

express

THE FINAL
PRINT ISSUE

The story
continues at
saccityexpress.com



PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

This is not our obituary.

You are holding in your hands the last printed Express newspaper at Sacramento City College.

As one of a couple dozen advisers of the paper since its beginnings as Jottings in 1921, I have to say that this is a bittersweet moment. The paper itself is not ending; in fact, it's thriving with new content every day of the academic year at saccityexpress.com. But it's time to bring a close to its monthly existence on newsprint. Beginning in the fall semester the Express will be a completely online publication.

This reminds me of another important moment in the paper's history, when Ginny McReynolds was hired in 1986 to replace longtime journalism instructor and adviser Jean ("Doc") Stephens, who was retiring. The story has become part of our history: Jean made no secret of the fact that she didn't want to have to deal with computers, which were very much becoming a part of newspapers. So it was Ginny who ushered in the first small Macintosh computers into the Express lab, and she and her students set about learning the new technology to put out the paper.

"When I came here in 1986, I was extremely grateful to have been chosen for the job and I was nervous," recalls Ginny, who is currently associate vice president of instructional services at City College. "My whole first staff of editors had been Jean's students, and it wasn't an easy transition for any of us. But, before long, we formed our own team, and Jean was very helpful and supportive of my work."

Ginny also notes that as the program transitioned to using computers, she had "enormous help from people who actually knew what they were doing. Over the years, all of that has changed a number of times, but it has always been a kind of

'each one, teach one' situation. Without very tech-savvy colleagues and students, I would never have been able to facilitate that!"

Our journalism colleague Dianne Heimer also oversaw a major technological shift when she advised the paper—creating an online version of the Express as with the new century in 2000.

None of this would have been possible without thousands of dedicated students, who, since 1922, have made up the staffs of Jottings, the Pony Express and the Express. We have included the names of as many of those former staffers as on the back cover.

The goal of the journalism department has not changed since the days of the first newspapers on campus: to educate students in the skills and ethics of journalism so that they can continue their educations in the field, if they choose, or go to work as professional communicators. Many have done both. We are proud to point to photographer Ron Edmonds, a photographer on the Express in 1968, who won a Pulitzer Prize for his photos of the assassination attempt of Ronald Reagan in 1981.

But we are equally proud of young journalists who did outstanding work while reporting and photographing for the Express.

When a student was shot and killed on campus Sept. 3, 2015, Express editor-in-chief Kris Hooks and news editor Vienna Montague immediately went to work. Most of the coverage was put up instantly on the Express' social media platforms and on our website. Local news outlets were following our reporting that day. (Now they both work for ABC TV stations—Vienna for KGO/ABC7 and Kris in Sacramento for ABC10.) Our Express editors put up stories first online and then

decide which stories to include in the monthly print editions, from the coverage of the reaction to the death of former City College student Stephon Clark and decision this year not to prosecute the city police officers who shot and killed him.

As we've been looking at the end of the printed editions of the Express, I've struggled for ways to write about this. One of my former writing students, Dawn Orosco, put it this way in the final stanza of a poetic tribute to print newspapers:

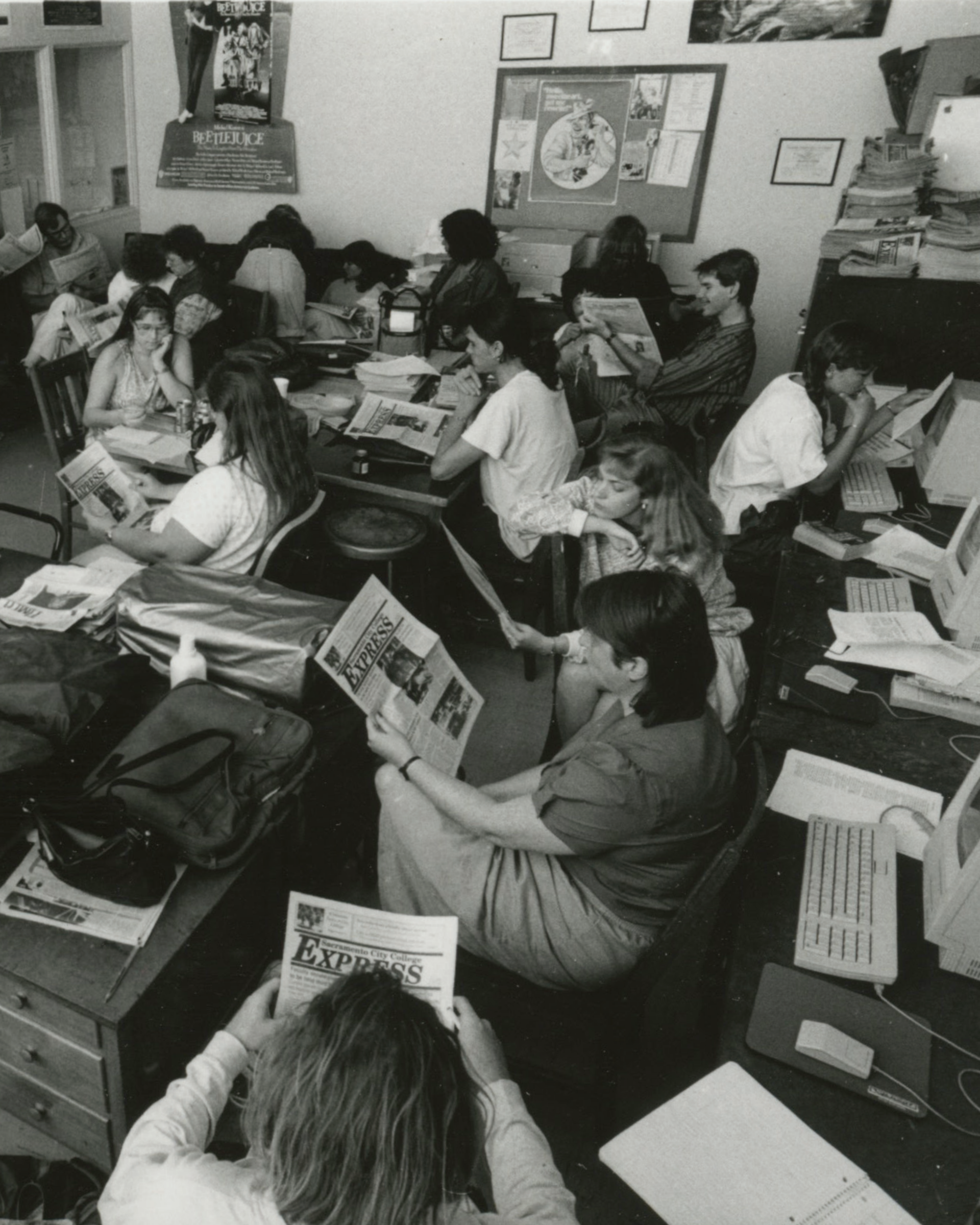
*But still, this is not an obituary —
newspapers will never die
They will always be held;
they will always be opened —
forever recycled
in my bank of memory.*

It's been a great run on newsprint, and we are grateful for the support of literally thousands of (before 1959) Sacramento Junior College and (after 1959) Sacramento City College students, faculty, staff and administrators who have read (and sometimes railed at) the Express. The paper has been an ongoing practice in democracy and the First Amendment—not without disagreement and challenges—but it has largely succeeded as the voice of students reporting on other students and their college experience.

Here's to many more years as that student voice, in whatever form of delivery is appropriate to the changing times. In the meantime, the Express will still be going strong each academic year at saccityexpress.com.

We hope you'll continue the journey with us. ♦

Jan Haag and Randy Allen
Express advisers, spring 2019



BETTEJUICE
The Party is Just Getting Started

THE SACRAMENTO CITY COLLEGE
COMMUNITY SERVICE CENTER

Sacramento City College
EXPRESS

Computer keyboard

Computer mouse

Open notebook



The Story Goes On

The Express shifts toward a fully online publication

DANIELLE MCKINNEY
AND ROSE VEGA

The student-run newspaper at City College has seen many seasons over the years and, as its staffers and advisers attest, will continue to evolve.

The paper originally started as Jottings, a three-page, two-sided mimeographed sheet in 1921, according to a history of the college, “Celebrating 100 Years: Sacramento City College.” Jottings became The Blotter in 1922 until its name changed—at the recommendation of the college’s first president Jeremiah Lillard—in 1929 to The Pony Express. The name changed again in 1972 when the paper dropped the “Pony” and shortened to just the Express.

Pam Slater, editor-in-chief of the Express in spring 1972, was part of the group of people that changed the name of the newspaper.

“We were trying to figure out how to bring it into a more modern world, and so we decide to change it to just the Express,” said Slater.

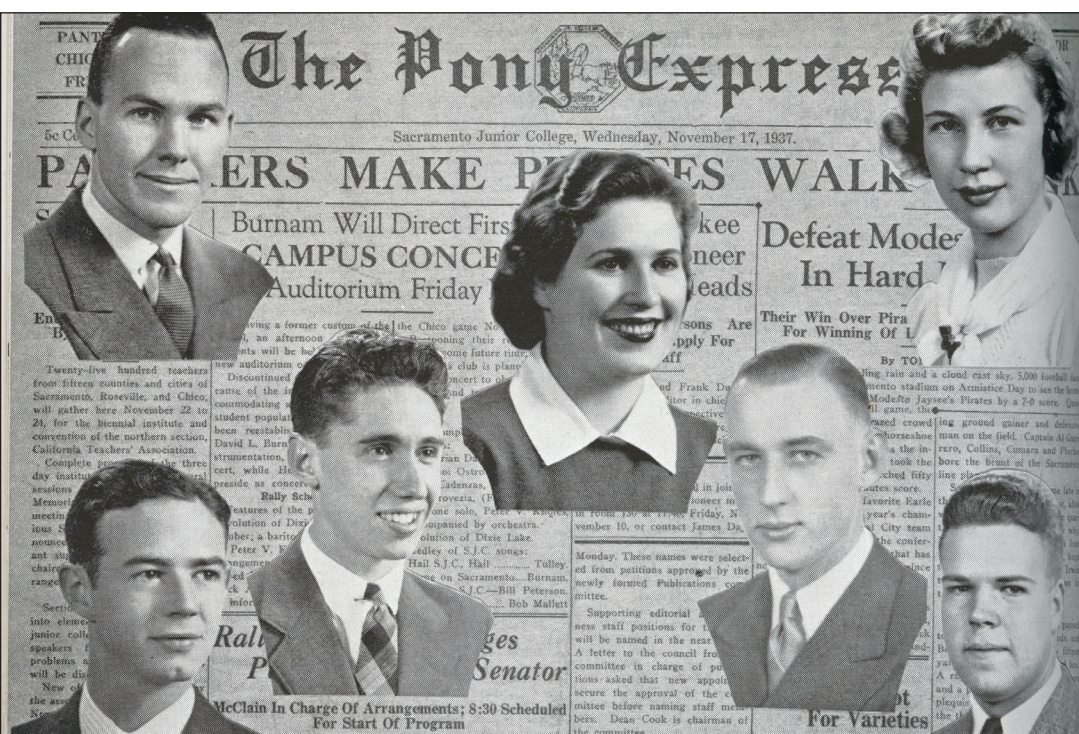
Back then, Slater said, the newspaper ran a weekly print paper of 8 to 12 pages with advertisements, and the staff consisted of about 16 people, not including the editors. She said she became interested in journalism

in elementary school and created a one page newsletter “South Land Park Post Script” after her initials, P.S., and was also co-editor for the Kennedy High School paper, the Clarion. Because of her experience on the Express, Slater was hired at The Sacramento Bee as a “copy girl” running stories from reporters to editors to the production staff and then spent 25 years as a reporter for The Bee.

“The best thing there was the newspaper adviser Tom McClelland—we called him Mac—and he was one of those people that never sat down. Always on the go, always teaching, always making everything better,” she said as she flipped through old copies of the Express. “I think truthfully that I learned everything about journalism from him.”

Tom McClelland came to City College as a teacher and newspaper adviser in 1969, filling in for journalism instructor Dr. Jean Stephens who was getting her doctorate.

“My job was to motivate them—make them want to learn. To teach a student to be a writer is difficult. I was never certain I could do it,” McClelland said in his memoir, “Job-Jumping Through Life.” “I turned out



PHOTOGRAPHER NAME • PNAME.EXPRESS@GMAIL.COM

(Clockwise from left) Ginny McReynolds began advising the Express in 1986 after longtime journalism instructor/adviser Jean (Doc) Stephens retired. Jottings was the first “newspaper” at Sacramento Junior College in 1921. For decades students laid out the paper by hand on large paste-up boards in the Express office. The Pony Express editors look across time from the pages of the 1938 Pioneer yearbook.

some excellent writers. I tried to give them plenty of writing assignments, critiquing their work, asking them to rewrite again and again.”

After McClelland left, Stephens returned to her former position as journalism instructor and Express adviser until 1986. Ginny McReynolds then took over as the department’s only teacher for several years and continued to advise the paper off and on until 2002.

“I was hired to replace Dr. Jean Stephens, who was retiring and had advised the Express [on and off] for 29 years,” said McReynolds. “She knew that the paper had to be computerized, but didn’t want to choose the computers for someone else. I really didn’t know what I was doing, but we bought a few Macs and went for it!”

For nearly 22 years, McReynolds taught a full load of classes in journalism, communication studies and English.

“I loved getting to work with students this closely. In a classroom, you meet students and work with them on papers and projects, but at the Express, or any college newspaper, you have the chance to work on an ongoing project,” said McReynolds. “It is inspiring to watch the students grow and develop. I got to grow in ways that I never would have if I’d only been in the classroom.”

Donnell Alexander, who was advised by both Stephens and McReynolds, held a variety of positions at the Express from 1986-1987, ranging from sports editor to editor-in-chief to managing editor. Alexander was originally a psychology major and took the newspaper production class on a whim.

“It’s where I got my start,” said Alexander, who now co-hosts a podcast and publishes a newsletter, both called WeedWeek. “I’ve worked at ESPN and had films in sundance and I take everything back to

the Express.”

Alexander described a typesetting class he took at City College in which he and his peers laid out copy. He said that after the articles were typed up, they would bring them back to the classroom and assemble the newspaper column by column.

While more recent journalism students have not had the experience of assembling a print paper by hand, the work is still hard and requires dedication.

“The experiences that you have at the beginning help you form your habits and your patterns,” said Alexander. “The work you do at the very beginning pays off at the end, and in some ways it’s some of the most important work that you do.”

Some former staff writers have come full circle, such as Rachel Leibrock, who is now the current journalism professor and adviser for the American River College student-run newspaper, The Current.

She was on the Express from 1988-1990—first as a staff writer and then features editor.

“What I remember from that time was really learning how a newsroom works and that collaborative sense of what makes a story,” said Leibrock, who went on to work for the The Bee and Sacramento News & Review, eventually as the editor-in-chief. “What’s the best story for our paper? Or how do we serve our community? What are the stories that we tell to serve that community?”

Doug Herndon, current dean of English at ARC, was once a staff writer and editor-in-chief of the Express. Herndon started as a reporter in 1992 and became editor-in-chief in 1994. He came back as an instructional assistant while going to Sacramento State and later returned again as an advisor around 2005. Herndon said the paper taught him how to meet deadlines and work collaboratively with people.

“I think the thing that my little crew is known for is a piece that we did on an AIDS hospice called Hope House,” said Herndon.

During the early '90s, Hope House was being threatened with closure. Herndon and his staff went and talked to the people who ran Hope House and met 12 men who had come to live and die there.

“We were there most of every day for about four months, and I think even during that time we saw three of the guys that we got to know die,” said Herndon. “We kept covering Hope House until really everyone we knew there had died.”

Hope House was the focus of a special issue about AIDS for the Express and was then picked up by the Sacramento News & Review, The Bee and local TV stations. Thanks to all the coverage, Hope House was able to stay open.

“It was kind of the best experience you could have as a young journalist for really seeing like, ‘Oh, this is good work to do in the world you can actually make a difference,’” said Herndon.

Herndon was among the group of journalists who experienced the beginnings of a more technologically advanced newsroom.

“We put the paper out on the very first Macintosh computers, which had little 7-inch screens,” said Herndon. “We would get so frustrated just trying to lay out a page 7 inches at a time that we would want to throw those computers out the window.”

Dianne Heimer began her teaching career as a part-time journalism adviser and instructor at City College in 1995 and was hired full time in 1997.

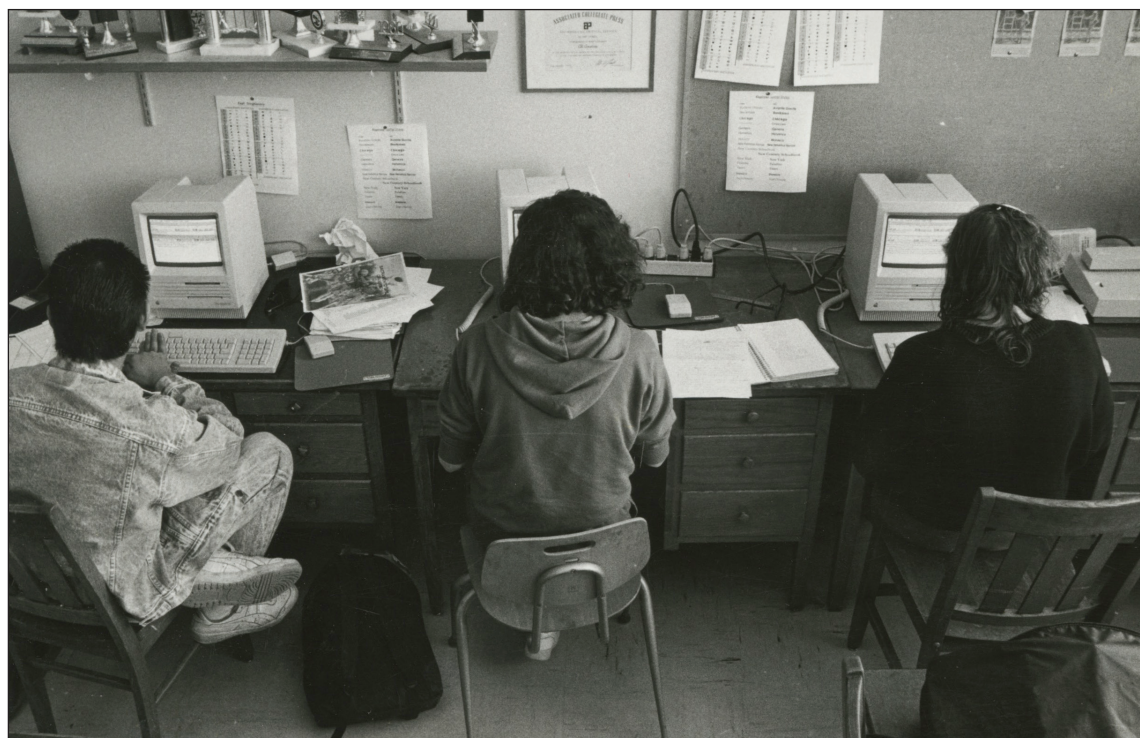
“In the late '90s is when major media outlets were waking up to the fact that digital news media is here to stay,” said Heimer. “They had to figure out a way to move primarily the print version on to online.”

Heimer was instrumental in digitizing the Express. She took a sabbatical to study how other media outlets transitioned to online and knew it was the direction the program needed to go.

In 2000 the Express started using Dreamweaver—which was really “shovelware,” Heimer said, meaning that the staff took the same content from the print edition and put it online.

“I thought it was critical for our program for our students to be trained not only in reporting, not only in news writing but now this new part of journalism, which was online,” said Heimer.

Current Express advisers Jan Haag and Randy Allen note that the Express has primarily been an online paper for several years with student editors loading articles and photos daily onto the website



Express editor-in-chief Charlotte Kosa works on the Express in its early electronic years. The introduction of the Macintosh computer to the Express newsroom in the 1980s changed the way the paper had been made for more than a half century.

(saccityexpress.com), then adding new material to its monthly print editions.

As the Express staff bids farewell to the print version of the Express and as preparations for the fall 2019 semester in the journalism department are underway, the question being asked is what impact will the digitization of journalism have?

“I think it’s [journalism] has always been evolving to this direction, and I think that we shouldn’t fight it but to go there and bring all the talent,” said Slater. “There’s so much talent from journalists and reporters and photographers, and I think even though that we are not going to be holding the paper in our hand, it’ll be a wonderful product in the end.”

The transition to being a fully online Express has been in the works since Heimer and her students

launched the earliest digital version almost 20 years ago.

“It’s strange, but it’s time,” said Heimer. “Even in the last two or three years, the students here—like the Gen Zers don’t understand journalism in the form of a print newspaper. They’re informed, they keep up with what’s going on, but they do that completely online.”

While readers will no longer be able to pick up a physical copy of the Express, student journalism at City College will continue.

“The stories will always be there,” said Leibrock. “It’s just how you tell the stories is going to change a little bit. How you present the story might change a little bit, but the content is still there.” ♦

Coaching champions

Head wrestling coach David Pacheco retires after nearly four decades of success

JASON REED

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This month City College bids farewell to one of its longest tenured and most successful head coaches as David Pacheco retires after 37 years of coaching wrestlers at City College, having led his squads to eight consecutive Big 8 championships and racking up 301 career wins.

“When I first started off, I wasn’t ready,” said Pacheco in his office full of trophies and photos of championship teams. “I took over this job when I was 26 years old, and I had to do a lot of learning.”

“All of the stuff behind the scenes, such as getting [athletes] into class and keeping them on a straight path—you become so many things other than just a coach,” Pacheco said. “Some of these kids you become a father to.”

Pacheco remembered the days when he had to do more than coach wrestling. When he first started, he wasn’t yet a full-time employee at City College and was also teaching at a middle school.

Pacheco was brought into City College as an assistant wrestling coach in 1982 by former Head Coach Bill Hickey, who died in late 2018. Pacheco said when Hickey contacted him, he told Pacheco that he was planning to stay on for at least five more years.

“I started my master’s degree, and I came in that first year and assisted, and the next year he dropped the bomb and told me he wasn’t coaching the following year,” Pacheco said, adding that he didn’t think he was ready to be a head coach. But he took that job in 1984.

In November 2018 Pacheco reached a milestone when he logged his 300th career win as the head coach of the Panthers wrestlers. That season, the team won 17 meets, the most in a single season at City College.

“In retrospect, it means a lot, [but] when it first happened, it was just another win,” Pacheco said. “It also means that I’ve been around a long time. I also see it as I didn’t get 300 wins. My wrestlers, my assistant coaches, the staff around me—I’m just a piece of the puzzle. When something like that happens, you just tip your hat to everybody that’s involved in it.”

In 1996 when the Panther wrestlers won their first state championship, 13 years after he started as head coach, Pacheco showed his appreciation to the coaches who helped

him in previous years by giving a championship ring to each of them.

“Just because they weren’t there that year—whatever they did with me before that year helped me get there,” Pacheco said. “I took something from each of them to help guide me.”

Pacheco said about three of his strongest squads, “There is always something different about each team.”

The 1996 team was the first to win a state championship, though it had fewer wrestlers than in following years. “We had a small team, and by the end of the year we only had, like, 11 guys left on the team,” Pacheco said.

His team in 2000 also won the duals state championship. In 2015 Pacheco’s wrestlers won the fourth and final state championship for their coach.

“If I really had to put my thumb on the team that was really the team of all teams, it will have to be the 2013 team,” he said.

The ’13 state championship team had six wrestlers make it to the finals compared to the ’96 team’s four wrestlers advancing to the finals. Four wrestlers on the ’13 team became first-place champions in their respective weight classes.

“No knock against any other team,” Pacheco added. “There’s always appreciation—even for the teams that didn’t do as well.”

**“HE’S JUST A
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AND HAS A
HEART OF GOLD.”**

Josh Emmett, U.F.C. fighter and former City College wrestler

Pacheco remembered that 1990 was his toughest season. “I almost stopped coaching after that year,” he said, citing injuries as a big problem and people quitting the program. That season, City College had only one wrestler place for state.

“That year was really hard because I was working all day teaching, and I was coming here, putting all my heart into wrestling, and it got nowhere, and I thought about it and said, ‘Maybe I



PHOTOGRAPH BY SARA NEVIS • SNEVIS.EXPRESS@GMAIL.COM

(left to right) Raul Ezekiel Ortiz, marketing major; Michael Mello, business management major; and wrestling Head Coach David Pacheco during spring training in the North Gym.

shouldn’t be doing this.’ But when ’91 came around, we had a good recruiting year, and we finished fourth in state.”

City College had two state wrestling champions that year, the first time in school history that happened in the same season.

Pacheco’s goal was not only to coach wrestling but also to use his platform to help his wrestlers in other areas.

Current U.F.C. fighter and former City College wrestler Josh Emmett reflected on what Pacheco meant to him as a coach. When Emmett was about to graduate from high school, he planned to join the Army. He was approached by Pacheco during a tournament, and the two talked about Emmett’s wrestling future.

“Pacheco paved the way for me,” Emmett said. “I was already enrolled in the Delayed Entry Program, and I was going to go into the Army as a Private First Class after I graduated high school. This guy was on me about where I was going to go wrestle.”

Emmett recalled Pacheco’s advice to let

wrestling pay for Emmett’s education and see if he liked it. “I just took a leap and I listened to the guy,” Emmett said. “I really like Pacheco, and we have a connection. He’s just a genuinely good guy and has a heart of gold.”

Though Pacheco will turn over his position to a new head coach, City College will announce its choice for the job late next week, Pacheco said, adding that he plans to help mentor the next coach.

“I feel more comfortable doing it that way because we’ve built this program, and we want it to stay on top,” Pacheco said. “I wouldn’t want it to have it transition to where it bottoms out. I want [the new coach] to win the state championship next year.”

As he looks toward his retirement, Pacheco said he is planning to travel.

“It’s going to be a change,” he said. “You can’t do something for 37 years and not miss some of it, but you have to retire sometimes and let someone else take the reins. It has been a fantastic ride, but it’s time to get off the horse.” ♦



PHOTOGRAPH BY SARA NEVIS • SNEVIS.EXPRESS@GMAIL.COM

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) student Dania Aceves, child development major, outside Rodda Hall North.

Dania Aceves

City College student dares to Dream

DENZELL WASHINGTON

Guest Writer

It is said that every great dream begins with a dreamer. Well, this “Dreamer” is lucid and is well on her way to fulfilling her dream.

City College student Dania Aceves is a “Dreamer,” a term commonly used to describe people who were brought illegally to the U.S. when they were children. The DREAM Act allows Aceves to stay in California, but not as a legal citizen.

And like a dreamer, Aceves has met nightmares along the way. It has not been all rainbows and butterflies, but that hasn’t slowed her down one bit. She was born in Atotonilco, a small town in Jalisco, Mexico. She is powering through the difficulties of being a DACA student, another term derived from more immigration reform named the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, all stalled in the Trump Era.

Aceves, 19, who is one of two children, arrived in the U.S. at about 4 months old in 1999. She arrived separately from

her parents. Being a baby apart from her mother was hard on Aceves. Once they were reunited, the family relocated to Williams, a small farm town on the outskirts of Sacramento.

In the life of this “Dreamer,” it’s going to take a lot more than just clicking her heels to get back home.

“Before I even knew what being illegal was, I remember every December or summer, all my friends were going to Mexico, and I couldn’t go,” Aceves says. “I would ask my parents, ‘Why can’t I go?’ They would tell me, ‘It’s because if you go, you can’t come back.’”

Because she was not born in the U.S., becoming a DACA student still does not give the student access to go back and forth across the border.

“We could go if it’s a family emergency, and we get two weeks,” Aceves says, “but that was before Trump got into office.”

As positive and open as a person can be, Aceves’ aura is colorful.

“She’s a little bit of everything,” says Ingrid Rodriguez, a friend of Aceves. “Authentic. You can always count on her.”

With an appetite for a better future,

Aceves consumed a lot of information about becoming a DACA student before applying. Her parents were afraid of the process, but Aceves was ready to take control of her life. Understanding that it was a

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Dania Aceves, City College student

careful legal process, she got counsel from a lawyer, who informed her of everything she needed to know.

She met the requirements. She had proof of living in the country since she was in kindergarten. After paying \$495 to

apply, she was granted access to work and to a future for higher education. She began working at 16 and knew that “the permit must be renewed every two years.”

“We know how much harder it is,” says Rodriguez, who is also a DACA student. “We have to push for everything that we do, but it’s helped us in a sense, because we know how much harder it is. It’s helped shape us into who we are.”

Cecilia Orduno, another friend, sees qualities in Aceves that will help her accomplish her goals.

“She’s driven and really cares about others,” says Orduno, who also notes Aceves’ empathetic personality.

Many students go to college unaware of what they want to do with their future, but for Aceves it is clear: child development.

“Since I was younger, I always liked kids,” Aceves says. “I like being around them. They’re interesting, funny and cute.”

“I realized that being a child is very important because it builds who you are, into becoming an adult. I just want to understand the way children work, and I want to help develop them into being successful.”

Excited for the future, Aceves is in the process of applying for a job at Applied Behavior Consultants. There the “Dreamer” will be working with children with autism and other behavioral disabilities, working toward her dream. ♦



PHOTOGRAPH BY SARA NEVIS • SNEVIS.EXPRESS@GMAIL.COM

Annette Barfield, academic guidance counselor, has aimed to empower students and faculty for almost 30 years.

Annette Barfield

Shaping success one student at a time

AMAYA TORRES
Guest Writer

City College holds a staff of counselors and professors who have made it their job to assist students in a successful college experience. Among the staff is a woman who has made it her life's work to do both. She prides herself on her work and the message she has for her students.

For almost 30 years, Annette Barfield has been a City College counselor, and in the last 20 years she has taught a class that not only teaches students about college, but about the world they live in. And if that wasn't enough, in the last decade, Barfield has represented her colleagues in labor negotiations with the college district.

Barfield, 61, is coming up on 30 years at City College. She is an academic guidance counselor, a professor and a labor union representative in her third term as the City College president of the Los Rios College Federation of Teachers, which represents 2,500 faculty members in the Los Rios

colleges.

In her time, Barfield has made a name for herself through her services, assisting students and other faculty members. Whether students meet her in her classroom or in her office, she is the one to go to for guidance on campus.

"She was a pretty cool professor, and what I got from the class was the process of transferring to university after community college," student Kyra Ibarra says.

Barfield understands the power of education to change lives.

"When I was in graduate school," Barfield says, "I took an ethnic studies class. We had to write a paper addressing the question, How would you change society? I read a very small book by Eleanor Roosevelt. She discussed how you can change many negative things about society and the people who live in society through education."

Barfield graduated with a bachelor's degree in speech pathology and a master's degree in counseling from California State University, Sacramento. Then, she began working for City College as a full-time counselor in 1989.

Barfield's job as a counselor is to provide academic, career, personal and crisis counseling. She feels that her work as a counselor is rewarding, and she recognizes that she gets to be a part of an important time in students' lives.

As professor of the human career devel-

"SHE REALLY TRIED TO HELP US WITH TIPS ON HOW TO BE A SUCCESSFUL COLLEGE STUDENTS. WHAT I TOOK AWAY FROM HER CLASS WAS KNOWLEDGE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES, AND NOT TO BE AFRAID TO TALK ABOUT ISSUES THAT OTHERS MIGHT FIND UNCOMFORTABLE."

Malik Cunningham, City College student

opment class she teaches, College Success, she wants to empower her students.

"Students are so aware of their sur-

roundings," Barfield says. "They are so impacted by the neighborhoods they live in, their culture, religion and family. Trying to put things in perspective as a college freshman is so overwhelming, and they are constantly evolving. I want them to know about human rights and that they have so much to offer the world."

At the beginning of every class, she asks students to discuss current events in the community or around the world. This leads to conversations and debates, which is an important skill to have in college classrooms.

"She really tried to help us with tips on how to be a successful college students," says former student Malik Cunningham. "What I took away from her class was knowledge on social justice issues, and not to be afraid to talk about issues that others might find uncomfortable."

Now on top of her responsibilities here on campus, Barfield continues to serve as the LRCFT City College president. She represents faculty regarding working conditions, salary and benefits. She often meets with deans and administrators in defending the contractual rights of faculty.

Students, however, are at the heart of Barfield's efforts.

"Opening their minds to critical thinking, combined with social justice, drives me," she says. ♦



PHOTOGRAPH BY SARA NEVIS • SNEVIS.EXPRESS@GMAIL.COM

(left to right) Marissa Johnson, business office associate and communication studies major and her 6-year-old Jonah, 16-year-old Josiah, 11-year-old Nathaniel Jr., and husband Nathaniel Sr. Johnson family at Sacramento State.

Marissa Johnson

Diligence, determination and drive

PAM ALFARO

Guest Writer

Her day starts at 6 a.m. She wakes up, gets herself ready for school, and then helps her three boys out the door to their schools. She is a true story of balance: a mom, a wife, a worker and a student, all rolled into one.

Marissa Johnson is a determined woman. At the age of 40, she returned to City College after taking nearly five years off from school. She has been a wife for 13 years, and a mother for 16 years. Like many returning students, she struggled with fulfilling requirements after returning from a long hiatus. Nonetheless, she was determined to finish her education, no matter the obstacles.

Johnson would stop at nothing. Her determination runs so deep, she wasn't ready to give up just yet.

"But then it dawned on me, that no, I worked so hard to get this far," Johnson says. "I looked into my options and met

with a counselor last summer."

So Johnson overcame the first obstacle she was challenged with, but there were still more ahead to overcome in the future. After returning to college, she struggled with finding her place and staying on top of the coursework.

"I felt like I couldn't keep up," Johnson says. "I kind of gave up. I was really discouraged."

Once again, Johnson says she felt lost. She would have to start over with her academic requirements if she made too many changes. Little did she know that it would all work out for her in the end, because she would eventually take a class that would lead to changing her major.

After taking a mass media communication course with journalism professor Dianne Heimer, Johnson enjoyed the class so much, she decided to look into changing her major. Upon talking to her counselor, she felt communication studies would be a better path for her. She had also completed most of the prerequisites for math, so she wouldn't have to worry about clearing that hurdle.

"The most difficult for me was the math requirement," Johnson says.

With three boys and a husband, her hands are full at home. Her sons are 16, 11 and 6. She's involved in her children's schools, including volunteering at her oldest son's track meets, which usually occur at the end of Johnson's school day.

Johnson understands the importance of

Her coworker Shazia Ashraf is amazed at Johnson's positive outlook, no matter what the day brings.

"I have seen Marissa come to work exhausted and sick, but she still shows up," Ashraf says. "So, I can see her being the same way with school."

But Johnson knows she doesn't have it all figured out.

"I kind of just wing it and try to find pockets of time for myself and my family," Johnson says.

Krissy McGill, who has been Johnson's friend for over 10 years and now lives in Seattle, remains close with Johnson. She was recently in town to visit with Johnson over spring break.

"For as long as I've known Marissa, she has always been a go-getter," McGill says. "I mean the girl never quits, and that is part of what makes her so amazing."

It seems as though Johnson has determination running through her veins and will stop at nothing once she has set her mind to it. Johnson is looking forward to graduating in May, and then transferring with her associate's degree in communication studies to Sacramento State, where she's been accepted for the fall semester.

In the end, Marissa Johnson stayed determined and kept her goal in mind—always. Now, she's crossing the finish line. ♦

"FOR AS LONG AS I'VE KNOWN MARISSA, SHE HAS ALWAYS BEEN A GO-GETTER. I MEAN THE GIRL NEVER QUILTS, AND THAT IS PART OF WHAT MAKES HER SO AMAZING."

Krissy McGill, Johnson's friend for over 10 years

balancing education and family. And employment. She works at a car dealership, which can be pretty stressful. But she says she still enjoys her job.



PHOTOGRAPH BY SARA NEVIS • SNEVIS.EXPRESS@GMAIL.COM

Jacob Sidman, graphic communication major, is described by a professor as having a probing mind and curious nature.

Jacob Sidman

Choosing optimism despite adversity

DESTINEE LANG

Guest writer

According to the Center for Neurological Neurodevelopmental Health, cerebral palsy is the most common motor disability in childhood. However, having the condition doesn't stop City College student Jacob Sidman from getting his education and following his dreams.

Sidman was born prematurely with a form of cerebral palsy called periventricular leukomalacia, known as PVL. The condition affected his legs and arms, preventing him from walking or writing. He uses a wheelchair to get around campus.

"There's always something enjoyable enough to keep me constantly motivated," says Sidman, with his usual optimism.

Right by Sidman's side, with a genuine smile and a helping hand, is his mother, Angela Sidman. "Ever since he started preschool, he always wanted to be like every other kid," says Angela. "He never wanted

to be treated differently. He always worked so much harder to maintain that level. And I think that's what motivates him to be just like everyone else."

Thriving with creativity and perseverance, 20-year-old Jacob enjoys the artistic side of life. He is a graphic design major, and his hobbies include design and composing music.

"I've always been into the creative side of things," Jacob says. "I like to be able to create and experiment," Jacob says.

With Jacob's kind heart and optimism, he has managed to not only motivate himself but those around him, as well. Longtime City College music professor Robert Knable is deeply inspired by Jacob's perseverance to achieve.

"His probing mind and curiosity have helped me to be a better teacher," Knable says. "He is the best proofreader ever. He reads everything with a hypercritical mind."

Knable has Jacob as a student in one of his music classes. He has been able to watch Jacob flourish as the young man embraces his impeccable talents.

"He has a passion for and curiosity about music," says Knable. "He is an excellent student, very smart, very creative and very funny."

Angela joyfully goes with Jacob to and from each class, making sure he gets to his destination safely and hassle free. She

would have.

"It will always be in the back of our minds," Angela says of her and her husband. "Jacob is an only child, so we don't have the support of siblings to think about what happens when we're gone."

However, Jacob says that being born this way has made it easier to cope with life.

The bond between Jacob and his mother is sincere and heartfelt.

"She's a great mom," Jacob says. "She has to do much more than a typical mom because of my disability. My parents have to do double the work of typical parents."

Jacob's mother says she receives a lot from her son and his personable demeanor.

"He is a bright, engaging person who has a great sense of humor," Angela says. "I can be in a bad mood, and he just fixes it. He always knows the perfect thing to say. He taught my husband and I what is important in life, and so much that isn't. He has made us better people."

As he continues his quest, Jacob and his mom agree that education can be challenging but rewarding.

"Always find something you enjoy," Jacob says. "Just realize that there are certain parts that are enjoyable and fun. Certainly not all of it is like that, but there is always something to look forward to."♦

"I CAN BE IN A BAD MOOD, AND HE JUST FIXES IT. HE ALWAYS KNOWS THE PERFECT THING TO SAY. HE TAUGHT MY HUSBAND AND I WHAT IS IMPORTANT IN LIFE, AND SO MUCH THAT ISN'T. HE HAS MADE US BETTER PEOPLE."

Angela Sidman, Jacob's mother

recounts the obstacles that Jacob faces on campus: closed doors he can't open and backpacks filled with water and supplies he can't access.

She admits that when she first came to the realization about Jacob's disability, she was worried about the quality of life he



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Ryan Angel Meza, Sacramento-based photographer, focuses behind the scenes to shed light on Sacramento's homeless crisis.

Ryan Angel Meza

Capturing the story behind every shot

LEIGH MARTIN
Guest Writer

Click. Click. Face toward me, now face a little to the left. Click. Click. The lighting is perfect and the angle of the shot gets the message across. These are the considerations photographers face when trying to capture their vision in a picture.

Sacramento-based photographer and adjunct professor at City College Ryan Angel Meza uses photography to capture the raw nature of people. Using his camera, he is able to share his vision with people through his commercial and his experimental work. His lenses help express his vision for his projects and portray the rawness of the characters being shot. Meza has managed to grow his clientele through the years, become a photography professor, and have his work featured in magazines.

There's no question that choosing a creative career often includes less stability, less pay, and a lot of hard work. It requires entrepreneurship, dedication, and a vision that can resonate across all audiences.

From a young age, Meza says he was intrigued with the ideas of stardom, especially given that his hometown was San Benito, which has a population of fewer than 30,000 residents. In his eyes, becoming a celebrity would give him a platform or power to influence others in a positive way. He never ended up becoming an ac-

"ISN'T THAT WHAT PHOTOGRAPHY IS SUPPOSED TO BE ABOUT?"

TELLING STORIES?"

Ryan Angel Meza, adjunct professor at City College

tor, but his media technology department at his high school provided photography as another avenue to make an impact.

The face has the ability to reveal the soul. He is captivated with the faces and

uniqueness that each person brings.

"The face is a topology that nicks the surface of one's character and may share secrets that we try to hide at times," Meza says. "Photography can cause people to connect, and every person's face will tell a different story."

Other creatives understand.

"When taking a photo, I am at my most patient and relaxed," says Christina Johnson, a fellow creative and marketing director at All Good, a clothing store in Midtown Sacramento, where Meza works. "I want their artificial exteriors to drop and feel as if no one is watching them. In that moment people are truly themselves."

Because of his portraiture and desire to tell stories using his photography, Meza's most recent works are profiles of different people around Sacramento. Sometimes these are commissioned work for publications such as Comstock, Sacramento magazine, and The Wall Street Journal. But other times, it is pleasure. Either way, Meza's photography can tell stories about the community.

"Isn't that what photography is supposed to be about? Telling stories?" Meza says.

In the age of social media, it is easy to take photographs or find subjects to get "likes" on platforms, such as Instagram or Facebook. However, he decides to gravitate to the story behind each shot, which is evident in his latest and influential work on the city's homeless crisis.

Meza is bringing acknowledgement to Sacramento's homeless community. The article, "A Way Forward" by Catherine Warmerdam, was featured in Sacramento magazine's March issue. The piece talks of homelessness in Sacramento and possible solutions to alleviate the problem.

"Homelessness is at epidemic levels across Sacramento County, but those working to end the crisis say there is hope for solving it if the community has the will to do it," Warmerdam says.

Meza was grateful to shoot for the project because he believes awareness is important. He doesn't believe there is enough government funding to support a solution that would end the crisis.

"If you think about the veterans, but more specifically which veterans they are, a lot of them were drafted without choice—to fight in a war that they may not even have agreed with in the first place," Meza says. "It's sad that our government hasn't done enough to save them."

The homeless project has become personal for Meza, because as stated earlier, each face tells a different story. The plight of a homeless person tells many. Even after the project ended, Meza continued to take photographs of Sacramento's homeless people.

Meza's subjects in his photography capture who he is as a person, a socially conscious person who will continue to think innovatively in hopes of making an impact on his audience. ♦



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Cheryl Gussman, returning student majoring in psychology, has plans to reach her higher-education goals.

Cheryl Gussman

Psyched to be back at the books after 30 years

MICHAEL MCDANIEL

Guest Writer

The first day of a semester can be intimidating for anyone, let alone parents of students entering college. But what happens when the parent and the child are both headed to their first day of college at the same time? Then you may encounter a unique set of challenges.

For one City College student, returning to college has been just that, a learning experience not only about the coursework, but about herself. Cheryl Gussman, 56, enrolled in City College classes as a psychology major after not attending college for 30 years. Her son was a college sophomore at the time.

Gussman has an elegant, effortless poise. Fiery, long red locks atop her head, tanned skin, and a bright, glistening smile. She describes her morning routine as “wake up, slap on a bunch of makeup.”

Yet her clothes are always chic, with perfectly placed accessories. Her laugh unmistakable, enough to shake the silence of any drab classroom. She, in a sea of stu-

dents, stands out, not only for her style or her red hair, but her warm and welcoming demeanor.

“The classroom has changed so much since high school,” says Gussman, who has recently moved to Davis from her hometown of Los Angeles.

What has changed the most, she says, is her outlook on life. She spent 30 years working as a successful real estate agent in Los Angeles, while raising two sons. Prior to moving to Davis, she says she never would have returned to college if she had stayed in Los Angeles. She did, however, when she moved to Davis and her youngest son entered his sophomore year in college.

She never imagined she would be in college at the same time.

Gussman glances at one of the family photos resting on the pristine mantle above the fireplace in her Davis home. She moved because she was interested to see what living in Northern California would entail. And she moved here to support the career of her partner, John Bowes.

“Cheryl returning to college has been great,” Bowes says. “I feel it is important to support partners in life goals and be flex-

ible, adjust my expectations to what will be likely to change throughout the week, heck, even the day.”

Gussman says that when she went to college the first time when she was younger she could not focus. She had too much going on at that time. But she was grateful

they enter classes.

“It’s so weird to me,” she says. “They don’t even talk to each other, and they are creating distance from each other.”

She says she “loves meeting all the different kids.” By kids, she means fellow students.

“It’s so inspiring to hear all of their different backgrounds, dreams and stories of what they want to do, and it takes you out of your bubble that you tend to be in,” she says.

Students appreciate Gussman’s interest in their lives.

“She is the nicest person in any of my classes,” says Juan Dela Cruz, who has class with Gussman. “She is always willing to talk and listen. She always has a smile on her face.”

Gussman, who is a psychology major, has been back in college for three semesters. For her, the greatest concern she had when returning to school was her memory. She mentioned she has to take longer to read and reread things for them to get absorbed into her memory banks.

Yet, she has always wanted to learn Spanish, and she has now completed the highest level of Spanish class available at City College. She even put her Spanish to use last summer on a trip to Spain.

Gussman, who says she never intended on getting an academic degree, now sees in her future a bachelor’s degree.

“Who knows?” she says. “Maybe even a master’s.” ♦

“SHE IS THE NICEST PERSON IN ANY OF MY CLASSES. SHE IS ALWAYS WILLING TO TALK AND LISTEN. SHE ALWAYS HAS A SMILE ON HER FACE.”

Juan Dela Cruz, City College student

for real estate, which gave her an opportunity to support herself and provided an excellent source of income, compared to the other sales jobs she had held.

Now, engaging with students and learning more about their lives seems to be a strong suit of hers, even when the students seem to be reluctant to talk to one another. Gussman mentions how hard it is to get fellow students to talk, as many of them are so focused on their phones as soon as



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David Fabionar, communication studies professor, sees the value in maintaining good relationships.

David Fabionar

Exposing students to valuable life skills

CESAR ESPINOZA
Guest Writer

As children, we are asked what we want to be when we grow up. The hope of having a fulfilling job is instilled in us at a young age. In the college journey, people are attending because they want to find what they might be doing for the rest of their life. The end of college quickly arrives. The culmination of all the hard work over the years comes: the job. It brings a sense of fulfillment, and it pays well.

We hope for that. We want that. David Fabionar, a City College communication studies professor, has that satisfaction in what he does, and it shows.

Fabionar walks into class with a twinkle in his eyes, ready to teach but also ready to listen. If there is confusion about a topic, then a discussion ensues. He makes sure that every student understands the material. He gladly teaches from the front of the room and in front of a desk. Hannah-Monique Miller was a student in his conflict management class, and she says she would definitely recommend Fabionar's class to

other students.

"He has been one of my favorite instructors," Miller says. "He is considerate, empathetic, thoughtful and thorough."

Fabionar is a favorite of Miller's. Conflict management is a favorite of Fabionar's.

The communication studies professor has sections of public speaking and interpersonal communication, too, but conflict management is the class that he enjoys teaching the most.

Fabionar believes conflict management exposes students to important life skills. He says that relationships are the most important aspects of our lives. To maintain those relationships, it is necessary to have the skills to manage conflict.

Gloria Mendoza, another of Fabionar's former students, agrees.

"You can't live life completely isolated," Mendoza says. "Almost everything you do requires communicating with other people. Life is just easier when you have healthy and strong relationships with people."

Conflict is a part of everyone's lives, and Fabionar hopes to always help students by teaching the course. Conflict was the concentration in his master's degree, and he is

more than happy to focus on it again.

"It's something I see as a calling," Fabionar says. "There is such an opportunity to introduce students to these types of skills. It's so gratifying."

Mendoza says that the professor's enthusiasm for the material is reflected in the way Fabionar teaches the class. With examples from his own life ready to share,

"MY DAD ALWAYS SAID RELATIONSHIPS ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS IN LIFE. THE VALUE OF GOOD RELATIONSHIPS HAS ALWAYS BEEN INSTILLED IN ME."

David Fabionar, communication studies professor

he eases the tension students feel about speaking up and facilitates relating to the topics of the day.

Understanding that relationships are constantly needing maintenance is critical. Fabionar credits his father for his view on relationships.

"My dad always said relationships are the most important things in life," Fabionar says. "The value of good relationships has always been instilled in me."

Fabionar at 52 has many years teaching conflict management and hopes to be teaching for many more, not only to spread his knowledge and values, but to keep learning.

"I've been blessed to be able to teach for 20 years and feel like I still learn," Fabionar says. "I am by no means an expert in conflict."

Not only does he love his job, the world is in need of it, and he does it well. Conflict management is his purpose.

Fabionar is set to become the department head for the communication studies department next semester. It won't be his first go at it. With a previous term from 2009-2011 under his belt, he is ready to step up once again.

In the future, he hopes to grow conflict management classes and make them as in-demand as public speaking classes. He hopes to see the course become a required course for all students.

In Fabionar's opinion the world needs to step away from competing in interpersonal conflict and focus on finding the win-win scenario. ♦

Conflict Management, COMM 355, will be taught in fall 2019. The course fulfills the IIB requirement for graduation.



PHOTOGRAPH BY SARA NEVIS • SNEVIS.EXPRESS@GMAIL.COM

Mentor with Davitto Leadership Academy (DLA) and HAWK institute, Trayzell White, is a business management and ethnic studies major who has been a student leader at City College.

Trayzell White

Leading the youth through change

JUAN SALCEDO

Guest Writer

Trayzell White is about to be handed a microphone at a Student Development meeting for students, hosted this spring on the City College campus.

While people stand around drinking hot chocolate, the question is asked: "What can the school do to help the students?"

Upon being handed the mic, White explains his own experience as a person of color. He tells how within the system of the campus, there are prejudices shown toward black students that should be prevented. He explains how racial profiling can be unfair and hurtful to innocent students.

In addition to being a leader of change and a City College student, White, 20, does his fair share of his special type of social work among youth. He works as a mentor for Davitto Leadership Academy, for leaders of social justice, and the HAWK Institute, a local volunteer group for people of color who empower the community. White was also part of

a local summit for minority students in Sacramento. He explained his frustration with the low attendance, and how there's a strong need for minority youth to talk about their problems to overcome them. He says he talks to everyone he can and sends positive energy to those who need it.

"People just need people to talk to them," White says. "If I could teach something to someone in five minutes that took me five years—that is amazing—so, they don't have to go through what I did."

As a person that realizes the strength of words, White does his best to offer his perspective so that no one has to go through similar hardships. He wants to open minds.

White has been going to City College for about a year now, pursuing a major in business management. Yet there's no denying his role as an activist in his community.

"This is just like my life work," White says. "This is my view on life, and my philosophy that developed from that. My environment showed me a lot, and it showed me how important it is to be there for people."

This semester, White traveled to

Southern California with a handful of City College students. The students were hand-picked by college leaders to participate in a conference to help create positive academic environments for African American men.

At home, in class or outside the classroom, White is always trying to express his truth through words and through being himself. He is a happy guy who laughs

"YOU REALLY DO ONLY LIVE ONCE, SO IF THERE'S SOMETHING YOU WANT TO DO, REALLY GO DO IT. BECAUSE TOMORROW IS NOT PROMISED AT ALL. YOU COULD BE IN JAIL OR YOU COULD BE DEAD TOMORROW, JUST LIKE THAT."

Trayzell White, City College student

loudly. He values the importance of loving yourself and of having confidence.

White stresses that feeling happy and confident wasn't always a part of him. Even growing up as a twin, he felt alone.

He says he didn't always have the perspective he has now. He had to deal with hardship to be where he's at today.

"Through that pain, we see," White says. "It's only an 'L' (a loss) if you don't learn from it. We meet people from many walks of life, and we have to appreciate that. You can't be mad all of the time."

As a twin, White values strong connections, as well as communication.

"He's always motivated and trying to be in a good mood," says twin brother Trayson White. "He really believes in, you get what you put out."

White is aware of this: trying to better himself with how he thinks. The most important thing he says is to have authenticity.

"Truthfully it's all about being happy," he says. "We don't have any repeats in this life. You really do only live once, so if there's something you want to do, really go do it. Because tomorrow is not promised at all. You could be in jail or you could be dead tomorrow, just like that."

Have a question for White? He probably has an answer or will at least help you discover your own answer. White's confidence is unmatched.

"I've had a few jobs already with a few programs, and I never have even had an interview," he says. "I really think it's because I come at them honestly."

The whole point is about being happy.

"He's just different, and that's what he's trying to be," says Savion White, his cousin. "He gets that anything is possible." ♦



PHOTOGRAPH BY SARA NEVIS • SNEVIS.EXPRESS.EXPRESS@GMAIL.COM

High School junior Montay McDaniel will graduate City College in May with an AA in Behavioral Studies. He will graduate high school and Sacramento State next year with a bachelor's degree.

Montay McDaniel

Life by the motto: 'Education first'

KATELIN LOPEZ
Guest Writer

The plan is the same for most—attend high school and graduate with a high school diploma. Then, the college years can start. Most high school students don't concern themselves with college plans until their parents start nagging and the school pushes SAT prep down their throats.

There is one high school junior who has been planning well past his senior year and looking into the future since he was a freshman. When Montay McDaniel II graduates high school next year, he will be one of the few high school students in California who will graduate with not just one, but three college degrees.

The City College student takes classes at two other campuses: The Met Sacramento High School and Sacramento State. With the support of his family and his

own self-determination, McDaniel, who just turned 17, will graduate with A.A. degrees in behavioral studies and in communication studies, and a bachelor's in athletic training. He will be able to apply for master's programs in his field when he finishes high school. The two colleges he's looking at? Azusa Pacific and California State University, Long Beach.

His schedule is filled to the brim throughout the week. There's high school. When he's at City College, McDaniel takes mass media, as well as argumentation and debate. When he's on the Sacramento State campus, he's enrolled in jogging and Caribbean dance.

But it's nothing he can't handle. His high school has helped prepare him. It's a small school—only about 300 students. The Met Sacramento High School differs from conventional high schools in the way that it's structured. The charter school has students come to the campus three days a week and work at internships the other two days.

Because the class sizes are small, The Met allows the students to create meaningful relationships with each other and their advisers. The goal of the school is to shape motivated leaders, and McDaniel is embracing that idea with open arms.

Besides his academic achievements, McDaniel is just like any other high school student. With a wide smile on his face and poster in-hand, he asked his girlfriend

"I LEARNED THAT CHARACTER OPENED DOORS OF RELATIONSHIPS, AND EDUCATION CREATED OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUCCESS."

Arrickia McDaniel, Montay McDaniel's mother

of four months to their junior prom. His poster was covered with bubbled letters that displayed lyrics from their favorite song, "Best Friend" by indie artist Rex Orange County. With one look at it, she couldn't help but say, "yes."

A big part of McDaniel's life is his faith. He and his family attend church every Sunday at Bayside Midtown Church in Sacramento. McDaniel is a student leader every Wednesday for the church youth group.

His devotion to the church stems from what his mother, Arrickia McDaniel, calls their four pillars: faith, family, education and character. And McDaniel's family means a lot to him.

McDaniel is the middle child, sandwiched between two sisters. He's also not the first to graduate high school with more than one diploma. His older sister, Jay'Riah Thomas, set the standard first. She graduated high school with a couple of associate's degrees under her belt, thanks to their mom's motto of "education first."

His mother grew up in Oakland, California. She used her experience in the foster care system as a driving force behind her belief in the power of education and character.

"One of the foster parents that she grew up with was like, 'No matter what you do in life, make education the first thing,'" her son says. "She kept that with her, and she put that in me, so that's kind of my motto in life."

McDaniel's mother tells her story.

"Like many at-risk students, I struggled with both academics and being of good character," Arrickia McDaniel says. "I learned that character opened doors of relationships, and education created opportunities for success. That was my escape, and as a parent, that has been the driving force behind our family's academic achievement."

She now hangs four degrees, including a doctorate, on her walls at home.

While he's been attending college classes for the last three years, McDaniel admits that sometimes being the youngest in the room can be intimidating. He does his best to blend in by observing and mimicking behavior.

"I really look up to everyone here," he says. "They know about the college experience. I'm looking at everything they do and picking up what they do."

This technique has been working. McDaniel also doesn't let his youth stop him from raising his hand.

"I always thought he gave very good insight and participated in class discussions," says Taylor Elgin, a classmate in McDaniel's City College mass media class. "I didn't realize he had so much going on."

His achievements have not come without adversity. McDaniel has suffered the loss of five close family members in the past few years. However, like his spirit animal the phoenix, he emerged from the tragedies stronger and more focused.

"I'm doing it for the people that are here now supporting me, but those people that aren't there anymore, I do it for them." ♦



PHOTOGRAPH BY NIKO PANAGOPOULOS • NPANAGOPOULOS.EXPRESS@GMAIL.COM

Halsey Boyd, statistics professor, maintains a balance between teaching yoga and math.

Halsey Boyd

Peace, serenity and statistics

VIVIAN YO
Guest Writer

Among statistics professors, Halsey Boyd is unlike any other. When he's not stuck behind a calculator, staring at formulas and teaching students, he spends his time as a yoga instructor.

Boyd works full time as a City College statistics professor. After a long day of hypothesis tests and chi squares, he likes to unwind doing tree pose. Boyd is also a part-time yoga instructor in West Sacramento at Rebel Yell Yoga.

Statistics professors are stereotypically portrayed as monotoned and stressed. Yoga instructors are often seen as exultant and peaceful. Boyd goes against the grain, showing an unusual pairing of the two blends.

Yoga has had a huge influence on the math professor's life, and he hopes to help others find peace through it. He feels yoga is essential to living a stress-free life. He

believes everyone has innate powers, special to that individual. He says this makes all his yoga classes a new experience.

"And so, I am constantly challenged by trying to encourage your growth through the experience of yoga, just as you have nourished me by being unique, an enigma," says Boyd, 49. "And each class, you are a little different than you were before, as am I. We've experienced new things since we last saw each other, experiences that imprint new memories and begin to chip away at habits that no longer serve us. Each class is a little different in that the particular confluence of people that gather to practice is, I believe, not by chance."

Meaningful relationships and being able to find balance in all things are important to Boyd. This mentality can be seen not only in the yoga studio, but in his City College classrooms. Boyd takes the extra time to accommodate students' needs and keeps a safe, friendly environment.

"Halsey is one of the best professors I've had," says student Andrew Palmer. "Math

is not my subject, but I still look forward to going to class. He makes us find our heart rates and really cares about our mental health."

Boyd's students say they value his light, upbeat personality and fun, healthy environment in both his studio and classroom.

"I feel like I leave this class just feeling good," says student Sarahi Quintero. "He's good at what he does, and I get a lot out of this class."

"HALSEY IS ONE OF THE BEST PROFESSORS I'VE HAD. MATH IS NOT MY SUBJECT BUT I STILL LOOK FORWARD TO GOING TO CLASS. HE MAKES US FIND OUR HEART RATES AND REALLY CARES ABOUT OUR MENTAL HEALTH."

Andrew Palmer, student

At a young age, Boyd had already lived a charged life. Living in six different cities

and two countries, he was always on the move. He went through heartbreak and sadness, as well as happiness and achievements, such as getting his degree in theoretical statistics. He says his journey so far has been worth it, as he has made lifelong friends he now considers family.

"Always present, in times good and bad, are the heroes that help me rise above adversity – the artists, the students-turned-friends, the real estate agents, the lawyers, the writers, the studio owners," says Boyd. "A breadth of people across a diversity of thought and background that are willing to have meaningful and profound conversations in between silliness and absurdity."

Boyd aspires to continue doing what he loves. Along with yoga, he enjoys going on adventures and staying active. Some of his favorites are dance, tennis, aikido, ice hockey, skiing and running. He also enjoys calmer activities, such as writing and reading.

Taking a math course and a yoga class fall into two different categories. In Boyd's eyes, this is a remarkable dyad. Boyd hopes his students receive as much from him as he does from them.

Whether in a serene yoga studio or a chaotic classroom at six in the morning, he has the same caring and adventurous personality, and he is ready to help others find their balance. ♦



PHOTOGRAPH BY SARA NEVIS • SNEVIS.EXPRESS@GMAIL.COM

Evelyn Retter, administrative assistant III, plays an instrumental role in students' educational lives.

Evelyn Retter

Thirteen years of contagious caring

SPENCER SLAVAZZA

Guest Writer

The office that Evelyn Retter works in has a welcoming atmosphere. There are two adjoining rooms beyond Retter's office that appear to be just as welcoming. A comfy looking chair and eye-catching art scattered around leave a permanent and positive tone in the air. A cluttered desk full of knickknacks reveal her robust personality.

However, what gives away Retter's intentions the most are pictures of her kids that sit on her desk. The pictures serve as a reminder of why Retter goes into work whenever school is in session at City College.

"My kids starting school made me get into education," says Retter. "I began with yard-dutying. I just wanted to watch my kids."

Caring and devotion are just two words from a long list that would describe Retter's attitude toward her own children and toward City College students.

Retter's job title at City College is an administrative assistant for Student Services,

a role that is extremely important when it comes to student success. Retter has played a key role in students' educational lives in the Los Rios Community College District for 13 years now.

"Caring for students, understanding and being willing to listen," says Retter about the skills it requires to do her job successfully.

It is not an easy task to be in a position of aiding students, but Retter manages it. She has come a long way since her journey in education began in Nevada.

"Reno was probably less diverse at the time when I was there to attend college," says Retter, 58, revealing her attentiveness to her surroundings.

Her words are evidence of what she cares about when it comes to those she interacts with. Beyond the content of what she has to say, it is obvious Retter is here for the right reasons by the tone of her voice when discussing student needs and concerns. She makes it very clear that she puts students first and that she will do whatever it takes to ensure she can help them become better off than when they first entered her office.

Something that Retter lets every student who comes in contact with her

know before they leave is that they have an important purpose.

"IT'S A LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCE KNOWING THAT YOU MAY HAVE HELPED A STUDENT SUCCEED WHEN THEY MAY HAVE NOT."

Evelyn Retter, administrative assistant for student services

"Being able to help students," says Retter, who speaks with conviction. "It's a life-changing experience knowing that you may have helped a student succeed when they have not."

Retter's process of interacting with students is sweet and simple. Shantel Carter is a student who has come to Retter for answers.

"She will legit perk up when you enter the room," Carter says.

This way of greeting others seems to act

like a volt of energy for students.

"When I went to her, literally every question I had she paid good attention to," Carter says.

It is clear that Retter is doing her job with a certain sense of attention and caring.

Before students leave her office, there is one thing that Retter makes sure they part with.

"Being able to come to me for any question, to have trust in me," says Retter of what she hopes to impart to students. "Basically, I am here for the students, and I really care."

Retter's ability to help others and affect lives does not stop with students. She also interacts with colleagues on a daily basis.

Just down the hall from Retter, Melanie Frazier is a colleague who is filling in for a faculty member on maternity leave.

"The job was difficult starting off," says Frazier. "Evelyn has been so helpful to me, so I am very grateful for that."

There are more ways than one that Retter shows her positive outlook. One of those is her positive attitude toward rejection. Retter has faced many job rejections before she got to where she is now. Retter refers to her competition as wonderful people competing for a good cause.

Retter adds a cherry on top of every interaction with students with her use of humor. Her role at City College is vital and leads to more success among students. Without a doubt, Retter's kind of caring is contagious. ♦



PHOTOGRAPH BY SARA NEVIS • SNEVIS.EXPRESS@GMAIL.COM

Graciela Serratos, elementary school teaching major and student vice president of technology of Phi Theta Kappa, is transferring to UC Berkeley.

Graciela Serratos

Leading the way at PTK

RAHITESH PRASAD
Guest Writer

There are many students who go to City College, but there are only a select few who hold notable positions in campus organizations.

As vice president of the college's chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa honor society, Graciela Serratos is one of those leaders. She is also the vice president of Technology for student government. The 19-year-old student—not too tall, wearing semi-round glasses and casual dress—is not to be underestimated.

She graduated from Davis Senior High School in 2017, and in high school, she did a lot of things.

“During my high school years, I wanted to make the most of my experience, so I joined many clubs,” says Serratos.

The National Honors Society, California Scholarship Federation, and Key Club. She played baritone saxophone in the concert and symphonic bands. She interned at the school library, where she grew to love the staff, as well as the library itself. She was vice president of the dance

club and in charge of tech operations, where she helped put together their annual dance show.

“By getting involved in my community, I had a greater appreciation for my school and the staff members that made it all possible,” says Serratos.

Her journey of going to colleges, though, started back when she was in high school.

“So I heard through a friend that I could become an advanced student and attend college while in high school, so I took the opportunity,” she says.

During the summer of her junior year in high school, Serratos did just that and started going to the City College Davis Center. She loved the campus and the staff so much that, at that moment, Serratos decided that instead of applying to a traditional four-year college, she would go with the alternate path. So, the next summer after she graduated, she enrolled at City College and began the next chapter of her life.

During her time at City College, she joined the nonprofit academic honors organization Phi Theta Kappa.

“I decided to try it out because my close friend invited me to join,” says Serratos.

“She told me she had recently become the president of Service and Sustainability, and I wanted to support her.”

Serratos went to multiple public meetings and to student government officer meetings with her friend. Soon enough, she started to volunteer for projects that would pay dividends for her in the future, as she would become the vice president of Phi Theta Kappa and of Technology for

“Caring, kind, understanding, proactive, the boss” is how her friend Maria Katherine, a fellow Phi Theta Kappa member, describes her.

Another City College student, Robyn Fields, who is a current classmate of Serratos, sees other traits that make Serratos a successful leader.

“She’s very down to earth, and even if she has her own things going on, she’ll be there for others when they need her,” Fields says.

However, Serratos says she is still fairly new to all of this. She says that she thinks the officers have really made a huge difference this academic year, as they have recruited more active members.

“There are always going to be difficult moments, but I think if you can work through those problems you will really find satisfaction in what you do,” says Serratos of the work she does in campus organizations. “Besides that, I really enjoy all the time I spend with all PTK members and officers. I have learned so many practical job skills, but I will say, it has been hard work. Lots of calling, texting, emailing, planning, and making so many documents and forms that I do not even know where to begin. However, when I look at all the work we have done, I couldn’t be prouder of what we have all accomplished.”

As proof of her hard work, Serratos found out during spring break that she was accepted for transfer to the University of California, Berkeley, in the fall.♦

“BY GETTING INVOLVED IN MY COMMUNITY, I HAD A GREATER APPRECIATION FOR MY SCHOOL AND THE STAFF MEMBERS THAT MADE IT ALL POSSIBLE.”

Graciela Serratos, PTK vice president

student government.

“I got the news that the VP of Technology position was empty in the beginning of this semester, and my friends encouraged me to run for the position since I had volunteered so much for PTK already,” says Serratos. “So, I announced that I was interested, and it was put up for voting and I was officially announced a couple weeks afterwards.”

Her friends and fellow students appreciate her initiative.



PHOTOGRAPH BY SARA NEVIS • SNEVIS.EXPRESS@GMAIL.COM

Students walk across the Tower Bridge during the March for Our Lives Too.

March for Our Lives Too

Students organize walkout and march for police gun reform

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The Black Student Union organized a May 2 walkout on City College in which 14 schools in the greater Sacramento Area participated in to spread awareness about gun reform and police brutality.

According to BSU's Secretary and Social Media Coordinator Mya Worko, the walkout began at City College's quad between the Learning Resource Center and the City Cafe at 10 a.m., where BSU leaders waited for other members and students to gather until marching to the City College Light Rail Station.

"We just want to come together, go at the Crocker Art Museum, then go to the bridge, then the Capitol—hold hands and unite as one," said Worko the morning of the march.

Worko also spoke about the six pillars the March for Our Lives Too walkout stood for: criminalizing deadly force, having independent investigations of deadly use of force, demilitarizing the police, having more police accountability, training

for mental health crises, and having police build better relationships with Sacramento communities.

Jamarea Austin, a construction major and BSU consultant, stood up about 10:30 and gave directions for those in attendance, explaining that they group would take light rail to 8th and Capitol and walk to the Crocker Art Museum.

"This march is about gun reform for police officers because for too long we have seen unjust murders in our communities, for too long we have not brought up the topic of how we should go about changing those rules in this country," said Austin.

On the way to the light rail, BSU members chanted, "You shoot us down, we shut you down!" and for most of the march, the chants were lead by BSU Ambassador Kevin Robinson. When the group got to the light rail station, the chants stopped as BSU leaders made sure everyone had a light rail ticket.

BSU President Joshua Robinson said organizing a walkout takes patience and consistency.

"[It takes] consistency because it's not as simple as just sending out flyers and letting people know," said Robinson, "[and]

patience is because even when there are not a lot people participating, it's best to be patient and continue to do the work until the momentum grows."

Robinson also said that students who didn't participate should feel free to come to the next march, though the group does not have a date set yet.

Once at the Crocker Art Museum, the

crowd grew to about 70 people, from the 50 who joined at the start, all of whom took chalk and wrote the names of people who were killed by police on the sidewalk. After people were given water, snacks or used the bathrooms, the march proceeded to the Tower Bridge.

Marchers continued to acknowledge the names of those killed by police at the Tower Bridge by shouting the names of 100 people, in increments of 10 each, which was followed by a shout of "ashé" (so it shall be).

After each group of 10 names, two groups of three people stood on each side of the bridge and poured water with red coloring symbolizing the blood of the fallen, and when the last 10 names were shouted, they poured the last of the "blood."

From this point on, marchers made their way to the Capitol, chanting as they walked through the streets. Finally at their destination, marchers united holding hands on the steps of the Capitol, held a prayer and sung the Black National Anthem.

While at the steps, Robinson, recited the six pillars that the March for Our Lives Too was built upon with the help of a Sacramento High Student who spoke about the fourth and fifth pillars.

Stephon Clark's grandmother, Gequita Thompson, also attended the march and said that it was wonderful to see the younger generation marching and raising awareness about ongoing issues.

"The young people are out. It's a great fight and I'm proud of them," said Thompson. "All these children here is a blessing" ♦



PHOTOGRAPH BY NIKO PANAGOPOULOS • NPANAGOPOULOS.EXPRESS@GMAIL.COM

Sequita Thompson, grandmother of Stephon Clark, speaking at the March for Our Lives Too demonstration at the State Capitol.



PHOTOGRAPH BY SARA NEVIS • SNEVIS.EXPRESS@GMAIL.COM

Motivational speaker Caliph Assagai addresses students, staff, and faculty about making positive change in the wake of social injustice.

From pain to power

Guest speaker talks pathway to positive change

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Motivational speaker Caliph Assagai said that students can put themselves into positions to succeed and make positive change in the wake of social injustice when he addressed City College students, faculty and staff in the Student Center May 1.

Assagai acknowledged the pain from the loss of Stephon Clark and the recent decision to not charge the officers involved in his shooting death, as well as the string of hateful and racist graffiti incidents that have plagued City College in the 2018-19 academic year. He was brought to campus by Eric Williams, business administration major and president of the Business Society at City College.

“As students, we are in a special position to be activists now, to make a difference now on this campus and people around us—not only for the impact it will have on Sacramento City College, but for the impact each and every one of you will have when you leave this place,” said Assagai. “I know that learning and understanding different perspectives and most importantly understanding your power is the way to make that happen.”

Assagai, a law school graduate and former lobbyist, commented on the big-pic-

ture view of Clark’s death, citing compassion regardless of race or ethnicity.

“If you care about other people, and you see someone die unnecessarily, it’s going to hurt you,” said Assagai. “We want accountability for the loss of this life.”

Assagai acknowledged the reopened wound in March after the Sacramento County district attorney declined to charge the officers involved in Clark’s death, despite community demands for accountability.

“IF WE WANT TO CHANGE THE GAME, WE HAVE TO PLAY THE GAME.”

*Caliph Assagai,
motivational speaker*

“When something has caused such a tremendous hurt in your life and in your community, and your in a place of pain and don’t have accountability on the account of those people who were acting,

and the people who made the decision are still in charge,” said Assagai. “The question that we have now, and that I’m here to talk about is, what do we do now?”

Assagai said he understands the desire to stamp out systemic racism, hatred and bigotry, but that these things happening at the local level are a symptom of a much larger societal problem, and to actually make meaningful change, the first step is to recognize who you can be and empower yourself.

“It’s going to be a long fight,” said Assagai. “It’s understanding this entire game that is being played out there and to get involved. [We may not like it, but] if we want to change the game, we have to play the game.”

Assagai recalled the experience of his mother’s sudden death the day after he graduated from UC Davis and applied his story of pain and loss to empowering students in the wake of social injustice.

“[Moving forward with my life] I knew this was not about me, but for a greater vision for my life,” said Assagai. “The most painful experience I’ve ever had in my life I turned into power, and that power was to overcome, the power to be resilient, the power to focus, work on and fix myself, to deal with those things that were preventing me from achieving greatness.”

Assagai explained what he called three types of power—personal, economic and political—and how students can build themselves up in a community college environment to create meaningful change.

“Part of personal power is being able to succeed despite [hateful, racist incidents] happening on campus,” said Assagai. “The way the system wins is getting you to quit.

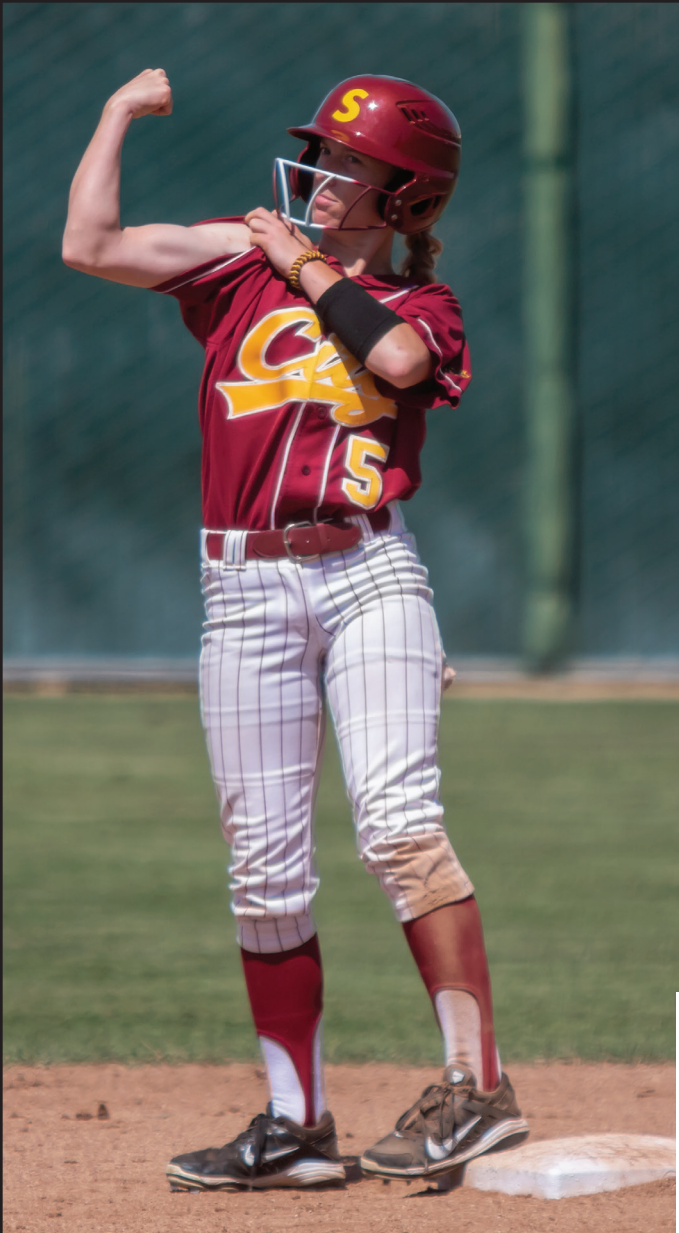
The way the system wins is getting you to say, ‘I’m not going to worry about school; I’ve got to fix this racism,’ and they’re like, ‘Gotcha, because that’s not going to happen,’ understanding that you have to pick your battles, where you put your focus on advocacy on campus, but mostly where you put your focus on academics. The best thing we can do to honor the life that was lost and start to interrupt the corrupt system that allowed for no accountability after a life was lost, is to put ourselves in a position to infiltrate the systems that control our lives, and that takes success right here [at City College].”

Money talks, and to play the game, Assagai said, aspiring advocates will need some.

“Where we need to be going, it’s not just ‘I want to run for office,’ it’s not just ‘I’m going to always vote,’ it’s not just ‘I’m going to give \$5 to Bernie,’” said Assagai. “It’s understanding that there’s this entire game that we need to be getting involved in. When it comes down to it, there’s always somebody on the other side who’s putting their money where their issues are, and we need to be able to do the same.”

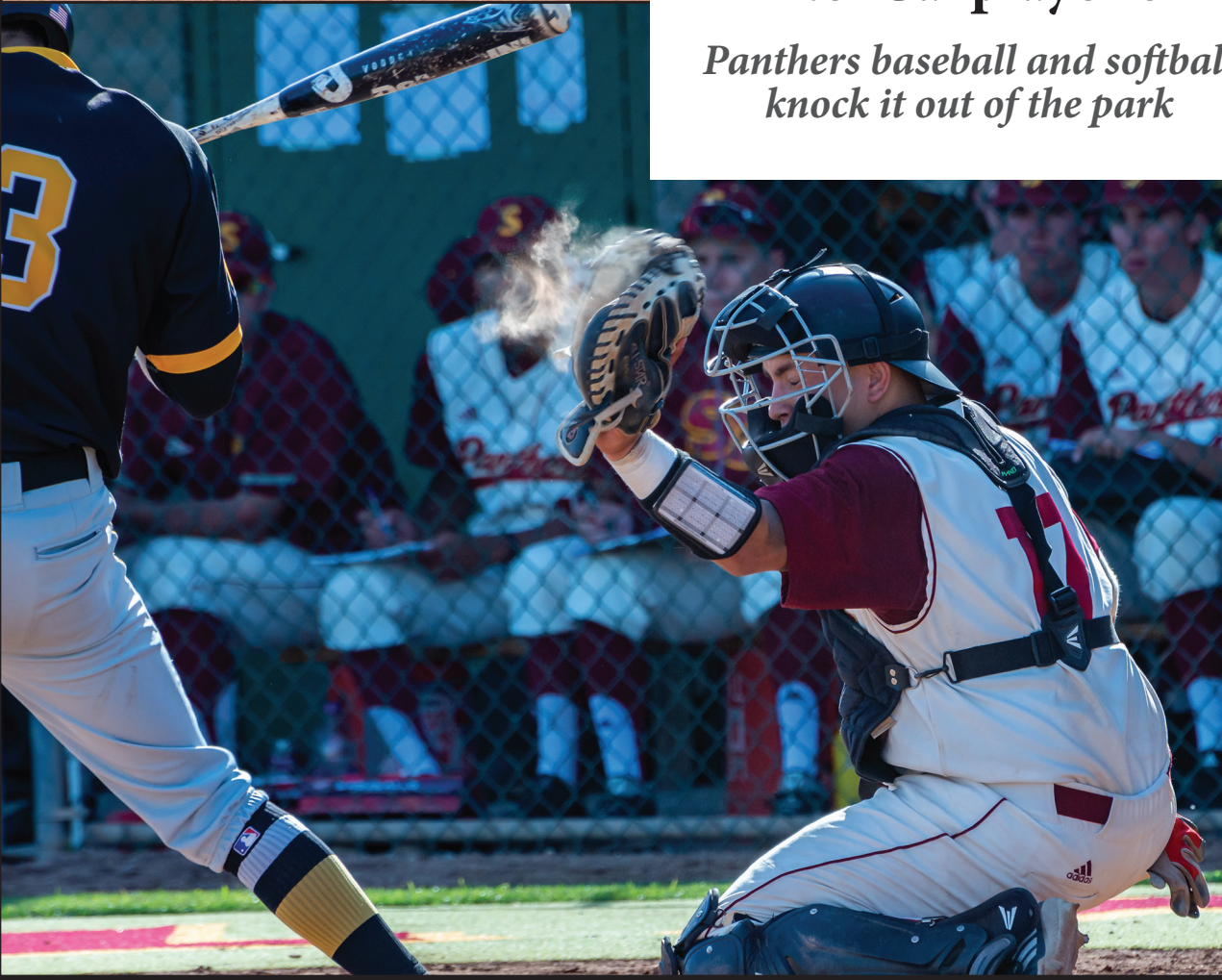
Assagai encouraged students to continue to advocate for change on local issues, but not let local hate, bigotry and racism derail them from the goal of building themselves to combat these systemic issues on a bigger playing field.

“That [change] begins with us stepping into our personal power now, gaining economic power, flexing our political power and forcing this system into what we want it to be, because it will only happen with us. Eventually we will have the America we all dream of, but it starts with you.” ♦



**Panthers advance
to round 2 of
NorCal playoffs**

*Panthers baseball and softball
knock it out of the park*



PHOTOGRAPHS BY NIKO PANAGOPOULOS • NPANAGOPOULOS.EXPRESS@GMAIL.COM
(Top right) Jordyn Farren (13) after she hits a home run May 3.
(Bottom left) Kevin Saenz (17) catches a fast ball from the pitcher May 3.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARA NEVIS • SNEVIS.EXPRESS@GMAIL.COM
(Top left) Mackenzie Duval (5) flexes after she hits a double May 3.
(Bottom right) Post-game high fives May 4.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY SARA NEVIS • SNEVIS.EXPRESS@GMAIL.COM

Mathiana Montoya, photography major, demonstrates how expensive tuition can be.

Out of pocket

The costs and benefits of free tuition

ROSE VEGA

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City College nursing student Sophia Fox, like many other students, wasn't sure how she was going to pay for college.

"Before I started school, I was just trying to figure it out. I didn't really have a job at the time," says Fox. "I was on the student center website [and] it showed my fee before I turned in my financial aid application, and I was like, 'I don't know how I'm gonna do this.'"

City College is a part of the Los Rios Promise Program, which helps eliminate the cost of tuition for first-time full-time students, according to Gabe Ross, associate vice chancellor of communications and media relations for the Los Rios Community College District.

"We know that for a lot of students—not just in Los Rios but in all community colleges there are financial barriers for students," says Ross. "The Los Rios Promise is an overarching program that helps to address some of those financial barriers."

Ross says that the Los Rios Promise Program is a mixture of different federal and state funding programs and scholarships. Included in those is the California

college promise grant formerly known as the Board of Governors (BOG) fee waiver as well as new funding from the state.

"Los Rios Promise is a program that combines all of these supports into one program for students," says Ross.

"YOU HAVE STUDENTS WHO ARE AFRAID TO TAKE CERTAIN CLASSES BECAUSE THEY JUST DON'T THINK THEY'RE GONNA HAVE ENOUGH MONEY FOR A BOOK. SOME STUDENTS FAIL CLASSES BECAUSE THEY DON'T HAVE MONEY FOR THE BOOK."

Eric Williams, City College student and president of the Business Society.

There is currently a proposal pending in the California Legislature, AB 2, to extend the first-time full-time free tuition for students to a second year. There is also another bill that would help with expenses beyond tuition, according to Ross, called

SB 291.

"The state chancellor's office is proposing an expansion of Cal grants to give more state financial aid to community college students," says Ross.

The bill hasn't become law yet, but if it does, Ross says the money would help pay for things such as books, rent and other costs besides tuition.

"We also know that there are significant barriers for many students beyond tuition. AB 2, the California College Promise [and] the Los Rios Promise Program don't universally cover the cost of books," says Ross. "They don't cover the cost of rent or other living expenses that students need to pay while there going to school full time. We know that often the biggest financial barriers are apart from tuition. This by no means a solution to all the challenges that students face towards affordability but it's certainly a step in the right direction."

Eric Williams, City College business administration major and president of the Business Society, says that he sees a lot of students struggling when it comes to the cost of books.

"You have students who are afraid to take certain classes because they just don't think they're gonna have enough money for a book," says Williams. "Some students fail classes because they don't have money for the book."

Fox says she felt the same way when she started going to City College.

"I couldn't imagine how hard it would be if I didn't get a job," says Fox. "I would probably have to quit school because I wasn't aware of any aid I was able to get for my books."

Williams says he wished he'd known about these programs when he decided to go back to college.

"When I knew I was going back to school, I automatically put myself in a financial situation that I could handle as a student," says Williams. "I downsized, I started renting a room, I started taking different precautions like make sure I get the student sticker so that I could ride the bus for free and the train for free."

Williams says that, federal work study, getting loans and financial aid also helped him a lot. He thinks that AB 2 would be beneficial for students but worries that if community college was completely free, students wouldn't take it seriously.

"Free tuition would be ideal," says Williams. "But from a psychological standpoint, sometimes when things are free, people don't tend to take them serious. Like if I know I have to pay for it, then I'm gonna make sure that I show up."

Williams feels that if free tuition was a reality that it would need to be designed to ensure that students don't take advantage of it.

"Any time you don't have to worry about financial situations it makes it easier for you to study and focus on exams and quizzes," Williams says. "It makes you a better student because you don't have to focus on 'How am I going to pay my rent?'" ♦

To learn more information about the Los Rios promise program, see <https://promise.losrios.edu/> and for information about SB 291, see truecollegecost.com.

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