

accolade

May 2025 | Volume LXV | Issue 4

Sunny Hills High School

1801 Lancer Way, Fullerton, CA 92833

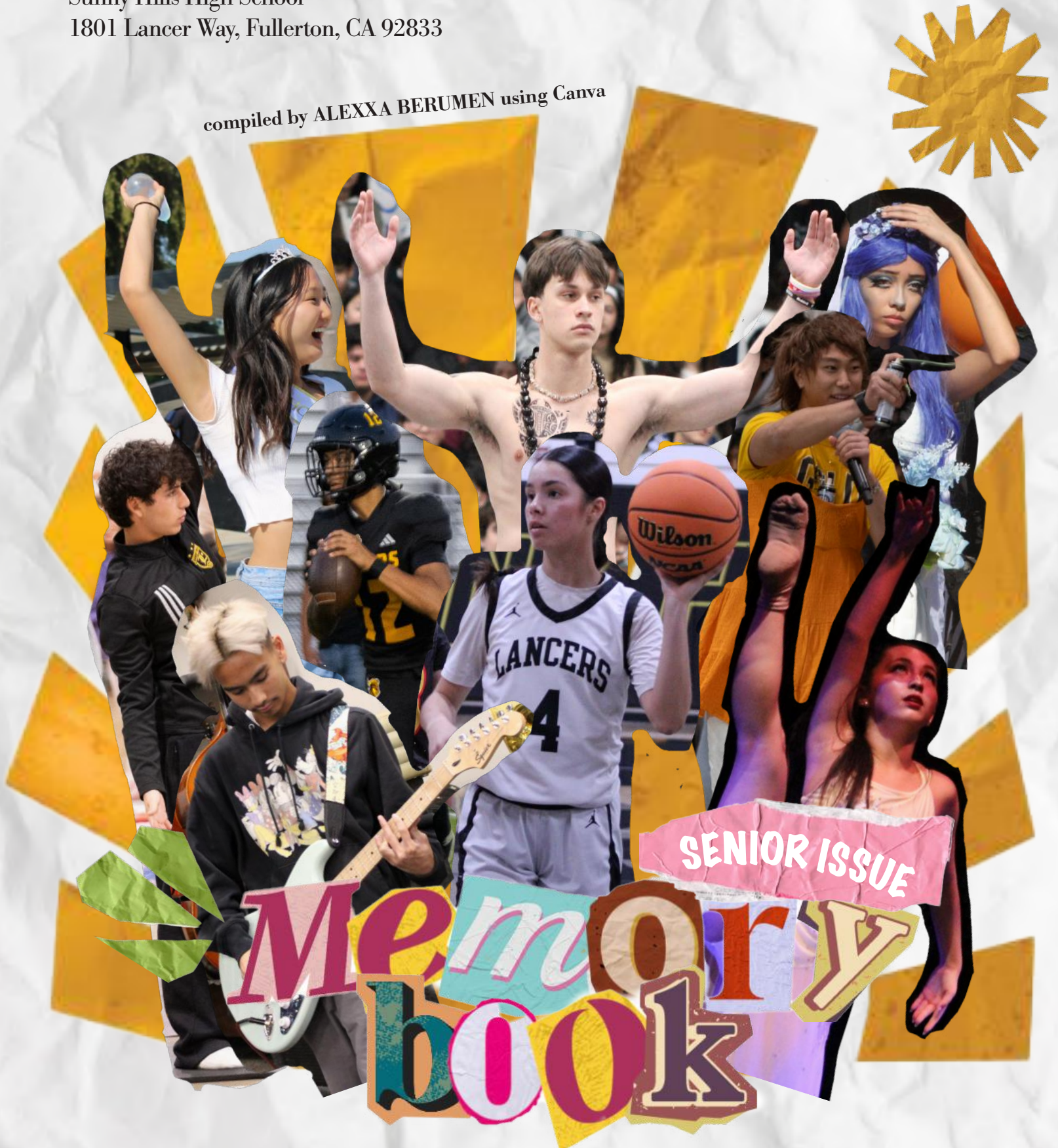
Don't be a Rotten Egg | pg. 5

Administration on high alert for this year's senior pranks

The End of an Era | pg. 16

Graduating 2024-2025 *Accolade* staff members leave their mark

compiled by ALEXXA BERUMEN using Canva





EDITOR'S NOTE

The final issue has arrived.

While I feel sad to leave my fellow Accoladians after three years of working in this publication, I am so proud of the legacy this year's staff will be leaving behind.

In my years here we have broken Pacemaker records and even became a School Newspapers Online [SNO] Distinguished Webiste — all “accolades” that I have come to pride myself on.

However, I am not the only gratudating staff member that would like to share my final thoughts. Within this “memory book,” each senior on our staff has written thier own note to the program (page 36) and our editors signed off with their last column for the publication alongside a treasured member of *The Accolade* (page 15).

The Class of 2025 has also had some incredible achievements as a whole, totaling 31 valedictorians (page 7) that are all attending some amazing universities.

Also signing off with this years seniors are nine teachers who are taking the FJUHSD's early retirement deal or the “golden handshake” (page 4).

As we approach the end of the year, the possibility of notorius senior pranks also becomes a reality and this years seniors should be warned (page 28) of the potential consequences — especially following the events of last years attempt.

Lastly, I want to thank all of our readers and our donors (page 29) for continuing to push us to reach our goals and allow our graduating class to make such a valuable impact. Thank you for believing in us.

Best,

Alexxa Berumen
Editor-in-Chief

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1)



Subjects: Physics, Earth Science

Marital status, family: Single


Education: B.S. in geophysics, University of California Riverside; M.S. in geophysics, Texas A&M University; teaching credential, Chapman University

Previous Employment: Physics teacher at a community college, geologic research assistant at Cypress College, field researcher at Chevron Oil, environmental geologist at IT Corporation

Hobbies/Interests: U.S. Masters Swimming, gardening, reading, listening to ham radio (Call sign: KE6BAQ)

Funny anecdotes while teaching: "I once electrocuted myself while teaching elementary school teachers."

2)



Jeff Gordon replaces his father as girls soccer coach

By Christine Sandoval

Landgraf said, "But any losses will only help to improve our league play."

"It looks like we are going to have a good season this year and will hopefully win league."


The Lakers lost five games—Michael Cunningham, Megan DeSantis, Jamie Gardner, Holly Hart, and Leah Russell—and placed juniors Jenny Partida, Leslee Love and Jamie Castillo.

Three of the five girls were defenders.


However, they gained freshmen Michelle Buckley, Sky Hernandez and Lia Main.

The Lakers travel to Pacific High Monday for their next match.

3)




4)




"I like to benefit society, and teaching is the best way to do that. I am teaching high school because high schoolers can work with theories and abstract thinking."

Greg DelCrognale, social science teacher

5)



6)




From mentoring in local churches to leading special centers for citizens in China, Bob Bradburn, a new addition to the Sunny Hills staff, boasts a wide range of accomplishments that may satisfy anyone's ambitious appetites.

Through his involvement at churches, social service centers and community centers for most of his adult life, Bradburn has shown that he has the power to teach.

But his role as the Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Economics teacher for three periods a day will be his first opportunity to help high school students.


Bradburn said a seven-year stay in China during which he took part in leadership training has given him the ability to understand the principles of economics.

7)



From her collection of Barbie dolls from around the world to her childhood background in Guatemala, Spanish teacher Veronica Deutsch has a lot of culture to bring to Sunny Hills.

8)




From mentoring in local churches to leading special centers for citizens in China, Bob Bradburn, a new addition to the Sunny Hills staff, boasts a wide range of accomplishments that may satisfy anyone's ambitious appetites.

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9)



photos 1-2, 4 and 6-8 from past Accolade issues introducing new faces to the campus; photos 3 and 5 from Helios

TENURED TEACHERS: After this semester ends, these faces will no longer grace the halls of Sunny Hills in the 2025-2026 school year. Shown in their first year on campus are: 1) science teacher Chris Peoples 2) social science teacher Jeff Gordon 3) English teacher Teresa McCarty 4) social science teacher Greg Del Crognale 5) English teacher Regina Boardy 6) math teacher Myra Deister 7) Spanish teacher Veronica Deutsch 8) social science teacher Robert Bradburn 9) see page 26.

Over 20% from Sunny Hills take early retirement incentive

story by KEVIN LEE

Sunny Hills for the next school year will experience a staffing change as nine teachers representing five academic departments will not return after accepting the Fullerton Joint Union High School District's [FJUHS] early retirement incentive [ERI].

"Normally, you don't get this many [retirements] at one time, but it's great for them, and I'm excited for them and what they have in store," principal Craig Weinreich said. "For us, it's a loss of a lot of tradition and

experience in our staff, and we are going to train the younger teachers to do what we do at Sunny Hills."

FJUHS officials first introduced the incentive, also known as the "golden handshake," to the school board November 2024 and explained to trustees how much money it could save the district if those at the higher end of the salary scale were to retire. Since they are also anticipating additional years of lower enrollment at each of the district's six campuses, they told trustees that offering

NOTABLE NUMBERS

43 Teachers in Fullerton Joint Union High School District [FJUHS] accepting early retirement incentive

9 Sunny Hills faculty retiring


2 FJUHS campuses with the most instructors retiring (Sunny Hills and Troy)

source: FJUHS document compiled by Kevin Lee and Irene Park

RETIREE ROLL CALL

The Accolade asks each instructor to answer these three questions:

- What year did you first start teaching at Sunny Hills?
- What will you miss the most about teaching?
- What are your plans upon retirement?




Robert Bradburn ●

1) 1999

2) "People are the most important part of my life, so it will be my students and my coworkers that I'll miss, for sure!"

3) "I'll be working for my wife's company as well as traveling, biking and assisting with public service projects in my community."




Regina Broady ●

1) 2016

2) "I will miss the 'Black and Yellow' song played at assemblies ... [and] the unforgettable students at Sunny Hills High School."

3) "I'll be working for my wife's company as well as traveling, biking and assisting with public service projects in my community."



Myra Deister ●

1) 1987

2) "Everyday interactions with students. Planning lessons to help students understand."

3) "Projects at home ... [and] applying for part-time jobs like supervising student teachers at Cal State Fullerton."




Greg Del Crognale ●

1) 1991

2) "The friendships that I have made with the staff."

3) "Moving with my wife to San Francisco to be closer to our children."




Veronica Deutsch ●

1) 2002

2) "Today, I will miss all the students I had this year. Some of them will graduate and others will continue. It was a great year with all of them."

3) "My plans are to enjoy my grandchildren and to travel."




Jeff Gordon ●

1) 1993

2) "I will miss working with all of the awesome students and athletes at Sunny Hills."

3) "I am looking forward to spending time with my family, staying active and healthy and learning new things."




Teresa McCarty ●

1) 1996

2) "I will definitely miss my students more than anything. I feel so much love from them every day that I am there."

3) "First and foremost, I am trying to get a medical diagnosis. So, working to get my health back is the No. 1 priority during retirement."



Chris Peoples ●

1) 1996

2) "Everything."

3) "I don't have any idea, so I'm not really sure what I want to do."

Compiled by

● Pricilla Escobedo ● Tommy Li ● Jiscong Yoo ● Jared Kim

such a deal would alleviate them from having to release recently hired staff.

Board members then unanimously approved the ERI with the condition that it would only go through if 24 or more teachers in the district accepted it by Feb. 7. To be eligible for the offer, instructors had to be at least 55 years old by June 30, 2025.

Upon accepting the deal, teachers had to choose which benefits they would take upon their retirement:

- 60% of their base salary as a single payment or split between July 2025 and January 2026
- 60% of their base salary toward medical benefits
- Two additional years of California State Teachers Retirement System service credit (doing this would mean instructors can't work in the district as a substitute or a teacher for five years)

After the deadline passed, district officials determined that a total of 43 submitted their requests for taking an early retirement, meeting the required number by nearly double the amount.

"I feel very fortunate because there are many factors that my wife and I considered," said social science teacher Robert Bradburn, who was hired here in 1999. "This was a good year for me to retire, so I feel very grateful for the [ERI]."

The social science and English departments have the highest number of retiring instructors with three from each. The other two social science teachers are Greg Del Crognale, who started in 1990 as a student teacher and was hired to teach full time in 1991, and Jeff Gordon, who began as an assistant coach for girls soccer before teaching a full load of classes in 1993.

Teresa McCarty is among the three in the English department who will not return this fall.

"I will definitely miss my students more than anything," said McCarty, who began her teaching journey at Sunny Hills in October of the 1995 fall semester. "I don't know if I will ever do anything that gives me the same satisfaction as working at Sunny Hills."

In the science department, physics teacher Chris Peoples is retiring after teaching since 1996.

"As the day nears, I get more nervous," Peoples said. "I love what I do, I like where I work, I like who I work with and I like my students; there are just a lot of complicating factors."

Spanish teacher Veronica Deutsch, who started in 2002, and math and computer science teacher Myra Deister, who was hired in 1987, round out the rest of the instructors retiring.

Some students feel concerned about the impact of the school losing so many long-standing educators.

"I was very surprised at first and a little concerned that maybe something was going on, as these are significant teachers we're losing," said junior Sophia Gentile, who first found out Bradburn was retiring during her second period International Baccalaureate Economics HL1 class with the teacher last month. "But I also had many of these teachers and recognize that, independently, they all have a lot going on in their lives."

Still, some look forward to the change as a new opportunity, such as sophomore Sydney Kim, who is in Deister's third period.

"I was surprised to see that she was retiring, but everyone needs to retire at one point," Kim said. "I believe that a lot of these new teachers will have big roles to fill, but I am still really excited that we get younger teachers, as these teachers can be more relatable."

To prepare for the loss of teachers, Weinreich said the district has already begun its search for many of the replacements.

"We are looking forward to having those [teachers] be a part of Sunny Hills, learning how we do things here and help continue the success we have had," he said.

RELATED STORY

COLUMN: Ninth retiring teacher bids farewell.

See Opinion, page 26.



For the full story, go to shhsacolade.com



photo by TOMMY LI



photo by AASHNA DIALANI

NEWS ANALYSIS

SENIOR PRANKS

Has the tradition gone too far?

story by ROSE PARK

May 24, 2024, was unlike most school mornings at Sunny Hills.

During zero and much of first period after that, instead of students being in their classrooms, most likely preparing for finals the following week, more than a handful can be seen in the quad.

A few — male and female students — wore blue gloves, the kind that custodians or those in the food industry would wear at their work place.

With those gloves on, they pushed heavy duty brooms with yellow handles against the moistened concrete in the quad.

They cleaned derogatory writings and drawings and picked up leftovers of toilet paper falling off trees in the quad. They scrubbed remains of eggs thrown at lockers and wiped away more offensive words on certain classroom windows or walls.

Then-junior Dante Rosete said his Advanced Placement U.S. History teacher, Chris Vogt, had offered his first-period class a deal many couldn't resist accepting.

"Our first-period teacher gave us the option to stay in class or help clean for some extra credit," Rosete said. "I was happy because I got free extra credit for an easy task."

Science teacher Mason Morris said he told his students about his concern regarding the senior prank and implored his zero-period students — most of whom were then-sophomore Associated Student Body [ASB] students — to help make the campus more presentable again.

"I felt that [the senior prank] was disrespectful to the students and staff of our campus," said Morris, who had his students return 15 minutes into the class period so he can continue with his planned lesson for the period. "When my students arrived for zero period, I gave them towels and rags to go throughout campus to erase anything inappropriately written."

NOTABLE CONSEQUENCES

Principal Craig Weinreich provided this list for pranks that go too far:

Legal consequences

- police involvement
- potential criminal charges
- environmental crime charges

School-related consequences

- loss of senior activities
- student fines
- disciplinary actions
- the class of seniors clean up the mess

compiled by IRENE PARK

Principal Craig Weinreich said it didn't just take one morning for the campuswide cleanup to be completed.

"It took all summer last year to clean up some of the stuff that was left over," Weinreich said. "It's not encouraged, it's not condoned, and there will be consequences [if it happens again]."

Nevertheless, the principal has opted not to issue any warnings ahead of time this last month of the school year for anyone considering a similar senior prank or to top the damage last year's antics caused.

"We have a very nice campus, and unfortunately, people are not creative in pulling a prank, and they come in and destroy something that they've been a part of for four years," Weinreich said. "I'm always optimistic that they'll make the right choice."

ASB adviser David Fenstermaker said he agreed, fearing that any discussion with students about what happened last year or what could happen this year would give it more attention than it deserves.

"When you're creative and original and funny, and it's fun, as long as it's not illegal,

it's usually OK," Fenstermaker said. "It's just a very dangerous game that you play when you are in a situation where you're doing actual [damage], because there's a monetary value at stake. ... When there's damage, you end up in trouble."

Other faculty on campus who are SH graduates have also been willing to speak to *The Accolade* about consequences past senior classes have faced because of their antics.

Math teacher and girls basketball head coach Jae Byun said his Class of 2010 suffered the loss of a pageant show known as Mr. Sunny Hills that recognized male seniors. The then-annual event was canceled because someone or some seniors poured oil on the hill road way leading up to the Performing Arts Center.

"It was a close friend of mine [who got caught], and I know that to this day he wishes it wouldn't have played out the way that it did; [he] got expelled and fined a substantial amount from the City of Fullerton," Byun said.

What happened to the campus last year has prompted some students to consider alternatives.

"I would participate in the senior prank event as long as the pranks are harmless and don't involve vandalism," junior Sarah Martell said.

Senior Hannah Saab prefers a humorous one that respects school property.

"I've talked with many students who also think last year's pranks weren't good, so hopefully ours are better and tolerated by the administrators," Saab said.

RELATED STORY

STAFF EDITORIAL: *The Accolade* warns seniors against destructive end-of-year pranks.

See Opinion, page 28.

|feature

thirtysomething

The Class of 2025 repeats last year's valedictorians in reaching 31 — 8 shy of the previous year's record



● Ian Cha
UCLA

psychobiology

Who is one teacher you look up to?

Mrs. [Cristian] Bueno; she made the class a great environment.



● Scarlett Chang
Brown University

history

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

Surrounded by people I love and people that love me.



● Elizabeth Choe
UCLA

applied mathematics

What is one of your favorite quotes?

"Good things will come to those who wait."



● Joyce Choi
UCLA

nursing

What do you want to tell your freshman self?

Everything's going to be OK; you're not a failure.



● Naomi Coulter
UC San Diego

biochemistry

What are you planning to do this summer?

Travel to Trinidad to perform and do an outreach program.



● Ethan Hsu
UC Irvine

biomedical engineering

What is your proudest moment in high school?

Getting first out of 79 teams at a Science Olympiad invitational.



● Faith Jung
UC San Diego

psychology

What about college are you most looking forward to?

Meeting new people, making lots of friends, being independent.

Compiled by:

- | | |
|------------------|---------------|
| ● Esther Ahn | ● Jared Kim |
| ● Bradyn Chiang | ● Gene Lee |
| ● Philip Cho | ● Amy Lim |
| ● Tatiana Galvez | ● Nicole Park |
| ● Leona Ji | ● Kaylee Won |
| ● Caleb Kang | ● Jiscong Yoo |



● **Sophia Kiker**
UC Berkeley
molecular environmental
biology

What subject was easy for you but hard for others?
Generally all the humanities.



● **Anabelle Kim**
Biola University
biology

What does it mean to be named valedictorian?
A pawn in the school's system — a successful pawn.



● **Angela Kim**
UC San Diego
physics

What's your biggest worry about college?
Finding good dormmates; I hope they're not too quiet, loud, messy.



● **Caleb Kim**
UC Berkeley
microbial biology

What are some notable setbacks?
Wrestling because it took up a lot of time.



● **Zayne Shah**
UCLA
applied mathematics

What are some leadership roles you had?
President of Algebra Center, secretary of Chess Club.



● **Derrick Sun**
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
mechanical engineering

What class threatened your valedictorian status?
AP Lang with Mr. Wolf.



● **Jeremiah Sung**
USC
biological sciences

What do you hope to be in the future?
I'm hoping to be an oncologist or a pediatrician.



● **Ethan Tam**
UCLA

Who will you miss most from Sunny Hills?
My friends because I won't see them on a regular basis.



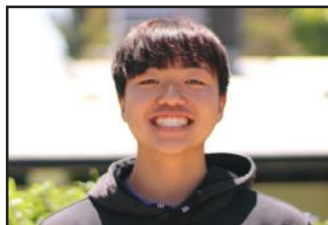
● **Ian Kim**
UC Berkeley
mathematics

How did you discover what to major in?
Math Club; it's something I was interested in for my entire life.



● **Joanna Kim**
UC San Diego
molecular and cellular biology

What is one thing you will be taking to college?
Photos because I never want to forget high school friends.



● **Noah Kim**
UC San Diego
data science

What study tip would you give to underclassmen?
Pay attention in class and space out your studying.



● **Andrew Kwon**
UCLA
biology

How did your surrounding family, friends support you?
By not pushing or pressuring me to really strive for an A.



● **Lauren Won**
MIT
brain and cognitive science

What was the hardest class you took in high school?
AP Physics 1; I'd never seen anything like it, so it was difficult.



● **Payton Yang**
Northwestern University
statistics

What did you sacrifice to maintain your grades?
Not much except for the occasional late night of sleep.



● **Christine Yoo**
Harvard University
neuroscience

What advice would you give to underclassmen?
Focus on yourself — not on what others think of you.



● **Joshua Yun**
UC Berkeley

What extracurricular did you struggle to balance?
Algebra Center; it coincided with Science Olympiad practices.



● **Celerina Lee**
Harvard University
molecular and cellular biology

Who was your biggest supporter in high school?
My older sister gave me valuable advice and encouraged me.



● **Kailyn Lee**
UC Irvine
psychology

What are some of your time managing tips?
Use a timer and do study sessions with friends.



● **Daniela Pabatang**
Cal State Long Beach
nursing

What is your biggest regret in high school?
Not joining any extracurriculars earlier.



● **Alan Park**
Purdue University
mechanical engineering

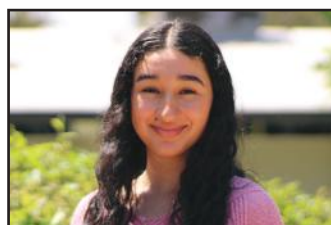
What's one moment you'd like to revisit?
Freshman basketball team — many moved or went to varsity.

VALEDICTORIAN REQUIREMENTS

- Unweighted 4.0 GPA
- 32 minimum honors semester classes
- Eight minimum honors semester in senior year
- 10 minimum academic classes in senior year
- All A's and B's on third quarter grade report in senior year
- No academic dishonesty violations

NOTABLE NUMBERS

California public schools: 20
California private schools: 3
Ivy League schools: 3
Out-of-state public schools: 1
Out-of-state private schools: 4



● **Sarah Patino**
UC San Diego
bioengineering

What are you most excited for after college?
I'm excited to be a researcher, especially to research diabetes.



● **Nalani Reed**
UCLA
mathematics

What was one thing you couldn't live without in high school?
My bed.



● **Hannah Saab**
Stanford University
symbolic systems

What was your favorite class in high school?
Engineering; I created products with real-world impacts.



● **Sienna Shah**
Georgetown University
public policy

What will you miss the most from Sunny Hills?
The Elf during finals week; I always loved looking for it.

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Director

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READY, SET, SHOOT

Senior captures moments of the SH sports teams, one click at a time

story by ALICE CHAE

\$100.

That's all senior Luke Lawrence spent to kickstart his passion with a hand-me-down camera from his older brother.

Lawrence was 12 when he received the Nikon Coolpix L340, starting his photography journey.

Later, he joined the Art of Video Production class as a freshman at Sunny Hills. Lawrence said he's been in love with photography, developing a strong passion ever since he took the first pictures for the school at a soccer game.

Among his peers, he said he is known as a go-to

photographer at the school — especially for sports like football, basketball, soccer and baseball. He takes pictures all year-round and is often seen on the sidelines, capturing everything from scoring points to a team cheer.

"Taking pictures is just so fun," Lawrence said. "It's so easy to go out, take pictures of people for fun and see them enjoying them."

Ever since then, he has been in video production, where he photographs and video records a wide range of events, primarily focusing on sports.

Video production teacher Daniel Flores said he

is determined with a positive attitude and strong work ethic, and had numerous opportunities to document events at California State University, Fullerton, Fullerton Community College, SoFi Stadium, Angels Stadium and other community events.

"I look forward to his continued success in everything that he chooses to do," Flores said.

Though he is not the official designated photographer for the boys and girls soccer teams, he has become a fixture at many of their games after taking pictures of the players.

Soccer player senior Vladimir Sotelo said Lawrence took many charismatic pictures of him in action.

"My first impression was that they were going straight to Instagram," said Sotelo, who met Lawrence at a league game against La Habra High School on Jan. 6, 2023. "His editing of the pictures was what made them amazing."

The two, whose friendship lasted two years, bonded over a photographer-player relationship.

"[He's] always willing to help you and gives tips on what settings or techniques to use for photography," the soccer player said. "Our relationship is super good, especially when we made a long run into CIF, and he was our photographer throughout that playoff run."

While he's not in the game himself, Lawrence said the excitement on the sidelines is just as real.

"I always feel super stoked, being able to be so close to the action," he said. "It's always super fun to see, and you feel like you're in the game and part of the team."

The best part of photography is not just the final product — but also sharing it, the senior said.

"The most rewarding part is seeing people's reactions, and then them posting the pictures," the photographer said.

Every time he posts something, Lawrence said he feels stoked because a lot of time and effort go into the process.

"You have to edit all the photos, find the order that you want, tag people and then post," he said. "I usually put my phone away for like an hour after I post so that I don't just keep checking it."

Still, that payoff comes with its challenges.

"I usually edit them late at night, and I'm always tired and just want to get them done," the senior said.

Lawrence said photography has

helped him develop in multiple aspects and learn a lot from his experience, from fixing small things, such as the horizon line, to discovering what the best equipment to buy is.

"My biggest learning lesson is probably taking pictures of other photographers," Lawrence said. "This has made me some huge connections and you never know where one of those connections could lead to."

The photographer said one of the toughest parts of sports photography is keeping up with the fast-paced action, as he feels it's difficult to catch players in focus and not miss the shot.

Lawrence said photography has become a major part of his high school identity.

"It's basically what I do with most of my time," said the senior, who plans to continue photography after high school. "It's something where I can go, be free and not have to worry about anything while I'm doing it."

all photos used with permission by LUKE LAWRENCE



HIS WINNING SHOT: Senior Luke Lawrence has taken over 60,000 pictures in high school; his favorite one is of Class of 2023 alumnus Mathias Brown celebrating his goal at home against Fullerton on Jan. 20, 2023, because he feels it's a powerful image of victory and defeat.



SNAPPING HIS SHOT: Senior Luke Lawrence aims his lens during a Sept. 12 football game between Marina and Pacifica high schools.



CLOCKED IN: The senior photographer walks around Angels Stadium in Anaheim during the March 29, 2024, Fullerton vs. Troy baseball game.



SAYING CHEESE: Lawrence holds up a peace sign in between taking photos for the All-Stars football game at Orange Coast College on Feb. 1.

KIKER OF ALL TRADES

story by MINA IMAI

Senior maintains unweighted 4.0 GPA, participates in clubs, operates charcuterie board business

Ingredient 1: Lab research

Ingredient 2: Science Olympiad

Ingredient 3: National Honor Society [NHS]

Ingredient 4: Charcuterie Theory

Above are all the components needed to make up senior Sophia Kiker.

As a charcuterie business founder, NHS president and co-captain of the Science Olympiad team, Kiker holds many responsibilities, and she's a valedictorian.

"I felt so thrilled and honored to be a valedictorian," Kiker said. "I worked really hard all four years, but I still didn't know if anything was guaranteed."

The senior said her family's support had the most impact on helping her throughout high school while managing various extracurricular activities.

"My parents were just so sweet and supportive the entire high school years," she said.

DIVING INTO SCIENCE

As a Science Olympiad co-captain, Kiker led the team to its first in-person state tournament this year.

"We were so thrilled when we made it to state, seeing

everyone's hard work," she said.

Adviser and chemistry teacher Alexander Hua said Kiker serves as a role model for other club members.

"She is a very enthusiastic, passionate and obviously very smart individual," Hua said. "She has excellent work habits; I had her as a student her freshman year, but when she was in my class, she did really well."

Sophomore Aziza Mojarro, a first-year Science Olympiad member and Kiker's entomology partner, said Kiker's kind personality led the team to success.

"She motivated our team and lifted our team spirit whenever we felt like we couldn't make it," Mojarro said.

Out of 23 events, the valedictorian said ornithology, the scientific study of birds, was her favorite event because of her experience with the topic since middle school.

Kiker's passion for ornithology encouraged her to contact UCLA and University of California, Irvine, professors in hopes of joining their research team for birds.

A NATIONAL STUDENT

Kiker said she joined the NHS when she was selected in her sophomore year, after being elected president her junior year through a voting process.

Similar to Science Olympiad, Kiker said she leads and conducts numerous events as the president.

"As a president, I made the society more active by creating an inductee ceremony and a senior party, as well as creating pizza parties," she said.

Kiker said her urge to help those affected inspired her to host the Open Donation for the L.A. fires.

"It was obvious the fire was all over the news, and it was so scary for the families and communities that were displaced during that time," she said. "So I called many different YMCA collection sites [and] fire departments, too, and I kept calling until I found out that the district office was still accepting donations of all kinds."

English teacher and NHS adviser Randy Oudega said Kiker is a detailed person who gets her work done.



illustration by EVINA LEE



illustration by EVINA LEE
photo used with permission by SOPHIA KIKER

QUEEN OF "CHAR": Senior Sophia Kiker crafts a spring-themed charcuterie board for a pre-prom party order on April 23, 2024, for her business. She sells food items decorated on a tray.

"She is a leader, an inspiration, and she's like the center of the club," Oudega said. "Her work ethic is incredible, she takes care of all the details, she spearheads things that need to be done."

CHARCUTERIE THEORY

While balancing other extracurriculars, Kiker also manages Charcuterie Theory, her board business.

Kiker said she started her business in the summer of her freshman year, inspired by her passion for creating charcuteries and her brother's advice.

"Because I always made [charcuterie boards] a couple times a month for friends coming over, it was something that I loved doing and did very often," she said.

Kiker said starting Charcuterie Theory taught her many valuable skills.

"I think it's very empowering to start your own business because you have to learn a lot on your own, which teaches you independence and ownership," she said.

Kiker said she faced challenges in managing her academic and extracurricular lives while also pursuing her interests. She said her motivation came from her curiosity and willingness to learn more about things.

"Honestly, I am just so excited about so many areas of life and just exploring them for my own genuine interest," Kiker said.

The senior said she plans to get a molecular environmental biology degree at the University of California, Berkeley, receive a nurse practitioner or physician assistant master's degree and go into pediatrics.

"I've met so many great upperclassmen and underclassmen that go to Berkeley, so I believe I already have a community there, and I love that because the school is

so big — it feels inspiring," Kiker said. "There's so many different research opportunities as well."

Aiming to maintain her artistic side, the senior said she plans to continue running Charcuterie Theory.

"I will definitely continue my charcuterie board business through college and afterwards as I'm an adult," Kiker said. "Even though I'll be working in the hospital or clinic, I'd love to have this side business to just bring food to friends and have that artistic creation."



photo used with permission by SOPHIA KIKER

IN THE LAB: Kiker conducts retinal degeneration research at the University of California, Irvine, on July 12, 2023.

Q&A Lancer Life

In this last issue of the 2024-2025 school year, The Accolade's staff reporter and social media team member Emily Lee interviews senior Liam Weinreich on his experience as a student here with his father as principal and his plans after graduation.

Some of the questions and answers have been edited for brevity and clarity.

Q You are the youngest son in principal Craig Weinreich's family, but you are also the only sibling who had four years of in-person instruction in high school (you started here as a freshman in the 2021-2022 school year after the March 2020 COVID-19 outbreak that shut down schools). How did this fact impact your high school career?

A "I definitely had a few more perks to having my dad here as the principal. And it was also nice coming after my brother because teachers would know me. ... I know a lot of teachers and faculty here that actually know me not just as a student. They knew me growing up, and so they are really invested in me.

Q What role did your dad play throughout your high school journey?

A "He understood how classes work here, and he understood the teachers. He knew where I would fit the best, so I think that helped me to shape my high school career and to be successful in the classes that I took."

Q What was it like to come to school that first year while your dad was an administrator elsewhere and how has that changed, if at all, when he came back as principal at Sunny Hills near the middle of the second semester?

A "It was the beginning of my freshman year when he was at La Habra. It was most different when he finally came to Sunny because before that, I had no idea what it was like to have my dad as the principal at the school.

Q How special will it be for you to go on stage at graduation and shake your father's hand during the ceremony?

A "It's going to be really special. He's watched me grow as a high schooler, he's watched me stress over tests and he's watched me go through everything, so it's going to be really fun to have him there on the stage and be there for that special moment."

Q What's been the silliest question a classmate has ever asked you about being related to the principal?

A "In freshman year in my English class, one of my friends saw my GPA — he didn't even know what a weighted GPA was — so he was convinced that my dad was changing my grades. He asked if my dad would change my grades on Aeries, and I said, 'No, you can't do that.'"

Q Since your father graduated from Troy High School, do you ever make fun of him working here in "enemy" territory?

A "I definitely do make fun of him because it's kind of ironic that he went to Troy, graduated from Troy and then ended up working at Sunny Hills. But it's not enemy territory to him. He sees himself much more as a Lancer than a Warrior."

Q What college are you committed to and what will you major in?

A "I'm committed to Pomona College in Claremont, and I'm going to be swimming there. I will also be majoring in biology and then hopefully do a pre-med course to eventually go to medical school."

Q What goals do you hope to pursue outside of high school?

A "Outside of high school, I'm definitely excited to swim at the collegiate level. I'm hoping to go to the NCAA competitions, and I'm definitely hoping to succeed academically at Pomona. Eventually, I want to go to medical school, so I definitely want to succeed in my sports and academics. Also, I know that after high school, friendships aren't really built into your daily schedule, so I want to make sure that I keep in touch with my friends."

photo by KATIE LEEM

| opinion

seniors

25

Signing out

Senior Columns | pg. 16

Accolade seniors share their high school experiences

Staff Editorial | pg. 28

The Class of 2025 should reevaluate their stance on the ideal senior prank

all pages compiled by AASHNA DIALANI, KYUWON HAN and KAYDEN KIM

all illustrations by JENNA KIM and KAYDEN KIM

OPINION 15



The Accolade became my Stars Hollow

story by ALEXA BERUMEN

I fixed my gaze upon Rory Gilmore, her perfect brown hair and lively doe eyes. The little similarities in her appearance, music taste and appreciation for food only made her resonate with me more. She talked passionately about the newspaper, the late nights, the editing, the writing.

As a more introverted — and frankly extremely awkward — 13-year-old, I felt connected to this TV character, admiring how she found a subject that allowed her to break out of her shell.

I needed to do the same, find something that I could use to explore a new world of people and ideas instead of merely putting in my headphones and listening to music to get through the day.

Driven by this thirst for discovery, I decided to follow in Rory's footsteps, and I enrolled in journalism classes at Fullerton College in eighth grade, eager to explore the world of media and find my own voice.

I found a means of expression and a

love for journalism as I learned its history and its clear-cut rules. I discovered how much more eloquent I was through a faceless screen where I could easily type up my words without the unbeatable, recurring anxiety of saying something wrong.

When I started high school, I registered for Journalism 1. Soon realizing that newspaper production was harder than I anticipated and much different than the classes at the community college, I reconsidered my goals to join the staff.

Pro/Con list after Pro/Con list, I came to the decision to apply and became the only underclassman section editor that year working in the Feature section to produce truly unique stories. I was enamored by the sense of responsibility that I was given.

Spending an inordinate amount of time refining my skills, I found my niche in creative ledes developed reporting using my own voice to relay events to readers.

Journalism became my world instead of music, and with each new source I interviewed I saw my nervous habits of shaky hands and a racing heartbeat dissipate. I realized I not only found a love for writing but also meeting new people and hearing their stories.

On top of that, I found a loving community within *The Accolade* that I spent hours upon hours working with.

By the end of my sophomore year, I could confidently get through an interview without stuttering, and by the end of my junior year, I genuinely looked forward to meeting with the next interviewee.

Now I stand in a similar position to Rory, as editor-in-chief of *The Accolade*. I am proud to see how I have continued this passion — from a nervous writer to a confident speaker. And while some may still see me as the most awkward person out there (because I really still am at times), at least I have found a way to push past my introverted tendencies and to become successful in my journalism career.

Ready to take on any field

story by CHRISTINE YOO

I don't like sports. Besides dabbling in swim for a few years in elementary school, athletics was never a passion I sought to pursue.

So, imagine my surprise when I saw my name printed right next to the title "Sports editor" on *The Accolade* staff list at the end of my sophomore year. I didn't even list Sports as an option.

Despite this shocking and — quite frankly — disappointing result, managing the Sports section was simultaneously the most memorable and challenging era in my high school career that shaped who I am today.

I remember the countless hours I spent looking up what a kill is in volleyball, the difference between league and CIF and how many yards are in a football field (120!).

Landing in arguably the hardest section fresh out of Journalism 1 forced me to hone my journalistic skills alongside my leadership quickly. I pushed through my disinterest in sports, reviving live game updates on X, pumping out one sports preview after another.

Moreover, writing and editing for a difficult section I initially disliked so much nurtured my willpower and, subsequently, the perseverance to make it through other unexpected hurdles life throws.

Still, most importantly, my time as a co-Sports editor made me rediscover my love for journalism and my hope to spread my passion to others; this revelation evoked me to apply for managing editor in my junior year.

Because I was only on staff for a year by then, I had no high hopes in receiving this position; so, when I spotted my name once again on that bright yellow sheet taped in front of Room 138 — instead this time next to the position I actually hoped for — I was overwhelmed with feelings of excitement and determination to make the most out of being a top editor.

Fast forward a year, after helping take charge of *The Accolade's* print issues, continuing to write stories I'm passionate about and helping staff, I've realized that, although I have no plans of majoring in journal-

ism, this part of my life isn't something I'm willing to give up.

As my last year in high school comes to a close and I move across the country to study psychology at Harvard College, I hope to write for *The Harvard Crimson*, keeping my journalist half close to my heart.

You may be asking yourself if I possess a burning love of sports now. After all, that's how this all started. The answer to that is no, but I do still hold a love for reporting — no matter what the field, just as long as it's not a football one.



WEB EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

From a byline to a legacy

story by SEOWON HAN

In eighth grade, all I wanted was a byline. Not an award. Not a leadership title. Just to see my name in print — to write something that mattered enough to be published.

Scrolling through the Sunny Hills website, I found “Journalism” under the English department. I clicked on a PDF of the newspaper, and that was it. I was hooked. It seemed like such a simple, attainable goal — a small acknowledgment of my writing and a chance to be part of something bigger in the community.

At the time, I didn’t even know I had to take Journalism 1 to join the staff. But I emailed *Accolade* adviser Tommy Li anyway, hoping he’d point me in the right direction. He did.

I still remember the thrill of seeing my first story published during my freshman year. And the validation I felt after nervously interviewing students and teachers, revising my draft and finally spotting my name both in print and online. That tiny byline felt monumental.

Since then, *The Accolade* has shaped nearly every part of my high school experience. As I grew into roles as copy editor sophomore year, business manager and Spotlight editor the year after and eventually web editor-in-chief as a senior, those bylines became less about me and more about what they represented.

Somewhere along the way, that initial dream evolved. I found myself pushing past what I thought I could do — helping launch our Korean-language

section, redesigning the website, setting up our beat system and mentoring younger staffers who reminded me of where I started.

And then, it happened. The National Scholastic Press Association named us as an Online Pacemaker Finalist for the first time in our program’s history.

I didn’t learn about it right away; I was in a sixth period math class when Li posted the news on Slack. But when I finally checked my notifications, I saw his message: “You did it!” and a screenshot of the Facebook announcement.

I stared at it for a second, stunned because I didn’t expect it. In that moment, everything felt worth it when I celebrated with my web managing editor, Justin Pak. Every late-night update for consistent posting, every layout fix, every story edit. That was the moment we’d worked for.

Of course, awards like the School Newspapers Online Distinguished Site and Sweepstakes from write-offs were incredible honors. But what I’ll carry with me most are the everyday moments.

It’s surreal to think this chapter is ending. While I seek more opportunities and continue journalism in college, this will be my last byline for *The Accolade*. But more than anything, I’m grateful for all the opportunities I found, stemming from my unexpected discovery on the SH website in eighth grade.

I came in chasing a byline, yet I leave with so much more. And this, my final one, means the most.



WEB MANAGING EDITOR

A mark in crimson

story by JUSTIN PAK

It began as something to fear.

The red pen came in many hands — teachers, peers, even family — each one tearing through my work with sharp, decisive strokes. A line through a phrase. A question mark beside a sentence I thought was clear. It slashed across my paper, creating a chasm between where I stood and where I wanted to go. The marks made me second-guess myself. They made me wonder if I was missing something everyone else already understood.

What I feared wasn’t really the ink but what it represented: being wrong, being unclear, being misunderstood. But as time passed, I began to see the red pen differently. It wasn’t just pointing out flaws — it was pointing toward possibilities. It wasn’t there to shut me down but to push me to think more deeply — to look again.

I started asking for feedback rather than avoiding it. I welcomed comments, not because I wanted to be torn apart, but because I wanted to understand. Even disagreement became valuable — not a threat to my ideas but a test of how well I understood them. The process was no longer about approval — it was about clarity.

I experienced moments when I wanted to crumple up the pages and walk away from the weight of all those corrections. But each time I returned, something small had shifted — a stubborn sentence softened, an idea stretched a little further, a new connection sparked. The red marks, once wounds, became threads weaving me closer to the heart of what I wanted to express.

The red pen taught me to look closer. Not just at words but at meaning — to how

ideas are shaped and how they land. It taught me to slow down and ask: What am I really trying to say? Why does it matter? What’s missing here?

As I grew more comfortable with these questions, they began to follow me in other facets of my life. The red pen didn’t just help me revise my words but also how I saw and communicated with the world. It made me more patient, more attentive, more willing to listen.

I used to think the red pen was just about correcting errors, but it became something more — a means to rewrite. A reminder that everything, even ourselves, exists in drafts. That clarity doesn’t arrive all at once; it’s something we constantly revise toward. And that willing to admit one’s faults and rephrase is sometimes more powerful than getting it “right.”

I’ll keep carrying the red pen with me — not necessarily for what it crossed out, but for how it taught me to bask in the unfinished, to embrace the draft and to understand that we are always the process of becoming.

ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

write my wrongs

story by JENNA KIM

They say words are a writer's best friends. For me, they've always been more like frenemies.

In second grade, while my classmates were mastering addition and subtraction, I sat outside the patio with the school's speech therapist, trying — and failing — to wrap my tongue around the “th” sound.

No matter how hard I tried, it seemed my mouth could only muster up a flimsy “f” or rogue “d.” “Math” became “maf,” “smoothie” to “smoodie” and “this” sounded suspiciously like “dis.” For 7-year-old me, this was the unfortunate truth, my reality.

But here's the plot twist: my struggle with pronunciation never stopped me from falling completely, irrationally, head-over-heels in love with language.

In fact, maybe it made me love it more.

Because when you can't say certain words, you learn to feel them instead. You listen closer, write sharper and express louder in spaces where your

voice might falter.

So when I joined *The Accolade*, I didn't do it to prove anything. I just wanted to write. Luckily, the Arts & Entertainment section didn't require perfect pronunciation of the word “theater.” It just asked me to care. And I did.

From spring play previews to restaurant reviews, I wrote about everything that made this campus and its students come alive after the clock hit 3:30 p.m. As time went on, each story became a tiny love letter to the people who make our school different, wonderful and worth writing about.

Now, as I prepare to sign off with my final article, I think back to that second grade version of me — awkward, frustrated and lowkey hating the word and concept of “math.” I'd tell her she'd grow up to write stories full of words she couldn't completely pronounce and that those tricky “th”s wouldn't hold her back from finding a voice.

Over 10 years have passed since saying “this” felt like a trap. By 18, I've come to understand that words might not always come out the way you want — but they'll still take you exactly where you're meant to go.

And that's the truf (truth).

ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

from accident to Accolade

story by CLAIRE LEE

Planning ahead isn't my strong suit.

When I joined *The Accolade*, it wasn't because I had any goals of being an editor — I just liked writing and figured the school newspaper could be an interesting extracurricular. I didn't expect this program to become such a defining part of my high school experience.

At first, I felt completely out of place. Interviews were awkward so I would rewrite every question and sentence over and over. I wasn't confident in my voice or sure if my stories had a significant point to it.

But by watching how more experienced staffers approached their stories, I slowly learned how to ask better questions, write with more clarity and focus on the values that actually mattered in journalism, such as telling stories truthfully or respecting the sources behind the words.

This year, as co-Entertainment editor, I took on more responsibilities. Some weeks were frustrating because of late drafts, tight deadlines or stories that didn't quite come together. Still, I learned how to set the tone for my section, how to give helpful edits to reporters and how to guide writers without completely changing their work.

Looking back, I'm sure I'll miss laying out magazine pages after school and chatting with staff members during those long editing nights. Those moments made the hard work feel worthwhile.

What started as a casual choice turned into something I stayed committed to. It taught me how to communicate better and how to notice the world around me more closely, which is the kind of growth I didn't see coming, but now, I wouldn't trade it for anything.



Crossing continents, crafting stories

story by ANGELNA JEONG

When I first interacted with English at the age of 5 back in Korea, the language was a puzzle. But as I carefully pieced together the alphabet and basic vocabulary, I was drawn to its openness. Unlike math, where one formula leads to the right answer, writing allowed me to express my thoughts and ideas in endless ways.

The fascination grew into a passion as I enrolled in the Journalism 1 class during my sophomore year, not fully

knowing how it would open my high school experience into something more meaningful.

After a year of learning the basics of journalism, I applied to join the official staff of *The Accolade*, and unexpectedly got the position of co-Sports editor beside my close friend Christine Yoo.

This wasn't a position I wanted nor was ready for because of my lack of experience in the sports field.

As I began taking on this new role, I looked back at my journey from attending an English academy in Korea to getting an editor position in a journalism program. This was an opportunity I never imagined I would have, especially when I was 5 and didn't even think I would be able to put together a proper sentence.

One of my favorite pieces was a column I wrote my junior year about the relegating system because it captured both purposes of writing when I first joined journalism.

It was personal, as I was part of the golf team, and informative, capturing both my voice and the community's.

Being an editor opened a new way of connecting with people. Every interview, revision and deadline taught me something new, not just about writing, but about listening and collaborating.

I loved being part of something that served the entire student body. What began

as a classroom assignment transformed into a way to spotlight unrepresented voices and bring important issues to the forefront.

Now, as I prepare to leave *The Accolade*, I don't just carry a portfolio — I carry a purpose. Writing and journalism have taught me the power of words and the responsibility that comes with using them.

To me, writing will always be about impact. A mission I'll continue to carry with me, wherever I go.



UCSD

Listening between the lines

story by FAITH JUNG

My greatest talent is storytelling.

I believe in the power of narratives to not just inform but also to connect, and journalism sets the stage for this talent to flourish.

I used to think of storytelling as a grand process, at the end of which tears would be shed or shivers would ripple through the reader.

This perspective shifted when I had the opportunity to write a teacher feature story about Kathy Beville, one of the longest-tenured educators at our school, who announced retirement after 39 years of teaching and multiple Teacher of the Year awards.

I envisioned Beville's story as a cornerstone in the timeline of our school's history, something future students could look back on to understand the impact she made. With her impressive resume and decades of experience, I set out to craft a story that honored her accomplishments. I carefully prepared a list of 14 questions, focusing on the longevity and success of her career.

But at the start of the interview, her responses held little substance, and with every word she uttered, I couldn't help but think: doesn't she realize I'm doing this to make her look good?

Instead of focusing on her teaching accolades, she kept mentioning softball, almost like she wanted this to be the story's focus.

I was caught off guard, realizing that I may have to change the angle of my story.

Curious about the relevance of softball, I abandoned my original questions and let the conversation shift. When I changed the topic of my story, I learned that preparing myself for unexpected situations is an essential skill for a journalist.

I asked her about her time as a player and how it impacted her today, and suddenly, the interview led to a newfound focus — how her love for the game led her to study kinesiology and ultimately become a biology teacher.

I realized then that the story I thought I wanted to tell wasn't the story she wanted to share.

What emerged wasn't just a celebrated career but the personal passions and unexpected paths that led her there.

Through journalism, I learned that good storytelling relied far more heavily on how I approached a given topic, rather than the topic itself.

OPINION EDITOR

fall to spring

story by KAYDEN KIM

Freshman year starts in fall and feels like it too. We enter campus nervous, with a new backpack, maybe even a pair of new shoes and the air crisp with possibility. We make friends and get used to high school, and everything seems cool and refreshing.

Sophomore year still feels like autumn. A chill breeze follows everywhere you go, almost as if hinting at the coming years. But you have a jacket on, and you're not a junior yet. You start hearing about college and what senior year is like.

Some friends start to change. Some leaves turn red.

You lose others. Some leaves fall.

When winter comes with junior year, you can tell.

You worry about it in the fall, but once it's here, it's just life. You get used to it. It doesn't snow in winter — you can handle more stress than you thought. It gets pretty cold, but you have a jacket, and you might be too busy to think about the weather.

And then spring.

Senior year.

First semester still feels like winter — college applications. Who knew spring could be so cold? You're still too busy to be freezing, but you know that if you take time to sit down, you'll shiver from the stress. It's easy to stress about what you have to do when you're

not doing it. Trees are still leafless, but I guess that's possible with our weird weather nowadays.

You submit all your essays over winter break.

It's second semester — all you have to do is wait.

Your first thought is impatience. In just a few months, you'll know what college you're going to, or what job you're going to take. What will happen after high school, what will happen after you move past these past four years of your life. You can't wait — but you do.

Your second thought — you'd forgotten how nice it felt to not be busy. The spring sun on your skin.

You start reconnecting with some old friends — fallen leaves — from autumn. It's occurring to all of them (and you) that you might never see them again.

Everyone's changed since autumn.

They're wearing less outer layers, now that the weather's getting warm. People are more themselves — flowers are blooming.

Leaves are growing back green.

They're different — not just in haircuts and style — grown as friends, people.

Before you know it, you know what you'll do next year — what college you'll go to, what job you plan to take.

You plan to continue talking to some friends, keep some leaves, pick some flowers, keep parts of your high school life.

You bloom.

And you're ready for summer.

the fear of the unknown

story by NATHAN LEE

I never needed the spotlight to know I was leading. While others spoke first or ran the meeting, I was the one holding the blueprint. Watching the pieces. Fixing the cracks no one else noticed until the deadline hit. I wasn't the loudest, the flashiest, or the most followed.

But I knew how to build.

That's what layout taught me. Margins, spacing, alignment, flow — people think it's just design. But it's strategy. It's knowing how to make chaos look intentional. How to take hundreds of words and a string of photographs and make them feel like they were meant to exist together.

At first, I followed templates. Now, I tear them up. I don't just make things look clean — I make them feel right. Layout isn't about pretty pages. It's about clarity. Timing. Impact. And whether it's leading a spread, a team, or an entire publication, I've learned to trust my eye for what works.

Somewhere between late-night InDesign crashes and back-to-back deadlines, I realized this is where I operate best: behind the curtain, pulling the right strings, setting the rhythm. Not because I'm afraid to be seen — but because I know the value of precision over noise. And when a story finally lands just right on the page — when the headline hits, the photo bleeds perfectly and the whole thing breathes — I don't need my name on it.

I already left my fingerprint.

"Goodbye,
my friend.
I hope we can
really meet again
someday."

-Roselle Gustav

LAYOUT EDITOR

EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT



ACCOLADE FILE PHOTO

I'm also 'graduating' with Class of 2025

story by TOMMY LI

When The Accolade published the story introducing me as a new teacher in 2001, the writer's first sentence about me started with "Tommy Li has finally attained his dream job."

In my 24th year, this dream job will end on May 30 with my early retirement, which wasn't my original plan.

I told many of my students my goal was to retire when my youngest son, a freshman here, graduates from this school. I was looking forward to joining him three years from now in moving on to the next phase of my life.

And so since The Accolade's last issue of the school year has a tradition of allowing the seniors to write their farewell columns, I asked my top editors if they would grant space in this issue to do the same for me. I am grateful they agreed.

Here are my parting sentiments:

1) I would like to acknowledge my better half — my wife. She has been forgiving of the times I've spent working late during our production nights. Come July 1 of this year, we will celebrate our 25th wedding anniversary with a 14-day cruise around Japan. I am looking forward to spending that time with her without any other distractions.

2) It truly is best to leave at the top of one's game. Accolade has earned a historic number of awards this school year. This would not have been possible without the efforts of my journalism students — past and present.

3) Part of my retirement deal is I can't work in this district for the next five years. If whoever's in charge here in 2030 would like me to oversee our 75th year of publishing, that could be an enticing offer. I'd need to check with my wife first, though.



What year did you first start teaching here?

2001-2002 school year
What will you miss most about Sunny Hills?

all the students I've taught, present and past
What are your plans upon retirement?

I still want to be involved with journalism.
What would you want your students to remember most about the subject you teach?

Remember the 7 Habits and the 6 Most Important Decisions You'll Ever Make; be open to having as many paradigm shifts as possible. For journalism students, always produce Los Angeles Times quality work.

What's your favorite saying or quote you'd like to leave behind? I have a few. For English students: "Carpe diem — legally and appropriately."

When taking a multiple choice quiz/test: "Make sure every question is answered once. Don't double bubble, triple bubble or quadruple bubble."

"Accuracy, accuracy and accuracy." "Consistency, consistency and consistency." "Stay humble."

FLEXFIT

A CLASS AHEAD

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A group of six students (three boys and three girls) wearing various styles of Yupoong Academy hats and clothing. They are posing with a large, ornate trophy. The background is a dark blue wall.

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STAFF EDITORIAL

THOU SHALT NOT PRANK

The Class of 2025 should reconsider the severity at which it performs this year's senior stunts

The Accolade Editorial Board unanimously agrees that senior pranks belong on the list of traditions for each graduating class' personal interests; nevertheless, we agree with school officials who view last year's senior prank as borderline vandalism and encourage each graduating class to consider more respectful pranks like a sleepover in the quad or a Post-it extravaganza on the wall of a building.

Last year — May 24, the last day seniors were required to come to school — unspecified members of the Class of 2024 allegedly decided to, literally, leave their mark on certain parts of the campus with notorious, despicable sights. Profane chalk writings etched locker doors in the hallways and condemnable language written in chalk sprawled across the concrete in the quad.

That was just a fraction of the mess that some of these vandals left behind. Eggs' noxious smell also polluted the hallways, while toilet paper hung limply from the trees in the quad.

These immature pranksters went to unnecessary lengths to emphasize their impulsive views of the school and those who work in it, and this year's seniors should resist the temptation to top last year's antics in the name of tradition.

The joke doesn't last long, especially for those 18 years or older. Actually, when some of us on the editorial board met with principal Craig Weinreich, he said these pranks — regarded as criminal behavior — are something he strongly discourages as they tarnish the school's reputation.

Crossing the line can involve law enforcement, leading those who are no longer minors to face criminal charges and possibly be tried as adults. The Class of 2025 and all future seniors should consider toning their proclivity toward leaving their "mark" down a notch.

We also came into the principal's meeting with the idea of senior pranks being "not that bad," but upon considering what he had to say, reconvened and revised our main points to reflect upon the inconvenience and disrespect such acts bring to our school and its people.

Last year's aberration wasn't the first time some Lancers chose to pull a senior prank. Profanity on teachers' classroom doors has unfortunately become too much

of a redundant act. What's worse was what happened in 2010, when some vandals decided to pour oil all over the steep hill in the front of the campus outside the Performing Arts Center on Lancer Way. According to a March 2010 *Orange County Register* article, the cleanup cost ended up at over \$25,000.

Besides the monetary consequence to our school budget after the 2010 incident, administrators issued a severe consequence for all students as they canceled an event known as Mr. Sunny Hills, an after-school talent pageant recognizing senior boys that was open for the whole school to watch. Math teacher Jae Byun, a 2010 Lancer alumnus, said he and some of his fellow 12th-graders resorted to finding an off-campus venue to keep Mr. Sunny Hills alive for that year.

Finally, if the antics don't fall into the legal justice realm, Weinreich told us the worst consequences that administrators may hold would be to ban them from walking during the graduation ceremony and issue them a fine depending on the cost of the damages.

Fortunately, the principal said the entire senior class will not face these consequences. Only those who actively participate in this distasteful crime and are caught by the 80-plus surveillance cameras on campus will be the ones facing repercussions.

We acknowledge that the anticipation of someone pulling senior pranks is a non-school-affiliated tradition many of us look forward to, which is why it won't hurt to have a little fun — as long as the prank is not destructive and without an ounce of illegal and inappropriate behavior.

So in the name of fun and games, let's drop the eggings and pick up something we can consider a more school-friendly prank — perhaps something like camping out in the quad or maybe even covering the gym in fluorescent Post-its to make sure the nostalgic memories really do "stick" — ideas that our principal approved of.

The Accolade Editorial Board is made up of the top editors and section editors on the 2024-2025 staff with the guidance of adviser Tommy Li. If you have a question about the board's decision or an issue for the board to discuss and write about, please send an email to theaccoladeshhs@gmail.com.

FOR THE RECORD

The Accolade regrets the following errors from the Feb. 14 print issue:

On the cover, the *Los Angeles Daily News* should have been included in the "All images used with permission from ..." caption.

On page 10 of the Feature section, in the list of "Accolade advisers from year one to now," one of the advisers' first name was misspelled. It should have been listed as "Kimberley" Harris. At the bottom of the page under, "Did you know?" the picture used to identify English teacher Jill Lomheim was not correct. The PDF version of the magazine has the correct picture.

In a page 28 Sports article titled, "3-sport athlete impresses with speed, agility on field," the location for where then-eighth-grader Madelyn Sooter competed in should have been listed as Parks Junior High School in Fullerton.



For the full story, go to shhsacolade.com



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TOP ACTIVITIES TO DO IN THE SUMMER

story by ELISE PAK

Every summer, my friends and I tend to stick to the same routine: beach days, pool hangouts and shopping sprees. I know a lot of teens who repeat these same activities over and over again, so this year, I wanted to switch things up. After researching, I found five fun Orange County events that are perfect for making new summer memories.

1. KNOTT'S BERRY FARM

For those who crave thrills and love roller coasters, Knott's Berry Farm in Buena Park is the place to be.

Spend the day in Ghost Town Alive!, where you can interacting with townsfolk, participate in missions and enjoy nighttime festivities.

And for waterpark enthusiasts, Knott's Soak City Waterpark is open on select dates from May 17-Sept. 7. With 23 different slides, a lazy river, and a wave pool, it's the perfect place to cool off during the hot summer days.

As the sun sets, the festivities take over with live music, DJs and a variety of food options. The park transforms into a vibrant nighttime festival offering games, photo opportunities and a lively atmosphere perfect for summer evenings.

With its blend of interactive experiences, nighttime festivities and classic attractions, Knott's Berry Farm offers a dynamic summer experience that's hard to beat.

2. OKAYAMA KOBO BAKERY & CAFE

With the recent matcha craze among teens, Okayama Kobo Bakery & Cafe in Anaheim is a must-visit. This cozy Japanese bakery serves fresh, fluffy pastries that are perfect for a sunny day treat.

Their Salt & Butter Roll is a fan favorite — light, buttery and with a hint of salt that melts in your mouth.

The Strawberry Milk Cream Croissant or the adorable Kobo Kuma, a bear-shaped bun filled with vanilla bean custard, are great options for anyone with a sweet tooth.

For those who love savory treats, definitely try the Curry Pan, which is filled with Japanese-style vegetable curry and coated in a crispy panko crust. They also offer unique paninis such as the Japanini, which combines shiso leaf, basil pesto, bacon, cheese and tomato.

Pastries can be paired with one of their specialty drinks to cool one down on a hot day. The Matcha Sea Salt Cold Brew and Lavender Latte are refreshing options that compliment the bakery's offerings.

Located at 155 W Center St. Promenade, Okayama Kobo is open Tuesday through Sunday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. It's a great spot to grab a treat before heading to the beach or after a morning of shopping.

3. OCEAN FESTIVAL

For anyone who loves the waves, the Lexus U.S. Open of Surfing event, established in 1959, is an annual professional competition held in Huntington Beach from July 26-Aug. 3 south of the Huntington Beach Pier.

Beyond the surfing competitions, the U.S. Open offers a festival-like atmosphere with various activities including live music, food vendors, yoga classes and live art demos. The event is free to the public.

However, the events may not appeal to those who aren't or don't enjoy watching surfers. If that's the case, one can sign up for surf lessons at Corky Carroll's Surf School, also in Huntington Beach. With 25 years of experience, the school provides two-hour sessions that include a surfboard and wetsuit.

Additionally, during the summer months, students can enjoy perks like free equipment rentals until 2 p.m. and a complimentary T-shirt. Whether aiming to pick up a new hobby or simply looking for a fun day at the beach, Corky Carroll's Surf School provides an easy, enjoyable introduction to surfing.

4. DOWNTOWN DISNEY

This season is the perfect time to check out Downtown Disney, open from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday and 7-11 a.m. Friday-Monday. It's leveled up a lot with new food spots that go way beyond churros and sandwiches.

Their new Parkside Market food hall opened in January, and it's loaded with options: GG's Chicken Shop brings crispy sandwiches, Seoul Sister offers Korean rice bowls and Sip & Sonder serves coffee and Caribbean treats.

One restaurant that seems to be a fan favorite is Din Tai Fung, which offers the most delicious Taiwanese food: xiao long bao, cucumber salad, spicy noodles and a modern, sit-down vibe.

Downtown Disney also brought the heat with three Mexican-inspired spots: Paseo, for upscale dishes, Céntrico, for those who love street tacos and Tiendita, for people who need a quick bite.

Beyond the food, Downtown Disney is packed with fun activities such as bowling at Splitsville Luxury Lanes or live music on the Downtown Disney LIVE! Stage.

5. THE SOURCE OC 4DX MOVIE

For anyone looking to elevate their summer movie nights, CGV Cinemas at The Source OC in Buena Park offers an immersive 4DX experience that goes beyond traditional screening.

This cutting-edge technology synchronizes motion seats and environmental effects like fog, wind and scents with on-screen acting, making the audience feel like they're a part of the movie.

CGV Cinemas is situated within The Source OC, a multi-level shopping and entertainment complex.

The Source OC also offers a selection of Korean films with English subtitles for a diverse cinematic experience. From Hollywood blockbusters to international films, people with different tastes can sit back and enjoy a movie.



COOL CRAVINGS: Downtown Disney's new Parkside Market food hall located in 1569 Disneyland Drive, Anaheim, offers customers an indoor space to eat away from the summer heat.



illustration by JOANNA JOO



COMMITTED TO SUCCESS

photo used with permission by LUKE LAWRENCE

GOING FOR HER SHOT: Forward senior Lauren Won attempts to score a goal against Sonora High School to break a tie in the first half of the Lady Lancers' last league game Jan. 14. The match ended in a 1-1 tie.

⚽ GAME BALL ⚽

Co-captain's efforts on, off field lead to admission to MIT, a spot on its women's soccer roster

story by KAYLYNN PARK

At first, her heart sank. That was her initial reaction when senior Lauren Won opened up the Notre Dame admissions portal to see what the result was in regards to her early action application.

"I opened Notre Dame first ..., but I got deferred," Won said.

Then 30 minutes later on the same date, Dec. 17, she moved on to her next dream college — the Massachusetts Institute of Technology [MIT].

Upon reflection, the senior said she was glad she made the conscientious decision to remain alone in her bedroom.

"You know how some parents look at the [computer] screen with you when you open [decisions]?" Won said. "I didn't let them do that because I had already convinced myself that I didn't get in."

But she was wrong.

When the student-athlete clicked on the button to open the admissions portal message from MIT, she saw some images superimposed with words.

Thin green and blue streamers dropped from the top to the bottom of the screen along with small drawings of beavers — the MIT mascot. She read the opening sentence after "Dear Lauren":

"On behalf of the Admission Committee, it is my pleasure to offer admission to the MIT Class of 2029!"

"When I read the words, I honestly couldn't believe it and felt so much happiness and relief," said the senior, who got accepted as an undeclared major. "Going from a deferral from Notre Dame to an acceptance at MIT was such a big mood jump that it felt 10 times more intense."

Meanwhile, Won's family was in their living room, anticipating the response, when she ran downstairs to tell everyone the good news with tears in her eyes.

"We were overjoyed and relieved at the same time," said her mom, Amy Won. "Since Lauren was little, she dreamed of playing [soccer] in college. Lauren has been working on recruitment with the MIT coach since the summer after her sophomore year. We felt good about her chances of getting accepted to MIT."

Despite getting recruited to play for MIT's women's soccer team, an NCAA Division III school that finished this season 21-2-1, the university does not offer athletic scholarships.

By Feb. 5 on one of the National Signing Days on campus, Lauren Won made it official in committing to MIT. That culminated her four years of playing for the girls soccer team, leading the Lady Lancers as a co-captain this season.

FOLLOWING OLDER SISTER'S FOOTSTEPS — LITERALLY

Lauren Won said she first got involved with soccer because she wanted to participate in the same activity as her older sister.

"I started playing because of that, and I really liked it so I continued playing my whole life," she said.

As a forward, Lauren Won also had the opportunity to play on the same Lady Lancers squad with her sister when the latter was a senior.

photo used with permission by LAUREN WON



GOING TO THE EAST COAST: Senior Lauren Won holds up her Massachusetts Institute of Technology placard after announcing her commitment in the gym during the Feb. 5 National Signing Day.

"From a young age, I knew she had the talent, drive and the right support to go far," said older sister, Haley, who now attends Marist University in Poughkeepsie. "I always wanted her to be even better than me, and watching her grow into such a strong player has been amazing."

So amazing that the MIT commit's head coach took notice in his first year guiding the team.

"One of my favorite moments of Lauren this year was several of her crucial assists, whether it was against Fullerton in the tournament final, against Brea in a league title deciding match or our first round CIF game," coach William Allgeier said.

Allgeier also complimented Lauren Won's efforts when she's not competing on the field.

"Her work ethic during practice and games is relentless as she is never giving up until the final whistle," he said.

MIT FOR SPORTS AND ACADEMICS

Athletic director Paul Jones said this is the first time in his five years managing the sports program that a student-athlete has been recruited to MIT for sports and academics.

"It is not often that you come across a student-athlete who is that gifted on the field and in the classroom," Jones said. "Lauren has set a great example for our student-athletes, showing that it is possible to be an excellent student and athlete, excelling in both areas."

Lauren Won said she's willing to take on the challenge this fall when she moves to the East Coast in Massachusetts.

"I know it's going to be a huge change, but with the nervousness, I'm super excited because I know that I'm going to grow a lot being so far away from home and having to deal with everything myself and adapt to a new location," she said.



For the full story, go to shhsaccolade.com

A SUPER SAAB STORY

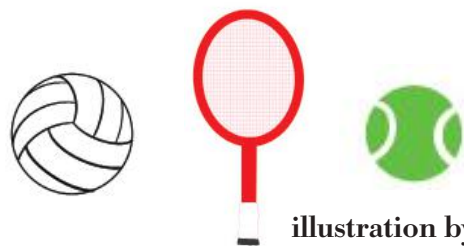


illustration by KAYDEN KIM

Senior triplets reflect on unique bond during high school athletics; plan to pave their own path past graduation

story by EMILY KIM

THREE IN A POD: Sisters and doubles tennis partners seniors Hannah Saab (left) and Karina Saab hold their rackets while brother senior Lucas Saab prepares for a volleyball spike.



photo used with permission by Jeraldine Saab

They're triplets. But they're not all the same gender. Two are girls, and one is a boy.

For the past four years, these three have taken their athletic talents to either the tennis or volleyball courts to help win league or CIF titles.

"It is extremely rare to have triplets on campus to begin with — twins maybe — but triplets are very rare," athletic director Paul Jones said.

Karina Saab, the middle child, started in her freshman year as a singles player in the girls junior varsity team, while her older sister began as a doubles player.

By the end of their sophomore year, they were paired to play doubles, and they were first team all league for tennis, winning third place in doubles for league finals in the 2023 and 2024 fall seasons, Jones said.

As for the youngest of the siblings, Lucas Saab has experienced the most success in his sport — being a league champion in boys volleyball each year he has played and being on

the CIF title winning team when he was a freshman, Jones said.

ONE SAAB AT A TIME

The eldest said she first started playing tennis when she was 7 years old.

"It was really exciting when I first

started playing," Hannah Saab said.

Hannah Saab said they all ended up at Sunny Hills, stemming from their parents' choice to send them all to the same school because it would be easier for transportation and the school offered a balance of academics and extracurricular activities.

She said tennis coach Chris Ghareebo made the decision to pair the siblings during a CIF playoff match at Rancho Cucamonga when one of the doubles players got injured.

"They performed so amazingly together that day, we barely won the match and ever since that day they stayed together," Ghareebo said.

SAAB NO. 2

Karina Saab also recalled other childhood sports her parents had her dabble in as early as 6 years old.

"I did gymnastics," she said. "Later, Lucas played soccer, while Hannah and I danced, [so] it wasn't until we started to all play tennis that the competition and my excitement for the sport stemmed."

In her freshman through senior years, Karina Saab committed to playing on the girl tennis and volleyball teams — something that neither of the other triplets were willing to accomplish.

For Karina Saab, she said the connection she and Han-

nah Saab share on the tennis court goes beyond just winning matches.

"She is the best person I could play with [since] she is able to understand me, not just as a player but as a sister, which I think plays a big role in our success as a doubles team," she said.

SAAB NO. 3

Since high school sports are usually separated by gender, Lucas Saab never had the same opportunity to team up with any of his older sisters. The one connection the brother had was his choice to dedicate his athletic talents toward volleyball, similar to the middle triplet.

Lucas Saab said he and his two older siblings found opportunities to bond and compete by enrolling in similar classes.

"We didn't compete with each other much in the sporting realm," he said. "Outside of sports, we most definitely did [regarding] school, grades, food and money."

Hannah Saab said she was still able to connect with her brother through being in the same engineering classes in their sophomore and senior years.

SAABS SPLIT UP

When the 2025-2026 school year starts, it will be the first time the three siblings won't be on the same campus.

Hannah Saab said she has committed to pursue symbolic systems — a major unique to her school regarding humanities and sciences using computer science — at Stanford University in Palo Alto, while Karina Saab said she wants to study nursing at Point Loma Nazarene University in San Diego. As for the youngest triplet, he plans to attend the University of California, Irvine, to study criminology, law and society.

Unlike Karina and Hannah Saab, who won't be playing sports in college, Lucas Saab said he plans to continue competing in recreational and intramural teams.

"Although we are all staying in California, being far apart will definitely make me miss them more," Hannah Saab said.

photo by NICOLE PARK



HANNAH
SAAB



KARINA
SAAB

photo by LAUREN KANG



LUCAS
SAAB

photo by LAUREN KANG

Dear Accolade,

Thanks for giving me unforgettable memories, amazing friends, & the power of Adobe Creative Cloud. Highschool wouldn't be the same without you!

Love,
Jehanna

compiled by ALEXXA BERUMEN

Dear Acco!

THANK YOU for all the late nights in Rm 138, memories, knowledge, and friendship. Forever an Accoladian with a heart!

xoxo,
Christine

Dear Accolade,

I'm so thankful that I got to be part of this award-winning program. Hoping the best future for the next generation of Accoladians! -Clare

Dear Accolade, I am so incredibly grateful to have been a part of this program. All of me sleep lost was worth it in the end! - Alexxa

Dear Accolade,

Thank you for giving me more memories in high school beyond studying and homework! And for getting me to enjoy writing for once!

LOVE,
Kayden Kim

DEAR ACCOLADE,

THANKS FOR ALL THE ~~FREE~~ JOY ~~PERIOD~~ AND LAUGHTER YOU'VE BROUGHT

-NATHAN LEE

Dear Accolade

Thank you for filling my 3yrs of high school yrs with unforgettable memories and opportunities.
Angelina Jeong

Dear Accolade,
Thank you for the memories and friends

-Teo

Dear Accolade,

Thanks for allowing me an outlet through which to create art and make friends!

-Nathaniel C.

Hey Accolade, it was a really fun three years. I don't think there was more impactful class I could've taken in HS

-Nathan Lee

Dear Acco,

Thank you for the friendships & memories for the last three years I've been in this program.

Elinor

Dear Accolade,
Thank you for all the unforgettable experiences and memories. You were a big part of my HS life! Will cherish these moments. Go Accoladians!

-seowon :)

Dear Accolade,

It has been a memorable three years in the program and I have learned various insights on writing that will carry on with me after high school. I will always hold those late nights with friends dear to heart and I hope everyone can share these feelings as well. :)

Dear Accolade,
thank you for the experience I had in your class. Not only did I learn a great deal, but I also felt encouraged and supported throughout the course.
Sincerely,
Jin Son

Dear Accolade,
thanks for everything!

-Justin Park

Dear Accolade,
Thank you for all the special memories and experience I gained :)

-Faith Jung