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# La Nueva Voz

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



Pomona Chamber of Commerce



Member

Issue No. 177

Thursday, April 25, 2024

## PUSD Assistant Supt. Fernando Meza, others, honored at Latino/Latina Roundtable Cesar Chavez breakfast

Pomona Unified School District Assistant Supt. Fernando Meza headed the list of honorees recognized last month at the 20th annual Cesar Chavez breakfast of the Latino and Latina Roundtable at the Sheraton Fairplex Conference Center.

Meza has served PUSD in a variety of capacities over the past 16 years following his career as an attorney and mediator. He was executive director of Inland Valleys Justice Center where he worked with residents to access legal services and the justice system.

He served as a staff attorney for Neighborhood Legal Services of

Los Angeles, as a Senior Conflict Resolution Associate at Loyola Law School Center for Conflict Resolution, and as site director and legal coordinator for One Stop Immigration and Education Center.

"We go back over 30 years," Meza told a huge conference room filled with some 500 members, supporters and community leaders. He explained their work at that time began as several professors at Claremont Colleges formed the Latino-Latina MEChA organization where he served as president.

"It was one of the great opportunities I had to meet them and work with them and to learn" Meza

said. "I'm grateful for the opportunity just as I'm grateful for the sacrifices everyone has gone through," adding that he was the son of immigrants.

"(My parents) sacrificed to come to this country to make a better life for all of us," Meza said. And he thanked the Roundtable board members for the opportunity "to support



PUSD Assistant Supt. Fernando Meza, at left, is honored by Latino and Latina Roundtable Vice President Angela Sanbrano as Roundtable President Jose Calderon, at right, looks on.

table outcomes.

And Roundtable Vice President Angela Sanbrano introduced him as someone who has long been a friend of the Roundtable, working on numerous programs including organizing a lawyer rights fund for immigration issues.

He also has been active in the Pomona community where he has served for the past seven years on

## State Sen. Susan Rubio cites 'smash and grabs,' artificial intelligence as current topics of interest in Sacramento during Pomona Chamber legislative event

Crime in the community, incidences of "smash and grab" takeovers in retail outlets, and artificial intelligence issues are among the topics of major focus in the state legislature in Sacramento, according to State Sen. Susan Rubio who was the opening speaker at this month's Pomona Chamber of Commerce annual "Legislative Luncheon" held on the Mt. San Antonio College campus.

She added that legislators also are exploring automobile break-ins.

"If someone steals from your car and you leave it open . . . (we) can't prosecute," she said.

Felonies, or major crimes, have seen a significant increase for three years in a row, she said, making it more important to place more emphasis on these crimes, particularly when they involve children, kidnapping, domestic abuse, trauma and violence.

Often, when kids are involved, she said parents see their children smiling when

Legislative event... pg. 2



State Sen. Susan Rubio names Pomona Chamber President and CEO Monique Robles her "non-profit woman of the year" this year at this month's annual Pomona Chamber legislative luncheon at Mt. SAC.

our students."

He added that his wife and children sacrifice every day to allow him to go out in the community and do everything he does "for the betterment of our students here in our school district."

Meza quoted his grandfather who said "they can take everything away from you but they can't take away what you learned, they can't take away your education."

He said he has been a lifelong learner and a lifelong protector of lifelong education for the students.

According to program notes at last month's breakfast, Meza's entire legal career was dedicated to helping others and achieving equi-

the executive board of Pomona Optimists, with six years as treasurer.

She presented Meza with the award "for your leadership in advancing multicultural equity, lawyer rights advocacy and community-based partnerships."

Honorees each year are selected for their work and accomplishments conducted in the spirit of the work of Cesar Chavez and the cause of equitable justice and quality of life in the community.

Also honored were members of the Union de Ranchos, formed in 2022 to advocate for the equestrian and agricultural zoned community

Cesar Chavez breakfast... pg. 4



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## MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

Our mental health needs deserve the same attention as our physical health, but it can be hard to know where to start when it comes to taking care of your own well-being. Maintaining good mental health is essential to each and every individual's overall health and wellness. Every May, Mental Health Awareness Month brings individuals, friends, families, and communities together to raise awareness of the important role mental health plays in our lives and ways we can support those we care about when they're struggling with life's challenges.

Join Tri-City Mental Health in celebrating California's statewide movement, *Take Action for Mental Health*, and promoting mental health in Pomona, Claremont and La Verne. This year's theme is *Reimagine Mental Health*. Join people across California and reimagine how you prioritize mental well-being for yourself and others. In the same way we speak up about our physical health, seeking support and talking about our mental health is a very necessary, and brave, thing to do. The good thing is, no one has to face anything alone. Your actions, no matter how small, contribute to a collective effort in creating communities that value and support mental health.

Scan the QR Code to RSVP and learn more about our free community-wide activities and events hosted in-person and virtually throughout May! Follow us on social media @TriCityMHS to get involved and discover how you can take action to improve mental health and increase resiliency for yourself and your loved ones.



## Legislative event... from pg. 1

they go off to school in the morning but they really never know what happens when they get there. She said training needs to be available to help make parents aware of what signs to watch for that might be a red flag.

“We’re finding out that they need to get training,” she said, to help control violence.

As a former educator, Rubio said she has worked with parents of murdered children and has seen positive results from what she called a “reunification building program” in which the child may be temporarily relocated to another home, another school or even a different state for a period of as much as nine months.

She pointed out that in a recent year nearly 1,000 children were murdered at the hands of their parents.

On retail “smash and grabs,” something Rubio said impacts a lot of small businesses in the state, the senate has created a “working

group” to help determine what needs to be done.

“We’re really focused on how we can do things better,” she said.

Other topical issues include access to hospitals in some areas of the state.

For example, she said, in the Central Valley, people can drive for an hour to get to a hospital.

Other issues include human trafficking, homelessness and providing assistance to people who have lost their job.

Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez, participating in his last Chamber Legislative Luncheon as a member of the assembly, echoed Rubio’s comment that retail theft and prostitution were continuing concerns in Sacramento.

Asked by moderator Josh Landis of Foothill Transit, Pomona Chamber Board Vice Chair, what his top accomplishment was during his time in office, Rodriguez said the first was just being elected to a body with only 120 mem-



**FREDDIE’S FINAL FORUM** -- Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez, who is terming out in Sacramento at the end of the year, was honored with a plaque, flowers and a legislative excellence award for all he has done for the community by members of the Pomona Chamber of Commerce at this month’s annual legislative luncheon which, as Chamber President and CEO Monique Robles put it, will be his last as a member of the assembly. Pictured, at center, surrounded by Chamber Board members and assembly staffers, are Freddie and Michelle Rodriguez and their grandson Tanner.

bers – 80 in the assembly and 40 in the senate.

And he said California has been a leader in a lot of areas.

“We need to be number one in emergency preparedness,” he said, adding that a bill is in the works now that will impact “ghost

guns,” or guns without serial numbers.

Los Angeles County Assessor Jeff Prang told Pomona Chamber members that Pomona’s assessed value last year was \$15.4 billion for 33,000 individual parcels, representing a 4.1 percent increase over 2022.

He also said the average median price of a single family home in Los Angeles County is now \$890,000, although fewer homes are being sold.

Prang also cited a new program to be launched this fall at Mt. SAC in which new assessors will go through training on the Walnut campus rather than in his office. He is also shifting appraisers to West Los Angeles College in Culver City for training and appraiser assistants to Rio Hondo College in

Whittier to free up his staff to provide more time for their primary tasks.

His office is the largest of its type in the U.S. with 1,400 employees responsible for determining the value of 2.5 million real property parcels and businesses with a combined \$2 trillion of assessed property valuation.

Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval told the group there are new houses being built throughout Pomona including a new 28-unit project in Downtown Pomona. He said the last new development in that area was the Mission Promenade.

“I’m happy to tell you that we are making progress,” he said.

And he reported that the Foothill Gold Line extension to Pomona will be completed by the end of



Pomona Chamber of Commerce Board Vice Chair Josh Landis, at right, serves as moderator going one on one with Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez at this month’s Chamber legislative luncheon. The event was held in the new student center building auditorium at Mt. San Antonio College.



Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval

Legislative event... pg. 6

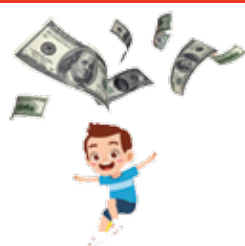
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Doors open at 5:30 p.m.



## Cesar Chavez breakfast... from pg. 1

and to oppose warehouse expansion and toxic pollutants in the City of Industry.

It is the largest equestrian coalition in Los Angeles County.

Roundtable President Jose Calderon introduced members of the group which he said was working for watering stations and wildlife corridors to create visibility for the equestrian and agricultural lifestyle in which many Roundtable members grew up.

He said the group has attracted interest by riding 200 horses onto the freeway in mass demonstrations and showing up in numbers at school board and city council meetings.



Scholarship winners at the event are, from left, Osvaldo Garcia Barron and Emmanuel Delvalle, both of Pitzer College; Jesse Suarez of Mt. San Antonio College, Orlando Arias of the University of California, and Marcelino Atilano and Eileen Ramos, both of Cal Poly Pomona.



Former healthcare workers at St. Francis Medical Center in Lynwood



Dr. Mary Montes

Their award was for their dedication and tireless efforts for environmental justice, equitable land rights development, and the protection of equestrian heritage in the San Gabriel Valley.

Speakers from the group said equestrians have been unjustly displaced for years since the onset of automobiles. They said they have organized the largest protests of their type in the area in more than 100 years.

The group also has mobilized

to protest the displacement of students in the Hacienda-La Puente Unified School District where 2,200 Latino students have been displaced in the last five years, representing the only ethnic group being displaced during a period of declining enrollment.

Another honoree, Dr. Mary Montes, according to the program notes has dedicated her life to helping the community with service to others throughout her career. A native of Chino, she was raised in Po-

mona and attended Pomona High School before attending Mt. San Antonio College and receiving her bachelor's degree from UCLA and a doctoral degree from Claremont Graduate University.

She became the first Chicana to serve as a professor at Cal Poly Pomona, where she wrote and implemented a program designed for teachers and teacher aids. And she was the first woman and the first Latina to serve on the Pomona Unified School District Board.

Montes also served as a news editor for ABC television.

"You are very important," she told the audience on accepting her award. "Your children are very important. You carry the power. It's inside of you – each one of you and your children have a responsibility. You have to do more – it's what you don't get paid for doing that's important."

Montes, who said she marched and fought with Cesar Chavez,

Cesar Chavez breakfast... pg. 18



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**Arturo Jimenez,  
President**

**POMONA DAY MAY 9!**

**LA County Fair opens May 3,  
Pomona Day set for May 9!**

The 102nd anniversary LA County Fair will celebrate the medley of communities that comprise Los Angeles County and Southern California when it opens its gates Friday, May 3.

The 16-day event runs through May 27 (closed Mondays except Memorial Day, Tuesdays and Wednesdays) with new attractions, long-standing partnerships and, as always, lots of unique food to be found only at the Fair.

But according to organizers, the main component is fun.

“County fairs are a community celebration, and county and state fairs across the nation reflect the unique characteristics of all their communities,” said Fairplex President and CEO Walter Marquez. “We are excited to embrace Southern California’s cultural mosaic.”

He said theme of the LA County Fair this year is “Stars, Stripes and Fun.”

Looking for something new? This year’s 2024 Fair has a free indoor roller-skating rink taking guests back to the days of disco balls and Friday nights with

friends.

There’s even an arcade so you can play a few games after skating.

And for the second year, the Fair is partnering with the Los Angeles County Museum of Art to bring fine art to the Fair. This year’s exhibition is the work of Mexican artist Rufino Tamayo (1899-1991) – 20 works by the artist and five examples of Mesoamerican sculpture, an important source of inspiration for the artist.

Don’t forget to take the kids to the Fairplex Garden Railroad where its 100th anniversary is being celebrated.

Then, take them up to the Big Red Barn for animals and agriculture programming from Cal Poly Pomona’s Huntley College of Agriculture.

Pomona Day at the Fair, presented by Athens Services, is set for Thursday, May 9, with a special \$1 admission (online in advance) just for Pomona residents. Online on Pomona Day, tickets are \$8 and tickets at the gate that day are \$10.

For more information, visit [lacountyfair.com](http://lacountyfair.com).

**Hearing and your health: What you need to know**

By Christopher L. Stone, AuD, C-AAA

Director, Audiology Center

Casa Colina Hospital and Centers for Healthcare



Christopher Stone

their faces, or turning off background noise, those around you play an important role in helping you adjust to your hearing challenges.

**Hearing loss may precede other negative outcomes**

When not addressed and acknowledged, hearing loss can contribute to social isolation, which in turn is a risk factor for any number of negative health outcomes, including depression, substance abuse, heart disease, and diabetes. Staying active and socially engaged improves your quality of life and helps you maintain better overall mental and physical health. Sometimes that requires assistive technology.

**Hearing loss can contribute to cognitive decline**

When you’re not engaged in meaningful conversations over time, it can alter your brain’s ability to process speech and communicate. People with hearing loss need to work harder to hear and process speech, and this often comes at the expense of memory. According to the American Academy of Audiology, hearing loss leads to social isolation, which is

Have you found yourself struggling to hear in everyday conversations with friends, family, or coworkers? Maybe you’ve noticed you can’t pick up some of the dialogue in the movie you’re watching. There are many reasons our hearing can decline as we age. What’s important is identifying the cause of that decline and slowing its progress, so that you can get the most out of the hearing you have left. This starts with getting screened by a licensed audiologist.

It’s possible you may benefit from assistive technology such as a hearing aid. Perhaps you’ve been hesitant to see an audiologist or even consider such a step. But here are a few reasons that might help to convince you.



**Hearing loss affects relationships**

When our hearing starts to decline, we often attempt to hide it from friends and family or play it off. But it’s actually best to loop your loved ones in. They are important allies in helping you get the most out of the hearing you have left. Whether it’s adjusting their speaking volumes, turning to make sure you can see





also a known risk factor for dementia.

The bottom line is that choosing to do nothing about hearing loss can cause more than just an inconvenience for family and friends – it can affect your overall physical and mental health. Don’t let hearing loss dictate your future – see an audiologist today!

*Editor’s Note: The Casa Colina Audiology Center is offering free hearing screenings for adults who may be experiencing hearing difficulties. Our licensed audiologists and hearing aid dispenser provide the most comprehensive assessment and hearing care available in the region. For more information, or to schedule a screening, call 909/450-0304.*

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## Fairplex, Pitzer's Community Engagement Center to be honored at annual Pomona Public Library Foundation Mayor's Gala

Tickets and sponsorship opportunities are now available for the 2024 Pomona Public Library Foundation Mayor's Gala set for Thursday, June 6, at Pomona's Sheraton Fairplex Conference Center.

The theme for this year's event is "All Jazzed Up." Pomona's Fairplex will receive the "Mayor's Award," and the Community Engagement Center at Claremont's Pitzer College will receive the Pomona Public Library Foundation Award.

Magician Taylor Hughes will serve as master of ceremonies, and Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval will work a little magic of his own as he honors Fairplex, which has served as a key institution in the community for more than 100 years.

And the Community Engagement Center at Pitzer has provided key support for the Foundation's "drop in" homework club, en-

abling faculty and students to help the tutoring program thrive over the years.

Proceeds go to the Pomona Public Library Foundation's diverse support of the Pomona Public Library, according to Foundation President Bree Devones Hsieh.

"Not only does the Pomona Public Library Foundation subsidize and operate one of the area's few drop-in one-on-one tutoring programs, it runs a free summer cultural excursion program," she said, adding that the group also has helped to remodel the library conference rooms adding state-of-the-art technology.

"A public library is an important space for learning and growth," said Foundation Past President Duane Smith. "The Foundation believes a strong public library is a key to the future."

For information, tickets and sponsorships, visit [www.pomonalibraryfoundation.org/gala-2024](http://www.pomonalibraryfoundation.org/gala-2024).

## Pomona High School student receives scholarship

Pomona High School student James Castellon has been awarded first place in the Pete and Consuelo Hernandez Memorial Scholarship Program and will receive a \$2,000 check for his studies.

The award program, administered by Bold.org, the largest independent scholarship in the U.S. and funded by the Hernandez family, is designed to continue the investment that their grandparents

started many years ago by supporting underrepresented students pursuing higher education in California.

Applicants were required to be a high school junior or senior who will be the first in their family to go to college. They submitted essays describing adversities they have overcome and how these experiences have helped them grow as individuals.

this year and should be in operation by July 2025.

Rubio took the opportunity of the event to present Pomona Chamber President and CEO Monique Robles with her recognition as Rubio's "Non-Profit Woman of the Year."

"It is my honor to recognize your exceptional devotion to serving others," she said. "Your history of leadership and collaboration, as well as creating partnerships between city officials and the community, has been instrumental in advancing positive change in Pomona."

"It will generate economic revenue in Pomona, (and) it will generate economic benefits and community wellness for generations to come," she added.

The event was the first "non-Mt. SAC" event held in the new student center on the Mt. SAC campus in Walnut. Board Vice President Peter Hidalgo, whose district represents north Pomona, San Dimas, La Verne and south Glendora, welcomed the group of 200 Pomona Chamber of Commerce members and guests to the

## Legislative event... from pg. 2



Los Angeles County Assessor  
Jeff Prang



Mt. SAC Board Vice President Peter Hidalgo welcomed 200 Pomona Chamber of Commerce members and guests to the annual Pomona Chamber legislative luncheon.

event on the campus of what he called California's largest single campus community college.

The school serves an enrollment of 70,000 students with 70 percent Latino and 20 percent

Asian-Americans, he added.

Mt. SAC Board members Jay Chin and Laura Santos also attended the event.

**Interested in who has been arrested by Pomona Police in Pomona?**

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and go to page 2 for La Nueva Voz.

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**Editor's Note:** This page is the first in a series of a Phase Three statewide program with three focus areas – “Anti-Hate,” supported in whole or in part by funding provided by the California State Library, along with “Socioeconomic Justice and Equity” and “Health,” through funding administered by the Latino Media Collaborative. Any victim of or witness to a hate incident or crime in California can report it and receive support by calling 833-8-NO-HATE, or (833) 866-4283.

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

# Yes, Virginia, there is hope for the future in Pomona!

By Jeff Schenkel, Publisher

Many of our regular readers will remember that, for the past two years, we've participated in a “Stop the Hate” grant program publishing two distinct series of stories taking a hard look at where we are and where we need to be in our dealings with, well, each other.

The first two years of grants to fewer than a dozen newspapers throughout California including, of course, La Nueva Voz were funded by the California State Library in a program administered by the Latino Media Collaborative.

The way it worked here, round one stories were written by elected officials and community leaders in an effort to provide a variety of perspectives.

Last year, we were pleased to be able to bring on board Pomona's own Joshua Swodeck to give us yet another approach to viewing the bigger picture. He was able to intersperse personal recountings of anecdotes from his own family history into his writing along the way.

And we even commissioned his wife, Chara Swodeck, to produce a “person on the street” survey to give us a better hands on understanding of where Pomona residents, visitors and others stand on some of the many issues involved. The results of that survey can be seen on our web site (access it from the home page at [www.lanuevavoz.net](http://www.lanuevavoz.net)).



Stephanie Campbell

This year, program administrators are throwing a wider net (see acknowledgements above) so additional topics will be involved, but we thought we'd continue the focus on “Stop the Hate” for our opening report, if only because that's really where we left off last year.

To kick things off, we decided to reach out to long-time friend and news source Stephanie Campbell, former founding executive director of Bright Prospect, the non-profit that focuses on getting particularly bright Pomona and surrounding area high school students into and through college.

Campbell, a former high school teacher, today is the interim chair of the leadership team of Pomona's Promise, a collective impact initiative in Pomona that works to build strong families, safe neighborhoods and a healthy quality of life.

She's also a member, an occasional contributor and, as she puts it, an admirer of Compassionate Pomona, which has a vision of weaving belonging and compassion throughout the community by collaborative actions.

We caught up with her by telephone last week to ask her in general terms how she thinks we're all doing on this whole “hate” issue in Pomona and we were pleased at the end of a 37-minute conversation to learn that she believes there is hope for us all in the future and, it appears, we're heading in the right direction.

We looked first at last year's survey and a question asking, “Do you believe all workers in a company, regardless of their race, have the same opportunity to excel and prosper?”

It turned out that 70.1 percent of the respondents answered “no,” and Campbell agreed that many people seemingly have the deck stacked against them.

“I think I also have to say probably no,” she said, basing her response on her work years ago at Bright Prospect.

“(We) had a young lady graduate from Cal Poly Pomona with a degree in chemical engineering and was working for a pharmaceutical company developing products that mimic the sticky stuff mollusks produce to adhere themselves to pier pilings for surgical use in a

wet environment,” Campbell explained.

The former Bright Prospect student was able to patent the product, but her company would not allow her to present it to a conference of physicians, apparently because she was a young Latina. Instead, they had one of her supervisors present her research at the conference.

“It turned out to be a learning experience for everybody,” she said.

And in another case of a former Bright Prospect student, a young lady with a Latino-sounding first name, it happens, was sending out all kinds of job applications after graduation from college but didn't seem to be getting anywhere.

She started using an anglicized version of her name and she “got a bunch of job offers,” Campbell said.

Somehow the term “profiling” comes to mind.

Closer to home, Campbell's late husband Trevor (the two bought their home in Pomona in 1989), who was Jamaican, told a story of how he was arrested – long before the two met – when he was fixing his own car in an alley where he lived. He was held overnight in jail simply because police believed Trevor, who was Black, was working on a stolen car.

And even closer to home, Campbell said her husband once was stopped by police in the 1990s while walking in Ganesha Hills and was told they “don't want people who don't live here walking up here.”

Her husband, who was an adjunct professor at several colleges in the area, and who served as a Pomona Cultural Arts Commissioner for several years, appointed by former Pomona City Councilmember Nell Soto, explained to members of the Pomona City Council at the time that everybody can walk on any street in Pomona.

Today, in fairness, Campbell said she believes the Pomona Police Department is doing about as well as a police department can. She admires their many outreach programs and community collaborations and appreciates that they have a representative in the Pomona's Promise Leadership Team.

“But again, I'm not on the receiving end of anything (in which) I might be regarded as a suspect based on my appearance,” she said.

“I would say . . . that Pomona for a good 15 years has had a wonderful culture of collaboration and I give credit to the Youth and Family Master Plan for literally solidifying that, and at this time there are many collaboratives . . . operating in the city,” she said.

Pomona's Youth and Family Master Plan is known as a “blueprint for change that points the way to a brighter future for the Pomona community's youth and families” by fostering a community that promotes youth development through collaboration.

There's that collaboration word again.

In fact, Campbell cited a list of about a dozen collaboratives off the top of her head – from the Mayor's COVID Task Force to the Pomona Chamber of Commerce and others.

She believes, of course, that collaboration is important and pointed out that prior to the establishment of the Pomona Youth and Family Master Plan city officials and Pomona Unified School District officials were not communicating with each other as much as they are today.

In fact, she said, a survey at the time showed teenagers were not certain adults in the community were “organized” or “doing anything to make things better.”

Today, however, she said “there are so many things going on that are positive.”

She gave credit to Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval for “pulling together this COVID Task Force right when COVID started, which was very effective, there was a lot of work done.”

That group continues to meet each Wednesday from 11 a.m. to noon, always on ZOOM.

Campbell pointed out that it included several subcommittees to provide economic support to small businesses, fundraising for undocumented families who were not qualified for federal funding, and even one helping the school district when it was going through difficulties adjusting to on-line teaching.

So yes, Virginia, there is hope, and it looks like collaboration has been and will be an important part of making that hope continue to turn into a reality. We'll have more of our in-depth look next month.

## US Bank selects Pomona for kick-off of Inland Empire ‘Access Commitment’ serving small businesses, homebuyers

US Bank officials kicked off their Inland Empire “Access Commitment” program with a launch event in Pomona this month in an effort to support what they called “generational wealth building in disadvantaged communities.”

Heli Castaneda, the newly appointed Business Access Advisor for the Inland Empire, was introduced at the event held at El Jefe in Downtown Pomona.

His role will include working with small businesses on funding opportunities and connecting them with partners who help in other areas of “business scaling.”

The program also includes an “Access Home” initiative, which addresses the home ownership gap by providing enhanced down payment assistance and grant programs for those who qualify.

US Bank launched the program in 2021 with a focus on helping businesses in underserved communities gain access to capital.

Castaneda, interviewed exclusively by La Nueva Voz at the event, said “access to information is huge and is very, very important.”

“But even more important than



**‘ACCESS’ TEAM MEMBERS IN POMONA** -- US Bank officials from throughout their Inland Empire region visited Pomona this month to kick off their “Access Commitment” program to better serve small businesses and homebuyers in disadvantaged communities. Pictured, from left, are newly appointed Inland Empire Business Access Advisor Heli Castaneda, Western States Business Access Advisor leader Cesar Hernandez, Downey Business Access Advisor LizBeth Dabroy, and San Diego Business Access Advisor Claudio Burgin.

that, having that access to information to communities that have significantly been underserved is really our mission,” he said.

His region includes US Bank markets throughout all of San Bernardino County, Riverside County, the San Gabriel Valley and portions of Kern County and even the Palmdale area.

The Pomona location was selected for the launch because it was a central location and because John Pena, the owner of the res-

taurant, is a customer.

“What a great way to support his minority owned commercial real estate that we want to pro-

We are on the precipice of change. We must continue our strive toward the Beloved Community. The choice of how humanity proceeds rests in the heart of every human being. On the one hand, there is the decision of humanity. On the other hand, there are many

options that degrade humanity. On the first hand, we get a critical mass of society who appreciate and understand the greater good, and actively and collectively work toward it under the common banner of humanity. This is the only available option for the survival of humanity.

All other options degrade humanity, some slower than others. Socially and economically, we are growing further and further apart when it comes to wealth, quality of life, and access to resources. We must balance the current allocation of resources in our system. To accomplish this, we need a real Equity and Compassion Criteria (“ECC”). Any law or policy that gets passed must get favorable responses to two questions:

• Does it harm the marginalized? If yes, reject it.

• Does it improve the quality of life for the marginalized? If not, reject it.

Any law or policy that harms the marginalized swiftly degrades humanity. Any law or policy that does not improve the quality of life for the marginalized degrades humanity, but at a slower rate than the former. Harming the marginalized means our lowest gets lower and humanity falls deeper into the trap of despair. Not improving the quality of life for our lowest means that public resources are going to a less pressing humanitarian issue. In a world where we all agree the government should not take our money unless it will make the best use of it,

information and especially to our minorities, people of color, we’re kind of in the epicenter of that in the City of Pomona,” Castaneda said. “And so sharing the message about our Access Commitment and the things that we’re doing to help the neighborhood and help those people with access to homes, access to small business information and access to our wealth side as well, I think, is going to be the broader scope of what we want to deliver.”

And how fast before he expects to see results in the local markets?

“We see results already . . . especially (in) our diversity lending program,” Castaneda said. “Last week we did a presentation, two days later we were able to help one of our small business owners

Access Commitment... pg. 17

## Compassion in law and policy

By Thomas Allison, Member, Compassionate Pomona

we cannot stand for such mismanagement of public resources. If it’s not improving anything, the law or policy shouldn’t exist. If it’s not improving the marginalized, then it’s improving the privileged, which is further widening the equity gap.

Everybody has the capacity to be a mentor. People need mentors from every walk of life. Many of us are on a journey to a better version of ourselves. On this journey, we pursue a transformation. Mentors help us through the transformation and share that with humanity. It can be a mission for a nonprofit, a product or service for a business, or some other way to contribute to society. Our success is based on the mentorship of people from all parts of society.

The interconnected network of humanity means we pursue a better version of ourselves while simultaneously helping others pursue a better version of themselves. The path to this understanding of ourselves, our community, and the role of ourselves in our community is through re-educating people into seeing the value that they offer everyone else, and seeing the value that everyone else offers them. In the meantime, the ECC furthers the discussion on how we might guide society’s legal and policy habits in this direction.

*Editor’s Note: Thomas Allison is a family attorney and professor of law at the University of La Verne. He is also founder of the non-profit Social Justice Advocacy Project.*



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Photo by Renee Barbee

**ROTARY PICKS BEST OF THE BEST** -- Five amazing high school musicians and an accompanist, also amazing, participated in a special Rotary regional competition at Claremont High School last week to see who would go on to the next level, district competition on May 18 at Pomona's Fairplex, according to Pomona Rotary President Josh Landis of Foothill Transit. Winners were on hand from Pomona, Claremont, Glendora, La Verne and West Covina Rotary clubs. Pictured, from left, are high school seniors Khai Ha, winner at Pomona Rotary, who plays classical guitar, and Porter Wonatott, of Claremont, who plays the marimba; sophomore Kali Asseded, representing Glendora, who plays violin; Maegan Angeles, also Glendora and also a sophomore, who accompanies Asseded on the piano; Joshua Castro, representing West Covina Rotary, a senior, who plays tenor saxophone; and Caleb Fong, a sophomore representing La Verne Rotary (although he attends Claremont High School), who also plays violin. Fong won the regional competition and Castro was runner-up.



Photo by Renee Barbee

**REMEMBERING THOSE LOST** -- Partnership for a Positive Pomona (P3) and Rethinking Access to Drugs (RAD) hosted a remembrance candlelight vigil and press conference in the Pomona Civic Center last month in honor of local youth lost to fentanyl overdose deaths. The two groups were attempting to "raise awareness of the danger, pain and loss that has impacted our community due to fentanyl use." Two middle school deaths and numerous near deaths have been reported in Pomona in the past six months. Pictured are representatives of P3 and RAD, along with supporters including Pomona City Councilmember Victor Preciado (back row at left). According to a spokesperson, fentanyl surpassed methamphetamine in 2022 to become the most common drug type listed as a cause of death in accidental drug overdoses in Los Angeles County.



**GRAND RE-OPENING AT POMONA'S HOUSE OF RUTH** -- It was a much appreciated grand re-opening ceremony last month at Pomona's House of Ruth as Pomona Chamber of Commerce officials, Pomona and Claremont City Council members, House of Ruth employees and friends re-opened a portion of the front of the Pomona location that was damaged when a car jumped the curb and drove into the building last July, destroying half of the domestic violence organization's outreach building. Insurance, fortunately, covered all but the last \$20,000 of repairs and House of Ruth is reaching out to the community for support. Pictured, from left, are Pomona Chamber Board Chair Nef Cortez of Re/Max Galaxy, Chamber Executive Board member Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz, Board member Jill Dolan of Mt. SAC, Executive Board member Jeff Johannsen of Pomona Hope, House of Ruth CEO Pat Bell (center), Pomona City Councilmember John Nolte, Claremont Councilmember Ed Reece and Claremont Mayor Pro Tem Corey Calaycay, and House of Ruth Chief Development Officer Rhonda Beltran. The re-opening came just in time for Sexual Assault Awareness Month in Los Angeles County, declared for the month of April on a motion authored by Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda Solis. To contribute to the repairs fund, contact Rhonda Beltran at (909) 868-8007.

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**ONE OF THE FIRST!** -- "Ender," age 8 (his parents preferred first name only), one of the first patients to be admitted to the brand new \$15 million inpatient pediatric unit at Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center, is rolled in to his room. And eight more patients arrived on opening day April 1. Pictured with Ender, from left, are Pediatric Clinical Supervisor Lana Gonzales, Medical Director of Inpatient Pediatric Services Dr. Muzna Atif, Pediatric Clinical Nurse Specialist Carrie DuPee, and Director of Children's Services Michele Atkins-Young. The new pediatric unit, replacing the original pediatric unit built in 1955, took three years to complete. It is the only unit of its type serving the region within a 15-mile radius.

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**NEW QUICK QUACK CAR WASH IN POMONA!** -- Members of the Pomona Chamber of Commerce, Pomona city officials and others helped cut the ribbon last week to officially open Quick Quack Car Wash as Pomona's newest car wash. Pictured, from left, are Pomona City Councilmember Nora Garcia, Chamber Executive Board member Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz, Quick Quack founding partner Travis Kimball, "Quackals" the duck, store leader Frank Acuna, Chamber Executive Board member Jeff Johannsen of Pomona Hope (at rear), Pomona Chamber President and CEO Monique Robles and, at far right, Pomona Chamber Board Member Jill Dolan of Mt. SAC. The car wash is located at 1862 S. Garey Ave., Pomona. The Sacramento-based company, founded in 2004, has more than 230 locations in Utah, Colorado, Texas, Arizona and California.

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**GIRL SCOUTS HELP ORGANIZE POMONA LIBRARY** -- Pictured is Troop 5134 of the Girl Scouts of Pomona who partnered with the Pomona Public Library to help troop members earn their service badges by cleaning and organizing the local library. As Girl Scouts, they learn to be selfless and kind and to be of service to others. The girls take pride in serving their community by collaborating with local businesses in Pomona to earn all of their Daisy Petal "badges" while displaying all the values that make them Girl Scouts. New members are welcome. Meetings are every other Wednesday at Delicious Freedom in Pomona. Please call Troop Leaders Frida Castellanos or April Alvarez at 714-399-6216 for further information. Back row, from left: Troop Daisies Aubrey Morales, Andrea Ambrose and Scarlett Mendoza. Front row, from left: Aubrey Seagrove, Penelope Ramos, and Sophia Morales. Not pictured is Roxanne Olea.



**SOROPTIMISTS DO A CLEAN-UP IN THE HILLS** -- The Pomona/Claremont Soroptimists, the folks who originally planted the beautiful redwood grove across the street from the main entrance to Fairplex, made one of their periodic visits back to the hillside last week to clean up, beautify and even do a little tree-planting at one of Pomona's treasures. The Soroptimists hosted the event in collaboration with the City of Pomona. Pictured, from left, are club Vice President Linda Chavez-Nunez, Treasurer Ana Luevano, and President Gayle Claiborne.

Photo by Renee Barbee





Photos by Gunnar Eisel

**FRIENDS OF POMONA PUBLIC LIBRARY BRING BACK TRIVIA BEE** -- The Friends of the Pomona Public Library brought back the "Trivia Bee" for the first time since 2019 and, with 14 teams competing, first place went to, who else, the "Library Kids" from the Pomona Public Library. Pictured, from left, are winning team members Jose Garcia, Pomona City Councilmember Nora Garcia, and Robert Costa.



**SECOND PLACE** -- Pictured at the Downtown Pomona Metro Event Center are second place winners in the Trivia Bee team "2 Thummers Up" from Pomona's Fairplex. From left are Renee Hernandez, Sara Orduna, and Natalie Chaidez.



**THIRD PLACE** -- Team Kiwanis took third place honors in this month's "Trivia Bee." From left are team members Linda Lowry, Ish Arias, and Mitchell Stein with Pomona City Councilmember Steve Lustro, master of ceremonies, pictured at right.

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**NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK IN POMONA** -- Members of the Pomona City Council this month proclaimed National Library Week in Pomona for the week of April 7 - 13 and encouraged "all residents to take advantage of the variety of resources available at their school, campus or public library" and urged them to "thank librarians and library workers for providing valuable services and making information accessible to all who walk through the library doors." Pictured accepting the proclamation on behalf of the library is Allan Lagumbay, senior library assistant, who told councilmembers "the library means different things to different people." "To me, our library means its staff and supporters and their stories and challenges from 1887 onward," he said. "We are who we are where we are because of them, because of you." Pictured with Lagumbay, from left, are Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval and Councilmembers Elizabeth Ontiveros-Cole, Steve Lustro, Victor Preciado and Nora Garcia.



**CESAR CHAVEZ AND DOLORES HUERTA PILGRIMAGE** -- This year's 20th annual Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta Pilgrimage, organized by the Latino and Latina Roundtable last week, attracted several hundred participants marching from Pomona City Hall to Tony Cerda Park. The event took a political turn this year as about 100 "Free Palestine" protestors -- who a spokesperson told La Nueva Voz were from throughout Southern California -- marched in support of the Roundtable's pro-labor issues. Pictured are three of the protestors on their way back to their car from the park. Also pictured is Roundtable President Jose Calderon, master of ceremonies, looking on as a speaker with a clipboard urges participants to sign a petition to support poor workers in a local wages dispute at "Around the Grille Cafe" in La Verne. The park was filled with music, dancers, flag wavers and placard holders and even easy-ups where sellers had a little of everything to take home. This year's theme was "Unite to Defend the Human Rights of our Communities."



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**FROM DRIVE-IN MOVIES AND SWAP MEETS TO A BUSINESS PARK** -- Well, you can't stop progress and this time it looks like it might have worked out OK after all. The old Mission Tiki Drive-in movie theater was demolished a year ago -- projection room, snack bar (oh no!), marquee sign and all -- after 67 years -- and it now has all been replaced with the Oakmont Mission Ramona Business Park at Mission Boulevard and Ramona Avenue in Montclair. The development when completed will include eight buildings ranging in size from 30,000 to 187,000 square feet.

## Hearing set on bill outlawing broadband discrimination in low-income communities

California Assembly Bill 2239, groundbreaking legislation that would make California the first state in the nation to codify as state law the Federal Communication Commission's newly adopted definition of digital discrimination, was scheduled for a hearing this week before the Assembly Judiciary Committee in Sacramento.

The measure was introduced in February by Assemblymember Mia Bonta (D-Oakland).

"Despite historic public investments to close the digital divide, low-income communities of color across the state remain disproportionately disconnected, stranded on the wrong side of the digital divide," Bonta said. "To the extent that there

are policies and practices that serve to exacerbate this persistent inequity -- even when that is not the intent -- we must put an end to them. That is my intent with AB 2239."

Last November, the FCC defined "digital discrimination of access" as "policies or practices, not justified by genuine issues of technical or economic feasibility, that differen-

tially impact consumers' access to broadband internet access service based on their income level, race, ethnicity, color, religion or national origin, or are intended to have such differential impact."

In January, the Los Angeles City Council unanimously passed the nation's first city-level digital discrimination policy on a motion that

referenced studies that show industry pricing practices worsen the digital divide by exacerbating the challenge of broadband affordability, with providers offering service that is slower and delivered over older technology to low-income communities at the same price they offered fast, reliable service to higher income communities.



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## I AM GOD'S NEW CREATION

By Susie Perales

I am a small part of this universe, but I am an entire lifetime. I am love, strength and weakness. I am a free spirit. I am happiness and this keeps me so much alive. I am the love and the warmth that I feel from the family and good friends that surround me. I am laughter, like that of a bubbling brook...

I am love. I am softness, and a soul gently caressed. I am the silence and peace of the night...

I am a lazy, warm Sunday noon. I am a caterpillar and a metamorphosis is what I am going through – eagerly spinning in my cocoon, waiting to burst into the world with the complexity of my being...

I am a journey that has to be made. I am a task that has to be done. I am a life that wants to be lived. I am a mystery that has not yet been solved. I am an adventure – exciting and new. I am a creature put here by God to be a woman, wife, mother and friend...

I am a woman, still incomplete, for there are things that still I am not. But of all these things that I am, I am most pleased, God's new creation to be...

## Pomona attorney serves 'cease and desist' notice to Pomona City Council alleging 'body camera' was turned off during officer involved shooting

Pomona attorney Jaime Gutierrez, representing Pomona's Gente Organizada, served a notice to cease and desist to members of the Pomona City Council during their meeting this month based on what the notice alleged was the Pomona Police Department's "continued violent targeting of our Black and Brown communities and its blatant violation of state and local laws."

Specifically, the letter cited violation of police department operating policies during an officer involved shooting in the Angela-Chanslor neighborhood on Feb. 3, 2022, in which the officer involved allegedly failed to ensure his "body camera" remained on continuously, "especially during incidents that are crime interdiction stops and those that become adversarial."

"These inconsistencies erode the public's trust in local government and law enforcement and have brought harm to our community," the letter said.

The letter also alleged that Pomona Police Chief Mike Ellis, during an April 2022 Police Oversight Commission meeting, stated that "video of the incident was not available because no video exists."

The letter claimed no details were made available on how the officer involved will be held accountable and how the department plans to enforce its procedures.

"The community has been left in the dark and has the right to

know about the details of the incident and how the department will cease from using violent and cover up tactics," the letter continued.

La Nueva Voz reached out to Pomona police officials for a response. While they were preparing a comment, it did not become available before press time for this issue.

A cease and desist letter serves as an official warning about illegal behavior and informs the recipient that further penalties could follow if the behavior does not stop, although it does not automatically lead to a lawsuit.

The letter stated if the activity continued, "there will be no other recourse than to commence a claim for damages for a class action lawsuit for noncompliance."

## Access Commitment... from pg. 8

with a small product."

"And not only that, but sometimes it's a partnership, it's an external referral that we have to send out to some of our CDFI (community development financial institutions) partners in helping them out in that regard, whether it be with

education, like training for the offer, and then just additional resources in addition to what the bank has to offer," he said.

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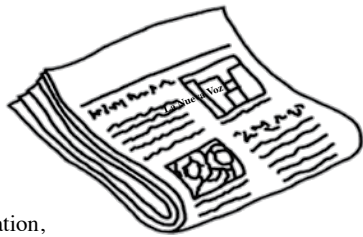
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## IPoly, with students from more than 40 cities, named California Distinguished School

International Polytechnic High School (IPoly), located on the campus of Cal Poly Pomona and administered by the Los Angeles County Office of Education, was recently honored with the 2024 California Distinguished School award. This accolade celebrates the exceptional educational journey IPoly offers to a diverse student body, representing over 40 cities from public, private, and home school backgrounds.

A 500-student specialized public college preparatory high school, IPoly centers around innovative project-based learning, offering a unique opportunity for students to take concurrent college courses starting in 10th grade. Through Dual Enrollment, the Special Admit program, and the Cal Poly Young Scholars program, students may earn general education college credits that are transferable to their future university.



IPoly seniors Oscar Zayas, Kaelynn Cadiz (at left), and Jasmine Le reflect on recent college acceptance notices and their exciting journeys ahead.

"Because we are a small school, we can give more individual attention to students," says Counselor Greg Anapol, highlighting the personalized approach that allows for direct academic and emotional support and intervention, ensuring that every student's needs are met. This focused approach has led to remarkable outcomes: a 100% graduation rate, with 97% of graduates continuing their education to college.

IPoly Students from a diverse range of backgrounds and cities are drawn to the school's reputation for fostering academic excellence, community involvement, leadership, and practical skills to be used in college and career. IPoly senior Kaelynn Cadiz of Diamond Bar, now on her path to UCLA to pursue a publishing career, reflects on her growth at IPoly, "The project-focused learning and small class sizes really helped me become more comfortable with public speaking," an essential skill she will carry into her future.

Oscar Zayas, a senior commuting from La Puente, was inspired to earn straight A's at IPoly due to "its emphasis towards working in a group and time management, which are vital in the workplace," he explains. Zayas aspires to enter the field of broadcasting after majoring in Communications at San Jose State University.

Pomona resident Jasmine Le was accepted to six colleges this year. She will also attend UCLA in the fall, following her graduation from IPoly, and is considering a career in the medical field. She found IPoly's collaborative, close-knit environment to be pivotal to her success, stating, "With IPoly being such a small school, you really get to know and become close to all of the students. You truly become part of a community that understands and is kind to one another."

The school's doors are open to students regardless of city of residence, provided they meet admission criteria. This includes a minimum two-year academic GPA of 2.5, acceptable teacher recommendations, a clean disciplinary and attendance record, and passing an entrance examination. Space is limited to 136 students per grade level.

With its specialized curriculum, supportive community, and commitment to student success, IPoly stands out as a leading educational institution, inviting students to engage in an enriching high school experience that lays a strong foundation for college and beyond. For families considering IPoly, the application and additional resources are available via the school's website at [www.ipolyhighschool.org](http://www.ipolyhighschool.org). The admissions office, at 909-839-2361, offers guidance throughout the year to prospective students navigating the application process.



## Cesar Chavez breakfast... from pg. 4

said the next election in the United States is “the election of our lifetime.”

“If you don’t do more, we’re going to be in trouble,” she said.

Another honoree, Deliana Speights, secretary-treasurer of UFCW 1428, has long been a Roundtable supporter, according to the program notes.

She began her career as a UFCW member in 1987 as a clerk’s helper working at Boys Marina Market in Marina Del Rey. In 1997 the union hired her in the medical benefits department at the local office and she was promoted to office manager within six months.

Speights was promoted to union representative after the food strike of 2003-2004, and she represented members at four major supermarkets and two pharmacies. In addition, she has been a regional coordinator for the union’s women’s



Roundtable President Jose Calderon, at left, presents an award posthumously to Harry Pachon. Pictured, accepting the award, are his daughter, Melissa, at center, and his wife, Barbara.



Deliana Speights



Latino / Latina Roundtable Executive Director Lina Mira



Fairplex President and CEO Walter Marquez

network, which has taken up the conditions of low-wage women in the retail sector.

She is an immigrant from Serbia who came to this country with her family through Amnesty International.

David Estrada, a labor leader for the past 50 years and a Roundtable board member for the past 15 years, introduced Speights as

some one who has come up through the ranks.

“She has demonstrated herself to be a community champion,” Estrada said.

He added that she is also work-

ing in the community helping to eradicate violence against women and fighting to protect reproductive rights in the U.S. and Canada, all while making a strong statement for social and economic justice for all workers.

“Here I stand today and I want to recognize the wonderful people that are here with me today,” Speights said. But she added that her efforts toward working conditions and even feeding the less fortunate in their time of need would not have been possible without the support of her family.

She told the audience her family fled Serbia because they were persecuted for their religious beliefs.

“But in 1969 my dad made a decision to . . . leave the homeland and come to this country because he knew the opportunities that were ahead of him in America,” she said. “As a child of immigrant parents, as the first generation to graduate college in my family, I

am a proud 35-year member of UFCW (and) I will continue my lifetime commitment to helping others.”

Also honored were the four registered nurses and five healthcare workers at St. Fran-

cis Medical Center in Lynwood – known as the Prime 9 – who allegedly were fired during the holidays by Prime Healthcare, owner of the hospital, after presenting documentation of unsafe staffing and letters of support at Prime’s headquarters in Ontario, California.

The nurses are represented by UNAC/UHCP and the healthcare workers are represented by SEIU-UHW.

Estrada introduced the group and acknowledged their unwavering dedication and selfless service exemplifying resilience and solidarity in the face of adversity.

“Behind the façade of this esteemed institution lies a tale of injustice and corporate greed,” Estrada said. “The brave individuals we honor today were unjustly fired by their employer.”

The employees were recognized for their determination and their efforts.

La Nueva Voz reached out for comment to St. Francis, where a spokesperson said the hospital



Alicia Rodriguez, recipient of the Roundtable’s “Community Star” award, at center, is honored by Roundtable President Angela Sanbrano, at left, and Roundtable Board member David Estrada.

has a 79-year legacy of providing compassionate, quality healthcare for the community with a mission of “being a voice for our patients (that) resonates with the mission of Cesar Chavez.”

“We respect the voices and the labor rights of our caregivers, which is why we want to share that, while unfortunate, the termination of nine of our employees in late 2023 had nothing to do with union membership but specifically with individual employees’ violations of the hospital’s standards of conduct, which require professionalism and respect and prohibit abusive conduct,” the statement continued.

“We have received accolades for quality and dedication, including Healthgrades’ 2024 Patient Safety Excellence Award, an ‘A’ rating for patient safety from Lown Institute, and ‘Champion of the Year’ award by the City of Lynwood,” the statement said.

The statement added that St. Francis “remains fully compliant with all regulatory requirements, including with respect to staffing.”

In fact, according to the spokesperson, the hospital has expanded services in areas of behavioral health, geriatric emergency care, thrombectomy-capable stroke care and obstetrical emergency servic-

Cesar Chavez breakfast... pg. 19

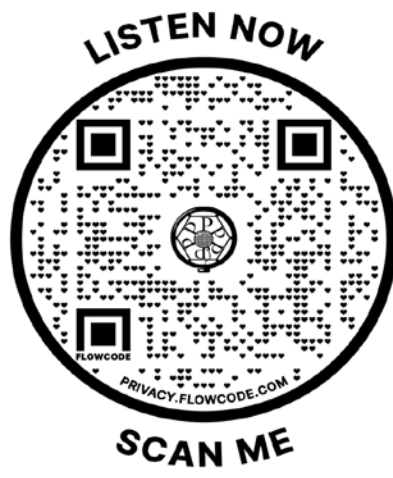


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Members of “Son Real” performed at this year’s Latino and Latina Roundtable Cesar Chavez breakfast.



## Cesar Chavez breakfast... from pg. 18

es.

The hospital is the largest employer in Lynwood and is “committed to ensuring access to health-care for residents, both represented and underrepresented.”

Another honoree, Harry Pachon, a professor who was called a scholar-activist, was recognized posthumously at the event.

A resident of Claremont who died in 2011, Pachon was president of the Tomas Rivera Policy Institute when it operated at Clare-



State Sen. Susan Rubio



Mark Ramos, President  
UFCW Western States Council

mont Graduate University. He was also a professor of public policy at USC.

He was instrumental in the formation of the Roundtable when he asked Calderon, then a professor at Pitzer College, to call a meeting of leaders in 2003 to discuss the changing demographics in the region.

That same year, the new group led a march through 22 cities to protest Gov. Schwarzenegger’s veto of a bill that would have given undocumented immigrants the right to a driver’s license.

Pachon’s wife, Barbara, and daughter, Melissa, accepted the award on his behalf.

And this year’s “Community Star Award” was presented to Ali-

cia Rodriguez, an immigrant from Colima, Mexico, who taught elementary, middle and high school for 21 years after an earlier career in the private sector as a worker’s compensation claims examiner.

She has been a member of the Roundtable since its inception and has contributed to its major events and committees. She has served on the board of directors for the last four years.

She volunteers her skills and time to Financially Fit Foundation and to the San Gabriel Valley-



Pomona City Councilmember Nora Garcia greeted participants at this year’s Cesar Chavez breakfast on behalf of the City of Pomona.

Inland Empire Labor Council for Latin American Advancement.

The Community Star Award was created to recognize individuals who provide exemplary service inside the Roundtable.

She was introduced by Estrada as someone who has worked tirelessly and selflessly to empower Latinos and other minorities in the community.

“Now in my sixth decade . . . I work tirelessly to make the world a better place,” Rodriguez said. “I see people like you . . . people from all walks of life (and) all ethnic backgrounds. And I call on you, our brothers and sisters, to pledge your life to make positive change, and especially to the youth in the house to carry the torch in the struggle.”

### State Sen. Susan Rubio

State Sen. Susan Rubio, who told the Roundtable she came to this country as an undocumented child whose father was a farmworker and day laborer, thanked the Roundtable for the work they do.

“People like you have helped my father, my family, with those difficult years, the collective work of the community, Cesar Chavez, the

legacy . . . to ensure that community lifts up community,” she said.

And UFCW Western States Council President Mark Ramos, elected nearly two years ago as the group’s first Latino president, cited the legacy of Cesar Chavez which he said was about unionism, dignity and respect in the workplace.

“The fight was never about grapes and lettuce, it was always about people,” Ramos cited as one of his favorite quotes from Chavez. And he added that if Chavez was with the group at the breakfast, he would say “celebrate today but tomorrow we roll up our sleeves and we get to work.”

Fairplex President and CEO Walter Marquez welcomed the group to the event.

### Scholarship winners

Six scholarship winners were introduced at the event. It was the Roundtable’s 12th year of providing scholarships to help with college expenses. Education is a part of the Roundtable’s mission in an effort to continue the legacy of Cesar Chavez organizing and doing work in the community.

The six, selected for their work in the image of Chavez, were selected from a list of 15 applicants. Each received a \$1,000 scholarship check.

The winners were Eileen Ramos of Cal Poly Pomona, Emmanuel Delvalle of Pitzer College, Jesse Suarez of Mt. SAC, Marcelino Atilano of Cal Poly Pomona, Orlando Arias, University of California, and Osvaldo Garcia Barron, of Pitzer College.

The event, the Roundtable’s second “live” event after meeting virtually during the pandemic, each year celebrates the life and legacy of Cesar Chavez and the work of the Roundtable, its members and volunteers in the community.

## Garey High spring concert on Disney theme set for next month

The Garey High School Music Department’s annual spring concert – “Music Extravaganza 2024: A Disney Celebration!” – showcasing talent with a tribute to the timeless magic of Disney is scheduled for next month at Pomona’s Garey High School.

The performances are set for 8 p.m. Friday, May 17, and Saturday, May 18, at the school, located at 321 W. Lexington Ave., Pomona.

In addition to the musical performances, also offered is a VIP dinner on the theme “A Tour of Disney,” with a buffet menu featuring delightful dishes inspired by beloved Disney classics including “Lady and the Tramp” (spaghetti and meatballs), “Cinderella” (baked chicken with green beans and mashed potatoes), “Mulan” (veggie chow mein) and the classic French dish ratatouille from “Ratatouille.”

After the concert, a reception is scheduled that should be reminiscent of Alice in Wonderland’s tea party, complete with coffee, lemonade, iced tea and an assortment

of mini desserts.

Tickets for the “President’s VIP Dinner” are \$40, VIP floor seating tickets (including reception after the show) are \$25, and general admission is \$15. Students and seniors are \$12, children 8 through 14 are \$7, children up to age 7 are free and Pomona Unified School District music students are free.

“Legacy Awards” will be presented to three Garey High School alumni for their “unwavering support and significant contributions to the arts within our community and Garey High School – Pomona Unified School District’s Community Schools Coordinator Julia Cortez, who is retiring, Victor Lopez of Vic’s Bike Shop, and Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez.

An art exhibit showcasing the work of the school’s art department – including 11 new murals – will be on display.

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### Pomona Concert Band spring concert set for May 17

The Pomona Concert Band has scheduled its annual spring concert titled "Musical Masters, Past and Present," for 7:30 p.m. Friday, May 17, in Pomona's Palomares Park Community Center.

Linda Taylor, Jorge Garcia and Kerry Kline will be directing and master of ceremonies will be Paula Lantz.

Featured will be music from

past music masters and selected new composers.

Selections will include Leonard Bernstein's "Overture to Candide," "Fanfare and Allegro" by Clifton Williams, and three marches by John Philip Sousa.

Palomares Park is located at 499 E. Arrow Highway, Pomona, and the concert is free and open to the public.

### Pomona Valley Hospital 'joint replacement' award puts Pomona in top 10 percent in the nation

Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center has received a 2024 "Joint Replacement Excellence Award" from Healthgrades, placing the hospital among the top 10 percent in the nation.

"This distinction, along with numerous other accolades from Healthgrades, reflects PVHMC's outstanding clinical performance and distinguishes them as one of the nation's leading hospitals," a

spokesperson said in a news release.

"From surgery to recovery, our joint replacement team is dedicated to helping our patients regain their mobility using the latest minimally invasive surgical methods and practicing the highest standards in rehabilitation," said Hospital President and CEO Rich Yochum.

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### LGBTQ+ elected group, called first of its kind, becomes official

Driven by a commitment to ensure measures are in place to protect, preserve and advance the LGBTQ+ community, the Los Angeles County LGBTQ+ Elected Officials association has been established, according to a news release from Los Angeles County Assessor Jeff Prang, president of the new group.

Prang said the group believed the association was particularly important in light of what he called increasing attacks on their rights.

"With our vast number of LGBTQ+ elected officials in Los Angeles County, we have a stronger voice when we speak with a unified voice," Prang said. "With the increase in public homophobia and anti-LGBTQ+ legislation opposition to our community here and nationally, it's vital we have

a united front to protect our rights and liberties."

He added that as elected officials, "our voices will resonate strongly as we advocate for policies, programs and legislation that will ensure equality and safety for everyone."

The new group has been meeting unofficially for several months while working to officially register the organization as a 504(c)4 "California Nonprofit Mutual Benefit Corporation" focused on education, advocacy and mutual support.

Its inaugural meeting was held on April 13 in downtown Los Angeles. In addition to Prang, other officers include Claremont City Councilmember Ed Reece and Burbank City Councilmember Nikki Perez as vice presidents,

Pasadena City College Trustee Alton Wang treasurer, and El Monte City Councilmember Martin Herrera secretary.

Speakers at the meeting included Congressman Robert Garcia (D-Long Beach) and State Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara.

According to the news release, Los Angeles County is home to more than 50 "out" LGBTQ+ elected officials elected to serve on water boards, school and college boards, city councils, city clerks, legislators, county officials and as members of Congress.

"The demographic and geographic diversity of the officials demonstrates the growth and progress that has been made for LGBTQ+ rights throughout the region," Prang said.

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**TRAINING AND TOOLS FOR HONEY PRODUCTION** -- Did you hear the buzz about Pomona Rotary? They went all the way to an African village in Kenya to give away some beehives so the locals could produce honey. It all started when Pomona Rotarians Malika Kachani and Sandy Christensen organized a fundraiser and collected other donations to gift the women of the community with 50 beehives. Rotary President Josh Landis told La Nueva Voz the income generating project included training and the necessary tools for honey production. The goal of the project was to empower the women and to improve their livelihood. Pictured personally presenting the beehives to the ladies in Kenya last week are, at left, Malika Kachani with Sandy Christensen, center.

### Lions schedule free vision screening event in Chino

Members of the Pomona Host Lions Club and Chino Valley Lions Club, in conjunction with California Lions Friends in Sight, are again partnering to sponsor a free vision screening event next month in Chino.

Scheduled for 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, May 11, at the Chino Community Building, 5443 B Street Chino, the event is open to both children and adults.

Organizers point out that it is

not intended to replace a comprehensive eye examination and refraction that can be obtained through an optometrist's or ophthalmologist's office.

However, the exam is designed to assess patients for ocular health concerns and provide a usable pair of eyeglasses at no charge until patients are able to obtain professional services on their own.

In addition to the vision screen-

ing, used eyeglasses and hearing aids will be collected at the event.

Participants are urged to arrive early in the day as the screening may close early subject to attendance. No identification is required. At last year's event in Pomona, nearly 300 adults and children were screened by eye-care professionals.

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**Claremont Chapel**

325 N. Indian Hill Blvd. Claremont, CA 91711



Mitchell Todd, Joel Diaz, Nina Hernandez, Rudy Urrea  
*Hablamos Español*





Photos by Renee Barbee  
It was all things eggs and bunnies again this month at the Spring Egg-Stravaganza at the Pomona Public Library! Pictured are kids having their photo taken with the "Spring Bunny," the official start of the egg hunt on the Civic Center lawn, face painting as always, and one of the three trains giving free train rides around the plaza during the event.



### Services held in Pomona for Margaret Castaneda

A celebration of life was held last week at New Life Church in Pomona for Margaret Castaneda, who died earlier this month at her Pomona home where she had been under hospice care for the past five months. She was 90.

Castaneda was born in East Los Angeles and was the daughter of Joe Valdiva and Julia Romero. She was one of five children – three girls and two boys.

She married Peter Ruiz at the age of 16 and together they had six children – Peter, Debra, Richard, Eloise, Steven and Ray. After a divorce, she moved to Montebello, where she met her second husband, Tony Arauz. They had one son, Tony.

She later moved to Azusa, where she worked at Optical Radiation, her last job until she retired.

Castaneda enjoyed working



Margaret Castaneda

in sales at King Richard's Antiques in Whittier where she was known for making friends with everyone she encountered.

After her retirement, she took a job next door to her home at New Life Church in Pomona

where she also volunteered during the Halloween festival each year.

She enjoyed her television shows including "The Golden Girls" and "Mike and Molly" and she loved her two small dogs Sugar and Candy.

And she enjoyed getting all dressed up each year for her annual Mother's Day tea with her grandkids, Brittanee and Dyllan.

She loved cooking and always volunteered to make taquitos.

A reception followed services at the Foothill Village Club House.

She was survived by one daughter, Eloise, nine grandchildren (in-

cluding Michele Huerta, daughter of Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz and the late Steven Ruiz), and many great-grandchildren. Castaneda and her ex-daughter-in-law Renee remained close until the end.



Photo by Renee Barbee

**HISTORY IN THE SKY!** -- It was like witnessing history in the sky early this month when a rare solar eclipse (partial only visible in Southern California) could be seen. Here's what it looked like in Westmont at the moment the maximum amount of visible sun was covered by the moon crossing in front. Miss this one? No worries -- next one comes around on March 30, 2033.

### Need to advertise in La Nueva Voz?

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**RIBBON CUTTING AT MT. SAN ANTONIO GARDENS** -- The Pomona Chamber of Commerce and the Claremont Chamber of Commerce held a joint ribbon cutting ceremony this month for a new building at Mt. San Antonio Gardens, a residential community for older adults. Why two chambers? It turns out the residential community's campus is right on the line and is in both Pomona and Claremont. The new building, "The Cedars at Mt. San Antonio Gardens," a three-story facility housing individual residential units, was built on the exact site of the first building at Mt. San Antonio Gardens, which opened for business in 1961. Pictured from left, with several staff members from Mt. San Antonio Gardens, are Pomona Chamber Executive Board member Renee Barbee, of La Nueva Voz; Pomona City Councilmember Victor Preciado; Pomona Mayor Tim Sandoval; Claremont City Councilmember Ed Reece; Claremont Mayor Pro Tem Corey Calaycay; Mt. San Antonio Gardens President and CEO Patricia Williams; Claremont City Councilmember Jennifer Stark; Mt. San Antonio Gardens Vice President of Engagement Linnette Guidera; Claremont Chamber Board Chair Stacey Caponigro; Claremont Chamber Executive Director Randy Lopez; and former Mt. San Antonio Gardens President and CEO Maureen Beith. Mt. San Antonio Gardens is located at 900 E. Harrison Ave., Pomona.

PERSONAL AD

**MAN seeking a FEMALE relationship.**

I'm Dennis, a 73-year-old man, on a heartfelt search for a lasting connection filled with trust, companionship, and love with a special woman. I hope to find a life partner and a best friend, someone with whom I can share the remainder of my years. Life is meant to be lived to the fullest, hand in hand with someone you truly care about. If you're interested in embarking on this journey with me, please feel free to drop me a message to know about you at [oceandeeep152@gmail.com](mailto:oceandeeep152@gmail.com). I'm open to connecting with someone between the ages of 65 and 83.



**Looking for employment?**

**2024 VENDOR JOB FAIR**

Brought to you by independent service providers supporting individuals with developmental disabilities in the San Gabriel/Pomona Valleys



**DATE/TIME**

Friday, May 3, 2024  
10:00am-3pm

**LOCATION**

San Gabriel/Pomona Regional Center  
(Conference Center)  
75 Rancho Camino Drive  
Pomona, CA 91766

Service Providers will be recruiting, screening and hiring professionals to work in the following service industries:

- **Early Childhood Development**
    - Day Care
    - Floor Time
  - **Family Services**
    - In-home Respite
    - After School Support
    - Residential Homes
  - **Adult & Senior Services**
    - Employment
    - Independent/Supported Living
    - Adult Day Programs
    - Coordinated Family Supports
    - Residential Homes
- And many others.



Scan QR Code to learn more about who will be recruiting at this event.



**Bring your resume!  
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- Recruiting for :
- office settings
  - direct care professionals
  - behavioral supports
  - culinary/housekeeping
  - job coaching
  - administration
  - clinical support
  - maintenance
  - and more....



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