

ORACLE

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The Queen's Ball

Inspired by the glamour of the Regency Era, the Warrior 2025 prom was planned and organized by ASB around the theme “The Queen’s Ball: Diamond of the Season.”

Compiled by Samantha Luo, **NEWS EDITOR**, article by Kylie Tien, **STAFF WRITER**, cartoons by Hanh Dinh, **CARTOONIST**, graphics courtesy of Canva

Drawing inspiration from elegance and 18th-19th century glamour, Warrior Prom will be held at Cerritos Performing Arts Center April 12 from 7pm to 11pm. Prom will be held at the Cerritos Performing Arts Center with ticket prices ranging from \$90 during the flash sale to \$150 as the final guest price. The venue is an old-fashioned theater with dark elements and gold accents which contribute to the Regency era theme. The event will feature a live DJ and various

entertainment options, including a photo booth and game room. After visiting the venue in November, ASB’s prom organizers chose a theme centered around a gold color scheme and a formal theatre setting. According to ASB Adviser Abigail Contreras, after compiling concepts from historical periods such as the Great Gatsby, Victorian and Regency eras, the organizers selected the theme “The Queen’s Ball: Diamond of the Season.” “The junior ASB [organizers] are the [students] that pick the theme for Prom,” Contreras said. “[The organizers] go through a process of elimination, and advocate and vote for themes within [the junior ASB students] with the help of their Junior Adviser.” ASB advertised prom with flyers around campus and posts on social media. According to junior ASB Art Director Priscilla Le, the usage of a fake Squid Game theme before the prom rally brought more publicity and anticipation for

the reveal of the true theme. “I think what was the most [suspenseful] was our Squid Game fake theme [as] I started this rumor a while ago,” Le said. “We wanted to release a fake theme to have people start talking about news of a ‘Squid Game’ [themed] prom and we wanted people to be excited to see what the actual theme [was].” A team of eight ASB juniors organized various aspects surrounding prom. These members include Le who planned the artwork for the rally, and ASB publicist Niyati Godha and Junior Class Vice President Bianca Dong, who were in charge of social media posts. ASB Interclub Commissioners Phoebe You and Eshani Deshpande planned the prom rally. Junior Class Secretary and Treasurer Jinah Kang and Junior Class President Kathy Nguyen are in charge of the prom logistics and communicating with PegLeg Entertainment, a company specializing in organizing high school dances. The organizers took care of the budgeting as well as any details or decorations that needed to get approved by consulting with Pegleg. According to Kang, the eight team members available to help limited their abilities for the rally and dance, working late at school to ensure the perfect execution of events. “We’ve been staying after school till five 30 from on Mondays and Wednesdays every single week from January,”

Kang said. “We [also] teach the current sophomores prom [organization] for next year so that next year’s seniors can also enjoy a really fun prom.” ASB’s dances have evolved since partnering with PegLeg as they are able to order from a wider selection of decorations and host more activities, which contributes to having a larger budget. There are many changes that arise from the partnership with PegLeg, which helps ASB save time, Le said. “I was in ASB last year [and] I remember the juniors directing us to set up the dance, and [before] we had to get there to do everything ourselves, whereas this year it will be done for us,” Le said. “I think both proms are just as amazing but in different ways, as last year’s was really cute and light [while] this year is kind of darker and elegant. Both [are] equally unique and planned very well.” According to Le, the ASB organizers put a lot of effort into organizing prom, so they will enjoy seeing the end result of students being able to create delightful memories. “We genuinely want the students here to not only feel valued but to actually enjoy their time at Troy, especially since we know it is so academically straining,” Le said. “We enjoy putting effort into the school for events like these where people, especially the seniors, will make lifetime memories with their friends.”

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Warrior Middle Eastern Culture Club hosts fundraiser after school

Profits from the club fundraiser will go towards an American Relief Fund initiative to assist victims of an earthquake in the Middle East.

By Salman Waheed
STAFF WRITER

Warrior Middle Eastern Culture Club will be hosting an after school Qamaria Yemeni Coffee Company Fundraiser in the student parking lot to support the American Relief Fund April 25. As a California humanitarian organization founded in 2016, the American Relief Fund aims to aid disadvantaged communities in Syria that lack access to basic living necessities. The nonprofit offers

several donation opportunities, orphan sponsorships, general donations for the impoverished and public fundraising for community improvement projects. The ARF occasionally hosts events to support other Middle Eastern countries during times of crisis. Following the 2023 Turkey-Syria earthquakes, the ARF launched an initiative to support the rebuilding of communities in both countries. Funds from the MECC Qamaria Yemeni Coffee Company Fundraiser will specifically go towards assisting displaced families and refugees in Syria and eastern Turkey. Qamaria Yemeni Coffee Co. is a Michigan based coffee chain that sells a variety of traditional Yemeni sweets and coffee beverages. Warrior MECC will sell an assortment of Qamaria food items at



PHOTO COURTESY OF CNBC

a display alongside a Qamaria food truck taking orders from students on campus. Warrior MECC began preparations for the Qamaria Yemeni Coffee Company Fundraiser in early March, starting with an application to create a club fundraiser on the official Troy High School website. Board members also communicated with Assistant Principal of Student Activities Jeff Padgett to complete event paperwork and establish arrangements for the event between the ARF and Qamaria. According to Warrior MECC Co-President Mohammad Tanatra, negotiating prices and budget spending were challenges during the process of organizing the fundraiser. The club also faced difficulties when completing legal paperwork for the event while simultaneously trying to form a consensual agreement between Qamaria, ARF and Troy. “During the weeks-long process of planning, we had to keep in mind the amount of money we would have to pay the cafe and stay conscious of the

amount of funding it would take to execute the event,” Tanatra said. “Our main obstacle that we really faced was trying to get three different organizations with different schedules and priorities to work together on a singular event, but in the end we were able to create something that I believe all parties benefited from and were satisfied with.” According to Tanatra, there is still an urgent need to help support the Middle East after the Turkey-Syria earthquakes. It is also important that club members learn to become more empathetic towards the less fortunate through the event, Tanatra said. “This nonprofit [ARF] presented us with a very nice opportunity to help out those in need who are not nearly as privileged as students at Troy are here in Southern California,” Tanatra said. “I believe this fundraising event will help students become more in touch with the reality of devastation that occurs in other places and understand the importance and urgency that we help others.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF CENTER FOR DISASTER PHILANTHROPY

DISASTER DAMAGES: *Following the earthquakes, approximately six million people from both Turkey and Syria faced displacement.*

Troy cafeteria offered after-school meals to students fasting for Ramadan

While observing Ramadan, students abstained from eating or drinking from sunrise to sundown for the month of March.

By Anastasia Efremova
STAFF WRITER

Troy cafeteria established a new program to provide students with meals after school March 3-28. The California State Department of Education issued a waiver on Jan. 14 which made the initiative possible from March 3-28. Students observing Ramadan could sign up for after-school meals with a QR code that was sent to their email or available at the cafeteria. Students could then pick up their school all school-provided meals at the end of the day. Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar during which Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset. This year from Feb. 28 to March 29, students had to time everything a little later to account for fasting and praying, sophomore Minnah Vakil said. “I [had] to get up earlier because sunrise started at 5:40 a.m., [and] that [was] when I started my fast,” Vakil said. “Since I [spend] the night praying after my fast is

over, I [had] to go to sleep later.” According to Assistant Principal of Instructional Operations Lance Bletscher, the new system protected fasting students to make sure that food was saved for them after school. The Fullerton Joint Union High School District initiated the district-wide provision. “All campuses wanted to support our students who are recognizing [this] religious holiday,” Bletscher said. “We wanted to make sure that our kids still had access to the same nutrition that they would any day.” With this program, students had access to the same meals as they normally would, as the cafeteria set aside certain meals for breakfast, lunch and supper and heated them when students picked them up. According to Vakil, getting lunch later in the day helped accommodate her schedule during fasting and helped her feel understood by the school. “If [the cafeteria] did not provide food and I [was] still at school, I would probably just not eat anything or get something from the vending machine,” Vakil said. “I really appreciate that they have [meals]. It has helped me manage my time better.” The program was advertised through flyers and emails throughout

the school. In Fullerton Joint Union High School District there were a total of 19 students who signed up, including two from Troy. According to Vakil, the message about the Ramadan meals could have been communicated more effectively. “I did not even know about [the program] until a friend of mine told me,” Vakil said. “While the school did send out the announcement in the weekly email, it is important to note that the email [was] long and not everybody read it. I think they should have announced it on OMNIA, something that all students watch at the end of class.” In the future, Troy hopes to continue this initiative

to support students fasting for Ramadan. As long as this program remains part of a government initiative, the district will most likely continue it next year, Bletscher said. “I think it is a great idea, and it is a very easy practice to do,” Bletscher said. “I would imagine we will continue doing this.”



CARTOON BY HANH DINH

The Associated Student Body read books to elementary school students

Read Across America Day, celebrated every March, aims to encourage children to foster a love of reading and increase literacy.

By Paulina Lee
STAFF WRITER

Warrior Associated Student Body read to students at Acacia Elementary School in honor of Read Across America March 3. Every year, the Fullerton Joint Union High School District Student board members plan a community service event. In previous years, Warrior ASB members have participated in activities such as pulling weeds or creating cards for those in need. This year, the FJUHSD Student Board organized a reading event as part of Read Across America at Acacia Elementary School.

Due to its proximity to Troy High

School, ASB members walked to the elementary school and split into two classrooms with small groups of students ranging from Transitional Kindergarten to third grade. Each small group consisted of two ASB members and three to five children, creating more personalized interactions.

ASB started planning the event months in advance, coordinating with Acacia to finalize details such as the date and activities. According to ASB Executive President Riley Chiu, the Acacia Elementary staff and teachers were excited to welcome the Warriors to their school.

ASB members also found the event to be a positive experience. Many felt a sense of nostalgia as they read familiar books, such as “Dr. Seuss” and “Big Nate.” ASB viewed this as an opportunity to build relationships with the younger students who might soon attend Troy High School, Chiu said.

“I think doing this once a year is a great way to build relationships with the other schools in our community,” Chiu said. “I think it allows our school to build a relationship so that if they ever need anything from us or vice versa, we can ask each other.”

According to Junior Class Secretary and Treasurer Jinah Kang, the event was rewarding as it provided an opportunity to reflect on ASB’s role in the community. It also led her to reflect on her



PHOTOS COURTESY OF TROY ASB

REMARKABLE READERS: *Associated Student Body members read a picture book to elementary school students.*

own experiences in elementary school.

“I felt very proud to have the opportunity to read to our community as a student body representative,” Kang said. “I believe involvement within our community is a great way to unite with each other.”

The event received positive feedback from Acacia, as it created a memorable experience for the students. After the reading sessions, many students waved goodbye to the ASB members as they left, showing their appreciation for the time spent together. According to Chiu, some students were upset that their time together was too short.

“We definitely want to repeat this

again, even without the Read Across America event,” Chiu said. “We wish we had more one-on-one time with each student since we had to read and immediately move on to the next group.”

The ASB members may make the event a recurring part of their community service. According to Chiu, ASB hopes to expand the event beyond Read Across America to create more opportunities for interaction with younger students.

“I think doing this event with other groups on our campus beyond just ASB will also be very beneficial,” Chiu said. “[The event] allows us to build relationships with the younger students who will be here in 10 years.”



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A night to remember should not come with such a high price tag

By Jayden Beaumont
STAFF WRITER



Students should not be going broke over prom. With prom so close on the horizon, many students are buzzing with anticipation. The dance is romanticized by movies and television shows and dreamt about by idealistic freshmen waiting for their turn at this magical night. It represents an escape from the ordinary pattern of a teenager's life and is a major milestone during one's teenage years. One expects it to be dazzling and wonderful. But it is also quite expensive, and unnecessarily so. The average cost of a prom ticket is \$50 to \$100 (\$50 cheaper than Troy's prom) but the true cost can be up to \$1000. For some students, the night is not worth the price or is simply unaffordable. Schools should reconsider what is essential to prom to make the dance accessible for all. High schools should make efforts to make prom more affordable. This event is a massive expense for students. In addition

“For some students, the night is not worth the price or is simply unaffordable. Troy should reconsider what is essential to prom to make the dance accessible for all.”

to the ticket price, students also have to pay for their formal wear, which can cost over \$100. The cost adds up very quickly, which can be stressful for students and families with lower incomes and take away from their overall experience. Fortunately, Troy has partnered with the Assistance League of Fullerton Thrift Shop. This organization can help students who need financial support get prom attire for a cheaper cost. To make the tickets themselves more affordable, schools could hold prom at less expensive venues or even on campus. Instead of buying out a glamorous or thematic atmosphere, they could create one themselves for a cheaper price. Rather than pouring money into costly locations, ASBs could bring more creativity into the games, food and decorations provided at these prom dances. These changes could have a greater positive effect on the overall experience than the venue itself. Another solution would be to offer discreet discounts to students who cannot afford the full charge, similar to how students under a certain family income do not have to pay for Advanced Placement tests or to send in their college applications. A student's ability to attend prom should not be based on their family's income. Everyone should

be able to attend prom without having to worry about how they will pay for it. Prom does not need to be an expensive event to be special. Other school dances that are generally held on campus, like Homecoming, can be just as fun as prom, but cost much less because they are not at a new venue. Prom queen nominee Solongo Otgonbaatar said, “Prom doesn't have to be held at a separate location to be fun because...we derive our happiness from those surrounding us, our friends.” Of course it's exciting to go somewhere new for a school dance, but it's not the location that makes prom fun—it's going to dinner beforehand with a group of friends, seeing classmates all dressed up and screaming along to the DJ in the mosh. It does not matter how fancy or flashy prom is. Students will have a great time whether the dance is held in a ballroom or in the school gym; and if it makes prom more affordable to host it on campus, then that is what schools should do to extend the experience to all. Ultimately, no school event should be a financial burden on students and no student should miss out on joyful teenage memories because they cannot afford them. High schools serve students from all different walks of life and not everyone has the money to spend on an expensive school dance. Prom will be a great night no matter how much money is put into it. The venue and the ticket price do not make prom special—the students make prom special. It's worth making the night less expensive.



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF INKLINGS NEWS

The government is sacrificing the environment for political profit

By Chelsea Engelhardt
STAFF WRITER



The federal government is a threat to the well-being of the environment. Environmental protection has become increasingly threatened. The announced planned cuts to agencies and administrations dedicated to protecting nationally endangered species and budgets for national parks majorly threaten these departments and agencies. The Department of Government Efficiency is

making major changes in budgets as well as jobs specifically in the National Parks Service, which will have detrimental effects on the American government. Regardless of the costs of environmental protections, it is entirely worth it and crucial for American society. First of all, recent budget cuts against National Parks have disastrous effects on the environmental public involvement. Since the implementation of these sweeping cuts, there has been a 30% payroll reduction overall for the National Parks Service. This massive reduction in the budget has caused over 1,000 employees to lose their jobs, which includes all

probationary employees. This type and magnitude of cuts will have serious consequences on the quality of national parks for their visitors. National Parks are an integral part of American society, being protected land and very popular destinations for American and international tourists. Yellowstone National Park and Grand Canyon National Park receive an average of 4.81 million visitors a year each and the Grand Canyon has reported contributing 765 million dollars to the local economy. With these parks being so important to the American people, these cutbacks will cause serious damage to society. In addition to damaging the society, the government is also damaging the environment. The current administration has taken a stand on the support of drill and mine operations on United States soil. Although these practices seem to help the U.S. economy through increasing international trade relations with nations such as Japan, Ukraine and Uganda, the ecological price is too great. Increasing oil and gas exploration on U.S. soil will have drastic effects on local ecosystems especially in the cases of dangerous oil spills and animal migratory pathways. “Drill baby drill” has become a very popular phrase in the arguments to support local drilling, but grossly undermines the United States' consistent contribution to climate change. The president's administration is being careless in its actions to drill oil locally because it will eventually put an end to diversity and many prized American landscapes. It is frankly not worth

it to sacrifice the environment and the diversity it holds for more money in the government. Additionally, under new Trump administration policies, multiple species are at risk for extinction. According to the Guardian, Trump and his administration are acquiring a “God Squad,” or committee dedicated to vetoing the Endangered Species Act protections. This “God Squad,” backed up by DOGE, is dedicated to fixing the national debt, but this type of pull back on the protection of endangered species has the potential to seriously jeopardize the environment. This is a direct attack on the environment and will seriously harm any animals already at risk of extinction. The new government's initiative to make serious cutbacks on environmental government agencies will have serious and detrimental impacts on the quality of the environment over time. Under this new presidential administration, all national parks are at risk of being completely dismantled to the point of inoperability. This concept is dangerous and impending. Additionally, the newly assembled “God Squad” is set to disrupt the environment in an irreversible manner. Overall, Trump is attempting to jeopardize the environment for the sake of spare change. If we allow short-term profits to dictate environmental policy, we risk sacrificing irreplaceable natural resources and biodiversity. Protecting the environment is not just a moral responsibility—it is essential for the long-term survival and prosperity of future generations to come.



PHOTO COURTESY OF STATISTA

Students speak out—the United States education system needs vital change

By Ethan Ferrer
STAFF WRITER



The United States education system is flawed and must be improved to fit the needs of its students. In two court cases, William A. and Aleysha Ortiz have sued their school districts in Tennessee and Connecticut, respectively. They state that despite graduating from high school, they are illiterate. Both students have dyslexia, a learning disability severely hampering their abilities in reading and spelling. William A. and Ortiz were forced to use text-to-speech and translation software to complete schoolwork, having not received any educational accommodations. In the end, despite being illiterate, William A. managed to graduate with a 3.4 GPA, and Ortiz graduated with honors—despite their schools ignoring their pleas for better services. Clearly, the U.S. education system is flawed and needs vital change. To start, the fact that William A. and Ortiz were not given proper educational support is unacceptable. According to Pew Research

Center, in the 2021-22 school year, 7.3 million disabled students made up 15% of U.S. public school enrollment. In the same school year, 40% of those schools found it difficult to fill special education teaching positions. Note that when William A.’s case went to the U.S. Court of Appeals, a judge ruled that William A. was denied the free public education he was obligated to under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, proving the inadequacy of his school district’s service. Millions of students require special accommodations for their learning; if both William A. and Ortiz did not receive such treatment, any student with a learning impairment could have endured the same. In short, disabled students deserve the services that they are due. School districts with more minority enrollment, such as Ortiz’s, should receive the same treatment as districts with less. In a 2019 report from EdBuild, it was stated that most non-White school districts in the U.S. receive around \$23 billion less than White-majority districts. This severe difference in funding likely contributed to the lack of proper accommodation for Ortiz’s disabilities. Programs such as those made for learning disabilities cannot function

without financial support, and without that extra \$23 billion, Ortiz’s district undoubtedly had to shift their priorities elsewhere, making learning more difficult for Ortiz and many other students. If school districts with more minority enrollment received their needed funding, more students could be equally served. Furthermore, the school districts of William A. and Ortiz did not sufficiently communicate with parents to ensure their students’ academic success. Overall, parents play a vital role in a student’s life, influencing and sometimes controlling their children’s academic involvement and success. Even if students are given insufficient support at school, their parents are still responsible for handling the student’s future. Thus, miscommunication with parents can be fatal. For example, because of language barriers, insufficient translation services, and a lack of legal knowledge, Ortiz’s family had a difficult time advocating for her. Had the district tried to properly communicate with Ortiz’s relatives, Ortiz would have had a better chance to learn. Overall, obvious problems exist in how U.S. schools have handled student disabilities. William A. and Ortiz deserved to receive the

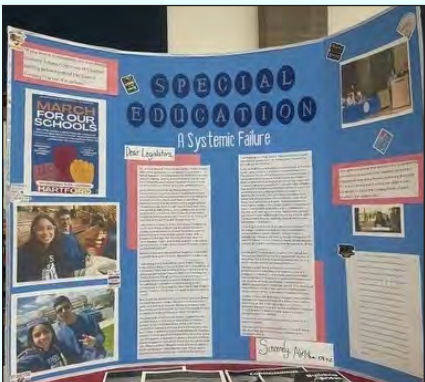


PHOTO COURTESY OF ALEYSHA ORTIZ

support they needed to learn while struggling with dyslexia. The lack of support they were given may be due to various factors, but it should be noted that the amount of minority enrollment in school districts may be a primary issue. However, regardless of the source of the problem—whether it be school district decisions, funding or parental irresponsibility—the fact remains that all students deserve an equal chance to learn. Students who have disabilities should be no exception.



GRAPHIC BY OLIVIA WON

Students and parents claiming school negligence is a slippery slope

By Scarlett Clark
STAFF WRITER



Personal responsibility in the school system often outweighs institutional accountability. Aleysha Ortiz, a current student at the University of Connecticut, is suing the Hartford Board of Education and the City of Hartford for negligence. Ortiz claims that, despite receiving decent grades, getting into a competitive university and graduating with honors, she is incapable of reading or writing. Ortiz blames Hartford and its education system for her

shortcomings, but should realize that the public schools she attended are not blameworthy. Ortiz was far from without resources or opportunities, and had she advocated better and earlier, she would be in a better situation. Ortiz, for instance, was unable to access support because the school was not made aware of how much she was struggling. Special education programs require parents to be actively involved in order to adequately find the right support for students. Due to a language barrier, Ortiz’s mother did not advocate for her during high school. This was an unfortunate situation, but far from the school’s fault. The school was not being made aware that Ortiz needed more help. In fact, Ortiz did not bring the issue to the attention of school

officials until her senior year, resulting in testing failing to be completed until the very end of her high school career. Had she advocated sooner, she would not have had such a delay in accessing dyslexia support. Ortiz said she would actively compensate by using language transcription technology and spending upwards of four hours of homework each night. The school should not be held responsible for not offering Ortiz further support for an issue she was actively compensating to gloss over. Ortiz and her family should understand that her situation and incapacities are largely due to an absence and delay of personal advocacy—not negligence by the school system. These claims are also unjustifiable considering the support that Ortiz did receive for her difficulties. For instance, she was assigned to a special education program. When Ortiz complained about her special education case manager, she was immediately heard by school officials, and reassigned effectively. Additionally, as soon as Ortiz did advocate for herself in her senior year, she was sent into testing, which confirmed she had dyslexia. The school district even offered to defer Ortiz’s high school degree and give her intensive services for her disabilities. Ortiz herself denied this offer. Thus, Hartford was far from negligent when it came to assisting a struggling student. William A. of Tennessee was another student in a similar situation; graduating with a 3.4 GPA, William claimed he could not read by the

end of high school and sued his school system. However, he was assigned an Individualized Education Plan and other disability support systems. If those opportunities were not taken advantage of to the degree of efficacy, that is not the fault of the school. School districts should obviously provide comprehensive support for students like William A. and Ortiz, but there is an extent to which it should not be expected that they become so over involved with every individual student. Doing so is a slippery slope, and these schools should continue doing what they are doing; making support systems for disabled students accessible and available. In essence, Aleysha Ortiz has suffered unfortunate circumstances, but found her way around them independently to succeed. She could have taken advantage of more opportunities for support had she or her family advocated for her more and earlier. Additionally, she should recognize the measures her education system provided for the issues it knew she was experiencing. On a larger scale, it is true that schools receive far from enough resources to adequately help every single student become academically well-rounded and successful. In this political climate, education needs to be prioritized more nationally. But in the case of Ortiz and William A., their school districts did what they could, and negligence is an unsubstantiated claim.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ALEYSHA ORTIZ

Troy Ever After

Magical, fantastical and unforgettable! Come read about our teachers from the happiest place on Earth!

Compiled by Eileen Um, **FEATURE EDITOR**, article by Emma Gong and Kathleen Hong, **STAFF WRITERS**, photos courtesy of Jennifer Heuerman, Alison Wills, David Sinclair and Heidi Goff

Jennifer Heuerman

The reminiscent scent of warm churros follows Mrs. Jennifer Heuerman, an English teacher of 18 years, as she strolls down Disneyland's Main Street. Although retired from the Disneyland staff, Heuerman uses the lifelong skills and friendships gained during her time to support Troy's student body. In Mrs. Heuerman's early career, Disneyland was a means to financially support her endeavors. In 2000, she began working in Costuming, helping park characters dress in their costumes, then operating various stores west of Magic Kingdom. Eventually, Mrs. Heuerman transitioned to managing the New Orleans and Critter Country stores and shop finances. She grew close to the employees, many of whom she remains in contact with. From working behind the scenes to helping the Disney magic unfold, Heuerman remembers work experience as filled with fun and friendship. "This is gonna sound super cheesy, but Disney really is a family," Mrs. Heuerman said. "You become like a camaraderie." At the time, Mrs. Heuerman worked at Disneyland from 5:30 PM to 2 AM and would come to Troy High School at 8 AM for student teaching, all while studying for her teaching credential. Despite the difficult schedule, she adapted to disorienting work days, strengthening her time management skills. She also learned to assist visitors of different backgrounds, a skill that carried into her teaching career, helping her assist students with different needs. "You get used to dealing with folks with different abilities," Mrs. Heuerman said. "You get used to dealing with lots of different people, different cultures, different backgrounds." Mrs. Heuerman reflects on her Disney days with gratitude for her husband, who supported her various responsibilities. She encourages students to seek environments that cause them to step out of their comfort zones. "Disney is a great option for something different," Mrs. Heuerman said. "You step out of your comfort zone, it definitely requires you to talk with others; it was a neat experience."



Alison Wills

The lively sound of children's laughter floats down Disney's Main Street as dancers perform with cheerful wonder. Before Dr. Alison Wills' current position at Troy, Vice Principal of Pupil Services, she performed as a dancer in Disney's character parades, nurturing the magic of childhood. With a family history intertwined with Disney—her parents had met while working there and her aunt performed as the Snow White for Disney Japan—Dr. Wills felt deeply connected to the park. After joining Disney's staff as a dancer, she experienced firsthand the magic of performing and the joy the stories brought to children. She recalls the rewarding feeling of waving to children and seeing their smiles, mesmerized as their favorite fictional worlds came to life. "You can make somebody's day, and it makes your day to make other people happy," Dr. Wills said. "I think you have to take that into everything you do." When she began her dancing experience at Disney, Dr. Wills recalls feeling intimidated by the harsh auditioning process. The applicants faced eliminations, tried on various makeup and wigs, received facial inspections and participated in dancing auditions. Despite the rigorous application process, Dr. Wills fostered perseverance, motivating herself even further to continue spreading the magic of childhood dreams. "We put so much emphasis on perfection," Dr. Wills said. "I think that you have to have your own view of what perfection is and know that there's beauty in the imperfection." Now, Dr. Wills lives by the same philosophy of magic and wonder. She continues to create a welcoming environment within the Special Education program and also hopes that one day, she can return to Disney and continue spreading the childhood excitement that she encourages to this day. "Disney instills a magic in you that you can take anywhere," Dr. Wills said. "It [is] anything, you can find magic in any place."



Heidi Goff

Swirling fabrics flutter through the air as nostalgic characters glide down the street. Beyond Ms. Heidi Goff's job as Troy's speech-language pathologist, she performs in Disney's iconic character shows, sharing her passion for dance and immersing the onlooking audience in childhood wonder. Ms. Goff cultivated a love for performing at a very young age, but she began her entertainment career at Disney in 2013 as a parade performer in the "Pixar Play Parade," "Paint the Night," Halloween and Christmas Parades and the "Fantasmic!" night show. Through these experiences, she explored different avenues of performance like puppeteering and Polynesian poi, a dance involving swinging ropes, creatively representing her characters. These techniques were adapted with care, with poi becoming the inspiration for the lassos of cowgirl toys from Toy Story, and captured the audience in the imaginary worlds of Disney. "It's really an entirely different world than here in my day-to-day, kind of like an escape out of reality," Ms. Goff said. "I'm doing something that I love, surrounded by really great people." Initially, Ms. Goff struggled with auditioning and self-doubt. In an application pool of nearly 500 girls, only five to seven were hired to become Disney's new performers. With Ms. Goff's father's never-ending assurance, she qualified for her role despite two previous rejections. "It's hard to feel that rejection, but just know it's not a representation of your worth," Ms. Goff said. "As long as you just push yourself through it and try again, you'll be okay." Today, Ms. Goff continues to share her passion with others both on and offstage. She performs upon Disney's stage just as she does as an SLP at Troy, working with all kinds of audiences and students with disabilities. Ms. Goff hopes to continue pursuing performing arts as a lifetime passion, bringing joy and wonder to every person in her audience. "It's something that I know I can't do forever," Ms. Goff said. "But [I love] being able to have it for as long as I can."



David Sinclair

The boat rocks beneath Mr. David Sinclair, an AP Macroeconomics teacher of 30 years, filling the air as the ride enters the thick, green jungle ambiance. Looking back on his Disney days as a former ride operator of the Jungle Cruise, the amusement park fostered important abilities Mr. Sinclair continues to use today. Mr. Sinclair joined the Disneyland staff through an unexpected route: baseball. As a member of Troy High School's baseball team, his assistant baseball coach recruited him to become a cast member so he could play softball on a competitive softball league among Disneyland employees for the Adventureland team. Mr. Sinclair agreed and started working in 1986 as a seasonal employee, where he assisted in parade control and the Jungle Cruise. "On the Jungle Cruise...people go on that ride to listen to your spiel," Mr. Sinclair said. "You're not just pushing buttons, right? You are the ride." When he first started operating the Jungle Cruise at 17, he lacked public speaking experience, grappling with nervousness, tasked with delivering a speech for a boatful of riders. Being a ride operator helped refine and strengthen his speaking skills. Currently, Mr. Sinclair continues to utilize his public speaking skills to lead his classroom with ease. "I think in any occupation, if you can get up in front of people and feel comfortable, that's a valuable skill to have," Mr. Sinclair said. "Working at Disneyland helped me to obtain that skill, [and] to become better at that skill." As Mr. Sinclair nears his 31st year of teaching, he reflects on his Disney days with gratitude. He thanks his assistant baseball coach for the opportunity to work at the amusement park. Looking back on the lessons he learned, Mr. Sinclair encourages the Troy population to work part time jobs and boost their finances. "Get a job, whether it's at Disneyland or anywhere else," Mr. Sinclair said. "[To] anybody that...has some free time over the summer, I would encourage them all to go out and get a part time job and make some money."



The Art of Eight Limbs

Check out Muay Thai fighter Darian Park and his journey in competing internationally as well as dominating in local tournaments and events!

Compiled by Kusuma Kothamasu, **SPORTS EDITOR**, article by Seungwoo Lee, **STAFF WRITER**, photo courtesy of Darian Park, graphic courtesy of Canva

The air in the ring is dense with the smell of sweat and tension between the two fighters, each fueled by adrenaline. With his boxing gloves and breathing heavily, sophomore Darian Park, a Muay Thai Fighter, steps up to the canvas getting ready to demolish his competitor. Muay Thai is a martial art from Thailand that is unique for its utilization of eight points of contact. It is an aggressive and competitive sport that Park enjoys. His first martial art was Taekwondo, but he later moved into Muay Thai after being introduced to it five years ago and fell in love with it. “I liked the competitiveness of

combat sports, but I wanted to go one step further because Taekwondo is not the most exciting sport there is. Then, it happened that one of my friends from Korea introduced me to Muay Thai. He took me to a gym that he went to, and it was really fun. But as I continued, I became more and more committed,” Park said. Park’s training regimen is a balance of cardiovascular conditioning and strength development with an emphasis on shin conditioning for actual fights. He usually spends around an hour at the gym sparring with individuals to test out new hooks and punches he learns. On average, Park dedicates roughly 12 hours each week to training, sometimes even spending

full-length Saturdays in the gym. Park started training in Muay Thai as a leisure activity, not knowing that he would compete for it later on. However, as he improved and got more involved within the sport he wanted to take the extra step into competing. Park started to compete in tournaments two years ago as part of the featherweight division. Last June, he traveled to Thailand to compete under an international federation for Muay Thai. Park faced challenges in competing before, but he did not expect to find out how much more difficult it was there compared to his local competitions in California. “These kids in Thailand, they are on a whole other level. But I managed to swipe four rounds out of 16, which by Thailand standards is bad, but I was going against the best of the best in that country because Muay Thai is from Thailand, so you would expect the people in Thailand to be absolutely devoted their entire life since they were like four years old into this sport,” Park said. After losing his match, Park is now aiming to get certified and hopes to go back to Thailand this upcoming summer to redeem his loss from last year. He currently prioritizes school over Muay Thai and is trying to balance out his schedule. As soon as summer vacation starts, Park wants to dial back into his hardstyle training and devote a minimum of twenty hours a week to it.

Park’s experience in Thailand

truly exposed him to a level of competition that he has not faced before. This drove him from competing in Muay Thai as a hobby into a passion as he aims to win and do exponentially better next time. Aside from competing in Thailand, Park also attends and wins local tournaments and goes to Nevada for competitions. “I visited Nevada for the first time. I went to a UFC gym there, and it is one of the most well-known MMA gyms in the state. They were hosting an event there, and I got second place throughout the entire thing in my weight division,” Park said. A match in Muay Thai is determined by the number of hits you get or a knockout, therefore Park often has to adjust his mentality when he gets ready for games. He points out the importance of anticipating pain as well as the strict mentality of desiring to defeat whoever you will be going against. Park believes the desire to compete comes with the heavy price of mental challenges, but still suggests that anyone who wants to compete and learn Muay Thai should take action as soon as possible. “Just do it if you really want to do Muay Thai because what do you have to lose? You have so much to gain. Like it really was one of the core fundamental parts of my life that built me both mentally and physically.”



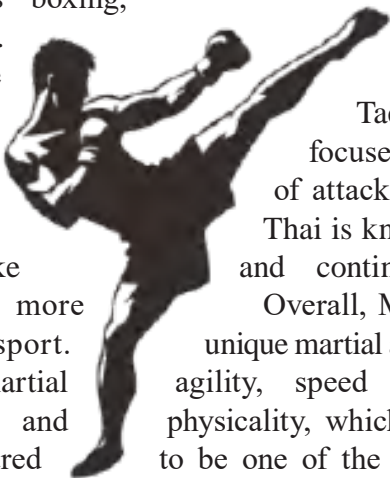
LEARNING MUAY THAI

A round winner in Muay Thai is decided based upon the number of points you land on your opponent or a knockout. Points are awarded for clean hits without it being blocked. There are also counter-attack techniques that can receive points. Some allowed techniques in Muay Thai are elbowing, kneeing, strikes, clinching and takedowns. However, there are still prohibited moves in Muay Thai such as Judo or Wrestling moves, headbutts and disrespectful conducts are also not allowed in any matches.

Muay Thai originated from Thailand in the 13th century as a way for unarmed soldiers to use as battle tactics. Now, it is a popular sport in Thailand culture that showcases discipline, bravery and respect. Thailand’s roots and culture are embedded within Muay Thai, and through that connection, there are spiritual ideas and concepts within it. With buddhism ideals being highly regarded through the sport, Muay Thai teaches about finding balance and composure. Muay Thai differs from other martial arts because it allows a learner to use all eight limbs at

free will. This gives a greater range of striking options for a fighter compared to other well known sports such as boxing, taekwondo and karate. In boxing you are not allowed to kick an opponent, but for Muay Thai it is completely legal. Such movements make Muay Thai a much more physically demanding sport. Taekwondo is a martial art that prioritizes fast and powerful kicks. Compared to Muay Thai it is slow and

concentrates deeply on perfecting one’s technique rather than being able to adapt in actual fighting scenarios. Karate is similar to Taekwondo but focuses on precision of attacks, while Muay Thai is known for brutal and continuous strikes. Overall, Muay Thai is a unique martial art that requires agility, speed and extreme physicality, which allows for it to be one of the most practical sports to learn for combat.



What Kind of APRIL FOOL Are You?

April showers bring May flowers, but what else is this month famous for? Take Oracle’s quiz to determine what April Fool you are, and gain more insight into your take on humor!

Compiled by Kate Berger, ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR, and Samantha Luo, NEWS EDITOR, graphics courtesy of Canva

How likely are you to challenge a teacher with a funny remark?

Always!

Never!

Do you laugh at your own jokes?

Do you often make yourself the punchline?

Always!

Never!

Do you still laugh when you hear a joke that you don’t think is funny?

Never!

Always!

Is your mood dependent on how many times you have laughed throughout the day?

Always!

Never!

Never!

Do you unintentionally create awkward moments with your humor?

Always!

Always!

Never!

JESTER

Storyteller

Queen of Tears

Sarcastic

Beyond the stereotypical “class clown,” your jokes and pranks hold another element - creativity. Whether it’s devising out-of-the-box ways of making others laugh, or crafting not-so-subtle jokes at others’ expense, the bottom line is, your humor is undeniably present in every situation. You provide the comedic relief in any circumstance.

A crazy, unfathomable story. A tale of riveting drama. Your words and storytelling ability capture any situation effortlessly. From your outlandish hand gestures to the dramatic pauses in your tangents, you are a natural comedian. Your friends know a warm and humorous individual who loves to laugh, and loves to make others laugh as well.

With a penchant for self-deprecating humor, you have certainly earned the title of Queen of Tears. Though your humor is never loud, your words speak for themselves. You have a penchant for oddly cutting comments, certainly earning you the title of a heartbreaker. Your friends appreciate the way you comfort them, and the laughter you bring.

Bounding in with quick wit and a biting comment in any situation, your deadpan humor and undeniable sarcasm are always present. Your friends playfully roll their eyes at you, and you’ve earned the right to be “fluent in sarcasm.” Though your humor might have landed you in awkward situations, your remarks also provide a well-needed laugh out loud.



Take a look at Selena Gomez and Benny Blanco’s new collection of songs from their joint album, “I Said I Love You First.”

Compiled by Kate Berger, ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR, article by Celeste Hollingsworth, STAFF WRITER, graphics courtesy of Instagram, Canva and Pitchfork

“I Said I Love You First” is a melting pot of misguided songs from all realms of genres. Released on March 21, this dance-pop album is singer-songwriter Selena Gomez’s first studio album since “Rare” five years ago. Gomez originally made a name for herself as a child actress, but veered into the music scene back in 2013 with hits like “The Heart Wants What It Wants.” Ever since, she has made a mark in both the studio and on sets like Hulu’s hit TV show “Only Murders in The Building” and the award-winning movie “Emilia Pérez.” Now, she revitalizes the duality of her career by returning to music, although her many pursuits in business, fashion and makeup make the term “duality” an understatement. In the midst of all her ventures, she does not revisit her old stomping grounds alone but brings her fiancé Benny Blanco along for the journey. Having co-written smash hits like “California Gurls,” Benny Blanco is an acclaimed American producer and songwriter. Gomez’s newfound love with renowned producer Benny Blanco has sparked new music, but the music itself lacks any flame.

Just like a dramatic love confession, “I Said I Love You First” is an album that offers a glimpse into Gomez’s inner thoughts. She combines her abundant life experience with her storytelling talents to create a collection of personal anecdotes. The opening track “I Said I Love You First” is a simple monologue

from her days on “Wizards of Waverly Place,” where she expresses her gratitude and love for those who have supported her. This non-musical track is just one of the unconventional features of the album. Even songs that seem to discuss overdone topics have an unexpected twist. For example, despite seeming like a typical romance song, “Call Me When You Break Up” personifies the hope of wanting your friend back when they get into a relationship. This theme is prevalent in many people’s lives but is not a common topic for songwriters. In this way, she sheds light on the underrepresented parts of interpersonal relationships by drawing attention to such neglected aspects.

Regardless of the authentic lyrics, the overwhelming production strips the storytelling of its authenticity. Gomez shared in an interview with ELLE magazine, “I don’t think I’m the best singer, but I do know how to tell stories.” This statement rings true through the use of overwhelming autotune to conceal her natural tone. While less autotune would create space for faulty vocals, at least it would match the rawness of her album. In her bold and daring single “Cowboy,” the opening vocals reveal the robotic and overcast sound. Despite Benny Blanco’s production being cohesive with each song’s vision, there is little vocal contribution on Gomez’s end. For example, in “Bluest Flame,” the hyperpop production creates the perfect sound for a rave or a high-energy dance session. The electronic production is a perfect match

here, but Gomez does nothing for the song. Despite this couple’s harmonious relationship, their crafts clash in “I Said I Love You First.”

With the variety of genres meshed into one album, Gomez lost an opportunity to make a name for herself as an experimental and unconstrained artist. Instead, she comes off as a background vocalist for other features on her album such as Gracie Abrams, J Balvin and The Marías’ María Zardoya. Unfortunately, these additions fail to elevate the album and end up bringing attention to Gomez’s lack of versatility. As she takes on the featured artist’s style, she feels like a puzzle piece that is being forced to fit. For instance, when María Zardoya begins to sing in Spanish in “Ojos Tristes,” her angelic voice takes the song from average to ethereal. Gomez’s dry vocals make this song drag, but Zardoya makes the song float. For the most part, the features elicit pity for Gomez and appreciation for her features.

Unfortunately, “I Said I Love You First” is a constant struggle for cohesion, and as a result, it leaves listeners reaching in the past for old Gomez hits. The detailed storytelling cannot replace the most important part of any album: the sound. With all the love incorporated into this joint project, listeners expected to leave with a new fan favorite, but “I Said I Love You First” failed to achieve this.



INVINCIBLE

Take a look at the explosive battles and unexpected plot twists in “Invincible” that make this animated TV series one of a kind!

Compiled by Kate Berger, ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR, article by Riddhi Arora, STAFF WRITER, graphics courtesy of Variety and IMDb

As fists collide with every resilient fight, “Invincible” keeps viewers on the edge of their seats as they propel through the twists and turns of the show’s dynamic plot. Originally a comic series, “Invincible” was adapted into a TV show directed by Dan Duncan and Robert Kirkman in 2021. Since its release, the series continued to draw in fans, gaining anticipation for season three of “Invincible,” released on Feb. 6. While Mark Grayson, also known as Invincible, tries to balance his human life, he must find a way to save the intergalactic world from the dominating Viltrumite aliens. Featuring prominent actors like Steven Yeun, the voice of Invincible, the show lives up to its well-produced reputation as the story keeps focused on Invincible’s action-packed story. From exceedingly complex characters to fluid animation, “Invincible” emerges as indestructible against all criticism.

With colors that pop like its characters’ strikes, the animation quality of “Invincible” did not disappoint. The show explodes with vibrancy and life in gripping scenes which allure viewers further into the ferocious battles on screen. Even in bustling scenes, “Invincible’s” animators strive for perfection with the water-like fluidity of every character’s

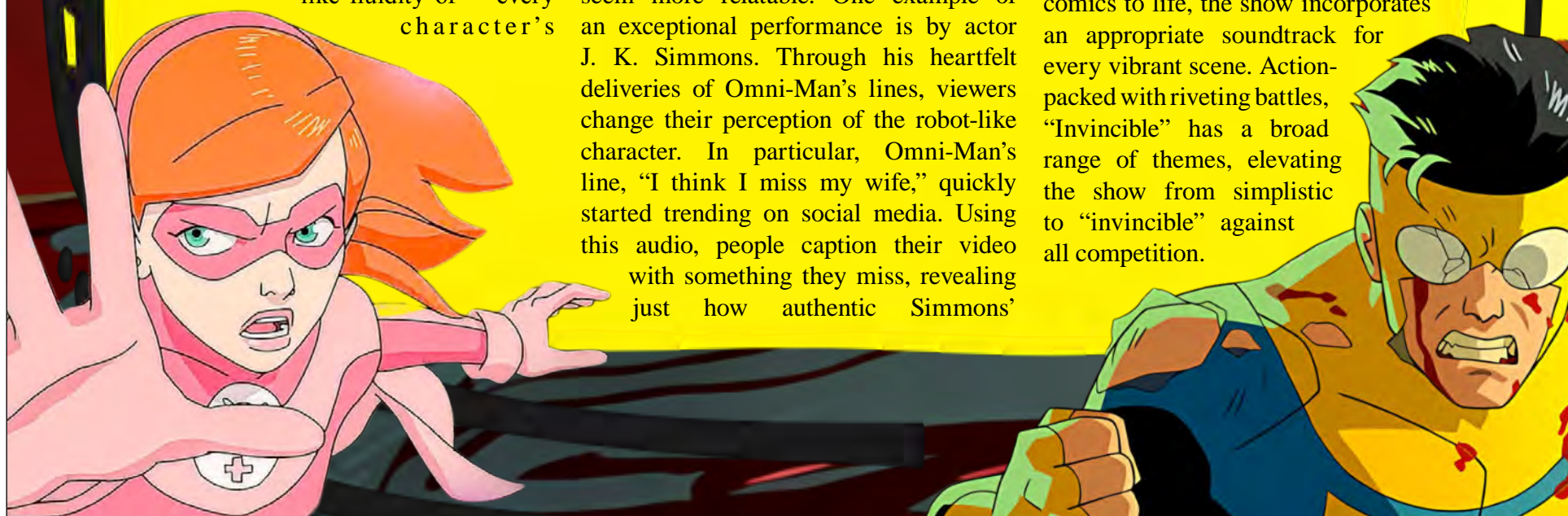
movement. Frames of battles with disastrous explosions flow into the next with little to no rigidity, revealing the immense time and effort the animators put into creating the show. Along with its crisp motion, “Invincible” features a unique stylistic choice by keeping the background relatively realistic in comparison to the cartoon-like characters. Though the show may seem like any run-of-the-mill superhero show, the unique perception of the characters’ world through the different animation styles brings personality to “Invincible,” captivating viewers as Invincible flies from one scene to the next. Brimming with energy and creativity, “Invincible’s” animation allows viewers to experience the supernatural world as their own.

Along with exceptional animation, the characters’ voices are even more powerful than the characters themselves. Emphasizing the subtlety in the characters’ feelings through tone shifts, the voice actors humanize the characters, bringing the drawings to life. For example, Invincible confronts Omni-Man about his past in season one. Within these scenes of tension, Invincible’s broken voice feels human and alive. During such difficult arguments, the dialogue is barely audible through the actor’s thinned, hoarse voice, making the character’s feelings seem more relatable. One example of an exceptional performance is by actor J. K. Simmons. Through his heartfelt deliveries of Omni-Man’s lines, viewers change their perception of the robot-like character. In particular, Omni-Man’s line, “I think I miss my wife,” quickly started trending on social media. Using this audio, people caption their video with something they miss, revealing just how authentic Simmons’

line was. A single line from one of “Invincible’s” voice actors carries the impact of 100 generic lines, as evidenced by the TV show’s global sensation across social media.

Through the seemingly common superhero plot, “Invincible” pushes for more originality with unique, complex characters, defining “Invincible” as a one-of-a-kind action series. In particular, Angstrom Levy, a villain who can enter different dimensions, is first revealed to be nonviolent, wanting to save his own dimension without bloodshed. However, once disaster strikes, Levy is hurt and blames his accident on Invincible, which turns him into a violent villain. Levy’s human struggles with his inhabitable world and previously pacifist attitude make the villain easy to sympathize with, showing that villains may not be purely evil. The complexity of Levy reveals that the world is not black or white, villainous or heroic. While one person can come across as evil with violent tendencies, they may have a heroic heart, demonstrating the complexity of mankind.

The show adaptation of “Invincible” rocketed its popularity with immersive animation and exceptional voice acting. Bringing the intergalactic war from the comics to life, the show incorporates an appropriate soundtrack for every vibrant scene. Action-packed with riveting battles, “Invincible” has a broad range of themes, elevating the show from simplistic to “invincible” against all competition.



READY, SET, RUN!

Running is an easy, flexible way to stay active, clear your head, and hit new goals—read Oracle’s spring guide to getting started and making it your own.

Compiled by Zoey Bahng, LIFESTYLE EDITOR, article by Bianca Naranjo, STAFF WRITER,

There’s something about a bright California spring that just calls you outside—sneakers on, playlist loaded, ready to move. Even outside beautiful park trails, running in any context is a wonderfully healthy habit, as well as a way to bond people with their environment and community. Running is a great way to create new goals, and following this guide to the basics of running can help you reach your personal finish line.

Recently, running has experienced a rise in popularity thanks to its combination of accessibility and personalization, which may be your incentive to take a leap into the running world. Unlike many other athletic activities, running does not require participation in a sports team or membership to a gym. Anyone can start running as long as they have access to a safe trail or sidewalk. Freshman Anders Lu affirmed this, stating, “I’m not actually that much of a sports person. So when I started running, I thought I was pretty good at it.” Running also allows people a lot of room to “customize” their workout, which can include running with a friend for social butterflies, going on a picturesque trail for nature-lovers or adding devices like resistance bands for strength-trainers.

Finding the necessary equipment and locations for running is a simple but important way to set off any new runner’s journey. Running shoes are surely the most essential product, because they can make or break the comfort

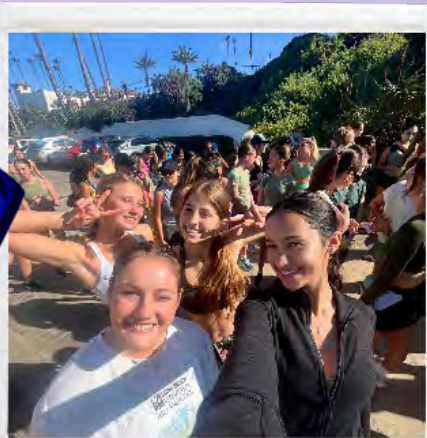
of your workout. You should buy shoes with plenty of cushioning around the sole and some extra room in the toe area. Avoid flat shoes like Converse that may lack the arch support for a run; instead, opt for tried-and-true running shoe brands like Nike, On, Hoka and Under Armour instead. Workout clothing is also essential, and particularly dependent on the weather. For a nice spring run, leggings, shorts, t-shirts and a light jacket you can easily take off and wear around your waist are all great options for your attire. An emphasis on lightweight and layerable clothes is essential, given the fluctuating temperature of your environment and body that you will experience on an average run.

Choosing a location is also a way to set up your perfect running environment. For instance, Hillcrest Park in Fullerton offers plenty of shade and greenery, and a huge staircase built into the hill to add a challenge to your workout. Alternatively, Irvine Regional Park has an ultra-wide running path and multiple routes with varied difficulties, including a hilly trail and a flat loop. Lining the coast, the Huntington Beach trail offers a scenic

beach town view, perfect for people-watchers and lovers of the fresh, salty beach air. Sound is also a big part of setting up your run environment. If you enjoy the peace of your running location, you can go headphone-free, but adding some upbeat music is a great way to keep your mind busy and hype up your workout. Junior Logan Perez agrees with the reward of tailoring your running environment: “You have a break from everything,” Perez said.

Running is not only a way to increase physical fitness, but also a way to clear the mind in whichever way you want or join your friends for a fun workout. Going on a run offers the unique experience of fine-tuning your environment while tuning-out distractions and letting your thoughts be at the forefront of your mind: “I’m just thinking about running, and it’s a single break from whatever’s going around,” Lu said.

Whether you are drawn by the thrill of a good workout or the simple joy of soaking up the sun, lace up your sneakers, hit play on your favorite tunes and kick off your running journey this spring.



Running w/ Noe Bad Vibes!
Photo courtesy of Finley Dalley



Long Beach Grand Prix 5K
Photo courtesy of Zoey Bahng



Huntington Beach Surf City Race
Photo courtesy of OC Register

bloom & brew

Craving something new? Check out The Oracle’s review of two new Starbucks spring drinks to see which one’s worth the hype.

Compiled by Zoey Bahng, LIFESTYLE EDITOR, article by Kialeigh Reichman, STAFF WRITER, photos courtesy of Starbucks



Cherry Chai Latte

The Cherry Chai Latte takes a trendy approach to the classic spiced tea latte. However, this flavor combination may turn away chai-lovers. The warm cinnamon and clove flavors of the classic chai are overpowered by the sweetness of the cherry cold foam and cherry crunch toppings. If you have a sweet tooth and want to dabble in chai lattes, this festive blend can be a great choice.



Blackberry Sage Refresher

Offering a unique fusion of sweet blackberries with sage notes, the Blackberry Sage Refresher is a great tart drink. The deep violet hue and freeze-dried blackberry inclusions add a seasonal flare to a Starbucks Refresher’s iconically tart flavor profile—perfect for the hotter days to come. If you enjoy the popular Strawberry Açaí drink, this Refresher is a must try.