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La Nueva Voz

The New Voice, a Bilingual (English/Spanish) Publication
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Pomona Chamber of Commerce



Issue No. 206

Thursday, September 24, 2026

'Hen & Heifer' named 'Business of the Year' at Downtown Pomona's annual meeting

Downtown Pomona, also known as the Downtown Pomona Owners Association, named Second Street restaurant "Hen & Heifer" the "Business of the Year" last month at the group's annual meeting and awards presentation.

Restaurant owners Victor and Rachel Gurrola were commended for bringing a distinctive, "scratch-made" dining experience to Downtown Pomona at the event at the Institute of Latino Art downstairs in the Founders Building.

"Thank you, guys, we've seen a lot of you guys come through, we appreciate all your support," Victor Gurrola said in accepting the award. "Without your support,

we probably cannot be successful as we are. So, thank you guys all so much."

The restaurant is located at 296 W. 2nd St. The owners operate a second location in Redlands. A third location in Victorville operates under another name.

The "Outstanding Achievement Award" went to Geo Esparza and "The Alley Gallery" for his dedication to the Downtown Pomona



Rachel and Victor Gurrola, owners of "Hen & Heifer," accept the Downtown Pomona "Business of the Year" award last month at an annual meeting held at the Institute of Latino Art.

community and his inspiring vision and support of the arts.

Master of ceremonies Marco Argote, DPOA's marketing director, said the award is for "somebody that has exceptional accomplishments within the downtown (and) is always involved."

"Everybody's doing the best they can to improve Pomona and everybody here has the same goal which

is to try to make Pomona better and make sure people respect us and admire the work that we do here," Esparza said in accepting the award.

"Community Champion Award," for someone who has significant impact in the downtown community through art, went to Manny Vizcarra and his Tradicion Dance Company, who hosts free community events in partnership with the Fox Theater, including the upcoming La Posada celebration in December. He was also instrumental in bringing the Dazantes Unidos Festival to Downtown Pomona next March, an event expected to attract more than 7,000 attendees.

"Thanks to DPOA and the Fox who have helped us put Pomona on the map through multiple events and, of course, our beautiful Mexican culture through folklorico," Vizcarra said.

The DPOA's "Visionary Award" went to Maricela Rodarte, owner of Pomona Mercantile 1888, also on staff at Pomona Unified School District. She was recognized for the tremendous impact she has made on the Downtown Pomona community and its youth in just one year of business "through forward thinking and impactful

Downtown Pomona... pg. 2

INSIDE CITY HALL

Candidate Jacky Elizalde alleges 'political motivation' after Pomona Councilmembers oust her from commission

Pomona City Council candidate Jacky Elizalde, who is seeking to unseat incumbent Councilmember Victor Preciado in a runoff in the November election, responded in a news release to council action last month to remove her from the city's Parks and Recreation Commission, calling it "selective enforcement and political motivation."

Elizalde, who was appointed to the commission by City



Jacky Elizalde



La Nueva Voz file photos
Victor Preciado

Councilmember Elizabeth Ontiveros-Cole in February 2025, was removed from the commission in a unanimous 5-0 vote. Preciado recused himself from the discussion and waited out of the room during the consideration, and Mayor Tim Sandoval was absent from the meeting.

According to the staff report to councilmembers, Elizalde missed three

Inside City Hall... pg. 6

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Downtown Pomona... from pg. 1

new business ideas that have made a difference to downtown,” Argote said.

“What started off as a little tiny snack shop has now turned into a gallery and every Second Saturday we throw on full concerts, and I hope that one of these days one of you guys will join us,” Rodarte said. “I am in love with this community, I grew up here, and I really hope that you . . . come and visit so you can see the vision that I have for it.”

“Artist of the Year Award” went to Dana Burlingame, a graduate of Downtown Pomona’s The School of Arts and Enterprise, who was recognized for her artistic contributions and work on murals throughout Pomona.



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Downtown Pomona Board President Cathy Tessier accepts an “Excellence in Service” award at the group’s annual meeting last month.



Dana Burlingame Artist of the Year Award

Burlingame told the group she has been an artist in the Pomona Art Walk since she was about 12 years old.

“I absolutely love the community and the people in it, and I would never imagine that I would be doing it full-time as a job,” she added. “I just want to pour back into the community as much as possible.”

“Art Gallery of the Year Award” went to “Artist in the Alley,” led by Nate McMullen and his son Ian. The award recognized their active involvement in Downtown Pomona’s arts community and its continued success in attracting large crowds to the “Second Saturday Artwalk.”

McMullen said he is pleased to be able to “provide a spot for people to show their art completely for free, where young people and artists can get together and fully express themselves in their art and just enjoy the music.”

“I wouldn’t be here without the community and the artists that are in it that bless my gallery with all your work,” he said.

And “Excellence in Service” awards were presented to Downtown Pomona Board President and property owner Cathy Tessier and Cary Lowenstein, Downtown Pomona treasurer and Mission Promenade residential property owner.

“I live my life down here, my family lives our lives down here, and we wouldn’t have it any other way,” Tessier said in accepting the award.

Selection of six of the winners was Downtown Pomona... pg. 6



Manny Vizcarra Tradicion Dance Company



Geo Esparza The Alley Gallery



DPOA Director Heidi Ortega, at left, and Marketing Director Marco Argote present the “Visionary Award” to Maricela Rodarte of Pomona Mercantile 1888.



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Two outstanding Pomona students selected as National Merit Scholarship semifinalists

Two Pomona students – International Polytechnic High School’s Jayson Li and Diamond Ranch High School student Amara K. Beatty – were named this month as Pomona’s two semifinalists in the prestigious 2027 National Merit Scholarship Program.

They were among more than 16,000 semifinalists in the 72nd year of the competition – who program officials call “academically talented high school seniors” – having an opportunity to continue in the competition for about 6,700 National Merit Scholarships worth approximately \$24 million that will be offered next spring, according to the program’s news release from its headquarters in Evanston, Illinois.

More than 1.2 million juniors in about 20,000 high schools nationwide entered the 2027 competition.

To be considered for an award, they will need to fulfill several requirements to advance to the finalist level. About 95 percent of the semifinalists are expected



Amara K. Beatty
Diamond Ranch High School



Jayson Li
IPoly High School

to attain finalist standing, and about half of the finalists will win a National Merit Scholarship, earning the “Merit Scholar” title.

A total of 2,245 semifinalists on the just-released list were from California.

Jayson Li, 17, a senior at IPoly on the Cal Poly Pomona campus, is a resident of Walnut, and Amara Beatty, also 17, is a resident of Pomona.

Bryan West, IPoly principal, said the school “is proud to

recognize senior Jayson Li as a National Merit Semifinalist – it is a significant honor to be recognized for his outstanding performance.”

“Over 1.2 million juniors took the Preliminary SAT / National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test and Jayson is one of only 16,000 semifinalists nationwide who earned the distinction,” he added. “He serves as an ideal representative of everything IPoly has to offer.”

Responding to questions from La Nueva Voz, Li said the honor is meaningful to him “because it shows the results of all the effort I have put into academics throughout high school.”

“It also makes me proud because it shows that staying consistent with my work has actually paid off,” he added. “It also shows me that doing well academically is not just about doing well on one test or assignment, but showing up each and every day and doing my best.”

He said he plans to study business and economics in college, “with a strong interest in how data and quantitative information can be used to make better business decisions.”

He added that IPoly has played a “huge role in my path toward college.”

“IPoly not only has an option of dual enrollment to get a head start on college credits, but the project-based environment has helped me develop many important skills such as communication that I will be using at college and later in life,” he said.

Li is considering applying to Cal

Poly Pomona, UCLA and UC Berkeley.

Pomona Unified School District Board President Dr. Lisa Nashua said in the school district’s own news release, issued after learning the news from La Nueva Voz, that Beatty “represents the very best of what we hope for every PUSD student – someone who is curious, driven, willing to challenge herself and committed to creating a bright future.”

“Her National Merit recognition is a tremendous accomplishment, and we are proud to celebrate her hard work and perseverance,” she added. “We know this is only the beginning of what Amara will achieve.”

Responding to questions from La Nueva Voz, Beatty, who attended Ranch Hills Elementary School and Lorbeer Middle School before continuing her education at Diamond Ranch High School, said she was “overjoyed (when she learned she was selected) because it felt like all of my hard work had paid off.”

“Being named a semifinalist

Outstanding students... pg. 8



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Mt. SAC, Cal Poly honored at YWCA San Gabriel Valley gala

The YWCA of San Gabriel Valley honored its 2026 "Champions of Change" winners – including both Mt. San Antonio College and Cal Poly Pomona – at its gala last month in San Gabriel on the theme "Spotlighting the Stars of the San Gabriel Valley."

The two local colleges shared the YWCA's "Lighting the Way: Educational Champion" award.

Dr. Jenelle Pitt-Parker, Dean of Cal Poly's College of Education and Integrative Studies, accepted the award for the university's educational leadership doctoral program.

"More than half of our students are first generation, 58 percent are from under-represented racial and ethnic communities, and nearly half are low income," she said. "That's where our mission meets the YWCA's, advancing educational access and social mobility across the San Gabriel Valley."

Mt. San Antonio College's "Educational Champion" award went to its School of Continuing Education, which offers

programs and classes for personal improvement, college preparation or career advancement.

It includes short-term vocational classes, adult basic education, community and contract education, classes for adults with disabilities, education for older adults, and classes teaching English as a second language and citizenship preparation.

Board President of the YWCA of San Gabriel Valley Kristin McGuire is President and CEO of Young Invincibles, a national non-profit advocacy organization that empowers the next generation by amplifying young voices in the fight for affordable education, accessible health care, and meaningful career opportunities.

"We are a community hub, a welcoming space where anyone can come for assistance," she said. "The legacy I want to leave is folks having a spirit of servitude."

For more information, visit ywcasgv.org.



MT. SAC HONORED BY YWCA -- Pictured at the presentation of the Mt. San Antonio College "Educational Champion" award from the YWCA of San Gabriel Valley are, from left, Dr. Tami Pearson, Associate Vice President of Mt. SAC's School of Continuing Education; Cristina Ortega, YWCA board member; Dr. Madelyn Arballo, Vice President of Mt. SAC's School of Continuing Education; Laura Perez, Dean of Continuing Education Programs and Services; Krystal Yeo, School of Continuing Education Director of Systems and Operations; Debra Ward, CEO, YWCA-SGV; and Kristin McGuire, President, YWCA-SGV Board of Trustees.



CAL POLY HONORED BY YWCA -- Pictured at the presentation of the Cal Poly Pomona "Educational Champion" award from the YWCA of San Gabriel Valley are, from left, Debra Ward, CEO, YWCA-SGV; Betty J. Alford, Cal Poly Pomona Professor of Education and department chair; Dr. Janelle Pitt-Parker, Dean of Cal Poly Pomona's College of Education; Kristin McGuire, President, YWCA-SGV Board of Trustees; and Barbara Nakaoka, Vice President, YWCA-SGV Board.

Some 30 Pomona Unified Schools Earn Statewide PBIS Recognition, Three Selected to Present at California Conference

Pomona Unified School District is celebrating a major milestone in its districtwide commitment to positive, safe and supportive learning environments, with 30 PUSD schools earning recognition from the California PBIS Coalition and three schools selected to present their work at the 2026 California PBIS Conference in Sacramento.

Of the 30 schools recognized by PBIS (Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports, a network for state education leaders, county offices, school districts and schools implementing multi-tiered frameworks), 15 earned Platinum recognition, the highest level awarded, 13 earned Gold and two earned Silver. In total, 28 of the District's 30 recognized schools, or 93 percent, achieved Gold or Platinum status.

According to a school district news release, the recognition reflects PUSD's continued implementation of PBIS as part of a broader multi-tiered system of supports designed to strengthen relationships, promote positive

behavior, integrate social-emotional and culturally responsive practices, and create school environments where students experience connection and belonging.

"This recognition reflects the extraordinary work taking place every day across Pomona Unified," said Supt. Darren Knowles. "PBIS is about much more than behavior. It is about building school communities where students feel safe, connected and valued, and where they have the support they need to learn and succeed."

"Having 30 schools recognized statewide is a tremendous accomplishment and a reflection of the collective commitment of our students, families, teachers, classified staff, administrators and district teams," he added.

15 schools earn highest-level platinum recognition

Fifteen PUSD schools earned Platinum recognition, the highest level of recognition through the California PBIS Coalition:

Alcott Elementary, Armstrong
Statewide Recognitions... pg. 6

Pomona Hope gala set for next month

Pomona Hope, founded 23 years ago to address the challenges of youth growing up in the city, has scheduled its 2026 Fundraising and Awareness Gala for next month at the historic Kellogg House on the Cal Poly Pomona campus. The event, this year on the theme "Let Their Light Shine," will be held at 5:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 10.

Included will be hors d'oeuvres, a cash bar and a raffle with prizes donated by local businesses.

The organization provides young people with after school programs, summer enrichment programs and more.

It operates in Pomona's First Presbyterian Church.

For information or tickets, visit the web site at www.pomonahope.org/gala.



Dwight Pau, a 90-year-old YWCA volunteer, was named a "Senior Spotlight Honoree" at last month's YWCA gala. Presenting the award, at right, is YWCA of San Gabriel Valley CEO Debra Ward.

Inside City Hall... from pg. 1

commission meetings in 2026. Her attendance first was reviewed in July by her fellow commissioners who voted 3-3 on a motion to remove. The motion failed because there was no majority vote.

The staff report said Cole asked staff to bring the item for review to the council, which has the final decision on removing a commissioner.

A similar discussion at the Dec. 4 commission meeting focused on three additional meeting dates missed in 2025, this time by both Elizalde and a second commissioner. Commissioners at that meeting voted 7-0 to take no action regarding the absences.

The city's ordinance including bylaws for boards and commissions states that if a commissioner has three absences – excused or unexcused – within a calendar year, the secretary “shall place on the commission agenda the recommendation to city council for removal of the commissioner.”

At the Aug. 3 council meeting, the discussion lasted about three minutes with Councilmember Debra Martin asking staff what the vote was on a similar motion at the Parks and Recreation Commission, and with Councilmember Nora Garcia asking Cole if she supported removing her appointee. Cole said she did. There were no speakers from the audience.

In her news release, Elizalde said the city council action required her to change her ballot designation in the November election which originally was set to be listed as “Parks and Recreation Commissioner.”

She said the council action was “overriding the commission’s decision and exposing a glaring double standard in how the council treats its appointees.”

According to the news release, commissioners already had reviewed her documented absences which, she said, included “absences tied to the realities of childcare as a working single mother.”

“I didn’t step forward to serve my community for a title – I did it because I care,” Elizalde said.

“For more than 13+ years, I have dedicated countless hours to public service while raising my family as a working-class single mother.”

“When political retaliation is used to push people like me out, it raises a bigger question – who gets the opportunity to serve?” she added. “Working people, parents and everyday community members deserve a seat at the table.”

Elizalde also said councilmembers previously have “shown more leniency toward other commissioners by retaining two Community Life Commission members after their commission recommended removing them and by retaining two Ethics Commission members who reached the same three-absence threshold in 2025 but were not removed.

She pointed out that one of Preciado’s appointees to the Cultural Arts Commission has accumulated 16 documented absences since 2019 “and remains in office.”

La Nueva Voz reached out to city officials to confirm these absences and the resulting action by councilmembers but they were unable to respond before deadline.

However, La Nueva Voz scrolled through eight years of Cultural Arts Commission minutes on the city’s web site and came up with 15 documented absences since 2019 for Jovani Esparza. A quick check with the city clerk’s office confirmed Esparza has served as Preciado’s appointee since 2023, but apparently served under a previous appointment at least as far back as 2019. And four of those 15 were during a period serving as commission chair.

Elizalde said the council’s action “raises serious questions about selective enforcement and political motivation.”

“Even Elizalde’s absences, including times when she had a sick child, were scrutinized and she was later indirectly criticized for bringing her child with her to a commission meeting,” the release continued. “For working mothers, that creates an impossible standard.

Inside City Hall... pg. 8

Downtown Pomona... from pg. 2

based on online balloting by members of the community. The “Excellence in Service” awards were selected by DPOA staff.

A special recognition was presented to the DPOA staff for their commitment, dedication and hard work through the past year.

Pomona native Heidi Ortega, a homeowner in Pomona since 2013, has served as DPOA director since July 2025 after joining the organization in 2022 first as operations manager and then as chief of operations.

She has worked to help lead the “rebranding” of Downtown Pomona, strengthen relationships with businesses, property owners and the city, and expand public safety and maintenance efforts, all to make Downtown Pomona a vibrant place to shop, dine, create and connect.

The theme of this year’s event was “The Art of Downtown,” celebrating local community members, artists, business owners and leaders shaping the area.

The DPOA’s first annual “Taste of Downtown Pomona” provided samples of the many foods offered by various Downtown Pomona restaurants.

Statewide Recognition... from pg. 5

Elementary, Arroyo Elementary, Cortez Mathematics & Science Magnet, Decker Elementary, Fremont Academy of Engineering and Design, Golden Springs Elementary, Harrison School, Kellogg Polytechnic Elementary, Kingsley Elementary, Pantera Elementary, Park West High School, Philadelphia Elementary, Ranch Hills Elementary and Simons Middle School.

Thirteen additional schools earned Gold recognition:

Allison Elementary, Barfield Elementary, Emerson Middle School, Ignacio Lopez Elementary, Lexington Elementary, Lincoln Elementary, Madison Elementary, Roosevelt Elementary, San Jose Elementary, Vejar TK-8, Washington Elementary, Westmont Elementary and Carl H. Lorbeer Middle School.

Silver recognition was awarded to John Marshall Middle School and La Verne Charter School.

The schools will be formally recognized during the 2026 California PBIS Conference, scheduled for Oct. 8-9 in Sacramento.

Three PUSD schools selected to present statewide

This year’s conference will carry additional significance for Pomona Unified – in addition to receiving statewide recognition, Arroyo Elementary, Ranch Hills

Statewide recognition... pg. 8



Nate McMullen, at left, and Ian McMullen, operators of “Artist in the Alley,” accept the “Art Gallery of the Year Award.”

La Nueva Voz

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Publisher: Jeff Schenkel

Tel: (909) 224-0244 • jeffschenkel@verizon.net

V.P. of Marketing & Operations: Renee Barbee
Cell: (909) 762-1446 • reneebarbee7@gmail.com

Layout & Design: Dora Cruz
dcruz1549@gmail.com

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to support local journalism.



Inside City Hall... from pg. 6

If we expect working parents to participate in public service, there has to be room for the realities facing working-class families."

Elizalde worked as a field representative for Congresswoman Norma Torres from 2022 to 2025.

La Nueva Voz asked Preciado for a comment on the development, but he declined, repeating "as I mentioned that night" that he recused himself "for obvious conflict issues."

Asked if he could confirm the attendance record of his Cultural Arts Commissioner, he said he was unable to do so.

"It wasn't brought to my attention," he said.

In a related development, an unofficial on-going "reader poll" by The Pomonan, an online self-described "independent publication of essays, criticism, photography and cultural commentary," showed Elizalde taking an early lead last month and reaching beyond the 50 percent mark among poll participants before press time for this issue of La Nueva Voz.

The latest results were 51.43 percent for Elizalde, 40.00 percent for Preciado, and 8.57 percent undecided.

Pomona Valley's longest-running rummage sale set for next month at Pilgrim

The longest-running rummage sale in the Pomona Valley is set to resume on Saturday, Oct. 17, at Pilgrim Congregational Church in Pomona.

Always a popular sale, the event is held from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Huge amounts of donations enable the church to hold sales twice a year — something it has been doing on a regular basis since November 1923.

The sale, conducted in rooms and patios throughout the grounds, raises funds for the church while also providing quality, gently used goods at very low prices for local families.

Items include adult and children's clothing, toys, jewelry, pots and pans, furniture, antiques, garden plants, holiday items and other household goods.

Many hardcover and paperback books also will be available, along with many CDs and vinyl records.

Continuing a program that has become successful over the last few years, the "Learning Materials Giveaway Room" again will provide free educational materials for teachers, parents and others involved in education.

These donations, by retired teachers and others, include still-useful reading books, games, posters and other items for young people. They will be offered at no cost during the hours of the rummage sale.

A tour of the historic church campus will be conducted during the rummage sale by Pilgrim's senior minister Rev. Dr. Patrick Horn.

Pilgrim Congregational is located at 600 N. Garey Ave., Pomona. For information, call (909) 622-1373.

Elementary and Westmont Elementary were selected as conference presenters, providing PUSD educators an opportunity to share their practices and experiences with educators and educational leaders from across California.

Each school will showcase a different dimension of PUSD's approach to PBIS while demonstrating a shared commitment to culturally responsive, student-

Pomona Valley Hospital offers \$50 mammograms in October for 'Breast Cancer Awareness Month'

Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center will offer its annual "Breast Cancer Awareness Month" special next month, featuring \$50 mammograms without a physician order or proof of insurance.

The program each year provides area residents with access to breast cancer screenings for women who meet specific requirements.

To be eligible, women must be over 40, must not have had a mammogram in the past year, must not have breast implants and do not have a history of breast cancer in the past five years. They must not currently be experiencing breast problems.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about one in four women ages 50 to 74 had not received a mammogram in the past two years in

centered systems.

Arroyo Elementary will present "Connecting Home and School: Parents, Data Systems, and Positive Behavior Success." The Platinum-recognized school will share its journey and demonstrate how family engagement, accessible data systems, consistent schoolwide expectations, staff learning and regular data-review cycles can strengthen

2022. This screening gap means thousands of women are missing the window when breast cancer is most treatable, delaying diagnosis until the disease is harder to catch and treat, according to a hospital news release.

To schedule a "3D" mammography appointment, call (909) 469-9395 or visit www.pvhmc.org/services/radiology.

Locations include the Breast Health Center at the Robert & Beverly Lewis Family Cancer Care Center in Pomona, or Pomona Valley Imaging Center locations in Chino Hills, Claremont and La Verne.

According to the American Cancer Society, when breast cancer is caught at its earliest, localized stage, the five-year relative survival rate is more than 99 percent.

feels extremely validating," she said, adding that she credits her family and school counselor with encouraging her throughout her academic journey and believing in her potential.

She said she is motivated by a desire to challenge herself, continue learning, and become the best version of herself she can be.

Beatty hopes to study civil engineering at UCLA or UC Berkeley, followed by a possible career in environmental engineering, perhaps with an environmental conservation organization developing solutions to global challenges like climate change.

Students vying for the scholarships took the PSAT/NMSQT testing last October in their junior year. The test serves as the initial screening in the competition.

The nationwide pool of

behavioral supports and improve student outcomes.

Ranch Hills Elementary will present "Building a Culture of Equity, Safety, and Belonging: PBIS and Social and Emotional Learning in Action." The Platinum-recognized school will highlight how PBIS, social-emotional learning, equity-centered practices, multi-tiered systems of support, data-informed decision-

making and family partnerships can work together to strengthen school culture and student engagement.

Westmont Elementary will present "Beyond Rules: Cultivating Language, Culture, and Belonging through Dual-Language PBIS." The Gold-recognized school will showcase how its dual-language community connects

Statewide recognition... pg. 21



Photo by Renee Barbee

Two participants in last week's fifth annual Pomona Youth Fest at The Union experiment with one of their poses at the photo booth, provided by Pomona's On Time Photo Booth Rentals.

Outstanding students... from pg. 4

semifinalists represents less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors and includes the highest scoring entrants in each state.

The number of semifinalists in a state is proportional to the state's percentage of the national total of graduating seniors.

A semifinalist must have an outstanding academic record throughout high school, be endorsed and recommended by a high school official, write an essay and earn SAT or ACT scores that confirm the student's earlier performance on the qualifying test.

Selection is based on skills, accomplishments, and potential for success in rigorous college studies without regard to gender, race, ethnic origin or religious preference.

Every finalist will compete for one of 2,500 National Merit Scholarships of \$2,500. In

addition, about 770 corporate-sponsored scholarship awards will be provided by about 130 corporations and businesses, and about 150 colleges and universities are expected to finance another 3,600 college-sponsored scholarship awards for finalists who will attend those colleges.

Finalists will be notified of their selection in February.

The National Merit Scholarship Corp., a not-for-profit organization that operates without government assistance, was established in 1955 to honor the nation's scholastic champions and encourage the pursuit of academic excellence.

More than 395,000 distinguished students have earned the Merit Scholar title. Pomona Unified School District serves more than 20,000 students in Pomona and Diamond Bar.



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Photo by Renee Barbee

"NO LIMBS NO LIMITS" IN-PERSON MEET AND GREET HOSTED BY THE UNION -- Pomona's Ray Adamyk, owner of The Union (former Pomona YMCA), hosted internationally renowned motivational speaker and author Nick Vujicic at a "red carpet" meet and greet and movie premiere of the film "No Limbs No Limits" last week in The Cathedral Event Center inside The Union. Vujicic, who was born without arms or legs, has transformed what many might see as limitations into a remarkable testimony of courage, determination, and possibility. "His story reminds us that our circumstances do not have to define our future," said Adamyk, also founder of the organization Faith Leaders Connection, a partnership of churches, organizations and businesses. Nationwide release of the film was scheduled this week. Pictured, at left, is Vujicic posing for photos with Diamond Bar content creator and independent journalist Daniel Joseph Barela. A self-described "PUSD alum," Barela interviewed Vujicic on the red carpet for his media-focused social media channel "DanielinCalifornia." Producer of the film was Darren Moorman, whose award-winning credits include "Blue Miracle" starring Dennis Quaid. An estimated 500 people attended the event.

Ivana Cvetkovic, an associate professor of multimedia journalism at Cal Poly Pomona, has received a prestigious Fulbright Scholar Award to Portugal in spring 2027.

Based at the Escola Superior de Comunicação Social of the Instituto Politécnico de Lisboa, Cvetkovic will expand her research into news reporting on agriculture by interviewing jour-

nalists about how they cover agricultural news and farmer communities, including their use of social media outlets and online outlets to disseminate news.

Like California, Portugal is a leader in agriculture, being a major producer and exporter of cork, olive oil, tomato paste, and wine. They are also an important member of the European Union “from farm to fork” initiative,

with 80 percent of farms being family-owned.

"The Fulbright is a wonderful opportunity for a cross-cultural comparison of journalism practices in Portugal and in California, which will be a key focus of a larger research project," said Cvetkovic. "I am very excited for this opportunity to teach and collaborate with colleagues from

Fulbright Scholar... pg. 17

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JONAH'S SUPERHEROISM FUND WINNER

Superheroes: Stand up for others

By Tovi Han

When we think about superheroes, Marvel movie characters usually pop into mind. What can superheroes do? They fight evil and save innocents. What can I do as a sixth grader? I can do my part to protect innocents and save lives in our community. For example, I can be a superhero on campus by volunteering at an animal shelter and standing up for others who need help. Let me give you more details about being a superhero.

Jonah Hwang

what I learned from karate about anti-bullying and self-defense, I expect myself to stand up for others who seek help. Whether on campus or off, I will always show kindness and help those who struggle. If I see taller students trying to play tricks or bully the shorter students, I will stand up to protect them, get adults involved and even defend them. I will show empathy and always use my strength for good – something good, even small, like helping elders cross the crosswalk, holding the door open to help people with disabilities pass through heavy doors, and assisting with park or beach cleanup.

I truly believe that what I am working on will make a difference. Even though it's not huge or visible, it matters. I can be a superhero by taking responsibility, being respectful to others, spreading kindness, and standing up to unfairness. I will fight for those who can't fight for themselves, be a responsible citizen and do my best as a superhero.

Editor's Note: Tovi Han, a sixth grader at Pantera Elementary School in Diamond Bar, was the winner of this year's "Jonah's Superheroism Fund" essay contest held each year in schools throughout Pomona Unified School District. To help support the expansion of this contest, donate at www.superheroism.org and indicate Jonah's Superheroism Fund in the gift purpose box. Or mail donations to: Pomona Community Foundation, 101 W. Mission Blvd. #110-201, Pomona, CA 91766 with Jonah's Superheroism Fund written in the check memo line. Any donations given in Jonah's memory are tax deductible. For information, contact info@jonahslight.org. This program was created in honor of Jonah Hwang in February 2017 when he was killed at the age of 8 in an apparent drive-by shooting into a house in the 1100 block of West 11th Street in Pomona while having dinner with his parents and family friends. He had been adopted from an orphanage in Taiwan and had been in this country for less than three years at the time. With an outpouring of support from the community, his family established this fund to honor Jonah's creative, athletic and generous spirit

To stand up as a superhero, I will not tolerate bullying around me. Besides

Stand up for others... pg. 18

Our Stead Heart & Vascular Center is nationally recognized for lifesaving care

America's top heart and stroke organizations recently honored Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center (PVHMC) with two national recognitions - one for heart care, by awarding us the Heart Failure Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award and one for stroke care with the Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Awards. For both heart and stroke, PVHMC earned additional honor roll recognitions, as well as an Advanced Therapy honor for stroke care. We accomplished these by implementing a high standard of care that prioritizes evidence-based practices and positive outcomes for our patients.

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North Pomona’s first ‘travel ball’ youth baseball league off and running

If you Google “travel ball,” the “AI Overview” tells you that “travel ball is a highly competitive, independent tier of youth sports – most commonly baseball or softball – where players are selected through tryouts to play on teams that travel for weekend tournaments.”

Travel ball youth baseball teams have been playing in South Pomona for years.

But thanks to a motivated group of adults, kids and community supporters, the first-ever travel ball teams are now playing in North Pomona – the “Pomona Select” teams known as the “Sun Devils” (9- and 10-year-olds) the “Blue Devils” (11-year-olds) and “Pomona Blue Devils” (12- and 13-year-olds).

And they all got together on a Saturday last month to hold a very professional car wash fundraiser in the CVS parking lot at Towne Avenue and Foothill Boulevard with the help of Leo Arredondo, owner of Uppercuts 909 barber shop in the shopping center, a member of the Pomona Chamber of Commerce and a supporter of travel ball.

Denise Valdez, a team mom for the Sun Devils, said the three new teams – which she describes as one league with three divisions – were organized in June.

A lot of the players played – and still play – with Ted Greene Little League out of Pomona’s Ted Greene Park, she said.

Valdez said the parents wanted to offer the kids something “to extend their opportunities, to travel and



The travel ball car wash was a busy place all day long with a professional system of moving the cars through and easy-ups with everything from pizza for the kids to a gift shop with baseball items featuring the team logos.

experience new games, new skills, and get them better for their next position in life.”

All of the kids attend schools in North Pomona. Her 9-year-old son, Josiah “Pookie” Rivera, a fourth grader at Pomona’s Harrison Elementary School, plays for the Sun Devils team.

Then how wide of an area do they travel to for games?

“At the moment that we are starting, we are staying local – we are traveling to Jurupa Valley,



And then the real workers came over to finish the job -- a whole lot of them, all travel ball players. La Nueva Voz told them the van never looked so good!

Fontana, we stay here in Pomona and we are hoping to get blessed to be able to travel to other places as well,” she said.

And how many games are there in the season?

“The season is going to be all year round,” Valdez said. “Our travel team is doing a whole lot of fundraising so our parents don’t have to pay much out

of their pocket – travel ball can be very expensive so we want to raise as much as we can to help our kids, keep them, of course, out of the street, get them skilled and prepared for their future as either future major league baseball players or just for a hobby and just keep them entertained.”

She explained that a “tournament” normally consists of two games in one day and then the following day there’s an extra game.

“We’re hoping to do two tournaments a month,” she said.

And the number of tournaments

they can do depends on having the funds available to enter a tournament.

Want to get involved? Valdez suggests following them on Instagram at “Pomona Select Teams” and message them with questions, positions your child can play, and how to sign up. Their availability is important also – if they are playing Little League Baseball, Valdez said her teams would want to work around their schedule.

For more information, call (909) 670-8076 or e-mail pselect.teams4@gmail.com.



Pictured are logo stickers of two of the new “travel ball” teams in North Pomona.



Baseball dads and “travel ball” supporter Leo Arredondo (working on the driver’s side door of the La Nueva Voz news van) are pictured hard at work at last month’s car wash outside his La Nueva Voz favorite Uppercuts 909 barbershop.

Please visit our web site at
www.lanuevavoz.net to see the latest issue
of La Nueva Voz, past issues and more!



Pumpkin Fest set to open at Cal Poly’s Kellogg Ranch!

The 33rd annual Cal Poly Pomona “Pumpkin Fest” at Kellogg Ranch opens next month for four weekends of corn mazes, pony rides, a petting farm, a marketplace, plenty to eat and drink and some good old-fashioned pumpkin shopping for kids of all ages with an entire hillside loaded with pumpkins of all sizes for sale.

Festival dates are weekends only – from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Oct. 10 and 11, 17 and 18, 24 and 25, and Oct. 31.

Always a popular event for everyone, the annual “end of summer” celebration is produced by Kellogg Ranch under the auspices of the Don B. Huntley College of Agriculture.

It places an emphasis on fun, food and, of course, the connection between agriculture and California’s economy.

And Cal Poly-grown pumpkins are available to all – whether one or two or an entire wagon load (you have to bring your own wagon).

Cal Poly’s College of Agriculture prides itself on providing training for the next leaders in the food, agriculture and apparel industries.

Student clubs from the College of Agriculture will be on hand throughout the event with booths offering food, games, clothing and merchandise.

The event brings to life the work of the students, giving thousands of visitors the chance to experience what they grow, create, and learn at Cal Poly.

The Pumpkin Fest is located on the Cal Poly campus next to the Farm Store. For tickets and information, visit the web site at pumpkinfestival.cpp.edu.

Oktoberfest returns to Fairplex for three weekends of fun

No worries, it’s all good, raising a stein at Oktoberfest at Pomona’s Fairplex is good cardiovascular exercise and good for building biceps at the same time.

So come on down – Oktoberfest is once again coming to Fairplex for three weekends of Bavarian food, beer, live music and plenty of Oktoberfest fun.

The annual celebration takes place Fridays and Saturdays, Oct. 2 through Oct. 17, from 6 to 11 p.m. at Fairplex.

The Rheinlanders, a traditional Oom Pah band, will perform every night, entertaining guests with foot-stomping tunes and getting the crowd involved with favorites including the “chicken dance” and stein-holding contests.

Each weekend also features a tribute band – scheduled for Oct. 2 and 3 is Amor Prohibido Band, a tribute to Selena; Oct. 9 and 10, DSB (Don’t Stop Believin’), a Journey tribute band; and Oct. 16 and 17, Red Hot Cholo Peppers, a combination of funk, rock and Red Hot Chili Peppers.

This year’s Oktoberfest features an expanded menu of German favorites, from traditional bratwurst and schnitzel to sweet treats and Oktoberfest-inspired creations.

Highlights include a German fish sandwich, “schnitzel” sandwich with a choice of breaded veal or chicken cutlet, beer-braised bratwurst with onions and peppers on a pretzel roll, and Oktoberfest Festbier Pizza with beer mustard sauce.

Admission is \$17 for Fridays and \$20 for Saturdays when purchased in advance online. At the gate, admission is \$20 on Fridays and \$25 on Saturdays.

A “Raise Your Stein” bundle online is \$30 for Fridays and \$35 for Saturdays and includes admission, a stein and a first pour.

Parking is \$22.50 online and \$26 at the gate.

For tickets and information, visit fairplex.com/oktoberfest.

Please visit our web site at www.lanuevavoz.net to see the latest issue of La Nueva Voz, past issues and more!



File photo

Pictured are pumpkins on the hill at the 2024 Pumpkin Fest at Cal Poly Pomona’s Kellogg Ranch.

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‘Nuestra Casa Museum of History and Culture’ opens in Downtown Pomona

Pomona’s newest museum, the Nuestra Casa Museum of History and Culture, celebrated its grand opening last month to present to the community the results of an effort that, in the words of founding board member Cristina Carrizosa, “started from nothing.”

“Today is a very special day, not only for us, board members, for the community, and for our families,” Carrizosa said at the event that included a ribbon-cutting, music and folklorico dancing by members of Ballet No Te Rajes Jalisco of the Galan Cultural Center. “It’s taken a lot of work, a lot of effort to build something like this. It was an idea, it was just something that happened a few years ago.”

Carrizosa said the project began with Mike Suarez, Luis Juarez and Angela Sanbrano.

“The direction the group took was fantastic – it wasn’t easy,” she said. “We met night after night in the kitchen at my home. If my kitchen could talk, it would tell you how many projects have been carried out in my kitchen.”

“What I had in mind was to create something where the children and the young people can learn a little bit more about their families, about the city where they live, about where their parents and their grandparents come from,”

she added. “So many years of working in a school, I saw so many kids that had no idea where they came from, their parents came from.”

She said many of them never even came to Downtown Pomona from South Pomona.

Carrizosa said one day she took an old molcajete, a round stone mortar used for spices and salsa, to school.

“It was like a big deal because all of a sudden, they saw something, something they recognized . . . they saw something that resembled their home,” Carrizosa said. “They felt ‘it’s important for my school to have something like that, something that my mom and grandma use all the time’ making salsa and guacamole.”

“They were sharing stories and it was wonderful, and that stuck to my mind, these kids need that, and that’s why when Luis and Mike said ‘let’s do it,’” she knew it was a good idea.

Carrizosa told the group in Spanish that there are other museums but they don’t know the history of Pomona.

“We had a little bit of money that all of us put together, and here we are,” she said. “With your support, with the community support, this museum can survive,

it can expand, it can be an institution for this city, because this city needs it,” she said. “This city has an enormous amount of history that practically nobody knows, or at least



CUTTING THE RIBBON -- Cristina Carrizosa, who helped launch Pomona’s new Nuestra Casa Museum of History and Culture with organizational meetings in her kitchen, cuts the ribbon last month at its grand opening. Pictured, from left, are museum volunteer Alice Gomez, Board President Luis Juarez, Board Secretary Carrizosa, Board member at large - public relations Angela Sanbrano, Board Treasurer Mike Suarez, advisor and museum document editor Oscar Segovia, and museum volunteer Donna Otero. Gomez and Otero both assisted in editing donated material from their own families in the community. Not pictured is Board member (financial advisor) Francisco Espinosa.

the kids don’t know it.”

She said the name of the museum – “Nuestra Casa” was selected because it means “our home.”

“This is everybody’s home, and everybody’s welcome,” Carrizosa said.

Founding board member Angela Sanbrano told the group that organizers decided because it is the 250th anniversary of the independence of the United States, it was appropriate to

Museum... pg. 19



Pictured are two of many historical summaries on display at the museum tracking Chicanos, farm workers and more.



Pictured are some of the many cultural artifacts and historical summaries on display at the new museum.



The American flag, the flag of Mexico, the logo of the United Farm Workers and a poster from El Teatro Campesino, the cultural arm (founded in 1965) of the United Farm Worker movement all are on display at the museum.



Photos by Renee Barbee

PUBLIC SAFETY AWARD HONOREES -- Members of the Pomona Optimist Club recognized their 2025-2026 "Public Safety Award Honorees" last month in an awards presentation at Fuego at the Metro Event Center in Downtown Pomona. Pomona Police Detective Dave Estrada, pictured at left, was named "Police Officer of the Year," and Los Angeles County Fire Department Capt. Eric McNamara, at right, was named "Firefighter of the Year." Estrada joined the Pomona Police Department in 2004 and has served as a patrol officer, worked in the Major Crimes Task Force as a gang officer, worked in the Major Narcotics Unit and was promoted to the rank of detective in 2014. McNamara, who first served as a firefighter while serving in the U.S. Air Force, joined the Los Angeles County Fire Department in 2008 and has been serving Pomona for the past 10 years. He served as a paramedic at Station 183 for nine years and now is assigned as a Captain for the north side of Pomona at Station 186. Pictured in the photo above at left are, from left, Optimist Vice President Devynn Stein-Marquez, Optimist President Sonia Molina, Secretary M. Joyce Bakersmith, Estrada, and Pomona Police Capt. Alyssa Bostrom. Pictured in the photo at right with McNamara is Optimist Secretary M. Joyce Bakersmith.

Fulbright scholar... from pg. 11

another polytechnic institution."

A former reporter, Cvetkovic's research and teaching interests are at the intersection of media, technology and culture, growing online and social media news reporting, and multimedia journalism.

The Fulbright U.S. Scholars program is an international academic exchange of scholars and professionals founded to increase mutual understanding and to support friendly relations between people from the United States and other countries. It is administered by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

Since the Fulbright Scholar Exchange was established in the 1953-54 academic year, 46 Cal Poly Pomona faculty members have participated.

Cal Poly Pomona underwater robotics team earns second place at world championship

A Cal Poly Pomona student team – the Pomona Subsea Initiative – took home second place honors in June in the "Pioneer Class" at the 2026 MATE ROV Competition world championship in St. John's, Newfoundland, and Labrador, Canada.

MATE, originally the Marine Advanced Technology Education Center, is an organization working to inspire and challenge students to learn and creatively apply STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) skills to solving real-

world problems.

The ROV competition (in this case remotely operated underwater vehicles) is a part of their work.

Cal Poly senior Lauren McLaury also earned the "Engineering Presentation MVP" title, which recognizes the student who leads the most impactful technical presentation, articulating the team's design process, project execution and results.

More than 80 teams from 10



REMOTELY OPERATED UNDERWATER VEHICLE TEAM MEMBERS -- Cal Poly Pomona's team won second place in June at the 2026 MATE ROV Competition World Championship in Newfoundland and Canada. Pictured with team members are Daniel Silguero, holding the remotely operated underwater vehicle (ROV), and, just behind him at left, Lauren McLaury. The two led the two-year effort.

countries competed in the event which challenged student teams to design, build and pilot the underwater vehicles to complete missions modeled after real-world ocean engineering problems.

The 13-member Cal Poly Pomona team entered the Pioneer Class, a competition category for first-year university teams, technical schools and community colleges. Mechanical engineering students McLaury and Dan-

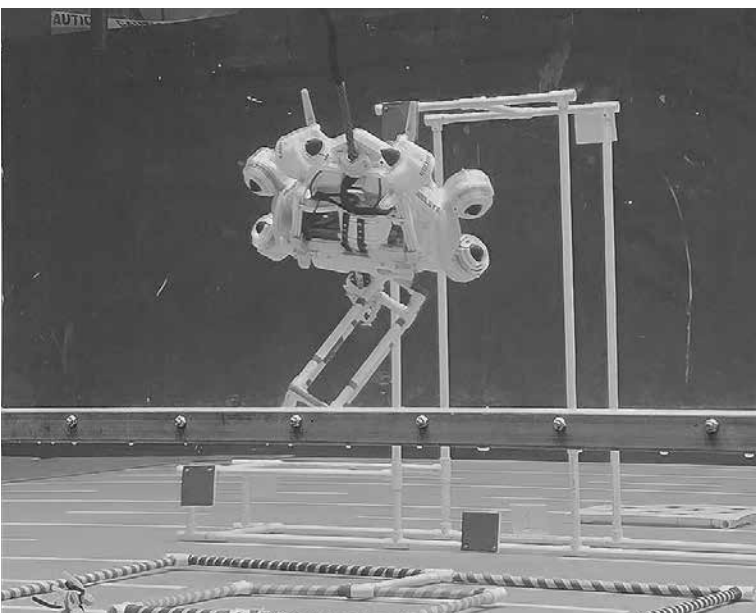
iel Silguero, who had experience developing underwater robotics systems, recruited the other team members and led the two-year effort.

Challenges included tasks such as connecting underwater cables, turning valves, deploying and recovering sensor modules, and surfacing heavy objects with the team's inflatable lift bag.

"The level of innovation, professionalism and perseverance displayed by these students con-

tinues to raise the bar each year," said Jill Zande, executive director of MATE. "By solving authentic engineering challenges in world-class facilities, students are developing the technical and professional skills needed to become the next generation of engineers, technologists and innovators."

The Cal Poly team plans to build on its debut performance by competing in the "Explorer Class," the highest level of competition, next year.



Cal Poly Pomona's "remotely operated underwater vehicle," pictured where it should be, of course, under water, enabled a student team to win second place in the "Pioneer Class" this summer in the international MATE ROV Competition World Championship.

Research firm focuses on ‘best practices’ in addressing school closures

California school districts face new and uncharted challenges amid the state's unprecedented decline in the number of school-age children.

National Demographics (NDC) this month released a new “white paper,” "Closing Schools Without Breaking Trust: Best Practices for California School Districts Facing Declining Enrollment," outlining best practices in community engagement, transparency, and effective management to address California's new demographic reality.

According to an NDC news release, school closures are perhaps the most difficult challenge a school district can face. They can generate contentious community disputes and result in unhealthy divisions between parents, students, and the elected officials who represent them.

“And small schools are not necessarily a bad thing – but they are expensive,” the release continued. “Similarly, declining enrollment can be efficiently managed, especially in this era of rapidly increasing per-student funding from the state. Each district's situation must be proactively managed. Ignoring the changes ultimately harms the students. In this new demographic environment "Status Quo" management leads only to imminent crisis, a financial situation forcing poorly-informed decision-making, and a lost sense of shared purpose between the community and the school board.”

“Proactive planning includes a transparent process engaging the community in defining a ‘right-sized’ school and identifying a path to achieve those goals,” the release continued. “Every choice involves trade-offs and there are no simple answers. A well-managed process ensures all sides understand both the data used to reach that decision and the reasoning behind it – even for those who disagree with the ultimate choice.”

NDC's white paper describes

the community engagement, the discussion around deciding what programs schools should offer and how big schools need to be to support those programs, and how to achieve those goals.

NDC (National Demographics Corporation), based in Glendale, is a pioneer in demographic analysis, districting and redistricting. It has completed more than 600 projects for more than 450 California schools, community colleges, cities and special districts.

Following is the unedited executive summary of the white paper:

Across California, many public school districts face a difficult reality. Declining enrollment, underused facilities, staffing challenges, aging campuses, and budget pressures are forcing leaders to consider closing or consolidating schools. These decisions are among the hardest any school board can make. A school is not

School closures... pg. 20

Stand up for others...
from pg. 12

with the mission to invest in the future of Pomona. Guests at his memorial service had been encouraged to attend dressed as “super heroes” in honor of Jonah’s love for the adventure characters and their movies. The annual poster and essay competition started in 2020 at Jonah’s school, Cortez Math and Science Magnet School, and has continued to expand throughout the school district since. This year’s theme was “Superheroes stand up!” Jonah’s mother, Karen Hwang, told La Nueva Voz she and her husband were “touched by the reflection of attributes in Tovi so similar to Jonah’s compassion and kindness and the display of superhero-like courage to stand up for fairness. It is truly admirable the level of maturity that can be expressed by a sixth grader that we can all learn from.”

Need an income tax deduction? Donate your car!

Contact Pastor Doug Brissette, Greater New Foundation Fellowship Church, 841 S. Main St., Pomona, in a building designated a historic landmark by the Pomona City Council!

(The church building, constructed in 1922 and 1923, originally was the home of Pomona’s Mount Zion Baptist Church, believed by historians to be the city’s first Black church to hold on-going programs.)

Info: greaternewfoundfellchurch@gmail.com

The following public service ads are courtesy of La Nueva Voz

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Museum... from pg. 16

observe the anniversary from the Mexican-American and Chicano and Chicana perspective from the people of Pomona.

"The exhibit reflects that in 1776, half of the U.S. territory was part of Mexico, and it was not until 1848 when the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed that Mexicans became part of the United States," she added. "And the rest is history. Our history is rich, we have made significant contributions to the social, political, and economic development of the United States."

"It is a history of resilience and resistance," she said. "The opening of Nuestra Casa Museum is in fact an act of resistance against the violation of civil rights in the Constitution of the United States, because through executive policies and federal mandates, the Trump administration has turned history into a political battleground, launching an intentional cultural war, claiming that the erasing is mirroring of Mexican-American history."

"Through the initiatives like the



Luis Juarez
Museum Board President

Yuen told the group she has worked closely with Pomona's Jose Calderon, also a supporter of the new Pomona museum, for decades.

"What Nuestra Casa Museum is doing today is what the Chinese American Museum did 22 years ago," she said of the museum that is located in El Pueblo Historical Monument in Downtown Los Angeles, which Yuen explained is



Cristina Carrizosa
Museum Board Secretary

history is not coming to the United States, you were already here in the United States."

"This is so significant for you to bring a museum together to tell your story, so when we heard about today, we said we had to come," she added. "So congratulations and we hope for a long, long blessed institution for you and the people of Pomona."

The logo for the new museum was created by 11-year-old Michael Ogama, the great grandson of founding board

president Luis Juarez.

Donors who contributed \$10,000 or more received a free coffee cup marking the occasion.

Organizers said the museum was designed to have a "transformative impact" on the Pomona area by fostering civic pride, strengthening the region's cultural infrastructure, and contributing to the revitalization of Downtown Pomona.

It also is offering opportunities for funding support from individuals, businesses and philanthropic organizations interested in becoming "founding supporters."

Founding board members include Luis Juarez, president; Cristina Carrizosa, secretary; Mike Suarez, treasurer; Angela Sanbrano, public relations; and Francisco Espinosa, accountant.

The museum is located in Downtown Pomona's Mission Promenade at 101 W. Mission Blvd., Suite 108, Pomona.

For information or to contribute – either items for the museum or to make financial contributions – call (840) 275-1230 or e-mail info@nuestracasa.com.

'Si Se Puede' art exhibition opens at the dA

An opening artist reception was held this month at the dA Center for the Arts in Downtown Pomona for "Si Se Puede (Yes We Can) 2026 Arte Campeonx," an exhibition that explores themes of immigration, heritage, community, cultural identity and advocacy.

The show examines the strength, resilience, advocacy and determination of breaking down barriers, breaking free from oppressive systems and stereotypes by communities who continue to overcome, claiming more spaces, and continuing to work for a better present and future.

Through art and visual storytelling, the exhibition celebrates cultural heritage and shared experiences, and displays the power of collective action. It also serves as a reminder that "Si Se Puede" is more than a statement.

Included is the work of some 34 artists and educators from Pomona and throughout the region,

Art exhibition... pg. 23



Folklorico ballet dancers from Galan Cultural Center's Ballet No Te Rajes Jalisco performed at the grand opening of Pomona's new Nuestra Casa Museum of History and Culture.

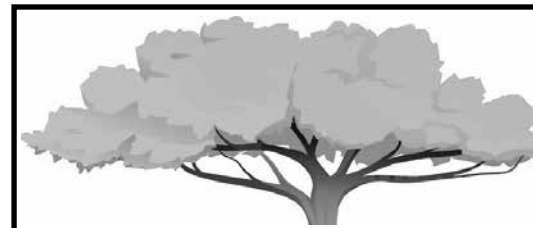
1776 Commission . . . diversity, equity and inclusion, and targeted attacks on ethnic studies, the Trump administration is attempting to erase the history of people of color in this country," she said. "There's no way you can erase the history of the people of the United States, and that includes all of us, all the people of color."

Also attending the event were Gay Yuen, board chair of Friends of the Chinese American Museum in Los Angeles, and Michael Truong, executive director of the museum.

the site of the original Chinatown in Los Angeles.

"We were kicked out – the Chinese were kicked out again and again throughout California, but in L.A., we were kicked out in the 1930s when all the Chinese were kicked out so they can build the train station -- Union Station was built after decimating and chasing out the Chinese," she said.

"Our mission is the same as yours, to continue to capture and tell the stories of the Chinese who came to the United States," she said. "For many of you, your



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Pomona Valley Memorial Park is a nonprofit corporation.

Looking for a little light bedtime reading?

How about your sample ballot!

Sample ballots should be arriving in mailboxes of registered voters in Los Angeles County pretty much any time now.

So, if you are looking for a little interesting bedtime reading, you might want to cuddle up with the propositions, particularly Propositions 40, 41, 42 and 44 (we know, you were just thinking those were the exact propositions you were going to read up on, right?).

Actually, those hit close to home here in Pomona for a variety of reasons, as brought to our attention by our friends at Tzunu Strategies, really essentially a public relations firm that doesn't call itself a public relations firm, with offices in Los Angeles and Sacramento.

For example, Prop 40 might have an impact here. According to a Tzunu analysis, it would place a onetime tax on the state's roughly 200 billionaires. But opponents point to a provision allowing state legislators later to expand the tax without another vote – plus it is written to sit outside the constitutional school funding guarantee, which could have an impact on readers with kids in school.

Pomona is home to two respected universities, a revitalized Downtown Pomona Arts Colony, and generations of fam-

ilies who have built their lives here. It is also a city where median household income lags behind the rest of Los Angeles County and roughly one in seven residents lives below the poverty line.

The promise of a new tax that would generate \$100 billion for health care, food assistance, and education is worth paying attention to. It's also fair to ask whether that promise would actually reach families in Pomona in a meaningful way.

According to the Tzunu analysis, the measure falls short and a no vote is urged on Prop 40.

Prop 41 would require an independent state audit of a program's finances before any new special tax can fund it, plus ongoing audits after. As Tzunu pointed out, it tends to resonate with those who run small businesses or send money to family, perhaps in another country, since it is framed around the same standard of accountability they already hold themselves to.

Across Pomona, work often starts before sunrise – at warehouses and distribution centers and at small businesses lining Garey Avenue and Second Street. The rule is the same everywhere – show up, do the work, and the books get checked.

Prop 41 asks California's state government to live by that same basic rule and the Tzunu analysis calls for a yes vote here.

Prop 42 would close a constitutional opening that currently lets the legislature tax retirement accounts, pensions and other personal savings, and it bars retroactive taxes on money already saved. That's a direct pocketbook issue for those who have spent years building retirement savings while also supporting a family here and abroad.

And Prop 44 would require community health clinics to spend 90 percent of revenue on direct patient care. Opponents, including major physician and clinic associations, warn the mandate could force service cuts or closures at clinics many families depend on for everyday affordable care.

Again, according to the Tzunu analysis, clinics like ParkTree Community Health Center in Pomona have spent years serving families regardless of whether they have insurance or can afford care. These clinics offer a variety of medical services under one roof. In a community where household income falls below the county average, many families depend on this kind of care to stay healthy.

Prop 44 puts that model at risk and would impose new spending mandates and financial penalties on clinics, based on a vague, largely undefined standard for what counts as patient care, threatening millions of Californians' access to services they depend on.

Full disclosure -- Tzunu Strategies is working with the coalitions for "No on 40," "Yes on 41" and "No on 44" as separate clients.

According to its web site, the company is a certified Minority Business Enterprise with a foundation in grassroots organizing, electoral campaigns and corporate strategy. It combines strategic insight with creative thinking to expand access to vital information, elevate outreach, and drive transformative engagement within communities of color.

School closures... from pg. 18

just a building. It is a neighborhood anchor, a family routine, a place of identity, and sometimes a community's emotional center.

Because of this, school closures almost always generate opposition. Even when the financial and educational reasons are real, families may experience the process as a loss, a threat, or a betrayal. The political difficulty often leads districts to delay action for years. But delay is not neutral. When districts operate too many under-enrolled schools, students suffer from fewer programs, unstable staffing, limited enrichment, reduced access to counselors and specialists, and facilities dollars spread too thin.

The central question, then, is not whether school closures can be made painless. They cannot. The question is whether districts can make closure and consolidation decisions in a way that is transparent, equitable, educationally grounded, legally careful, and worthy of public trust.

This paper argues that Califor-

nia districts should treat school closure not as a last-minute budget maneuver, but as a long-term educational redesign process. The best processes begin long before a district is in crisis, before specific schools are named, and before trust has collapsed. They start with developing an educational vision, establishing public criteria, publishing data before recommendations, evaluating multiple scenarios, conducting equity analyses early, engaging labor and community partners, and providing detailed transition guarantees before any final vote.

The goal is not to eliminate disagreement. In most school closure processes, disagreement will remain. The real test is whether even a parent who opposes the final decision can still say: "I understand exactly how they got there." That standard captures the heart of a legitimate process: transparency does not require universal agreement, but it does require visible reasoning, honest tradeoffs, and public accountability.

Office of Emergency Management encourages residents to take action for National Preparedness Month

September is National Preparedness Month, highlighting the critical need for organizations, families, and individuals to prepare for disasters and large-scale emergencies. Los Angeles County is at risk for a wide range of incidents, according to a news release. This year, the county has the additional

concern of El Niño conditions, which create the potential for increased storm frequency and intensity. County of Los Angeles agencies and partner organizations have been taking steps to strengthen preparedness and response capabilities.

As part of Preparedness
Take action... pg. 23



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

Pick up your free copy of La Nueva Voz at these locations and dozens more:

- Pomona City Hall lobby
- Pomona library
- Downtown Pomona Owners Association, 119 W. 2nd St., Pomona
- Pomona Post Office (rack on sidewalk)
- Claremont library
- Claremont City Hall lobby
- La Verne City Hall lobby
- La Verne Senior Citizens Center
- CVS, 775 E. Foothill Blvd., Pomona
- CVS, 150 W. Willow St., Pomona
- Western University of Health Sciences Patient Care Center
- El Famoso Pancho Market, 416 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
- Athens Services, 472 E. Holt Ave., Pomona
- Denny's, 3012 W. Temple Ave., Pomona
- Corky's, 2051 Rancho Valley Drive, #230, Pomona
- Canani Coffee, 101 W. Mission Blvd., #106, Pomona
- Sospeso Coffee, 290 E. Second St., Pomona
- Tony's French Dips, 986 E. Second St., Pomona



Statewide recognition... from pg. 8

PBIS with language, culture and identity, including practices that affirm students' linguistic identities, celebrate culture and strengthen connections between school and home.

"Having three of our schools selected to present is especially meaningful because our educators are not only participating in professional learning, they are contributing to it," said Deputy Supt. of Educational Services Lilia Fuentes. "They will have the opportunity to share what they have learned, the systems they have built and the experiences of our school communities with colleagues from throughout California. That is an important recognition of the expertise and leadership that exist within Po-

mona Unified."

Together, the 30 statewide recognitions and three conference presentations demonstrate the breadth of PBIS implementation across PUSD while also highlighting how individual schools have adapted the framework to meet the needs and build upon the strengths of their own communities.

Across the district, PBIS continues to evolve as part of PUSD's broader multi-tiered system of supports, according to the news release. Schools use data to guide improvement, explicitly teach and reinforce positive behavior, strengthen relationships with students and families, and integrate social-emotional and culturally responsive practices.

The district also emphasized

that statewide recognition represents a milestone rather than an endpoint. PUSD schools will continue examining data, listening to students and families, strengthening implementation, and working to ensure positive and supportive school experiences are consistently experienced by every student.

"We are incredibly proud of what our schools have accomplished, but the real measure of this work is the experience of our students," Knowles said. "Our goal is to ensure that every student walks onto a Pomona Unified campus knowing they belong, knowing there are adults who care about them, and knowing they have the opportunity and support to succeed."



Photo by Hayley Chacon / Pomona Unified School District

FORMER POMONA ASTRONAUT VISITS LOCAL STUDENTS -- Former astronaut Victor Glover, who grew up in Pomona long before he lived aboard the International Space Station and traveled around the moon, visited students at Pomona's Allison Elementary School last month -- the same school Glover attended as a child. Pictured is Glover speaking with some of the students. He told the students the Artemis II lunar flyby belonged to the next generation. "This wasn't my mission -- this was your mission," he said. The event was hosted by Congresswoman Norma Torres and her office sent out the invitations, according to a school district spokesperson. Photos and a news release were provided by Pomona Unified School District. Members of the news media were not invited to the event which involved a public school district, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (an independent agency of the federal government), and a sitting member of Congress. (Even White House activities with restricted media coverage, and many other news events, generally use "pool" coverage by a single reporter and a single photographer agreeing to make materials available to other interested news media.) Pomona Unified School District Supt. Darren Knowles told La Nueva Voz they "were only given so many seats for the event and wanted to make sure the staff and students had priority." He said the event was managed by Torres' office. La Nueva Voz interviewed Glover "one on one" during the 2021 Pomona Christmas Parade where Glover served as grand marshal. La Nueva Voz also ran coverage of his "live question and answer" session with local students when he was on the space station in August 2024, and again when he received the Mayor's Award at the Pomona Public Library Foundation in June (he accepted the award via pre-recorded video). Glover recently retired from NASA to take a full-time position at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, his alma mater. He will serve in an administrative position focusing on strategic initiatives and fostering partnerships and philanthropy, according to the university web site.

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Palomares Park ‘Soccer Field 1’ re-opens following complete renovation by city

Pomona City Councilmembers, youth soccer kids, Pomona Parks and Recreation Commissioners and parents gathered on the field this month for an official re-opening of the newly renovated Palomares Park Soccer Field 1.

“This project was a much-needed improvement to the field removing the existing grass, aerating and preparing the soil, adding a layer of sand, and grading and leveling the playing surface,” said Councilmember Lorraine Canales.

The project, which resulted in completely new turf, was funded through Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and from the city’s capital improvement project “carryover,” with a total cost of \$67,934, she said.

“These improvements provide our residents, families, and local

soccer players with fields that are safer, healthier and better maintained,” said Canales, whose council district includes the park.

She said she has advocated for this type of investment for some time because “maintaining our fields is essential to keeping them active, safe and usable for our community.”

Canales thanked the soccer community, families and residents for their patience while the work was underway.

“Investing in our parks is an investment in our community,” she added. “I’m proud to support this project and the continued effort to make Palomares Park a place where residents can gather, stay active, and enjoy quality recreational facilities.”

Palomares Park is located at 499 E. Arrow Highway in Pomona.



Photo by Renee Barbee

RIBBON-CUTTING FOR NEWLY RENOVATED PALOMARES PARK SOCCER FIELD -- An official re-opening of the newly renovated Palomares Park Soccer Field 1 was held this month -- right on the new turf! Pictured along with the youth soccer kids and a few parents are, from left, Pomona Parks and Recreation Commissioner Norma Quinones, Pomona City Councilmembers Debra Martin and Lorraine Canales, and, at far right, Parks Commissioner Brenda Morris.



Photos by Renee Barbee
NEVER A SHORTAGE OF THINGS TO DO! -- There's always something going on at Pomona Youth Fest and this year's fifth annual program -- for the first time at The Union in Downtown Pomona -- was no exception. From an artist drawing portraits of the kids to a half a dozen musical groups (pictured is the band "House of Venice") to crafts and games, a professional taco truck

serving dinner and more, the free event for kids ages 13 to 18 was another hit. Pictured is "honorary" Pomona Chamber of Commerce Ambassador Kobe Carrillo trying his luck at a game of stacking up the plastic cups, one of the games provided by members of Pomona Host Lions Club. Pomona City Councilmember Lorraine Canales also was on hand to help with lots of things from providing several student volunteers for the evening to bringing her signature custom bracelet-making craft. Helping Kobe are his dad, Frank Carrillo, at left, owner of Pomona's On Time Photo Booth Rentals, who was there with his wife Domenica taking pictures, and La Nueva Voz Publisher Jeff Schenkel. The event was produced by NCADD (National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence) of East San Gabriel and Pomona Valleys, Inc., and Partnership for a Positive Pomona (P3), a community drug-free coalition, made possible by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Substance Use Prevention and Control.



California lawsuit ongoing as new ‘public charge’ rule takes effect amid concerns it could lead low-income immigrant parents to shy away from enrolling U.S. citizen children in health insurance, nutrition programs

By Suzanne Potter
California News Service

California and 21 other states are suing to stop the Trump administration’s new rules on “public charge,” which went into effect last week.

Public charge regulations are used to determine whether an applicant for legal permanent residence or a green card might need public assistance. The change overturns Biden-era policy limiting the rule to federal cash assistance or long-term institutionalization.

Sarah Dar, vice president of policy and advocacy for The Children’s Partnership, said a wide range of programs, including Medi-Cal, CalFresh or Section 8 housing assistance, can now be counted against people who are applying for a family-based green card.

"It's really important that people get specific legal advice from a trusted immigration lawyer or an immigrant rights organization that's well-versed in this issue," Dar emphasized.

It is “protecting public resources and ending policies that encouraged dependency on hard-working American taxpayers,” the Department of Homeland Security said in a post on X.

Programs people have been paying into like Medicare, Social Security and unemployment are not counted. In addition, the public charge rule does not apply to refugees, asylees, T and U visa holders or people who are apply-

ing to renew a green card.

(T and U visas are humanitarian non-immigrant statuses created by the U.S. government to protect crime and human trafficking survivors and help law enforcement investigate and prosecute serious offenses.)

Dar said she worries the changes will deter mixed-status families from signing up their U.S. citizen children for needed social services.

"This new regulation allows for immigration officials to consider if anyone in your household has accessed any kind of means-tested benefit and count that against you. So, for a lot of parents and families, that's going to be a huge concern," Dar pointed out.

Census data show in California, more than 3.7 million children live in immigrant families, and 93 percent are U.S. citizens.

Take action... from pg. 20

Month, residents across the county are urged to get and stay prepared for risks in the locations where they live and work, which might include earthquakes, flooding, mudslides, tsunamis, wildfires, power outages, and other incidents:

- Have extra drinking water, food, medications; flashlights, radios, and the batteries needed to power them, and first aid kits and fire extinguishers
- Test your medical devices and other assistance and accessibility technologies and charge any related batteries and power supplies
- Test your smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, and similar systems and devices
- Develop and test your family plan for evacuating and staying in communication; familiarize yourself with the evacuation plans where you work or spend significant amounts of time
- Sign up for emergency alerts at alert.lacounty.gov
- Follow the Office of Emergency Management on X, BlueSky, Instagram, and Facebook: @Ready-LACounty
- If you know someone experiencing homelessness who needs help, visit homeless.lacounty.gov/get-help/
- Visit ready.lacounty.gov for more about being prepared

Art exhibition... from pg. 19

all viewing art as an advocate for culture, heritage and humanity.

The exhibition was co-curated by Jocelyn Marie Mulgado and Edgar Perez Pena.

It continues through Nov. 14.

Gallery viewing hours are Tuesday through Saturday 1 to 5 p.m. and Sunday 1 to 4 p.m.

The dA Center for the Arts is located at 252 S. Main St., Pomona.

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