“Regardless where we come from, who we like or who we are or what circumstances we are in, life moves on and so will you,” he said. “You are not alone. We are all in this for the first time in our lives.”

And Amy Benitez, also ASB president, urged her classmates to “embrace the opportunities that await us with open hearts and open minds.”

She urged them to remember the friendships they have created, the lessons they have learned and the experiences that have shaped them into the individuals they are today.

Pomona Unified School District Assistant Supt. Fernando Meza told the 349 graduates they have

“proven that you have a dedication of a Viking to be a success.”

“Your family and friends are here to cheer you on to your next journey in life,” he said, adding that their teachers and administrative support staff are cheering them on as

well.

“You make us so proud,” Meza said. “None of you can succeed on your own. We all need one another and that perhaps is the most lasting lesson that you have learned in school.”

Pomona Unified School District Board member Dr. Roberta Perlman, reading from her favorite Dr. Seuss book “Oh the places you’ll go” (and adapting her poetry to better fit the occasion), told the students “Today is your day, you’re off to great places, you’re off and away.”

“Today’s graduation, a day to have fun, one chapter is over, but another is begun,” she continued.

And Principal Roddy Layton told the students graduation is “a celebration of an accomplishment and at the same time it’s a celebration of a new beginning.”

Bragging just a bit about the Class of 2024, Layton said when they were juniors they took the California state exam and the percentage of students who met or exceeded the state standard in English language arts outscored the California state average.

“We were the only compre-



Salutatorian Felix Gil



Pomona Unified School District Board member Dr. Roberta Perlman reads to the class from Dr. Seuss’ “Oh, the Places You’ll Go,” changing some of the words just a bit for the occasion.

**The City of Pomona Invites You
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Saturday, June 29, 2024
8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
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* Pomona Residents Only

- Place uncontaminated oil in a closed, clean container
- No bleach bottles
- Do not mix with any other chemicals
- Bring up to 5 gallons in a container and 5 filters per person
- Place drained oil filters in a sealed plastic bag

**La Ciudad de Pomona le Invita
a Reciclar Aceite de Motor Usado y Filtros**

Sábado, 29 junio 2024
8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
en Palomares Park, 499 E. Arrow Hwy
* Solo para residentes de Pomona

- Coloque el aceite no contaminado en un envase limpio y cerrado
- No use botellas de cloro
- No mezcle con otros químicos
- Se aceptan hasta 5 galones en recipiente y 5 filtros por persona
- Coloque los filtros de aceite en una bolsa de plástico sellada



RE-GRAND OPENING AT DOWNTOWN POMONA EVENT CENTER -- Mariachis came out to celebrate an official Pomona Chamber of Commerce ribbon-cutting this month for Stars Sports Resto-Bar at the Cosmo Event Center building, located at 197 E. 2nd St., Pomona. The location opened early last year as The Metro Sports and Restobar but now is offering more of a live entertainment theme. Pictured, from left, are Pomona Chamber Ambassador Tracy Evanson-Norwood, CEO and founder of Healed Women Heal, Pomona Chamber President and CEO Monique Robles, the restaurant's booking agent for performing artists Sergio Franco, owners Krishna Baderia and Abraham Kobi, Congressional candidate Mike Cargile, and Chamber Executive Board member Renee Barbee, of La Nueva Voz.

Pomona Concert Band kicks off summer concert season

The Pomona Concert Band, sponsored by the City of Pomona, will kick off its 77th annual summer concert series next month with the first of nine free concerts scheduled for July 11 in the G. Stanton Selby Bandshell in Pomona's Ganesha Park.

The opening concert, under the direction of Conductor and Musical Director Linda Taylor and assistant directors Dr. Jorge Garcia and Kerry Kline, is titled "Musical Masters, Past and Present."

"Movie Madness" is the theme of the Thursday, July 18, concert, featuring pieces chosen from famous Hollywood movies, "Songs of Influence" is set for Thursday, July 25, and Thursday, Aug. 1, will be "Musica de America Latina."

On Thursday, Aug. 8, the theme will be "Kerry's Awesome Concert," directed by Kerry Kline, Thursday, Aug. 15, will be "A Night with John Williams," featuring music written by John Williams, and Thursday, Aug. 22, will be "Linda's Favorites," directed by Linda Taylor.

And the final concert for the season will be on Thursday, Aug. 29, titled "Music That Makes America Great."

All concerts are held at 7:30 p.m. Thursdays through August 29 plus a "bonus concert" set for 6 p.m. Sunday, August 25,

also in Ganesha Park, in which the band will host the Golden State British Brass Band.

The Pomona Concert Band features musicians from Pomona and more than 20 surround-

ing cities.

It was founded by former Pomona Mayor G. Stanton Selby in 1947 as a program of the Pomona American Legion post.

The band has represented the

City of Pomona in countless events and performances over the years, including tours of Europe and Japan in 1985 and 1988. The band represented the city in April 2015 in a per-

formance at the Association of Concert Bands Convention in Sacramento.

For more information, visit the web site at www.pomona-concertband.org.



Photos by Renee Barbee

SECOND SATURDAY AND PRIDE MONTH IN POMONA -- It was Second Saturday and "Pride Month" in Downtown Pomona this month. Pictured on stilts is a performer from The Stage Global, a Downtown Pomona circus arts, fitness and dance company, who was amazing everybody, along with a caricature artist who was getting her subject's portrait just right -- and she was even throwing in a green ball cap at no additional charge!

New HHS Department rule to expand health care to DACA recipients

As part of the Biden-Harris administration's commitment to ensuring affordable, quality health care for all, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, through the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, has finalized a rule that will expand access to health care for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients, according to a recent news release.

The new rule ensures DACA recipients no longer will be excluded from eligibility to enroll in a qualified health plan through the Affordable Care Act health insurance marketplace, or for coverage through a basic health program.

According to the release, the rule could lead to 100,000 previously uninsured DACA recipients enrolling in health coverage.

"HHS is committed to making health coverage accessible for DACA recipients -- 'Dreamers' -- who have worked hard to live the American dream," said HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra. "Dreamers are our neighbors and friends, they are students, teachers, social workers, doctors and nurses."

"More importantly, they are fellow Americans," Becerra said. "More than one third of DACA recipients currently do not have health insurance, so making them eligible to enroll in coverage will improve their health and wellbeing and help the overall economy."

"The Biden-Harris administration believes health care is a right, not a privilege, and that extends to DACA recipients who have

built their lives in the United States," said Centers for Medicare administrator Chiquita Brooks-LaSure. "(The) rule reduces barriers for DACA recipients to obtain health care coverage and is a vital step toward making certain that it is available and accessible to all Americans."

Individuals without health insurance are less likely to receive preventive or routine screenings and may delay necessary medical care, incurring high costs and debts when they do seek care. DACA recipients currently are three times more likely to be uninsured than the general U.S. population.

DACA recipients and other newly eligible individuals will qualify for a special enrollment period to select a health plan through the marketplace during the 60 days following the rule's effective date Nov. 1, and coverage can begin as early as Dec. 1.

The Centers for Medicare also made technical modifications to the definition of "lawfully present" used to determine eligibility for coverage through a marketplace or a basic health program to promote administrative efficiency, clarity, and transparency.

These changes aim to ensure complete, accurate, and consistent eligibility determinations and verification processes for health coverage for these populations.

Prevention of Sports Injury: A Parent's Guide

By Michele Rebozzi, PT, DPT, OCS; Faith Rea, PT, DPT, OCS; Steven Bast, MD
The Coliseum Sports Medicine and Orthopedics at Casa Colina

Young athletes view summer as a great time to train. It's the season to get "the edge" on the competitor -- whether it's neighborhood runs, weight training, skills workouts, pick-up games, or summer leagues, just to name a few.

Now, athletes have access to even more training opportunities and resources to give themselves the edge. However, if some is good, more is not always better! With more options comes added risk if you don't understand how to prevent injury. Today, healthcare professionals encounter increased injury rate and burnout among younger athletes, who are constantly being pushed to new limits. Often, the core of the problem is overuse and overtraining, combined with lack of rest.

If you are the parent of a young athlete looking to enhance their summer training regimen, here are signs to watch for to help them avoid sports injury:

- **Fatigue:** Most injuries occur when the athlete is simply fatigued, physically and mentally! If your athlete is sleeping more, having difficulty sleeping, or seems sluggish, they most likely need rest. Encourage them to slow down and focus on getting the right amount



PREVENTION OF SPORTS INJURY -- The sports medicine team with Coliseum Sports Medicine and Orthopedics at Pomona's Casa Colina Hospital and Centers for Healthcare are, from left, physical therapists Michele Rebozzi, Faith Rea and Dr. Steven Blast.

of sleep. For teens, this means 8 to 10 hours nightly. More games played will not translate to better performance. Fatigued muscles are able to absorb less energy before reaching the degree of stretch that causes injuries.

- **Sore muscles/Body aches:** Sore muscles and joints may be a sign of overtraining. Consider dialing back the intensity or frequency of your workouts in the short-term. The day after a hard workout, try light, restorative exercise such as yoga, stay hydrated, and get good rest. Training must include a recovery and regeneration phase.

- **Headaches:** Excessive or intense headaches may indicate dehydration. Remember, poor nutrition can lead to injury. Encourage

your athlete to drink plenty of water and eat balanced meals daily.

- **Burnout:** If your athlete is losing interest in a sport they once loved, it may be time to give them a break and just let them enjoy being a kid!

If done with a thoughtful regimen that factors in rest, nutrition, and mental health, summer training is a great way to gain a competitive edge. But we all need time for our body to recover and regenerate -- especially growing kids!

Editor's Note: For more information about sports injury prevention or training, or for free sports injury screenings on Monday evenings, contact The Coliseum at Casa Colina. Call (909) 596-7733, ext. 3500 or visit casacolina.org/Coliseum for details.



Photo by Renee Barbee

POMONA HOST LIONS INSTALLATION -- Pictured at this month's Pomona Host Lions 104th installation and awards ceremony at Pomona's Cachanilla Chinese Restaurant are, from left, Bob Stuard, who cooks monthly at Pomona's Hope for Homes; Operations Director Don Martens; Gil Smith, treasurer (at rear); Ben Selters, secretary; Jack Lightfoot, financial secretary (at rear); WendyAnn Stuard, immediate past president; Steve Lusto, publicity director (at rear); Jo Fulton, member activation director; George Kapiroff II, president (at rear); Barbara Smith, tail twister; Anne Henderson, community service director; Mitch Stein, fundraising director (at rear); and Steve Storbakken, second vice president.

Congresswoman Torres won't try to expedite federal investigation of Foothill Transit Pomona closure, leaves it up to city officials

La Nueva Voz has been covering the closure of Pomona's local transit store, operated for the past 25 years in the Downtown Pomona Transit Center by Foothill Transit, with stories in the January, February, March and May issues, but Congresswoman Norma Torres so far has refused to get involved -- and she essentially told La Nueva Voz that in a brief in-person interview last month in Pomona as she was walking to her car with a staff member.

La Nueva Voz was able to talk to Torres briefly after her check presentation outside Pomona's House of Ruth, which assists families victimized by domestic violence.

Following is the complete transcript of an audio recording of La Nueva Voz Publisher Jeff Schenkel's interview with Torres:

La Nueva Voz: "Real quick, Congresswoman, on another subject. Would you be willing to make a quick phone call to (U.S. Secretary of Transportation) Pete Buttigieg and ask him to expedite his agency's investigation of Foothill Transit?"

Torres: "No, not at this point, this is a city issue, I have no oversight over that. City officials have an appointed Board member (at Foothill Transit)."

La Nueva Voz pointed out that the newspaper is already talking to Pomona City Councilmember Victor Preciado, who was quoted in last month's issue.

Torres: "Is he the Board member?"

La Nueva Voz: "He's on the JPA (joint powers authority of Foothill), yes."

Torres: "So then he's the one you should be talking to."

La Nueva Voz explained to Torres that the U.S. Federal Transit Administration has already indicated to La Nueva Voz that the FTA is investigating the Pomona closure. And the FTA is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation, headed by Secretary Buttigieg. Congress, of course, has oversight over all federal agencies.

Torres: "Well, good, let them do their investigation and then we'll talk about it."

La Nueva Voz: "There are 22,000 people who use that facility and if he (Buttigieg) could get it expedited, they wouldn't have to wait so long."

Torres: "I think that's something that the city needs to deal with."

La Nueva Voz: "Thank you very much."

Torres: "You're welcome."

La Nueva Voz had already reached out to Torres by e-mail through her local staff members in Ontario, who forwarded the request for a response to Torres' media representative in Washington, D.C., although the response was simply no comment.

"The Congresswoman has no comment, as this is not a matter of federal jurisdiction," said Julia Rudy, Torres' press assistant.

Torres is a senior member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development which, of course, includes transportation matters under Buttigieg.

A total of 22,000 Pomona-area

bus riders used services like purchasing tickets or obtaining route information at the local transit store last year before the store was shut down on Dec. 29.

Local riders now must travel 11.8 miles to a transit store in West Covina to obtain those services -- riders who in many instances rely solely on public transportation and often have no cell phone, computer or access to the internet.

Preciado told La Nueva Voz last month he would work something out to restore services, adding that while he wanted to address the need, he did not know "what the scope is going to look like."

He said options include the city staffing the transit store, or the city could provide similar services in Pomona City Hall as it does with "Get About" transportation services.

The closure of the Pomona store is saving Foothill only \$40,000 a year out of its annual budget of \$230 million, according to Foothill's own information.

The on-going investigation by the Federal Transit Administration was the result of inquiries from La Nueva Voz.

Foothill's own records show the bus company's Title VI review -- required because the bus company receives federal funds -- indicated the bus company was in non-compliance because the closure places an undue burden on low-income riders and those who identify as Black, Indigenous or people of color (BIPOC). Title VI is part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

The published work-around to
Foothill Transit... pg. 20

Substance use... from pg. 7

or panic attack, with patients coming to the emergency room having a heart attack or feeling like they can't breathe.

"Any drug legal or illegal can have side effects -- if they are having symptoms, they should definitely come," she said. "Plus, it might be laced with something."

Finally, because substance use falls under the umbrella of mental health, the hospital follows up referring patients as needed to mental health organizations like Tri City Mental Health and others, with options including remaining anonymous in peer support groups.

Patients can even go online, again anonymously, just to chat at web sites like bewellline.com, and the service is free.

Or they can call the nationwide "988" telephone crisis line to talk to a counselor or be referred to treatment.

Then is Pomona Valley Hospital busier with substance use than other hospitals in the area?

"We do see more," Cisneros said. "I am affiliated with the L.A. County substance use line as well as the San Bernardino (program) so we do get referrals from the counties."

Patients walk into the Pomona emergency room from as far away as the high desert, Riverside, and La Puente, she said.

"We cover a huge scope," she said. "We don't really deny anybody."

Patients may walk in for substance use, county officials may refer them or patients may know someone who has been in before.

And they are better equipped for

the job, since they were one of the few hospitals starting this program.

"We've been doing this for four years and we continue to be a predominant leader for substance abuse," she said. Cisneros has even trained "navigators" from other hospitals.

Then what advice does she have for patients or parents and friends?

Just visit the emergency room to be assessed by the doctor. Or reach out and call a navigator who can guide you through the process and explain available options.

"I think the biggest focus . . . is that the community has options for substance use," Cisneros said, adding that there are many different programs providing different types of access. "And people don't know that we offer these resources."

The hospital even offers Spanish-language literature and Spanish-speaking providers. Hospital figures based on U.S. Census and Los Angeles County Department of Public Health data show Pomona is 76 percent Hispanic, 11 percent Asian, 6 percent White and 3 percent Black.

Its surrounding service area of an additional 10 communities ranges from Hispanic populations of 71 percent in Montclair, 70 percent in Ontario, and 69 percent in Fontana to 38 percent in Chino Hills, 36 percent in San Dimas and La Verne, and 24 percent in Claremont.

Need more information? You can even call Cisneros directly at (909) 293-9557, leave a message and she'll return your call within 24 hours.

Editor's Note: Sherri Cisneros, who has 30 years' experience as a nurse, has served Pomona Valley Hospital for the past 10 years. A Southern California native and a graduate of Mt. San Antonio College, she also holds a master's degree in nurse leadership from Western Governors University and works with the California Bridge Program overseeing navigator mentors and leading the planning and coordination of all statewide training for navigators. She is a registered nurse. According to 2019 figures from the National Center for Drug Abuse Statistics, 11.7 percent of Americans 12 and over use an illegal drug. And according to the Centers for Disease Control, opioid overdose deaths continue to increase with 100,000 lives lost in 2020 alone.

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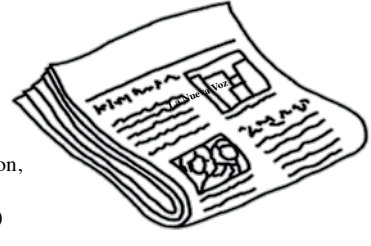
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- Pomona Eagles, 854 W. Mission Blvd., Pomona



Celebration of life held for Pomona's John Avila

A celebration of life was held last week at Pomona's Pilgrim Congregational Church for longtime Pomona educator, Pomona Unified School District Board President, U.S. Marine Corps veteran and community organizer John Joseph Avila who died last month in McMinnville, OR. He was 85.

A native of Denver, Avila and his wife, Dona, moved to Pomona shortly after they were married in Dona's home state of Minnesota in 1961.

The two lived in Pomona, pursued careers here in the Pomona Unified School District and raised their family here for more than 50 years before moving to Oregon.

Avila served as President of the Pomona Unified School District board, where he served as a board member for more than 10 years.

He was school board president at the time his good friend and fellow school board member Candelario Mendoza, founder of the original La Voz, predecessor of La Nueva Voz, passed away in 2008 at the age of 89.

At the time, Avila called Mendoza a "community icon who transformed education in the Pomona Valley to ensure every child in every household throughout our community has an opportunity to succeed."

Over the course of his life, Avila was a member of many organizations including the Catholic Newman Community, the Optimist Club, the United Farm Workers, La Raza Unida Party and the League of United Latin American Citizens.

The middle child of eight siblings, he shared fond childhood memories of freedom, multicultural exposure, and Catholic family traditions growing up in West End, Colorado, during the depression and World War II.

As first-generation Mexican Americans, John and his siblings were instilled with a deep sense of pride and obligation to honor the sacrifices of their parents through the pursuit of service, education and political consciousness.

After graduating from Cathedral High School, Avila served



John Avila

for eight years in the U.S. Marine Corps before pursuing a degree from the University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, to become a lifelong educator, community organizer and advocate.

He and his future wife met while in college.

An artist, Catholic and educator herself, the two of them connected over their shared passion for spirituality, public service, the arts and family values.

Politicized by the advocacy of his father, Roman, who lost his job speaking out about the poor working conditions of seasonal migrants he recruited for the Bracero Program, an agreement between the U.S. and Mexican governments that permitted Mexican citizens to take temporary agricultural work in the United States, Avila prided himself on challenging the status quo.

He recounted the assassinations of civil rights heroes President John F. Kennedy and Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., during his early days as a middle school teacher as the spark that ignited his fight for the expansion of quality education to underserved communities throughout his career.

He organized with the Association of Mexican American Educators and successfully lobbied for funding to spread Pre-K through 12th grade bilingual education. And he created curriculum to recruit, train and coordinate educators to meet the needs of their Spanish-speaking students and families and was a strong proponent of affirmative action.

Avila identified with the Chicano movement's vision for public education as a way to dismantle oppression and worked to uplift Chicano and Latino teachers and administrators in the school district.

He ran for Mayor of Pomona in 1995 but lost to Eddie Cortez, Pomona's first Latino mayor, who was elected in 1993 and became Pomona's longest serving mayor, serving until his death in 2005.

Despite the outcome of the election, Avila continued to seek opportunities to influence the conditions of the community.

Avila was known for his generosity, his charisma and his leadership. He was respected in the classroom, the boardroom and within the home, where expectations remained high for his family to live by those same standards and values his parents had so firmly instilled.

He was a lover of music and antique collectibles, dressed up for years as Santa Claus and sometimes even made elves out of his grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

And always the mentor, he never missed an opportunity

to ask about and offer guidance regarding the educational and professional interests of his children and grandchildren.

Family traditions that made memories for all included more than 30 years of annual vacations to Carlsbad and regular family reunions in Denver.

Avila's passing was read into the Congressional Record on the floor of the House of Representatives in Washington, D.C., by Congresswoman Norma Torres on June 11, who recognized him as a "veteran and public servant" and honored him "for his years of dedication as a community leader in the City of Pomona."

"Sadly, our community is now in mourning," Torres said. "For his outstanding accomplishments, it is my honor to recognize John Joseph Avila. His years of service and commitment to the people of Pomona are worthy of the highest commendation."

Avila was predeceased by his parents, Carlotta "Lottie" and Roman Avila, Sr. He is survived by his wife, Dona Avila, three children, Nori (Madrigal), Kyle (Avila) and Kena (Avila), 10 grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, sisters Laura and Maryann, and brother Roman Avila, Jr.

Donations to the Pomona Unified School District John Avila Scholarship Fund can be made at <https://connect.calfund.org/pomona-community-foundation>.

New UCLA study shows undocumented Latinx emergency room patients received COVID vaccine at same rate as U.S. citizens

A new UCLA health study showed undocumented Latinx patients who sought care in the emergency room during the pandemic received the COVID-19 vaccine at the same rate as U.S. citizens -- findings that surprised researchers given that COVID disproportionately affected the Latinx community in infections, hospitalizations and death.

Dr. Jesus R. Torres, lead study author and emergency medicine physician at UCLA Health, aimed to study undocumented people because they tend not to be identified in existing research even though they comprise about 3 percent of the population in the U.S., according to the Pew Research Center.

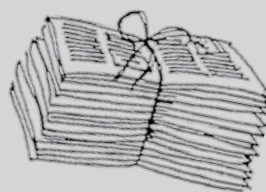
Torres noted that the emergency room is one of the very few places where undocumented immigrants can get access to medical care.

From September 2021 to March 2022, the researchers surveyed 306 emergency room patients about their citizenship status and whether they received a COVID vaccine or not. The group was comprised of adult men, women, and Latinx, Black, White and other races.

The researchers found that un-
COVID vaccines... pg. 20

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**COVID vaccines...
from pg. 19**

documented Latinx patients were more likely to have a prior COVID infection. They also found that the group had the same rate of vaccine uptake compared to other groups in the study.

“We would have expected Latinx patients to have lower rates of vaccination, considering higher rates of infection, hospitalizations and death,” Torres said.

He added that from a public health perspective, it is imperative to identify disadvantaged groups for research, policy advising, resource allocation, and targeted vaccine uptake campaigns.

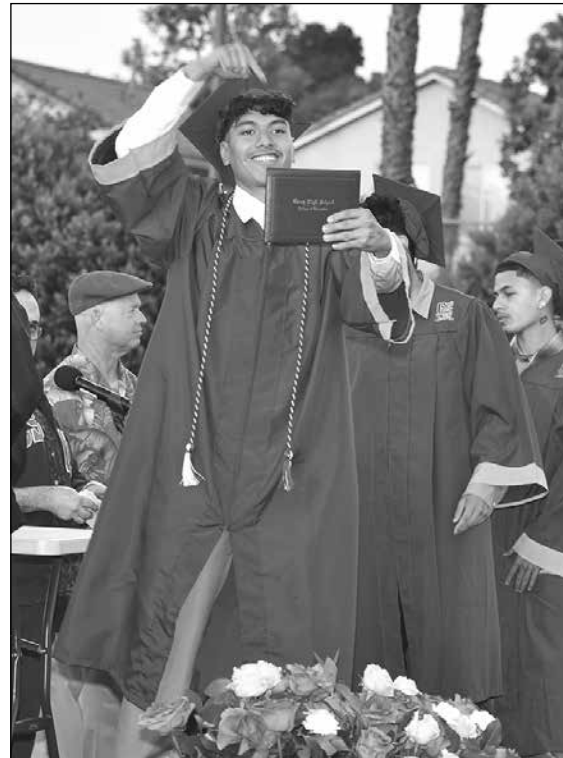
**No limit to dreams...
from pg. 15**

that you attended this school. And I hope you accept this new challenge -- be great. You have proven to me, this district and to the state that you are capable.”

This year marked the 60th commencement exercises at Garey.

A total of 1,551 students graduated from Pomona Unified School District schools this year (does not include summer school graduates). Total district enrollment this year was 20,974.

Editor’s Note: La Nueva Voz rotates its coverage of high school graduation ceremonies each year.



Sometimes you just can't believe it and sometimes you have to show it to your parents right away because THEY can't believe it. Either way, graduates were reacting both ways and more at last month's ceremonies at Pomona's Garey High School.

**Foothill Transit...
from pg. 18**

“mitigate” that impact was announcing the West Covina office would be open for eight Saturday hours a month to take care of the needs of those 22,000 people.

Depending on the outcome of the federal investigation, Foothill could receive legal, punitive or administrative penalties or fines and could even be required to re-open the Pomona facility.

Foothill was investigated by the FTA in 2016 for another Title VI matter with implementation deficiencies of the bus company’s Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program designed to prevent discrimination in the award of FTA-assisted contracts and subcontracts.

Foothill’s West Covina office logged only 9,161 “walk-in” customers last year compared to the 22,000 in Pomona.

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Info on student group programs at AGRIScapes:
www.agriscapes.cpp.edu
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SINGERS AT LOPEZ URBAN FARM -- Students from Music Tree School in Pomona, an after school program for the performing arts, sang at last month's Third Annual Art Fest at Pomona's Lopez Urban Farm. The school, located in Phillips Ranch, offers children's private lessons for voice, guitar, drums and violin. For information, call (909) 671-4422.

THIRD ANNUAL ART FEST AT LOPEZ FARM -- Kids were learning how to make things out of clay (note the creative use of old copies of La Nueva Voz under the clay), artists were selling their jewelry and their art, and other artists were working on murals at last month's Third Annual Art Fest at Pomona's Lopez Urban Farm, billed as a "celebration where creativity meets sustainability." Included were demonstrations, workshops, farm tours and more. Lopez Urban Farm, a space provided to the non-profit by Pomona Unified School District, is located at 1034 W. Mission Blvd., Pomona.

'Celebration of Life' set for next month for Pomona's Shirley Ann Smith

Visitation is scheduled for tonight (Thursday, June 27) at Todd Memorial Chapel in Pomona for Shirley Ann Smith, who died last week after a heroic battle with cancer at her Pomona home of more than 50 years. She was 89.

Shirley was born on May 15, 1935, in Columbia City, Ohio, the daughter of the late Joseph Russel (Pete) and Mary Troxel Pletcher. She moved to California after receiving her bachelor's and master's degrees from Taylor University in Upland, Indiana.

She married Pomona's Duane Smith on June 6, 1964. They have two children, Deborah Colleen Smith and Sheldon Russel Smith.

Shirley lived in Pomona for more than 50 years. In the mid-1970s, she served as Pomona's assistant city manager. Her duties focused on grant administration.

She had previously served as an administrator in the admissions office at Pomona College in Claremont. Shirley received her bachelor's degree from Tay-

lor University in 1955, and earned a master's degree there in 1957, both in religious education. She served as the director of religious education at United Methodist Churches from 1957 to 1968, first at Kingsburg Methodist Church in Central California, at the Maywood Methodist Church where she and Duane met, and later at North Hollywood United Methodist Church and then Glendora United Methodist Church.

Between 1995 and 1998, Shirley and Duane ran a market research business out of their home. She served on the board of the first Pomona Public Library Foundation from 2003 to 2005. Shirley had a beautiful singing voice and was an accomplished pianist. She loved working in the garden.



Shirley Ann Smith

Shirley visited more than half of the states and more than 30 countries on five continents. She spent the summer of 1956 in Cuba and, while Duane was working elsewhere in Israel, she spent the summer of 1971 in Jerusalem with their two young children.

She is survived by her husband, Duane, their daughter Deborah Colleen Smith, of Kent,

Ohio, and a teacher at Kent State University, and their son, Sheldon Russel Smith, of West Los Angeles, who was scheduled to retire this week from teaching at UCLA.

Both have doctoral degrees -- Deborah's from Washington State University and Sheldon's from The Ohio State University.

'Summer Fun Series' events, open to public, to be held at Temple Beth David in Temple City

Temple Beth David of the San Gabriel Valley, the only reform Jewish temple in the area, will hold its first-ever "Summer Fun Series" fundraiser events open to the public in July and August at the Temple in Temple City.

The first event, scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Saturday, July 13, will include live music by "Unkle Monkey," playing rock, reggae, funk and more, along with performances by a humorist and even "The Great Zamboni," a comedian and magician performing tricks.

A second event, scheduled for 6 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 10, will feature live music by the Temple Beth David Allstar Band, come-

Donations in Shirley's memory can be made to the Pomona Public Library Foundation.

Visitation at Todd's is scheduled for 5 to 8 p.m. tonight. An informal graveside celebration is set for 10 a.m. on Friday (June 28) at Pomona Valley Memorial Park, and the family is planning a celebration of life for July 27.

dians, magicians and more. Temple Beth David's new Rabbi Ira Rosenfeld will host both events showcasing his own talents as a musician, comic and actor.

Food and drinks for all ages will be available for purchase.

According to a news release, Rabbi Rosenfeld, who is a member of the local interfaith council, is very inclusive and did not want to make the "Summer Fun Series" a specifically "Jewish" event.

"It is important that we celebrate life, not despite, but because of all the things going on locally and around the world," he

American Legion Past State Commander, in Pomona on Memorial Day, says reverence and dignity are important but ‘remember the good times’

Immediate Past State Commander of the American Legion Jere Ramano, a retired Marine veteran, asked guests at last month’s Veteran’s Memorial Day program at Pomona Cemetery to remember those who “passed in the service of our country” but to “remember the good times.”

“Because all of us during those times and years of service we spent our off hours with our teammates, our platoon leaders, we played sports together,” Ramano said. “We had barbecues on the weekend together. That camaraderie is only shared by those that served.”

“But I ask on this day of solemn reverence and dignity for those that have passed . . . as a third generation Marine, a grandfather who served at Guadalcanal (World War II), as a father who lost his life in Vietnam, I treat this day with all the solemn dignity and respect that it deserves because I remember them,” he said.

“On this day I want to remember those good times,” Ramano said. “I was the best man at one of my fellow Marines’ weddings that is no longer with us. I cherish the memory of the good times. When I think of them today I think of the good times. Celebrate that life.”

“There are a number of people that are suffering today,” he said, including a young man who graduated from college and joined the Army with a dream of joining the California Highway Patrol.

But during basic training, he contracted a staph infection that turned into flesh-eating bacteria that ultimately cost him his leg.

“That young man with a dream . . . that person doesn’t exist anymore,” he said. “He has a new reality.”

Ramano said many service members in service to their country “lost who they were.”

“We do not have a day for our wounded warriors yet, but do they deserve less?” he said. “They still talk amongst us for God and country.”

“So, on this Memorial Day when I ask about celebration, celebrate those memories, but take time out to also remember those who lost themselves and had to embrace a new reality and have not given up the fight,” he said.

“Please take the time to visit convalescent hospitals, visit the



Pomona American Legion Post 30 Commander Javier Hinostrroza Master of Ceremonies



Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez



Congresswoman Norma Torres

VA, show that appreciation that we talked about today for our service members who have given the ultimate because these individuals have also sacrificed so much,” he added.

Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval thanked everyone who has lost family “and thank you to the parents of those who still serve in the military today.”



Pomona American Legion Post 30 Color Guard members Bob Radcliff, at left, and Jorge (JB) Barrera perform a solemn flag folding ceremony at last month’s Memorial Day activities at Pomona Cemetery.



Pomona American Legion Post 30 Auxiliary President Stephanie Huff places a memorial wreath at Memorial Day ceremonies at Pomona Cemetery with the help of Post 30 Color Guard Capt. Bob Radcliff.



Pomona’s American Legion Post 30 members Hector Navarro, at left, and Jack Peterson place a memorial wreath on behalf of Post 30 at ceremonies at Pomona Cemetery.



Retired U.S. Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Jere Ramano



Pomona City Councilwoman Nora Garcia

“May we always remember that because of our ideals we are a great country, a country so great that 45,000 immigrants serve in our military branches today,” he said.

“As the mother of an Air Force veteran, I know that the sacrifice is a shared sacrifice of a military, our greatest military in the world, is one that is a voluntary military,” said Congresswoman Norma Tor-

res. “And for that sacrifice, we all must commit to ensure that if they are good enough to be recruited, they should be good enough to be taken care of when they come home.”

State Sen. Susan Rubio said she has “great, great respect for all of those standing here before us in uniform and those who are here who have served, but with much



State Sen. Susan Rubio

gratitude to all those who laid down their lives for us.”

She said she has an uncle in his 70s who served in Pearl Harbor and is still telling the story.

“There’s always a mother left
Remember the good times... pg. 23

Remember the good times... from pg. 22

behind, a father, brother, who's worried about that individual and worried that they may not come home," she said.

Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez, who said he has two uncles buried in the cemetery here, said California is home to nearly two million former service members, the largest veteran population of any state in the United States.

And he said there are nearly 3,400 who call the Pomona Valley their home.

"Over 1.3 million service women and men have sacrificed

their lives . . . over the course of this nation's history," said Andrea Moreno on behalf of Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda Solis. "Today we reflect and pay our respect to our nation's heroes."

Dr. Huu Dinh Vo, president of the Vietnamese Community of Pomona Valley, extended his gratitude and respect to all American veterans, especially those who died in the Vietnam War defending their freedom.

Vo came to the U.S. in 1975 with the "boat people" after the Fall of Saigon.

"On behalf of Vietnamese people, thank you for all of you who open your arms for Vietnamese people here in 1975," Vo said. "America is a beautiful land. Let's stay to-

gether and make this country the land of hope, the land of peace, the land of freedom."

The Pomona Concert Band conducted by Linda Taylor performed at the event.



Dr. Huu Dinh Vo



Pomona Eagles President Dick Lotz places a memorial wreath at Pomona Memorial Day ceremonies.



Photos by Renee Barbee
HOUSE OF RUTH RECEIVES MILLION DOLLAR CHECK -- Congresswoman Norma Torres presented a check for \$1,049,600 to Pomona's House of Ruth last month. CEO/Executive Director Pat Bell said the funding would be used for much-needed capital improvement projects including replacing the roof on two of the three House of Ruth facilities. House of Ruth, which assists families victimized by domestic violence, was one of 15 organizations receiving "appropriations awardee" grant funding in Torres' district and was one of 70 applicants for the funding. Pictured holding the check are, from left, Chief Development Officer Rhonda Beltran, Pat Bell, Torres and Pomona City Councilmember Elizabeth Ontiveros-Cole.

JUST US 4 YOUTH RECEIVES MILLION DOLLAR CHECK -- Congresswoman Norma Torres presented a check for \$1,016,279 to Just Us 4 Youth, a non-profit working to transform the lives of urban youth by providing them opportunities, during a check presentation ceremony last month at First Presbyterian Church in Pomona. Pictured, from left, are Just Us 4 Youth Program Manager Dayna Garrett, "Stay" (transitional housing) Supervisor Evanne Coleman of Just Us 4 Youth, former Pomona City Councilmember and supporter Paula Lantz, Torres, Just Us 4 Youth Founder and CEO Eric Vasquez, Pomona City Councilmembers Elizabeth Ontiveros-Cole and John Nolte, and Just Us 4 Youth Board President Peter Hidalgo, a Board member of Mt. San Antonio College and government affairs representative for Spectrum. Torres also presented a check for \$201,834 to Pomona's Los Angeles County Emergency Operations Center and Fire Station #182 to purchase lifesaving equipment.



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said. "We want and need to bring light into our community and the world."

Tickets are \$18 (\$10 for Temple Beth David members) and children under 13 are half price.

Proceeds will help Israel and the local Jewish community.

Temple Beth David is at 9677 Longden Ave., Temple City.

For more information, call (626) 287-9994 or e-mail rabbi@templebd.com.

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