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Impacts of wildfires reach Pomona!

Southern California's raging wildfires this month, which broke out Jan. 7 driven by extreme winds and weather conditions, have impacted Pomona and surrounding communities where residents, organizations and elected officials have stepped up to help.

Nearly 40,000 acres have burned and, according to the Los Angeles County Coordinated Joint Information Center, it is estimated that 17,319 structures have been damaged or destroyed and at least 27 people have lost their lives as searches continue.

Critical fire weather conditions

Martin Luther King speaker tells students to run race, pass 'baton' to next generation

Researcher, educator and author Dr. Joy DeGruy told an estimated 250 celebrants at Sunday's 43rd annual Pomona Inland Valley

were expected to continue through this week with little relief and "red flag" warnings remained in effect for Los Angeles and Ventura Counties, as a harbinger of even more winds resulting in downed trees, power outages and high risk for fires.

No wildfires have threatened Pomona. According to Los Angeles County Fire Department Public Information Officer Frederick Fielding, the closest wildfire to

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HELPING OUT WITH THE HORSES -- Dan Schempp, of El Segundo, was one of the volunteers who came out to Pomona's Fairplex to help care for more than 40 horses displaced by the fires who are in temporary housing at the Fairplex stables. Pictured is Schempp just after feeding and watering "Chrissy," who seemed to like having her picture taken by La Nueva Voz after her long ride out in a trailer.



AND A BLANKET FOR MY DOG -- An unidentified resident in need of a place to stay because of the wildfires checks in at a Red Cross temporary emergency shelter in Building 5 at Pomona's Fairplex and asks a Red Cross volunteer for a blanket for himself and one for his dog, along with a supply of dog food. An Inland Empire Humane Society employee, at rear, looks on as he sets up temporary kennel cages just outside Building 5.

Pomona City Hall so far has been the Eaton Fire (Eaton Canyon in the Pasadena / Altadena area), which La Nueva Voz maps show is 36 miles away by freeway.

But in Pomona, where countless residents have friends and relatives throughout the region who have been seriously affected by the devastation, Fairplex once

again opened its doors to help – providing a safe space for people, small pets and even horses displaced by the fires.

Officials with the American Red Cross Los Angeles Region announced two days after the fire broke out that they were opening seven emergency shelters from

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Martin Luther King... from pg. 1

generation to continue to care for the condition of society and to pass the baton to the next generation.

“Unfortunately, a lot of people in my generation dropped it (the baton) and I’m here to put it back,” she said, adding that she stands “very firmly on the shoulders of Dr. King as do so many of us.”

And, she said, speaking as an educator and an activist, she believes it is important to honor today’s youth as the MLK Jr. Project does each year with awards based, among other things, on an essay competition, this year on the theme “What Is Your Life’s Blueprint.”

“So often we are in audiences, and we have normalized the absence of our youth,” DeGruy said.

She cited the writings of author and Pulitzer Prize winner Isabel Wilkerson, who wrote of the racial hierarchy in the United States, pointing to recent generations claiming they had nothing to do with the nation’s racial division, calling them “the sins of the past” and arguing that “their ancestors never fought with indigenous people and never owned slaves.”

“Our immediate ancestors may have had nothing to do with this but here we are, the current occupants of a property that is stress cracked . . . we are the heirs to whatever is right or wrong with it,” DeGruy said, using an analogy comparing societal condition to an aging house.

“We did not erect the uneven pillars . . . but they are ours to deal with now, and any further deterioration is in fact on our hands,” she



Dr. Joy DeGruy

added. “The . . . cracks will not fix themselves, the toxins will not go away.”

Continuing the analogy, she said when people live in an old house, they begin to adjust to the idiosyncrasies of an old structure.

“The awkward becomes acceptable and the unacceptable becomes merely inconvenient,” she said, adding that if people live with it long enough, “the unthinkable becomes normal.”

“Very often we start embarking on discussions about justice,” she said, “the very thing that our dear brother Martin Luther King gave his life for.”

She challenged those who claim they were not involved in the nation’s history.

“What are we but a constant reminder of our past,” she said.

DeGruy took the audience on a “visual journey” at nighttime as they were driving along a road and saw ahead blinking lights and beyond the lights yellow tape with three young men on their knees



This year’s MLK Jr. Project Youth Social Justice honorees are, from left, Harvey Swodeck, sophomore, Citrus College; Skyla Ho, 12th grade, Garey High School; Nathan Gonzalez, 12th grade, The School of Arts and Enterprise; Naomi Ahuchogu, 12th grade, Chaffey High School; Jason Troung, 10th grade, Garey High School; Guillermo Meza, 10th grade, Garey High School; Daniela Rodriguez, 12th grade, Pomona High School, and Tiffany He, 12th grade, Pomona High School.

with their hands handcuffed behind their back.

And she asked members of the audience what they saw.

“I don’t think we saw three blond-haired, blue-eyed boys on their knees with their hands handcuffed behind them – you saw brown and black boys,” she said. “It is that image that is seared into every one of us good people’s mind.”

“Regardless of how good you are, how well educated, how well spoken, how often you attend religious services, those images have been deliberately seared into your consciousness . . . so you will know who to fear, you will know who deserves punishment,” she said.

And she added that it was King who stressed the importance of “you knowing who you are, you

honoring who you are.”

“I believe that when people know better they can do better,” she said.

She cited a news story of a 16-year-old Mississippi boy who saved three girls and a police officer from drowning in a local river after their car started to sink.

“But we don’t see his picture . . . but I would submit to you that there are more people, black and brown, like him than the three on their knees (with) handcuffs behind them,” she said.

Then why does the public not see these images, she asked.

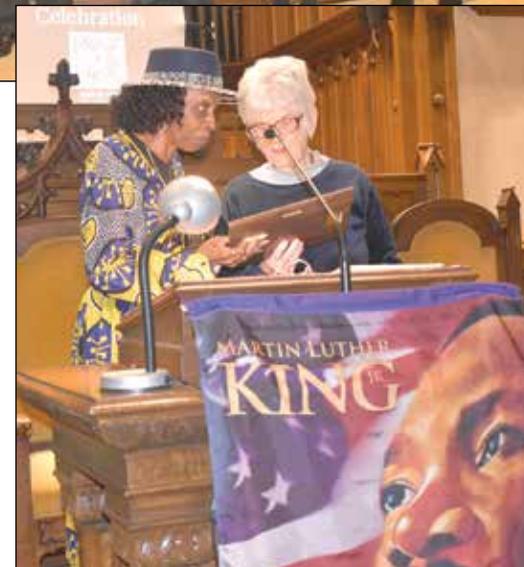
“We have to create the images, we can’t wait for someone else to do it,” she said.

DeGruy said she remembers reading writings of the Baha’i faith when she was younger.

“Whether peace is to be reached only after unimaginable horror is precipitated by humanity’s stubborn cling to old patterns of behavior or is to be embraced now by an act of consultative will is the choice before all who inhabit the earth,” she read.

“It is our choice, I will not hit the tape in this race, I am going to pass it into abler hands in hopes that not only will you hit the tape but that you’ve got to first know that you’re in a race,” she told the students.

DeGruy’s career over the past



Pomona Inland Valley MLK Jr. Project Treasurer Gayle Claiborne, at left, presents this year’s Zennie Cummings award to Rev. Ellen Livingston.

30 years has included work in the field of social work with an emphasis on the impact of racism, trauma and slavery on African Americans.

For more than two decades, she served as an assistant professor at Portland State University’s School of Social Work, and she authored the book “Post traumatic slave syndrome: America’s legacy of enduring injury and healing.”

Youth social justice awards honorees recognized Sunday were Naomi Ahuchogu, of Chaffey High School; Harvey Swodeck, of Citrus College; Nathan Gonzalez, of Pomona’s School of Arts and Enterprise; Skyla Ho, Jason Troung and Guillermo Meza-Silva, all of Pomona’s Garey High School; and Tiffany He and Daniela Rodriguez, both of Pomona High School. Each received an award varying in amounts from \$1,000 to \$2,500.

Rev. Ellen Livingston was the recipient of this year’s Zennie Cummings award, which recognizes continuous commitment to today’s youth and their work in social justice in the community.

Claremont Symphony offers free ‘Concert for Young People’

The Claremont Symphony Orchestra will present on Feb. 1 its annual free “Concert for Young People,” a one-hour performance, featuring soloists on the cello and piano who won the

Claremont Youth Symphony Orchestra’s 2024 “Concerto Contest.”

Performances will begin at 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 1, at the Bridges Hall of Music, 150

Kennedy Austin Foundation announces 2025 class schedule

Pomona’s non-profit Kennedy Austin Foundation has announced its 2025 schedule of free classes and groups in areas enabling families to help families heal after experiencing the loss of a child or having a loved one confronting a mental health crisis.

“Grief and loss: The five stages of grief” will be held from noon

to 2 p.m. every second and third Tuesday and Wednesday.

“Anger management: Knowing your triggers” will be held from noon to 2:30 p.m. every Saturday.

“Domestic violence self-awareness,” a group for women only, will be held from 5 to 6:45 p.m. every Thursday.

E. 4th St., on the Pomona College campus in Claremont.

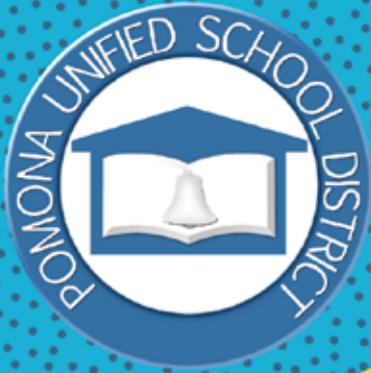
Doors will open at 3 p.m.

For information, visit www.claremontso.org or call (909) 596-5979.

“Creating space” youth groups will be held from noon to 3 p.m. every first and third Saturday.

And “Write the wrongs” journaling group will be held from 2 to 4 p.m. the fourth Saturday of each month.

All classes are held at 2040 N. Garey Ave., Pomona. For information, call (951) 475-0742



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Westwood to Pasadena and beyond – including a shelter at Pomona’s Fairplex – for residents seeking shelter, food, water, and health and emotional support.

The 24/7 multilingual Red Cross “Disaster Distress Helpline” is (800) 985-5990.

Help is available for locating a missing loved one or help finding a shelter at (800) RED CROSS (733-2767) or at redcross.org.

The fully staffed Red Cross shelter at Fairplex – with food, water, cots, blankets and facilities inside – is located in Building 5 on the Fairplex campus.

Eva Thiel-Maiz, representing Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Chair Pro Tem Hilda Solis, has been on scene helping to coordinate activities and provide support. Solis also visited the facility as operations got under way.

A covered Inland Empire Humane Society temporary kennel for small animals – complete with 35 individual cages (but a spokesperson said they can handle “as many as they bring us”) – has been constructed just outside Building 5 to care for animals until they



Rows of cots were already in place and, in some cases, already being used soon after the Red Cross emergency shelter at Pomona’s Fairplex opened for business.

can be transferred to the organization’s Pomona location.

And some 40 displaced horses are temporarily being cared for and fed by volunteers in Fairplex stables including Dan Schempp of El Segundo who initially volunteered with the Red Cross in Pasadena where he learned there was a need in Pomona. A Fairplex spokesperson said the facility has room to house a total of 150 horses, and horse owners are able to come in around the clock to feed and check on their animals.

God’s Pantry of Pomona provided pallets of bottled water for those at the Fairplex emergency shelter and volunteers caring for the horses. Their four-member team also drove to East Los Angeles to drop off additional water supplies there who had been impacted by an extended power outage.

Supervisor Solis announced on the day after the fires broke out that her



Eva Thiel-Maiz, at right, of the office of Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Chair Pro Tem Hilda Solis, who is helping oversee operations at the Red Cross emergency shelter at Fairplex, chats with Christian Maginn, of Red Cross Disaster Services, Northern California Coastal Region, who was helping out at the facility.



Eva Thiel-Maiz, at right, representing Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Chair Pro Tem Hilda Solis, and Barry Gillies of Fairplex chat with a volunteer outside the Red Cross emergency shelter at Fairplex.



Inland Empire Humane Society employees set up cages with pads for pets displaced by the the wildfires at the Pomona Fairplex emergency shelter.



Extra cots for the Fairplex emergency shelter were unloaded in Building 5, stacked up and ready to go as needed.

board has declared a state of emergency “in order to mobilize aid and support for residents and families affected by these fires.”

Gov. Newsom also proclaimed a state of emergency and issued an executive order to support communities affected by the fires. President Biden followed by declaring a “major disaster,” making it possible for businesses and residents to become eligible for federal programs “based on the unique damage and extent of impacts incurred locally,” according to a news release from Gov. Newsom’s office.

“My office is working closely alongside our county departments, cities, state and federal partners across all jurisdictions to ensure we are acting swiftly to meet the moment and responding to the needs of our residents,” Solis said in a news release.

“I am wishing all those injured, displaced or otherwise impacted by this fire safety at this time,



God’s Pantry of Pomona workers were driving around dropping off water as emergency shelters were setting up to help with residents displaced due to the wildfires. Pictured in the truck at Fairplex is God’s Pantry employee “Chava,” handing a case of water to God’s Pantry Operations Director Sergio Basterrechea. They were part of a four-member team on the project, leaving water at the emergency shelter and the stables at Fairplex before heading to an East Los Angeles shelter where food, water and clothing were being distributed to residents impacted by wildfires and power outages.

and would like to express my deepest gratitude to our first responders, Los Angeles County Sheriff’s and Fire Departments, community partners who have shared their own resources and shelters for impacted

residents and animals, and volunteers for coming together at this critical time,” she added.

Solis also thanked Gov. Newsom and the Biden-Harris admin-

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Two horses evacuated from the Southern California wildfires to the stables at Pomona’s Fairplex had a suspicious eye on the La Nueva Voz camera as they had their picture taken while getting used to the new and temporary surroundings.

Free Cal Poly program helps match students with employers

Attention all businesses and employers!

Looking for employees?

A new Cal Poly Pomona program called “Project Link” might just be able to take care of all your hiring solution needs, all at no cost.

Their spokesperson spoke this month to members of the Pomona Chamber of Commerce in Downtown Pomona, explaining that the program is collaborating with all clubs, organizations, fraternities and sororities encompassing more than 3,500 students.

Caleb Garcia, of the Cal Poly Bronco Leadership Center, said it all starts with knowing what you want and describing it on a special web site as specifically as possible to create an effective job posting, using tools very similar to Facebook.

And he said the benefits are many – businesses will have access to emerging talent with fresh perspectives, and college students can provide assistance on short-term projects, typically lasting between two and eight weeks, like marketing campaigns, data analysis, product development, community outreach and more.

In addition, he said many projects can be completed at minimal cost with options for stipends or funding, and by building relationships with future workforce leaders by working directly with skilled students, giving businesses a pipeline for future hires.

The bottom line, Garcia said, is the program helps employers streamline their recruiting process, and it gives students a taste of “real world” needs of businesses.

Not sure Cal Poly has the talent you are looking for? Just to

put it in perspective, the College of Engineering has 5,994 undergraduates, and is ranked number two in the U.S. in computer engineering, number three in civil engineering, and number five in aerospace engineering.

The College of Business Administration has 5,107 undergraduates enrolled, and is ranked



Caleb Garcia
Cal Poly Pomona

number three in the country in bachelor’s degrees earned by Latino students in business administration, management and operations.

And the Collins College of Hospitality Management is ranked number four for top hospitality administration/management degree producer for minorities in the U.S. It has an undergraduate enrollment of 609 students.

Cal Poly Pomona has an enrollment of 26,415 students, 93 percent of them are enrolled in undergraduate programs, 70 percent receive financial aid and 55 percent represent the first generation in their family to attend college.

The university offers more than 100 academic programs.

For more information or help with job postings and connecting with college students, contact Garcia at calebgarcia@cpp.edu or call (909) 869-4048.

Assemblymember Michelle Rodriguez named Assistant Majority Whip

Pomona’s new Assemblymember Michelle Rodriguez, sworn into office in Sacramento on Dec. 2 to represent California’s Assembly District 53, has been appointed by Speaker of the Assembly Robert Rivas to serve as Assistant Majority Whip for the 2025 legislative year.

The appointment was one of 42 Assembly committee chair appointments and nine leadership and floor team appointments announced by Rivas in a news release last month.

“Californians expect us to deliver practical solutions that improve everyday life, like building more housing for families and lowering energy costs,” Rivas said. “I look forward to working with the Assembly’s new leaders to chart a path forward that renews opportunity and innovation in our state.”

“I’m proud our Assembly boasts the greatest number of



Assemblymember Michelle Rodriguez

women legislators and committee leaders in California history,” Rivas added.

Traditionally serving as assistant leaders, whips are mainly responsible for counting heads and

rounding up party members for votes and quorum calls. They occasionally stand in for the majority or minority leaders in their absence.

Before “whips” became common in the U.S., they were used in parliament in the United Kingdom. Parliament derived the title of whip from fox hunting. When hunting foxes, it was the job of the “whipper in” to keep the fox hounds in order while on hunting expeditions, an idea that translated easily to politics where whips were appointed to keep their party members focused and in line when it came to voting on important measures.

Rivas represents California’s 29th Assembly District, which includes San

Benito County and portions of Monterey, Santa Cruz and Santa Clara Counties. He was first elected to the Assembly in 2018 and took the oath of office as Speaker of the Assembly in June 2023.

Air quality district proposes outlawing gas furnaces, water heaters

Board members of the South Coast Air Quality Management District, Southern California’s stationary source air pollution control agency, will hold a public hearing May 1 at its headquarters in Diamond Bar on a package of proposed amendments to existing rules that may prohibit the sale or use of gas-fired water heaters and forced air units in their four-county service area.

Similar efforts to eliminate the use of residential and commercial natural gas were proposed in 2019 by the California Public Utilities Commission and opposed by So Cal Gas, based on Senate Bill 1477, although PUC officials pointed out at the time that the legislation authorized only “pilot” programs that would be entirely voluntary.

The proposed SCAQMD rules update, however, would require a phasing out of gas appliances altogether, resulting in significant expenses for both new home buyers and existing homeowners who would be required to retrofit their appliances.

Amendments to existing SCAQMD Rules 1111 and 1121 would require landlords, homeowners and businesses to replace

furnaces and water heaters with expensive “zero emission” electrical units in an effort to reduce oxides of nitrogen emissions from the gas burners, one of the ingredients of Southern California air pollution.

Replacement units after Jan. 1, 2027, will have to be electrical units – it will be illegal to purchase or install gas units.

Do we have your attention yet? If so, the public hearing will be held in the SCAQMD auditorium, 21865 Copley Drive, Diamond Bar.

Public comment will be possible “in person” at the meeting, as well as through videoconferencing and by telephone.

For information on how to participate, visit the SCAQMD web site at www.aqmd.gov/home/news-events/meeting-agendas-minutes.

The “zero emission” limits, according to the SCAQMD’s notice of public hearing, will apply “at natural appliance replacement,” with a later implementation date for mobile homes and high-altitude commercial and residential buildings.

Rule 1111 was adopted by the SCAQMD in 1978 and amended in

2009 to lower the NOx emissions limit for gas furnaces from 40 to 14 nanograms per Joule (ng/J).

Rule 1121, also adopted in 1978, was amended in 1999 to reduce NOx emissions in water heaters from 40 ng/J to 10 ng/J.

According to the SCAQMD’s “executive summary” of the rule amendments, the changes would affect the manufacturers, distributors, retailers, resellers, and installers of space and water heating systems that are used in more than five million buildings, mostly residential homes.

Staff reports estimate the two rules combined would reduce NOx emissions by 10 tons per day, apparently a relatively small reduction compared to widespread financial impact on owners and residents of five million buildings.

Interestingly, as only one example, based on a few minutes of online research by La Nueva Voz, the California Air Resources Board, generally responsible for mobile source emissions, has documented NOx emissions from ocean-going ships anchored in the Los Angeles harbor or just offshore increased that same 10 tons per day on av-

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Local 'trafficking' victim who escaped from the lifestyle tells Project Resilience she now serves as advocate and mentor

"Survivor" speaker Jessica Gonzales, who grew up in San Bernardino, became a human trafficking victim in Las Vegas, and worked as a prostitute on the street in Pomona and other communities for four years, managed to change her direction, become a licensed vocational nurse and today is serving as an advocate and mentor for other women going through the same thing.

Gonzales was speaking to a full house at Pomona's Fox Theater this month at the third annual "Call to Action for Human Trafficking Awareness Day," sponsored by Project Resilience and the non-profit Every One Free, both based in Pomona.

"I am not just a survivor – I am a granddaughter, I am a daughter, I am a niece, I am a cousin, and I am a sister," Gonzales said, thanking everyone in the room working in the community to support the cause.

"You guys are the real heroes in our community," she said. "I'm not just a survivor, I'm an over-comer. I'm so grateful to be here."

Gonzales said she grew up in a "good middle-class family" and that while "every family has its struggles," she grew up in a home with her grandmother since both of her parents were addicts.

She said while she watched both of her parents get over their addictions, "I come from a hard working grandmother who worked two jobs and went to school and took care of kids that she didn't have to take care of."

"I come from a lot of people who were just doing the best that they could," she said, but that a lot of her "vulnerabilities" were from feeling like the black sheep in the family.

As she grew older, she said, she had a lot of resentment, no self-esteem, no love for herself, and "was looking for love in all the wrong places."

She said she was attracted to "chaos" and "to the kids who weren't always doing the right thing and didn't feel worthy enough."

"I carried those feelings with me through my childhood, through my teenage years and well into my young adult years," she said. Her older sister tried to take her under her wing and show her "the right things," so when she was 18, she

moved to Las Vegas, moved in with her sister, and found a job working on the strip.

However, the two got into a disagreement, and she moved out, ending up "couch surfing" with co-workers for about a month.

She told the group she got into the world of "fast money" with "people you really shouldn't be involved with."

"I didn't know too much about the world but I thought I knew everything, and when I hit that strip in Las Vegas when I was 18 years old, I ran into the right person at the wrong time, or the wrong person at the right time," she said. "I met a trafficker, he was nice looking, he was handsome, he had all the jewelry, he was wearing designer clothes, and in Vegas, that seems pretty normal, right?"

She said he saw all the needs she had unmet "and he found a way to convince me that he could meet all those needs."

So she gravitated toward his good looks, his nice car and his "penthouse in Vegas."

And, of course, she ended up being arrested – something that had never happened to her before – "and I was terrified," so much so that she cried "all the way back to the penthouse."

That was the beginning of her trafficking.

"I was sent to the strip, I was sent to the strip clubs, I was sent out of state," Gonzales said, adding that she knew that "wasn't what I wanted to do" and that "I knew I was way in over my head."

She actually called her mom who came to Las Vegas to "rescue" her.

"I left Vegas and I never looked back and I never wanted to go back there and it was scary," she said. She returned home but after only a few months learned her older sister, a student at the University of Las Vegas, was killed there in her apartment.

"I really didn't care about much in my life after that," she said, and



Jessica Gonzales



Stephanie Sepeda

she became addicted to various substances.

"I craved any feeling that would make me feel out of myself," Gonzales said, explaining that she got involved in the lifestyle of substance abuse, finding ways to get more, being around the people doing the same thing, and lifestyles of violence, gangs, drug dealing and prostitution.

She moved in with another man after knowing him for only a few weeks and after two weeks the conversation "turned south" – he told her "we're running out of money . . . and we need some money."

He put her out on the streets of San Bernardino and Pomona, and from San Diego to Los Angeles to Compton, Arizona and back to Las Vegas – "to all these places being trafficked by the man that I thought loved me."

"I've been arrested many times by Pomona Police Department," she said, calling it a "sad life" in which "you lose your idea and your perception of reality."

Gonzales said her mom figured out what was going on and told her she needed to get out of the lifestyle and go back to work, but she told her mom she was always going to be like this – "this is who I am."

That, she said, was until Oct. 29, 2021, the last day she was in the lifestyle, when she encountered three different incidents with customers in a two-hour time span on Holt Avenue.

"It was the worst day of my life," she said, and involved being locked in a car without handles, having gun shots barely missing her, and having another customer

Gonzales was rescued once again, this time after calling a friend with an anti-trafficking agency who herself had been trafficked who picked her up and took her to a shelter and found her housing.

"From that point on I never went back to the lifestyle," she said, although she did have trouble with alcohol and drugs but made a deal with the district attorney in San Bernardino County that charges would be dropped if she went into a program.

But her story continued – she moved to Florida to get away from her "boyfriend," realized she was getting back on alcohol and drugs and into the same cycle, and managed to get on an airplane back to California.

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La Nueva Voz

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<https://pomonaca.gov/ppl-digital-collections> and go to page 2 for La Nueva Voz.

Publisher: Jeff Schenkel

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

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

Layout & Design: Dora Cruz
dcruz1549@gmail.com

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“THE TIME
IS ALWAYS RIGHT
TO DO WHAT IS RIGHT.”

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s words remind us that the time to do what is right is always present, especially when faced with uncertainty. In times when our values are tested, it is our responsibility to take action and lead with justice and fairness.



Los Angeles County Supervisor

HILDA L. SOLIS

First District • Chair Pro Tem



Pediatric Care Close to Home

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CITY OF POMONA 2025 CLEAN-UP & COMPOST EVENTS EVENTOS DE LIMPIEZA Y COMPOSTAJE



Athens Services is offering **Pomona residents** a series of free compost giveaways and clean-up collection events for bulky items, electronic waste, and shredding services. These events will be held rain or shine and are for **Pomona residents only** (please bring ID, proof of residency, or a utility bill).

*Athens Services ofrece a los **residentes de Pomona** una serie de eventos de repartición de compostaje gratuito y recolección de limpieza de artículos voluminosos y desechos electrónicos, y servicio de trituración de documentos. Estos eventos se llevarán a cabo independientemente de las condiciones climáticas y son **únicamente para residentes de Pomona** (traiga su identificación, una prueba de residencia, o una factura de servicios públicos).*

📍 PALOMARES PARK
499 E Arrow Hwy, Pomona, CA 91767
• March 8, 2025 (Clean-up & Shred Event)
• September 6, 2025 (Clean-up & Shred Event)

📍 WASHINGTON PARK
865 E Grand Ave, Pomona, CA 91766
• April 26, 2025 (Clean-up, Shred & Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Event)
• October 4, 2025 (Clean-up & Shred Event)

📍 CITY YARD
636 W Monterey Ave, Pomona, CA 91768
* May 3, 2025 (Compost Giveaway)
• October 11, 2025 (Compost Giveaway)
ALL EVENTS ARE 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM



ACCEPTABLE ITEMS

Bulky items, carpet, electronic waste, broken furniture, mattresses, refrigerators, textiles, yard waste

ARTÍCULOS ACEPTABLES

Artículos voluminosos, alfombras, desechos electrónicos, muebles rotos, colchones, refrigeradores, textiles, desechos de jardín



NOT ACCEPTABLE

U-Haul trucks will not be accepted
Explosives, ammunition, radioactive materials, hazardous waste generated by commercial businesses, household trash, tires

NO ACEPTABLES

No se aceptarán camiones U-Haul
Explosivos, municiones, materiales radioactivos, desechos peligrosos generados por negocios comerciales, basura doméstica, neumáticos



Scan this QR code to learn more about Household Hazardous Waste (HHW), or visit CanIRecycleMy.com for more information



COMPOST GIVEAWAY

Athens' compost is a blend of organic materials, including green waste, wood waste, and food scraps.

- **Pomona residents only**
- Bring sturdy container(s)
- While supplies last (30 gallon limit first hour)
- No plastic bags or containers larger than 32 gallons (due to safety & weight concerns)
- Drive up only (no walk-ins)

DOCUMENT SHREDDING

Here's how to prepare your documents to be shredded:

- No limit on the amount you can bring
 - Please remove all plastic binders and binder clips
- After the documents are thoroughly shredded, the paper is recycled.



REPARTICIÓN DE COMPOSTAJE

El abono de Athens es una combinación de materiales orgánicos, que incluyen desechos vegetales, desechos de madera y restos de comida.

- **Solo para residentes de Pomona**
- Traiga contenedores resistentes
- Hasta agotar reservas (límite de 30 galones en la primera hora)
- No se permiten bolsas o contenedores que superen los 32 galones (debido a cuestiones de seguridad y peso)
- Solo acceso en vehículo (no se aceptan peatones)

TRITURACIÓN DE DOCUMENTOS

Le indicamos cómo preparar los documentos que desea triturar:

- No hay límite para la cantidad que puede traer
 - Remover las carpetas de plástico y los clips
- Una vez triturados los documentos completamente, el papel se recicla.

Participation in the event and all items accepted are at your own risk. It is the attendees' responsibility to practice safe lifting and take all protective measures to guard against injury or any other loss.

La participación en el evento y todos los artículos aceptados son bajo su propio riesgo. Es responsabilidad de los asistentes ejercer seguridad para levantar objetos y tomar medidas de protección para evitar lesiones o pérdidas.



2024 PROLOGUE

\$1,000 Lease Loyalty / Conquest Bonus*
 + \$1,000 Dealer Lease/Finance Bonus*
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2024 **ZDX** A-SPEC RWD 1-SPD AT

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\$4,999 due at signing

LEASE SPECIAL



ALL-ELECTRIC 2024 **ZDX**

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 909-484-8600

MONTCLAIR:
montclair-hospital.org/getcarenow



Montclair Hospital Medical Center
 Emergency Room
 5000 San Bernardino Street
 909-625-5411

SAN DIMAS:
sandimashospital.com/getcarenow



San Dimas Community Hospital
 Emergency Room
 1350 Covina Boulevard
 909-599-6811



Chino Valley Medical Center
 Montclair Hospital Medical Center
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TRUVEN HEALTH ANALYTICS

15 TOP
 HEALTH SYSTEMS



Latino & Latina Roundtable
of the San Gabriel and Pomona Valley

Save the Date

21st Annual Cesar Chavez Breakfast

March 28th, 2025
8-10 AM Pomona Fairplex

Join us to celebrate community champions and scholarship recipients.

For more information:
(909) 480-6267
info@latinolatinaroundtable.org



Latino & Latina Roundtable
of the San Gabriel and Pomona Valley

Social Justice Scholarship

Open to High School seniors and undergrad college students.

Scan to apply



Submit by:
February 28th 2025

For more information scholarship@latinolatinaroundtable.org 909.480.6267



Latino & Latina Roundtable
of the San Gabriel and Pomona Valley

PVWP
Pomona Valley Wellbeing Project

INSTITUTE FOR ECOLOGICAL CIVILIZATION

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- TIPS AND MOCK INTERVIEWS TO BOOST YOUR CONFIDENCE
- LEARN ABOUT WORKER'S RIGHTS AND HOW TO ADVOCATE FOR YOURSELF
- PERSONALIZED JOB RECOMMENDATIONS TAILORED TO YOUR SKILLS AND PREFERENCES

- ONE-ON-ONE SESSIONS TO HELP YOU FIND YOUR CAREER PATH
- PROFESSIONAL RESUMES THAT GET NOTICED

Join Here:  Heidi Carranza *Bilingual: English/Spanish
hcarranza@latinolatinaroundtable.org
909-542-5080



Latino & Latina Roundtable
of the San Gabriel and Pomona Valley

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Cantos que Sanan y Liberan

Taller GRATUITO para crear cantos, música y poesía en comunidad.

Regístrate hoy mismo



Iniciámos el 8 de Febrero
9:30 AM a 12:30 PM

Latino & Latina Roundtable
1460 E. Holt Avenue, Salón 5, Pomona, California
(909) 480-6267 info@latinolatinaroundtable.org

Pomona's new elected officials receive welcome from Pomona Chamber

Pomona's newest elected officials voted into office in the November election are excited about serving the city and representing the business community, according to their comments last week at a "welcome reception" hosted by the Pomona Chamber of Commerce at the Fuego by Metro Event Center in Downtown Pomona.

Pomona City Councilmember Debra Martin, representing Council District 1, emphasized her support for local business and thanked members of the business community "for staying strong in Pomona."

"I know we have a lot of battles to make," she said. "I'm here for all of you."

And Pomona City Councilmember Lorraine Canales, representing Council District 6, cited her business endorsement in the election.

"I do believe in the importance of working with our businesses because without businesses in our city, we won't have revenue," she said. "Without revenue, we can't fix our infrastructure."

"So, I want to thank all the businesses that are in Pomona," she added, "and hope that we can grow."

New Three Valleys Municipal Water District Director Jorge Marquez represents Division 6 on the Three Valleys Board, which includes North Pomona and small portions of Claremont.

The former mayor of Covina, former board chair of the San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority and resident of Pomona told Pomona Chamber members he has 18 years of water policy experience.

"Any questions about water I'd be happy to let you know about," he said. "We have a lot of issues going on about water. I'm sure you heard about water



Pictured, from left, front row, at center, are new Pomona City Councilmembers Debra Martin and Lorraine Canales posing for a group photo with Board members and ambassadors of the Pomona Chamber of Commerce. The Pomona Chamber hosted a welcome reception for newly elected officials last week in Downtown Pomona.

pressure issues that are going on in the canyons."

"We're actually your water wholesaler," Marquez said, explaining that Three Valleys provides supplemental water to the region.

New Assemblymember Michelle Rodriguez was in Sacramento and was unable to attend the event, and new Pomona Unified School District Board member Tamara Gonzalez was unable to attend due to an illness in her family.

Pomona Chamber Board Chair Nef Cortez, of Re/Max Galaxy in Diamond Bar, told the group the chamber is interested in staying engaged with its legislators – not only for the good of the business community but for the entire city.

The event provided Pomona's business leaders an opportunity to meet and connect with the

newly elected officials, to welcome them and to show them they have the support of the business community "on their journey to make Pomona an even better place to live, work and thrive," according to a chamber announcement.



Pomona City Councilmember Debra Martin



Pomona City Councilmember Lorraine Canales



Three Valleys Municipal Water District Director Jorge Marquez



PUSD School Board Member Tamara Gonzalez



Assemblymember Michelle Rodriguez

erage in December 2021 to a level of 30 tons per day from previous "spikes" of about 22 tons per day in October 2021 and 10 tons per day in February 2021.

And according to the SCAQMD's own 2022 Air Quality Management Plan (updates required by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency), NOx emissions from fuel combustion from

stationary sources in the South Coast Air Basin (factories and power plants, for example) was believed to be 20.1 tons per day in the 2022 plan, and 299 tons per day from on-road (156 tons per day) and off-road (143 tons per day) vehicles.

Of course, air pollution restrictions are nothing new in Southern California – the old Los Angeles

County Air Pollution Control District, one of four agencies that merged to form the SCAQMD in 1976, banned back yard incinerators in 1957 – early public information officers often said the agency banned all the "easy" sources of air quality emissions first.

Oral or written statements can be provided at the public hearing

(you'll have to submit 10 copies of all "hard copy" written materials to the Clerk of the Boards, South Coast AQMD, 21865 Copley Drive, Diamond Bar, CA 91765 or to cob@aqmd.gov before the hearing (time has not been announced).

For questions, comments or clarification, contact Jen Vinh, at (909) 396-2148 or e-mail jvinh@aqmd.gov.

Air quality... from pg. 5

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



Photo by Renee Barbee

'AMBASSADOR OF THE QUARTER' -- Pomona Chamber of Commerce Ambassador Tracy Evanson of Healed Women Heal was named "Ambassador of the Quarter" this month at the chamber's "Networking at Noon" luncheon at the "Fuego by Metro Event Center" in Downtown Pomona. Pictured, from left, are Chamber President and CEO Monique Robles, Chamber Board member and Ambassador Chair Ron Garner of Inland Empire Fence and Construction, and Evanson.

County supervisors vote to increase domestic violence awareness

Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors members this month unanimously approved a motion authored by Chair Pro Tem Hilda Solis and co-authored by Supervisor Lindsey Horvath to direct the county Department of Public Health's Office of Violence Prevention to create an awareness campaign and appropriate tools on domestic violence prevention.

Domestic violence in Los Angeles County, according to the 2023 "Report on the Status of Women in Los Angeles County," accounted for 22 percent of all domestic violence calls throughout California during 2020.

The 2023 Los Angeles County Health

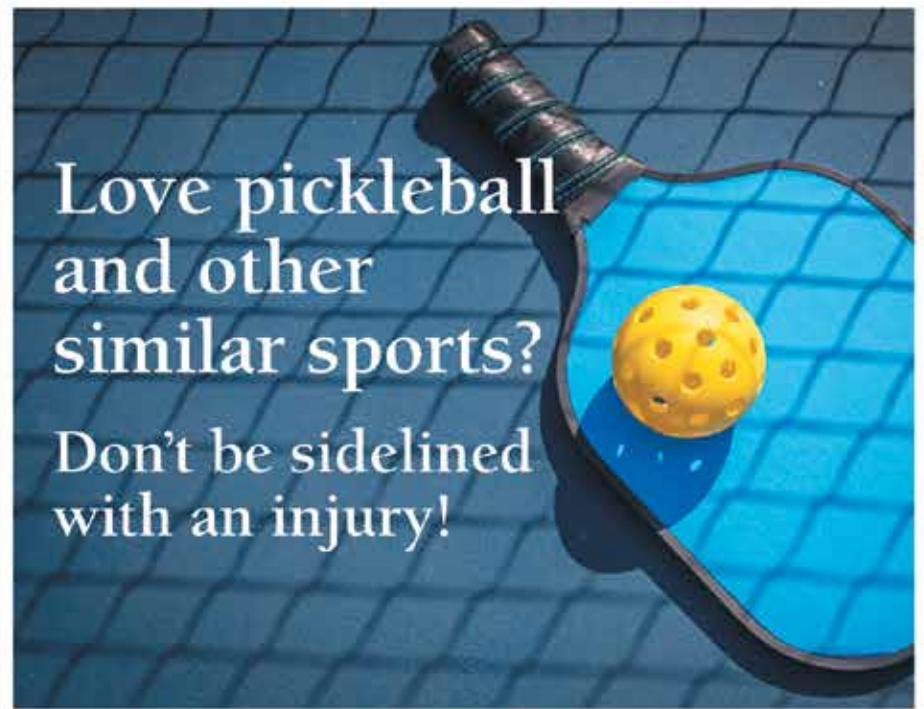
Survey indicated that domestic violence impacts women across races, ethnicities, and income levels. In addition, about one in four women report having endured sexual or physical violence from an intimate partner.

An estimated 5.7 percent of males report physical violence in the county, and 10 percent of men indicated having experienced sexual or physical violence from an intimate partner during their adult lives.

"I firmly believe that the county must continue to find ways to break the cycle of domestic violence and support our residents experiencing or recovering from domestic violence," Solis said. "One of the most

Domestic violence awareness... pg. 17

Free Community Seminar



Thursday, February 13 from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Casa Colina Hospital and Centers for Healthcare, Loverso Education Center, Building 1E • 255 East Bonita Avenue, Pomona, CA 91767

PRESENTED BY



**Benjamin Kamel,
DPM, FACFAS**
Foot & Ankle Surgeon,
Garey Orthopedics

Topics of discussion will include:

- Review of common pickleball and similar sports injuries including ankle sprains, Achilles tendinitis, plantar fasciitis, stress fractures, tendinitis, neuromas, and more
- Risk factors for foot and ankle injuries
- How to prevent injuries including demonstrations of dynamic stretching and selecting the proper athletic shoes
- Injury treatment and when to seek medical help
- Question and answer session

Three easy ways to register!

- Call 866/724-4132
 - Online at casacolina.org/communityevents
 - Scan the QR code
- Refreshments will be served and space is limited.



www.casacolina.org •





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Supervisors approve Solis motion to drop coroner's fees

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors this month unanimously approved a motion to permanently eliminate transportation and storage fees for removing the deceased from the place of death and transporting them to the county's Department of Medical Examiner.

Previously, the coroner's office required a transportation and storage fee of \$400.

"The last thing our residents

need to be worrying about is transportation and storage fees when mourning the loss of a loved one," said Board Chair Pro Tem Hilda Solis, who authored the motion. "The county is proud to practice compassion and equity by easing the financial burden of laying loved ones to rest with dignity."

An assessment by county officials showed the fees were disproportionately impacting low-income communities.

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

Please check our weekly listing at <http://www.lanuevavoz.net> and click on "Arrest Logs" on our home page.

La Nueva Voz Newspaper in Pomona, CA

The New Voice (La Nueva Voz), a Bilingual (English/Spanish) Publication. Pomona's Only Community Newspaper! Advertising with us is easy!

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NEW PHONE AND TECH SHOP AT POMONA WALMART -- Pomona Chamber of Commerce officials joined with representatives of the new Techy Pomona store for a ribbon-cutting ceremony this month to officially open the shop. Owner Jim Burke told La Nueva Voz the store was the second Techy franchise in California when it held its soft opening a month ago, and now the number has doubled. The company, based in Florida, started in a mall in 2006 and today has more than 200 locations in the U.S. and nearly 500 total with franchises in a total of nine countries. Pictured, from left, are Pomona Chamber President and CEO Monique Robles, Chamber Executive Board member Renee Barbee of La Nueva Voz; representing Techy are owner Tracy Allison, employee Ethan Zamarripa, owner Jim Burke, employee Robert Espinoza; Chamber Executive Board member Jeff Johannsen of Pomona Hope, and Chamber Ambassadors Tracy Evanson and Essence Guss of Healed Women Heal. Techy Pomona is located just inside the front door of Pomona's Walmart, at 80 Rio Rancho Road. The store sells accessories for cell phones, computers, tablets and gaming consoles, and offers same day repairs and installations with a lifetime warranty. For more information, call (628) 348-4448 or e-mail pomona@techycompany.com.

La Nueva Voz 'Top of Page One' stories for 2024

- January** City of Pomona and 12 partners receive \$22 million in state grants for local climate-based projects
- February** Anita Gutierrez (now Scott) named Pomona's first Latina city manager
- March** Pomona primary election results leaning toward re-electing mayor with three new councilmembers
- April** PUSD Assistant Supt. Fernando Meza, others, honored at Latino/Latina Roundtable Cesar Chavez breakfast
- May** Pomona Unified Supt. Darren Knowles – in 'State of the District' – says PUSD working to give students 'first-class education'
- June** Fairplex, Pitzer College receive top awards at 'Mayor's Gala' that nets \$50,000 for Pomona library
- July** Pomona's outstanding woman, veteran, business, educator of the year named at Freddie's final summer BBQ
- August** Pomona Chamber of Commerce announces awards, adds five board members
- September** Pomona school board candidate Alfredo Camacho linked by official documents to alleged check fraud scheme in defunct Pomona scholarship foundation
- October** Fire at the Ebell!
- November** Election results in two new Pomona councilmembers, one new school board member, and passage of Measure Y
- December** Pomona city councilmembers – including new faces – sworn in

Editor's Note: Complete stories are in the La Nueva Voz archives at www.lanuevavoz.net under "Past Issues."

FARMERS MARKET AT MT. SAC
EST. 2005

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WWW.REGIONALCHAMBERSGV.COM

Impacts of wildfire... from pg 4

istration “for responding quickly to our call for help.”

She urged everyone to assemble an emergency kit, charge devices, and check on neighbors.

Fairplex President and CEO Walter Marquez said the expo hall housing the Red Cross shelter will remain open as long as it is needed.

“Our thoughts go out to everyone affected by the fires in Los Angeles County,” Marquez said. “Fairplex is here to serve in any way possible.”

“Community benefit is part of our mission, and sometimes that means helping out in times of crises,” he added. “We have provided space, free of charge, to the American Red Cross for a shelter center and we are taking in horses displaced by the fires, as we have done with past fires in the area.”

“However we can help county and regional officials assist, we will do so,” he said.

In addition to the Red Cross shelters, assistance through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is available at eight libraries in Los Angeles County including La Crescenta, Temple City, San Gabriel and others where residents affected by the wildfires can receive assistance with submitting applications.

And residents directly impacted by the fires can request property and vital records free of charge to help with recovery efforts from the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk’s office at (800) 201-8999 or e-mail record-er@rrcc.lacounty.gov.

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health has issued a smoke advisory and “local health emergency” declaring unhealthy air quality due to the wildfires and urges everyone in areas where there is visible smoke or the smell of smoke or otherwise unhealthy air quality to avoid unnecessary outdoor exposure and to limit physical exertion.

Officials also said in the interest of protecting the public’s health, the use of power air blowers is prohibited throughout Los Angeles County until further notice as they stir up ash and particulate matter into the air, further worsening air quality and increasing health risks.

To support families impacted by the Eaton Fire, Los Angeles Coun-

ty Parks Care Camps officials are providing youth and teens with a supportive space for fun and recreation including music, arts and crafts, sports activities and field trips – with meals included – at five locations in the San Gabriel Valley.

Recovery resource information is available at recovery.lacounty.gov.

Firefighters were joining the effort from numerous surrounding states and even other countries, including at least 72 firefighters and emergency personnel from Mexico who arrived four days into the fire to augment the capacity of local efforts, according to Gov. Newsom’s office. County Fire PIO Fielding said other fire support has arrived from Canada.

“Emergencies have no borders – we are deeply grateful to our neighbors in Mexico for their unwavering support during one of our greatest times of need,” Newsom said in a news release.

He said they would join the state’s 14,000 personnel on the fire including firefighters, guard service members, highway patrol officers and transportation teams. Fielding told La Nueva Voz during “deadline week” last week that an estimated 8,500 firefighters representing all agencies involved were participating in the effort, mainly at the Palisades and Eaton fires. He added that was believed to be the highest combined number to date.

A hub of information and resources from state, local and federal government is available at ca.gov/lafires. And individuals and business owners who sustained losses from the fires can apply for disaster assistance in more than 40 languages at disasterassistance.gov or by calling (800) 621-3362.

Gov. Newsom also announced only four days after the start of the fire that he was doubling up on the California National Guard deployment – to aid in firefighting and public safety resources – with total personnel up to 1,680 service members.

The state also has provided more than 1,150 fire engines, more than 60 aircraft, more than 120 “dozers” and more than 100 water tenders to aid in putting out the fires.

He also took action to provide

state disaster tax relief for taxpayers and businesses affected by the fires.

In addition:

- Supervisor Solis held a resource fair in East Los Angeles to support those impacted by both fires and power outages.

- Tri-City Mental Health, serving Pomona, Claremont and La Verne, is collaborating with the American Red Cross and other agencies to provide emotional support for the victims of the wildfires as well as connect them to available resources. Contact Tri-City Mental Health at (866) 623-9500.

- The Assistance League of Pomona Valley, based in Pomona, provided donations they have received for those who have been displaced by the fires, along with hygiene kits, socks and more to relief distribution sites in Pasadena and, after learning of a need for meals, returned the next day with 57 hot meals for firefighters, volunteers and displaced residents.

- Pomona’s African American Advisory Alliance has collected numerous items for those displaced including clothes, blankets, water and other items.

- Los Angeles County Assessor Jeff Prang’s office is opening disaster relief centers in West Los Angeles and Pasadena to assist property owners experiencing loss of property in the wildfires who are entitled to property tax relief.

- The Credit Union of Southern California is offering relief options to those impacted by the fires and is committed to making up to \$1.25 million in interest free loans to those in the FEMA-defined fire areas.

- Wells Fargo is providing wildfires assistance to its customers and communities affected by the fires through its disaster response services staff at (800) 219-9739.

- The non-profit Jewish Free Loan Association, which has offered free loans to families of all faiths and backgrounds and businesses in need since 1904, is offering zero-fee and zero-interest loans to individuals, non-profits and small businesses affected by the wildfires in Los Angeles, Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties.

- The California Poison Control System is warning that smoke from the fires is creating a health hazard and urges those in fire areas to avoid outdoor activities, keep windows and doors closed tightly, and drink plenty of water to stay hydrated to avoid smoke inhalation symptoms like coughing, difficulty breathing and burning, irritated eyes.

- Climate attorney Jeffrey B. Simon, who believes human-driven climate change is fueling the Los Angeles wildfires, is claiming the fires are not merely natural disasters but the direct consequence of man-made climate change driven by the burning of fossil fuels.

- Metro has been suspending fares because of the fires (schedule of fare suspension subject to change) and some service has been adjusted or canceled.

- The Los Angeles County Department of Consumer and Business Affairs is warning businesses against illegal price gouging during the fire emergencies and urges the public to report suspected violations (officials said it is illegal to increase prices on essential goods and services including hotel rooms and emergency supplies by more than 10 percent).

- Gov. Newsom has issued an executive order protecting fire victims from opportunist and predatory real estate speculators making unsolicited offers on property in fire-ravaged communities and fast-tracking the creation of temporary homes for displaced residents.

- Walmart, Sam’s Club and the Walmart Foundation have announced a \$2.5 million commitment to support relief efforts, including donations of food, water, essential products and grants.

- The Honda family of companies in the U.S. is donating \$1 million in disaster relief funds to the American Red Cross to support those impacted by the wildfires, and both Honda Financial Services and Acura Financial Services are offering payment extensions and lease deferrals to customers

Impacts of wildfires... pg. 19

Put a Little LOVE in your Heart!!!

By Renee Barbee, Member
Compassionate Pomona

As we begin a new year, let us remember that Kindness, Love and Compassion make the world a much better place!

Be kind to others and spread that kindness to everyone you meet.

Let us live in the light of all that is good.

Compassion helps others in many ways.

Let us offer help to those in need.

Our focus and goals for this new year are love for one another, joy, happiness and good health!

Spreading Compassion is very important to a happy and healthy lifestyle!



Renee Barbee

Don't suffer silently through a concussion!

By David Patterson, M.D.

Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Physician, Concussion Program
Casa Colina Hospital and Centers for Healthcare

There is a common misconception that “nothing can be done to treat a concussion,” or that “only professional athletes get concussions.” Neither is true. In fact, people sometimes go years without a proper diagnosis.

It's true that roughly 80 percent of concussions “self-resolve,” and the overall prognosis for concussion is favorable. However, that leaves potentially one in five individuals diagnosed with a concussion who may be experiencing ongoing, life-altering symptoms. These can include vision issues, headaches, nausea, sleep disruption, and cognitive difficulties, to name a few. Concussions can make performing even the most mundane, everyday tasks seem difficult – let alone participating in the activities you love.

If you've been diagnosed with a concussion, or suspect you have one, and your symptoms won't subside, it's nothing you've done wrong. There is a significant variability among concussions and brain injuries – truly, no two are the same. So, if you're feeling like you should have recovered already but haven't, stop suffering silently and get the help you need!

There are more options than ever before for specialized concussion care. Many healthcare providers offer ImPACT (Immediate Post-Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing) or other reliable diagnostics to identify and develop a treatment plan for concussions. Based on the results of such tests, you may be referred to any range of services

or treatment modalities, including physical or occupational therapy to help with activities of daily living, neuro-optometry for vision issues, or neuropsychology for guidance through recovery.

Be sure to find a reputable program that uses evidence-based diagnostic criteria and rehabilitation techniques. Such service providers typically have clinicians on staff who possess specialty certifications in brain injury medicine, psychiatry (physical medicine and rehabilitation), neurologic rehabilitation, and more. There is also a range of specialized equipment to help patients with concussion regain function and independence, including balance machines, metronomes, and interactive touch-screen therapy devices.

No two bodies – and therefore no two recoveries – are the same. It's important to acknowledge that you are having symptoms of a concussion, and to understand that there are many effective ways to address this common condition. Don't wait. You don't have to “tough it out” after a head injury!

Editor's Note: Overseen by board-certified physiatrists, the Concussion Program at Casa Colina Hospital and Centers for Healthcare is dedicated to empowering individuals whose quality of life has been negatively impacted by a concussion or mild traumatic brain injury (TBI). For



David Patterson, M.D.

more information, or to schedule an appointment, call (909) 596-7733, ext. 3800.

Project Resilience... from pg. 6

On the plane she made a decision, that night was in a Narcotics Anonymous meeting, and hasn't used drugs or alcohol since Oct. 8, 2022.

A month later, she got into school, received her nursing license and now, three years later, “here I am” and “I'm so grateful.”

She encouraged everybody in the room to continue contributing to the cause and have the compassion to understand what these other people are going through.

Stephanie Sepeda, founder and CEO of the three-year-old non-profit Project Resilience, also once

a human trafficking victim, told the group that the organization is on a “mission.”

“I can't do this alone,” she said. “This is not an easy job. We are up to the task.”

“I'm very honored for those that support me because we're on a mission, just like Jessica, we believe that we are ready to make an impact and take the ground and the territory of the City of Pomona and we're not stepping back,” she added. “We're going to press forward and this is just the beginning.”

For more information, visit the web site at project-resilience.org.

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It's a fun way to improve reading skills.

Register at www.myf2b.com/register/pomona

footsteps2brilliance

La Nueva Voz is a proud member of PUSD's Literacy Collaborative.

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CHRISTMAS PARTY FOR CROSSROADS -- Members of Soroptimist of Pomona Claremont hosted their annual Christmas party last month for eight ladies in the program at Crossroads, which provides housing, education, support, counseling and employment readiness for women who have been incarcerated and are on their way to independence. Pictured at the Crossroads halfway house in Claremont are, from left, Crossroads Senior House Manager Linda Achterberg, Crossroads Executive Director Larissa Matzek, Soroptimist President Linda Chavez-Nunez, and Soroptimist members Gayle Claiborne, Jennifer Collaso and Amy Vega.



STOCKINGS FOR CROSSROADS -- All seven participants in the Crossroads re-entry program and one graduate of the program received a Christmas stocking filled with gifts, along with a monetary donation to assist with education or employment needs, last month at the annual Christmas party sponsored by Soroptimist of Pomona Claremont. Pictured, from left, are Soroptimists Liz Andrews and Diane Brockman; Kristy Lewis, a Crossroads graduate holding the stocking, and Linda Chavez-Nunez, Soroptimist President.

Optimists accepting applications, essays for annual 'Tea for Soul' event

Members of the Pomona Optimist Club are accepting applications for their 2024-25 "Tea Party for the Soul" essay contest with winners to be announced at the event March 27 at Pomona's Ebell Museum.

Winners will receive scholarships with amounts to be determined.

The annual event is held for young women of Pomona who will be attending college after high school. It focuses on preparing them for life after high school, the challenges

they will face in college and, for some, living away from home.

It is designed to provide special guest speakers providing valuable information to last a lifetime.

Each student receives a spring hat and pearls for the memorable luncheon.

Applications, essays between 300 and 500 words (typed and double spaced), a cover sheet and a letter of acceptance from a college must be received by 3 p.m.

Friday, March 7.

Applications are available at and completed documents must be submitted to the students' high school counselor and career center, and each high school will submit names of the winners who will attend the event.

Winners must be present to receive their scholarships.

For more information, contact Lorraine Canales at (213) 509-4980.

Domestic violence awareness... from pg. 13

important things we can each do is raise awareness amongst our communities to recognize the signs of domestic violence and connect loved ones to needed resources."

"Awareness is essential to preventing intimate partner violence – when we talk about it, validate survivors' experience, and center them in the support and care we provide, we can reduce its devastating im-

portant things we can each do is raise awareness amongst our communities to recognize the signs of domestic violence and connect loved ones to needed resources."

impact on our communities," Horvath said. "With this education campaign, Los Angeles County will ensure survivors know they are never alone."

The motion directs the Department of Public Health's Office of Violence Prevention to work with the Department of Mental Health and the Los Angeles County Office of Educa-

tion to create a toolkit on raising domestic violence and expand on existing resources.

It also directs the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department to report back with a feasibility study on options to better partner and develop a coordinated response to the needs of people experiencing domestic partner violence, their families and abusers.

Foothill Gold Line segment from Glendora to Pomona reaches 'substantial' completion

The Foothill Gold Line Construction Authority announced this month that the \$1.5 billion, four-station 9.1-mile Foothill Gold Line light rail project from Glendora to Pomona has reached substantial completion on time and on budget after breaking ground five years ago.

The project included design and construction of the four new light rail stations and associated multi-modal parking facilities, the new light rail systems including track, power, train control, communications and safety equipment, nine miles of relocated freight track that previously sat in the middle of the now-shared rail corridor, 19 bridges, 21 crossings, and 10 miles of decorative sound and retaining walls.

Reaching "substantial completion" means that the Foothill Gold Line from Glendora to Pomona – which is adding new Metro A Line stations in Glendora, San Dimas, La Verne and Pomona – is now ready to be turned over to Metro for final testing, training of operators and other crew members, emergency and safety preparations, pre-revenue operations and simulated revenue service, in addition to final approvals from the California Public Utilities Commission, according to a news release.

The milestone follows months of testing of the new systems and determination that the new exten-

sion is safe to operate. An opening date has not yet been determined but will be announced by Metro.

"Reaching substantial completion is an important achievement for the entire team at the construction authority, Metro, our contractors and our corridor cities," said Foothill Gold Line Construction Authority CEO Habib Balian. "We are proud to be the first light rail project funded by Measure M to have broken ground and to now be completed, and we look forward to handing the project over to Metro as they prepare to put the extension online later this year."

The design-build contract for the project was executed in October 2019 and major construction began in July 2020. Over the last five years of design and construction, the team logged more than 2.6

million work hours and completed the project with an excellent safety record, according to the news release.

Los Angeles County's Measure M half-cent sales tax provided the majority of funding for the project, along with nearly \$100 million of residual funds from the Measure R half-cent sales tax not used to complete the now-operational Pasadena to Azusa segment.

The final project segment will extend the light rail line from Pomona to Montclair, a 3.2-mile segment expected to break ground later this year and require about five years to build.

The original segment, from Union Station in Los Angeles to Pasadena, was completed in 2003 and the Pasadena to Azusa segment in 2015.

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ANNUAL NEW YEAR'S CELEBRATION AT PALOMARES -- It was time once again last month for the annual New Year's celebration for seniors at Pomona's Palomares Park Community Center. The party, actually held as a luncheon event the Friday before New Year's Eve, combined seniors participating in the city's lunch programs at both Palomares and Washington Parks. Everything was included from hats, noisemakers and bubbly beverages to a live disc jockey.

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, take the courage to drop me a message to know about you at oceandeeep158@gmail.com. I'm open to connecting with someone between the ages of 56 and 78, though I truly believe age is just a number.



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California Assembly delivers tough new property crime laws targeting organized retail theft that go into effect this month

Organized retail theft and dangerous “smash and grab” crimes have had a chilling effect on communities across California. But in 2025, new public safety laws passed by the California Legislature will go into effect, holding thieves accountable and protecting shoppers, business owners, and workers, according to a news release from Speaker of the Assembly Robert Rivas.

The Assembly delivered a major package of bipartisan, comprehensive new property-crime laws in 2024. These 11 laws were developed in collaboration with public safety, business, and community groups, and will provide additional tools to hold accountable people who profit from repeat theft. The laws also offer diversion pathways for those experiencing poverty or substance-use issues.

Labeled the “strongest property crime and retail theft laws in a generation,” the new package of laws provides:

- A new felony charge for people who repeatedly commit retail theft
- Allows law enforcement to aggregate stolen property across different locations and victims, to charge felony grand theft
- Establishes retail crime restraining order, for up to two years, to address vandalism, assault and theft
- Imposes sentencing enhancements, of up to four-plus years, for high value property theft or destruction, addressing “smash and grab” crimes
- Addresses the root causes of retail crime and theft by allowing for an extended cap for probation, requiring courts to look at underlying causes of theft, and encouraging diversion and rehabilitation for offenders who steal due to substance use

or poverty

Included on the list are:

- AB 2943 (Zbur, Rivas): Expands arrest for shoplifting, creates new penalties for organized retail theft, extends probation terms, and allows combining thefts to charge as grand theft
- AB 3209 (Berman): Authorizes courts to impose retail crime restraining orders
- AB 1779 (Irwin): Restores cross jurisdictional charging
- AB 1960 (Speaker Rivas): Addresses “smash and grab” crimes with new sentencing enhancements for high values of property damage
- AB 1972 (Alanis): Expands CHP property crimes task forces to support increased levels of cargo theft
- AB 1802 (Jones - Sawyer): Makes permanent the crime of organized retail theft and the operation of the CHP property crimes task forces
- SB 1144 (Skinner): Disrupts the sale of stolen goods on online marketplaces by requiring that third-party sellers be certified, and bans sellers suspected of criminal activity from operating through online marketplace platforms
- SB 905 (Wiener): Removes the locked door loophole for automotive property thefts
- SB 982 (Wahab): Cements the work California has done on organized crime by making the law on organized retail theft permanent
- SB 1242 (Min): Requires courts to impose higher penalties on criminals who create fires in order to engage in retail theft
- SB 1416 (Newman): Increases penalties on professional, organized retail theft, particularly for significant, large-scale resale schemes

Pomona's NAACP to hold annual 'Freedom Fund Program' next month

The NAACP Pomona Valley Branch will hold its sixth annual “Freedom Fund Program” next month from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 22, at the Double Tree Hilton Hotel in Claremont.

Theme of this year's program is “Moving Forward in a World in Discord!”

To register, contact the NAACP Pomona Valley Branch, (909) 620-0433 or e-mail president@naacp-pomona-valley.org.

Impacts of wildfires... from pg. 15

impacted by the fires.

- Mazda is donating \$100,000 split between the Los Angeles Fire Department Foundation and the Cal Fire Benevolent Foundation as an expression of gratitude, and Mazda Financial Services is offering payment relief options to customers in designated disaster areas.

- San Gabriel Pomona Regional Center in Pomona is collecting donations to support victims of the wildfires “in support of our individuals served and service pro-

vider community.”

- Members of the California Service Corps are deploying with YMCA Los Angeles to support families directly affected by the fires, with local YMCA centers becoming temporary evacuation sites (for donations, visit ymcala.org/actnow and to volunteer, contact ashleyberg@ymcala.org).

- The Braille Institute of America in Los Angeles has established a wildfire relief fund to aid blind and visually impaired individuals impacted by the Los Angeles



Photo by L.A. County Dept. of Public Works
EATON FIRE -- A Los Angeles County Department of Building and Safety employee “red tags” a home in Altadena last week.



Photo by Irfan Khan / County of Los Angeles
PALISADES FIRE -- Los Angeles County Fire Capt. Mark Lopez, at left, and Firefighter Nathan Ohara check last week for potential hot spots at a burned out home in Malibu.

fires.

- Hilton, American Express and 211 LA, an information hub for health, human and social services in Los Angeles County, have teamed up to provide hotel vouchers allowing those impacted by the

fires to stay at Hilton properties free of charge.

- Los Angeles County officials switched all local emergency notifications to the CalOES (California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services) alert system while

it went to work on resolving issues that resulted in erroneous emergency evacuation alerts intended only for residents of Calabasas, Agoura Hills and West Hills being distributed to nearly 10 million residents across the county.

Ontson Placide appointed executive director at Tri-City Mental Health

Officials at Tri-City Mental Health have announced the appointment of Ontson Placide as executive director of the public mental health authority providing outpatient services for residents of Pomona, Claremont and La Verne.

A veteran of more than 30 years’ experience in community behavioral health and social services, Placide assumed his new responsibilities last month.

He replaced Rimmi Hundal, who stepped down as executive director last year after 16 years with Tri-City to become chief deputy director for the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health.

Diana Acosta, Tri-City’s chief financial officer, served as interim executive director during a search for a permanent successor.

“Ontson brings to Tri-City a wealth of knowledge and experience in clinical work, community engagement, and policy development,” said Claremont City Councilmember Jed Leano, chair of the Tri-City Board. “His affa-

ble demeanor and understanding of the region are precisely what our three cities need moving forward in the Prop. 1 era.”

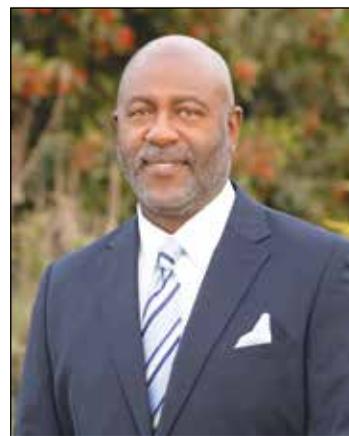
Proposition 1, a statewide ballot measure approved by voters last year, essentially revamps California’s mental health and substance use disorder system by, among other things, changing the name of the 20-year-old “Mental Health Services Act” to the “Behavioral Health Services Act” which now includes treatment of substance use disorders. The measure also expands services for which counties and the state can use funds. It authorizes \$6.38 billion in bonds to build mental health treatment facilities for those with mental health and substance use challenges and provides housing for the homeless.

“I am thrilled to embark on this journey as the new executive director for the Tri-City Mental Health Authority,” Placide said. “This role comes with immense responsibility and opportunity, and I could not be more excited to begin this path.”

He said he is enthusiastic about what he sees as a “vital role” that is “dedicated to fostering comprehensive mental health and wellness programs for our most vulnerable populations.”

“These communities are rich with diversity and resilience, and I am eager to collaborate with local organizations and stakeholders to enhance the well-being of our residents,” he added. “Together, we will implement effective and innovative behavioral health strategies that address the unique needs of our community and promote mental health awareness.”

“My commitment is to ensure that everyone has access to the support and resources they deserve (and) I look forward to creating impactful programs that



Ontson Placide

not only uplift individuals but also strengthen our communities as a whole,” he said.

Placide, licensed as a marriage and family therapist in California, has experience in both public and private/non-profit commu-

nity agency settings and actively participates in several community and county advisory councils, advocating for the well-being of adults, children and families.

He earned his bachelor’s degree in psychology from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and a master’s degree in clinical counseling psychology from Pepperdine University.

As the newly appointed executive director, Placide will provide strategic direction, coordination and support across Tri-City’s comprehensive system of care,

ensuring that the agency continues to meet the evolving needs of the community.

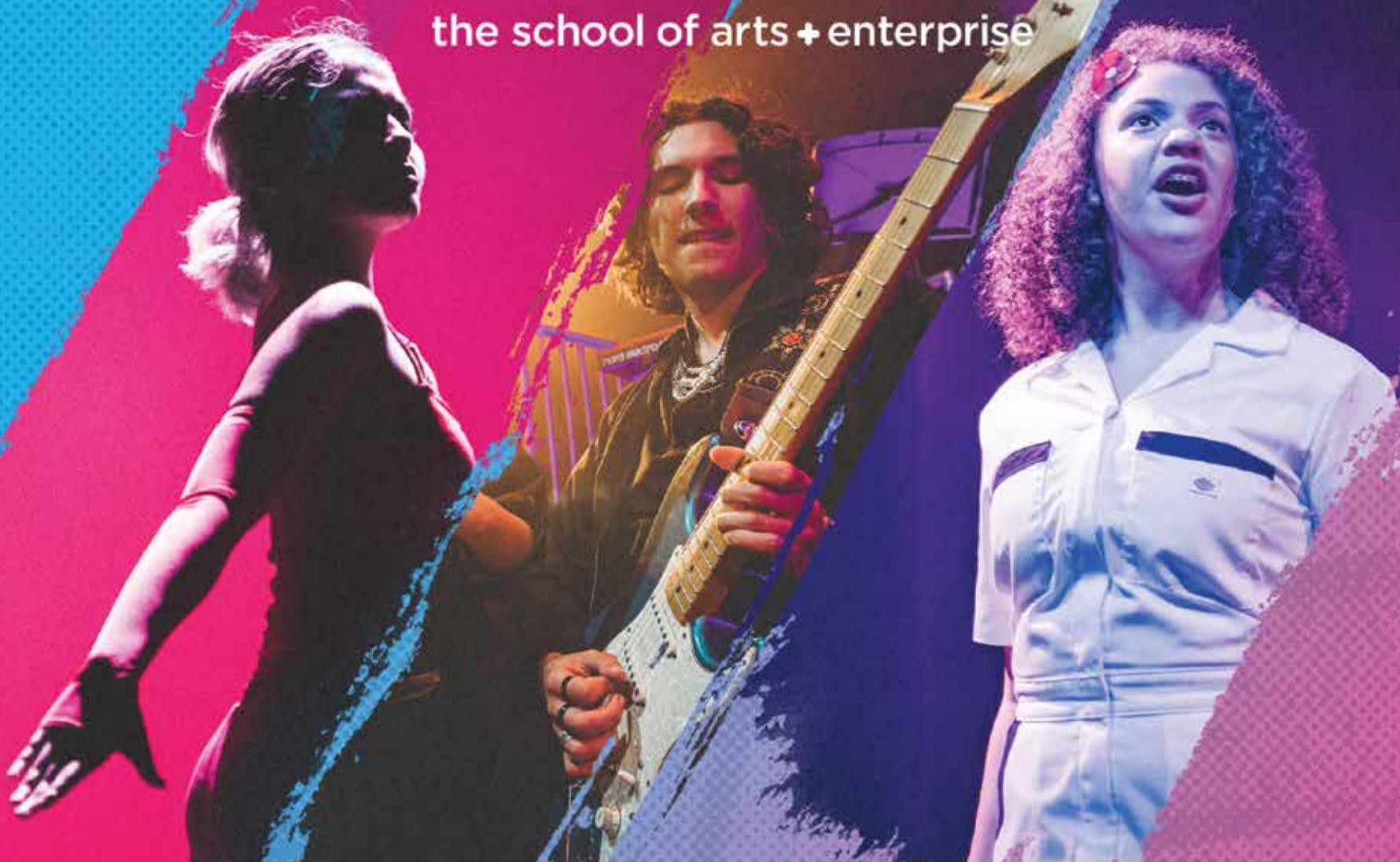
This includes a range of services that address mental health, wellness and recovery, including specialty mental health services, crisis support, clinical case management, medication support, prevention and early intervention services, supporting housing services and peer support.

He will oversee an agency with more than 200 employees and manage an annual operating budget of about \$40 million.

Tri-City has been the primary provider of public outpatient mental health services for residents of Pomona, Claremont and La Verne since 1960. Through a joint powers authority agreement between the three cities, the agency is committed to delivering high-quality, accessible mental health services for individuals of all ages and their families.

Tri-City supports a comprehensive system of care that strengthens the community’s capacity for healing, well-being and recovery.

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