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**Art:** Ketra Oberlander's Triton Museum exhibition explores how society gets disabled individuals wrong.



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**Pop culture:** South Bay comic book stores hope superhero hype will bring in new customers.



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**Sports:** Silver Creek track star Arianna Fisher going the distance with triple-jump success.



Used syringes are collected at the Santa Clara County Public Health Department's needle exchange facility.

## Costs of teen drug addiction

Families are often shattered as children spiral downward

By **DARRYL CERENO**  
*Mosaic Staff Writer*

John recently turned 20, marking his third year of homelessness. He was originally from Oregon, but traveled south with a couple of friends. He hasn't seen his family in years.

John is a recovering heroin and amphetamine abuser who started using during his sophomore year of high school. He currently stays in San Jose,

and is always moving around the city. Teenage drug usage isn't new. But the widespread substance abuse can carry the risk of addiction.

"Craving is the worst pain I ever felt," said John, whose full identity has been withheld to protect his privacy.

Kids turned into addicts have the potential to ruin the rest of their lives, but professionals say their families also

Jump to **ADDICTION**, page 11



## SubZero Festival celebrates tenth anniversary



Belly dancers from Persephone Dance Company perform at the SubZero Festival on South First Street in San Jose. (Zunera Ashar / Mosaic) More photos on page 6.

## Teen anxiety – a hidden, lonely struggle



A 13-year-old girl who suffers from an anxiety disorder takes a walk with her mother who also has struggled with the same condition. (Zunera Ashar/Mosaic)

By **JUDITH OROZCO**  
*Mosaic Staff Writer*

The 5-year-old curled up in a ball and cried as she repeated "no" when she was told to go with her father. Her mother couldn't find a way to comfort her, so she took her to the doctor.

Elizabeth, who is now 13, was diagnosed with anxiety brought on by her

parents' divorce. Knowing the diagnosis has helped her live with it.

To protect their privacy, Mosaic is not using her or her parents' real names. Unlike Elizabeth, many teens with anxiety are not receiving any treatment, according to the Child Mind Institute's 2015 Children's Mental Health Report.

Jump to **ANXIETY**, page 5

## COLORISM DEBATE MORE THAN SKIN DEEP FOR YOUNGER GENERATION

By **ZUNERA ASHAR**  
*Mosaic Staff Writer*

Whenever Sanya Kamidi, a 17-year-old San Jose teen, would visit her family in India, her mother would want Kamidi to put on turmeric face masks to make her skin lighter.

"My mom would make me sit there with the mask not only on my face but also on my arms and legs because she thinks it's some sin to be dark, even though it's not," Kamidi said.

She is just one of many girls affected by colorism—the prejudice or discrimination against individuals with a darker skin tone among people of the same ethnic or racial group. It leads to parents wanting their children, especially girls, to be lighter skinned so that they may have a better luck in finding a job, partner and other opportunities.

Girls are told that they should

Jump to **COLORISM**, page 10

# The Mosaic journalists



## ALYSSA LOREDO

Sitting quietly at her desk, eyes fixed on her screen, Alyssa Loredo, 16, works diligently. The rising senior at Overfelt High School may appear serious, working with extreme focus

during her hours at Mosaic. But inside, Alyssa's mind races with thoughts of setting a good example for her three younger siblings. During periods of rest, she can be found searching for anime and manga, particularly in the action genre as well as games to play later. An adamant soul when it comes to education, Alyssa has plans to work as a cellular biology field researcher in the future, though her main aspiration is to write a novel centered around people of all races. Alyssa has joined Mosaic to push herself to improve her professional, journalistic writing and editing skills.

By Isaiah Aguirre



## ANDREW BENITEZ

Andrew Benitez, 17, introduces himself by letting you know he's killed a chicken with his bare hands. But he'll rush to tell you he didn't enjoy it. He

says he'd much rather be a journalist than a butcher. He found his interest in journalism a year ago, and it led him to Mosaic. He enjoys playing basketball, and even though he shoots "a lot of threes like Curry," he doesn't make as many. Andrew, who will be a senior at Silver Creek High next year, also enjoys spending quality time with his friends and family. He says that they are the ones that shaped him into the person he is. Although Andrew may have his struggles at times, he always finds a way to have a good time and get the job done.

By Heriberto Cortes



## ASHLEY TORRES

Ashley Torres from Yerba Buena High wants to become a female version of Harry Styles. Confident and energetic while performing,

like the pop icon lead singer of One Direction, she is an individual, calm and collected. A self-taught singer, guitarist, pianist, and ukulele player, Ashley hopes to run her own record company for independent artists. This incoming high school senior has plans for her future in music, but to gain connections she is experiencing the world of journalism. Through Mosaic, Ashley is finding her voice and a way to communicate with others. Letting go of her reserved self, she is opening new doors.

By Jennifer Ramirez



## DARRYL CERENO

As he scrolls through his phone, Darryl Cereno, 16, looks up and smirks. But don't be fooled -- there's a lot behind that look.

He's wearing a pair of fresh Jordan basketball shoes and a white shirt, the carefree teen look, but in fact he has struggled. He's three months clean from alcohol and drugs, and even throughout his bad days, he persistently fights through that battle. He often expresses the love and thankfulness he feels toward his sisters and parents, without whom he would have given up his battle. As a rising senior at Overfelt High School, he is extremely down to earth and always does what he thinks is right. Darryl has dreams of going to San Jose State and studying in Europe to digest a new culture. He is a basketball player and he enjoys watching the Warriors in his free time.

By Jovette Cortes-Meza



## HERIBERTO "EDDIE" CORTES

Heriberto "Eddie" Cortes, 18, a new graduate of Andrew Hill High in San Jose, is excited to start college at San

Jose State University. He would like to help kids, and developed an interest in teaching by coaching soccer. Eddie has also been incredibly interested in sports since he was a child, participating in various sports such as soccer and ice hockey. When he's off the field, he enjoys challenging himself through subjects like math since he finds it to be an intriguing subject. He picked up Yearbook, working on the boys soccer spreads and and the history spreads, which is where he discovered the Mosaic program, and was eager to extend his knowledge about writing and sports. To unwind from long school days, Eddie likes watching ESPN, especially if it involves his beloved Golden State Warriors.

By Andrew Benitez



## ISAIAH AGUIRRE

Quiet and observant, Isaiah Aguirre likes to mind his own business, distant from the world in front of him. This is far from the truth. Isaiah is a fanatic of the worlds

molded by modern authors and video game developers. In his free time, he spends hours researching the history of these universes. His involvement in Mosaic began when he pushed his boundaries and joined the Silver Creek High School newspaper, where he wrote features, entertainment stories and opinion pieces -- but he also loves creative writing. At 17 and a rising senior, Isaiah aims to attend a UC campus or a university in New York to help him achieve his dream of becoming a novelist.

By Alyssa Loredo



## JENNIFER RAMIREZ

Amid the concrete jungle of San Jose, there stands Jennifer Ramirez, capturing the city's chaos in a photograph. Jennifer has resided in San Jose for her entire 17 years of life. However,

she has aspirations of leaving her native city to travel Latin America to pursue her dream of becoming a National Geographic photographer. But for now, this recent graduate of Andrew Hill High School will become a freshman at San Jose State University to major in photography. She wants to learn to encapsulate and share moments of grief and happiness. Through Mosaic, Jennifer hopes to gain experience with photojournalism and apply the practical techniques learned through the workshop to careers in photography.

By Ashley Torres



## JOCELYNN MIJANGOS

Jocelynn Mijangos is a carefree 16-year-old rising junior breaking barriers at Overfelt High School.

Refusing to join the softball team, Jocelynn broke gender norms by becoming the first girl to join the Overfelt Royals baseball team. Jocelynn also became a percussionist in the Overfelt symphonic band her freshman year, even though she'd never played an instrument before. Since she started drawing in sixth grade, Jocelynn had dreamed of becoming a tattoo artist. She loves drawing anything that interests her and conveys her emotions. She wishes to continue her education at UC Santa Barbara or San Jose State to play in the band and to study criminal justice.

By Juventino Ceja



## JOVETTE CORTES-MEZA

Walking into San Jose State's Dwight Bentel Hall, you hear a voice echoing through the halls. It's Jovette Cortes-Meza, 16, a soon-to-be junior

from Overfelt High School. She loves animals and has plans to become a veterinarian or a marine biologist. As Jovette speaks about ghost stories and experiences in Mexico, you can see how cool and down to earth she is. She is bouncing around and grooving to the music blasting in her earbuds. Jovette wants everyone to follow suit when she walks with a cool swagger. She likes to bring up things like memes or dumb jokes that always manage to make you laugh. She always looks for strong connections with people, and wants her friendships to last. Jovette's close friends are more like her siblings, and she calls her mom her best friend. As an outspoken person, Jovette has strong political and social views that she wants to defend by speaking up for people who can't. She joined Mosaic as a way to speak for the voiceless as well as to get her own voice heard through journalism.

By Darryl Cereno

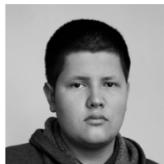


## JUDITH "JUDDY" OROZCO

Juddy Orozco, 17, an incoming senior at Andrew Hill High School, loves to take long road trips

across the nation with her mother every year. They travel by car instead of airplanes so that they can stop and admire the smaller magnificences en route to the final destination. The longest trip she and her mother made was from California to Maryland as well as going from California to Florida and back. Originally born and raised in Texas, Juddy moved to California last summer and has not looked back since. As she travels and meets new people, Juddy wants to share her adventures. Quickly falling in love with the idea of telling stories as well as covering issues she's passionate about, Juddy hopes to pursue a career in journalism.

By Zunera Ashar



## JUVENTINO CEJA

Juventino Ceja can make anyone feel comfortable as soon as they walk into the room and lives to make people laugh, usually by showing

the funniest videos you can find on the Internet. He is a rising junior at Overfelt High and loves to play video games and be on his phone during his free time. Juventino, 16, has the power to laugh off everything that people throw at him and continues trying to make as many friends as he can, saying always, "If you can't laugh at yourself, you're taking yourself way too seriously." When he isn't trying to make people laugh, he likes to study history and math. He practices mixed martial arts and plays French horn in the Overfelt Royal Band. When he isn't hanging around school or with his friends talking about the latest memes, he's at home playing Overwatch or watching Supernatural. He strives to go to UC Berkeley or San Francisco State to study engineering.

By Jocelynn Mijangos



## LUCY NINO

Lucy Nino, an incoming senior at Archbishop Mitty High School in San Jose, aspires to attend USC, NYU, or Boston University

to study communications. Lucy enjoys the thrills of Disneyland and the goosebumps that come from watching and performing in theater. Right away, you can tell that Disneyland is one of her favorite places because she speaks of her experiences in an excited tone that uplifts your mood. Although she has been to Michigan, Kentucky, New York and various places in California, she has yet to explore another country. As she imagines the places she could tour, Lucy thinks that Venice, Italy is the place that she would choose first. You can imagine her taking a boat ride through the Grand Canal and striding through a Renaissance art museum.

By Sophia Rodriguez



## SOPHIA RODRIGUEZ

Sophia Rodriguez, a recent graduate of Andrew Hill High School, was an active member of Andrew Hill's Latino Student Union, vice

president of the school's Gay-Straight Alliance and editor-in-chief of the yearbook. Her immense care for others is clear. One of Sophia's fondest memories is the distribution of the yearbook she was in charge of creating, when she felt nervous yet excited to watch her classmates receive it. Her experience as yearbook editor drew her to apply to Mosaic. When she isn't working hard, Sophia likes to come to downtown San Jose and immerse herself in the many cultures of the city by trying different types of foods, admiring architecture and art and shopping at newfound stores. She hopes her work helps bring about peace and reconciliation among different people.

By Lucy Nino



## ZUNERA ASHAR

The first time I met Zunera, we jumped from talking about how different cultures are and our similarity on being adventurers

who love to experience different cultures. Zunera had a way of speaking about topics that makes you intrigued to listen to what she has to say. Zunera, 17, is an incoming senior at Silver Creek High School and will become the editor-in-chief of her school newspaper. On the way to visiting relatives in Pakistan, she had the opportunity to visit London, Paris, Brussels and Dubai. Having the opportunity to visit different places sparked her interest in learning languages. Besides English, Zunera speaks Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi and reads Arabic fluently and Spanish and French semi-fluently. In the future, she aspires to become a software engineer in the Silicon Valley.

By Judith Orozco

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**The annual Mosaic Journalism Workshop** for Bay Area high school students offers aspiring reporters and photographers a taste of the real thing. Based at San Jose State University in the heart of the city, Mosaic students hit the streets for real stories under the guidance of professional journalists. According to our survey of Mosaic alumni, 14 percent become professional journalists and more than half go into related fields that require strong research and writing.

**The Mosaic** is a non-profit, education project supported by the Bay Area News Group, The Mercury News, San Jose State University, Dow Jones News Fund, California Chicano News Media Association, and local philanthropists.

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## Teen life

## Driving while **UNDOCUMENTED** and underage

Teens risk permit-less driving to support families, avoid government



Some local San Jose teens, like 16-year-old Pablo, risk driving despite not having permits or licenses. (Heriberto Cortes/Mosaic)

By **JOVETTE CORTES-MEZA**  
*Mosaic Staff Writer*

He leans over his shoulder, as his red-and-white shirt bounces against the blue SUV, he jingles the keys in his hands.

"I have been driving since I was 13. I do it for my parents, they insist I do," Pablo said.

Teens driving before they're even eligible for permits is a common occurrence in communities like East San Jose. According to Dana Hafter-Manza of Impact Teen Drivers, an organization geared toward teen auto safety, 70 percent of teen car wrecks are due to what she calls immature driving. That's on top of another startling statistic: that 50 percent of teens injured in wrecks are passengers.

That immaturity was on display as recently as last week, when Pablo, 16, locked his key in his car one

afternoon and had to wait until almost 3 a.m. to be helped out by his father.

But the families of these teens are relying on their children for everyday jobs to help support their homes.

Fifteen teens, all Overfelt High graduates or students, and their parents spoke to Mosaic on the issue. Their full identities have been withheld to protect their privacy and safety.

"I drop my mom off at work everyday. I am the only one who drives in my household," Alan, 16, said.

That need was echoed by Alan's mother Rosaria.

"I depend on him and he has to drive me and his father to work, or we won't be able to pay rent," she said.

"My parents depend on me to pick up my little sister from school everyday, my mom works at Fresco and works long hours. I drive more for my parents, not social," said Juan, 17.

Pablo, 16, a resident of

East San Jose, has numerous reasons for driving. He said he cannot depend on his parents to take him to work everyday and he does his best to give his younger brother time out of the house, including trips for fast food and the movies.

When asked why they don't turn to options like VTA or Uber and Lyft, the teens' answers varied from, "I don't have enough time to wait at the bus stop all day" to "If you think about it, \$2 every day is a lot more expensive than buying a car and gas."

But the risks they take aren't for a better social life. They admonish peers who joyride while they jeopardize their future to work and support their families.

"I got my truck for work and I put miles on it for work, not to take my friends to ditch and eat during school," said Jesus, 16.

But even after they become eligible for permits

and licenses, some residents are scared to have their name registered anywhere due to their immigration statuses. In 2016, the California Department of Motor Vehicles gave 800,000 undocumented immigrants licenses.

Out of the 15 teens who spoke to Mosaic, 10 of them were undocumented, and were afraid of the risks of breaking up their family.

"I don't want to risk having my brother growing up by himself if I were to get deported because I signed some DMV papers," said Jose, 18.

Jesus also identifies as an undocumented resident and also had echoed those concerns.

"My parents always told me if people asked if I was born in the U.S., even in school projects, I say I am born in San Jose," he said. "I wouldn't tell the government my information."

## School clubs work to ease peer pressure

*Link Crew pairs upperclassmen with newbies, eases transition and counters negative influences*

By **ANDREW BENITEZ**  
*Mosaic Staff Writer*

"As soon as I saw my friends were unfazed when buying drugs from juniors, I knew high school was different."

Thuytien Nguyen, an incoming sophomore at Silver Creek High School, was like many students about to enter a dramatically new environment, saying most aren't ready for what they're getting into.

"You're trying to get into a new system and school, and at the same time, you're trying to figure yourself out as a person, creating a whirling sense," said Laurie Weckesser, a longtime English teacher at Silver Creek High School.

Most peer pressure comes from upperclassmen, since they're the ones freshmen turn to, N00guyen said.

"Good or bad, juniors and seniors set the example for others to follow," she said.

Parents try to help their students transition from eighth grade to freshman year by talking to them.

"Every once in awhile my parents told me to not hang with the wrong group so I wouldn't get peer pressured into doing drugs," said Stanley, a student at Silver Creek.

But talking to parents about problems happening at school isn't something all students are comfortable with, leading them instead to turn to their teachers for guidance.

"Some feel as though they can't talk to parents about sensitive things, but for some it's because they feel since teachers are always in the (school) environment, they know best," Weckesser said.

Other students found themselves succumbing to peer pressure in some cases, calling it part of the high school experience.

"We were walking to Wendy's and my friend asked if I wanted to smoke weed and I immediately said yes, simple as that," said Stanley, whose full name has been withheld to protect his privacy.

Students who want to fulfill the need to fit in without giving in to harmful peer pressure turn to alternatives like after-school clubs.

"Getting myself into debate, even though I'm typically a shy person, saved me from falling, because it's easy to fall into that trap," Nguyen said.

To ease the transition from middle school to high school, the Link Crew program has increased its presence on campuses around the East Side Union High School District, most recently at Silver Creek. The program pairs upperclassmen with freshmen buddies to ensure an easier transition into high school.

"Link Crew combats the peer pressure freshmen face transition from eighth grade to freshman year by making sure that Link

Crew leaders know what to do when their freshmen talk to them about peer pressure," said Jasmin Lu, the 2017-2018 commissioner.

The organization utilizes the positive influences upperclassmen can have on freshmen by creating a bond during freshman orientation.

"Link Crew leaders guide freshmen through peer pressure and how to avoid it. Since Link Crew leaders are juniors and seniors, they have been in high school for two plus years and encountered similar events," Lu said.

Lu, who joined the program last year, keenly understands the challenges freshmen feel, since she had been through it herself.

"It's crucial for freshmen to know how to deal with peer pressure because it happens on a daily basis," she said, "and who would know more about facing the intimidation of their peers than the upperclassmen who have been through it themselves."

# Gender-neutral restrooms open on local campuses

*Despite some worry, openings at schools go smoothly and without trouble*

By **ALYSSA LOREDO**

*Mosaic Staff Writer*

San Jose's Lincoln High School is a trend-setter with two gender-inclusive restrooms, thanks to the efforts of the school's LGBT community.

"All the credit goes to the students," Lincoln Principal Matthew Hewitson said. "It's my job to be responsive of the community."

Hewitson posted a message after the school added the bathrooms in May 2016 to the Lincoln community about the gender-inclusive restrooms, each of which have several stalls, on the school's website: "For generations Lincoln students have upheld the 'Do Right' tradition and I am confident our students will handle this change with appreciation, maturity and respect."

Miranda Filbert is a non-LGBT sophomore, but she recognizes the value for others. "It's helpful for my LGBT friends," she said.

Not only is it beneficial for students with different gender identities, having inclusive restrooms makes it easier on non-LGBT students as well. Jose Orozcco, a junior from Lincoln said, "It's easier to get to class because you don't have to go halfway across the school to get to a

bathroom."

Even with an overwhelmingly positive response from students, parents had some concerns. Melanie Schlitzkus, mother of a sophomore, said she was worried about safety. "I'm just concerned because boys can use it," she said. "Boys in high school can be really immature."

Leticia Alcantar, a mother of an incoming senior at Overfelt High in San Jose, said, "I think it's a safety issue. I think girls should have their own facilities and boys should have their own, too."

Hewitson said the school addressed safety concerns. The school had administrators watching over the restrooms for the first few days when they opened in May 2016. The principal said students also have text lines available to report incidents in the restrooms. They had not been used at all, he said, adding that there were no reported incidents in the restrooms in the past year.

Some parents were supportive of adding bathrooms at other schools. Bernice Flores, a parent at Overfelt, thought that the inclusive bathrooms should be implemented there as well. "The whole purpose of these restrooms is for students to feel comfortable," she said. "I know



Lincoln High School principal Peter Hewitson shows off one of the school's gender-inclusive restrooms. (Alyssa Loredo/Mosaic)

how malicious high school students can be."

Lincoln won't be alone as San Jose Unified School District has taken it a step further, requiring every school in the district have a gender-inclusive restroom. Peter Allen, the public information officer at SJUSD, said that the decision was student driven. "It's to provide students with options, no matter what gender identity they're coming with," he said.

The trend is taking hold on college campuses, too. San Jose State University's Pride Center has a map of every gender-inclusive restroom on campus. Ghazaleh Fakhraadi, a manufacturing engineering major, said the presence isn't huge but she thinks it's awesome any-

way. "It's great that people have a choice," she said. "The most important thing is acceptance."

Alejandro Mondragon, an Overfelt student, said he would welcome the inclusion of restrooms at school. "There's only one on campus, and it's in the office, so sometimes you can't get to it."

But he favored a slow pace. "I feel like we need to take baby steps," he said. "I feel like we have more traditional people on the East Side."

Overfelt Principal Vito Chia-la said administration, students and staff discussed the inclusion of gender neutral restrooms and plan to have several single user inclusive restrooms in the future.



On Lok Lifeways puts the SENIOR in senior prom



A Great Gatsby-themed senior prom was held at the On Lok Lifeways senior center in San Jose on June 1, where (clockwise from top left) Zebedee Hall Jr. and Diana Landucci share a laugh among the festivities, Karen Schneider, 67, remembers her first senior prom back in 1967 and Huong Vo (left) and Lan Lai are crowned king and queen.

Photos by Jennifer Ramirez/Mosaic.

**ANXIETY, from page 1**

The report found that of all emotional disorders affecting children, anxiety is by far the most common. Yet 80 percent of children with this disorder are not getting treatment for it, putting them at risk for misbehaving, social phobia, separation anxiety and even depression and suicidal thoughts.

Left untreated, anxiety becomes more intense as a child transitions into teen years, according to the National Center for Children in Poverty.

To close the treatment gap, some schools are starting to create support centers to aid students with disorders such as anxiety. Santa Clara High School has an on-campus program that provides individual therapy, group therapy and crisis support.

The Wellness Center has interns that provide therapy for the students

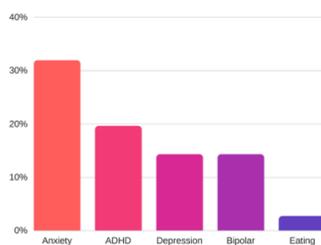
urgent, but we try to see every student who seeks out help," said Anita Amador, who interned at the center last year.

The center raises awareness by having posters and signs throughout campus, having presentations for parents and students during open house, and staff trainings.

Amador worked with students who had anxiety, and noticed the way it hits different people.

"Some students avoid going to class, can't concentrate on their work, or have sleeping issues that impact their school work. Emotionally, they begin to alienate themselves from others, or not be interested in

Research conducted by the Child Mind Institute reveals the percentage of teens from ages 13-18 who are suffering with these disorders.



because I don't know them," Elizabeth said, adding that because of her anxiety, she is also unable to give a presentation or place an order at restaurants and fast-food places.

"I can't even order things, my mom has to do it," Elizabeth said.

Elizabeth's mother, Lisa, has been one of her daughter's biggest supporters.

Anxiety disorders could be caused by various factors, such as brain chemistry, personality and life events, according to the Anxiety and Depression Association of America. Genetics can also play a role.

Elizabeth's mother has suffered symptoms of depression and anxiety since childhood, though she was not diagnosed till years later. At Santa Teresa High School, which she attended in the '90s, mental health was not talked about.

And at home, what she heard was "Suck it up. Don't cry." She tried.

"I would tell myself to be tough," Lisa said.

She lived her whole life not knowing what she was dealing with, until her sister suggested it was anxiety. But she didn't go to the doctor until suicidal thoughts started to form in her mind.

"I started having thoughts that I shouldn't have had and I realized I needed help," Lisa said.

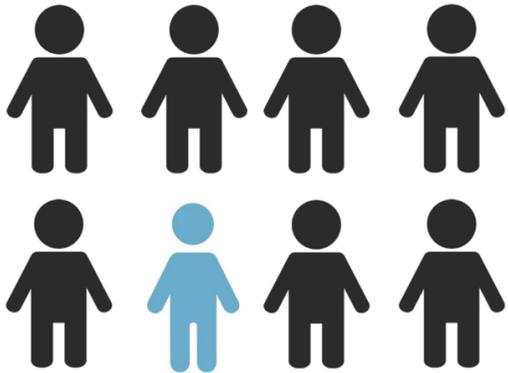
Her voice quivered as she explained how realizing that she had anxiety and depression felt like a weight lifted off her shoulders, because she would begin to get help for something that she didn't know she had been dealing with her whole life.

Sandoval, Santa Clara High's wellness coordinator, believes that parents are key to helping a child improve. Knowing they have their parents' support could make the treatment process a bit easier, she said. She wants to bring awareness to mental health.

"It's not talked about in American culture. That's what I'm hoping to change," she said.

Graphics by ZUNERA ASHAR

### According to the Anxiety and Depression Association of America, anxiety disorders affect one in eight children.



who need it. Coordinator Michelle Sandoval, who works with students, knows that anxiety affects students' school work.

"It affects the brain. Students get in this mood of thinking about their safety, which stops them from coming to school," Sandoval said.

Andrew Hill High School in San Jose also has a Student Support Center where students can speak with counselors when they feel depressed or anxious. The center offers crisis intervention and one-on-one counseling sessions, and is staffed by one full-time social worker and unpaid interns. The center logged 1,000 student visits this year.

"Sometimes the support center gets overwhelming. Working there, you have to triage the situations as they come. Students may get pushed to the next day if it's not

what they used to be interested in. Physically, they may not shower or keep up how they look, which is one of the first signs of anxiety and depression," Amador said.

While these student support and wellness centers are getting created, many teens still remain uninformed. Elizabeth, who attends a San Jose private school, said schools need to do more to raise awareness of emotional disorders.

"They don't talk to us about those types of things," Elizabeth said.

Growing up with anxiety, she has learned ways to control it herself without having to go to her mother. She turns to music to relax her, or stops herself from watching something that could cause a panic attack.

School still affects her.

"Meeting new teachers scares me

## Ice cream 'paletera' lady wins over students, parents

*Gloria serves popsicles and cones with dignity and joy*

By JUDITH OROZCO  
Mosaic Staff Writer

Bells ring and children start lining up at the paletaria cart selling ice cream treats outside Horace Mann Elementary School in downtown San Jose.

"Quiero una paleta, quiero una paleta," a little brunette girl tells her mother in Spanish, tugging on her mother's pants and demanding an ice cream.

"Ten esta" Gloria, the paletera worker, replies, telling the girl the ice cream is in her hand. The little girl grins when she receives the treat and thanks her.

For the past 12 years, Gloria has been pushing her cart through the streets of downtown San Jose, selling popsicles, ice cream sandwiches and other treats for Paletaria Hermanos. At Horace Mann, she's formed friendships with the parents, many of whom she now knows by name.

"Hola, como estas?" Gloria says, greeting a parent. "Bien y tu?" the parent replies, answering the greeting.

Parents are a key that help her know when school is on holiday or gets out early.

"I like my job a lot. I really, really like it," Gloria says in Spanish, as she smiles at the children devouring her ice cream. She makes small talk with them and gets them to laugh.

She's originally from Mexico but came to the United States in 1981. Since arriving in the U.S., Gloria had a variety of jobs, from working in factories to working in



Cold treats get a warm reception at Horace Mann Elementary school. (Judith Orozco/Mosaic)

the kitchen, until she started selling paletas to children.

On a good day, she sells up to \$250 of ice cream. If the weather is sunny it'll give her more money, but if it's windy or cold, she won't get as much. At the moment, she lives in a room because it's in her budget, but she says she's grateful to have a job.

Gloria works six days a week, sometimes seven. Work starts at 7:30 a.m. for her at the Paletaria Hermanos office. When she arrives, she gets her cart and

begins her day by foot.

Gloria has been selling paletas for so long, she already knows where to go to get the most business. When school is in session, she goes to apartment complexes and neighborhoods where the business is good. Around 2 p.m., she visits downtown elementary schools.

Going to Spanish-speaking places is helpful because she's able to communicate better with customers of the same culture.

Around 7 p.m., Gloria returns to the company and heads home. If she needs to use the restroom or eat, she stops along the way and continues on her way.

In the summer, business is good in parks, since the children will be playing and want ice cream when they see her. Walking all day long in the sun is hard, but she has grown accustomed to it, wearing a hat and seeking shade.

Graduation days for elementary school children also pay well, since the children bring their families, which means more business.

In winter, business doesn't end. Instead the focus is on a different product - tamales, churros and chicharones, which attract teens and adults.

Since she found the job, she has not left because she loves it. Gloria says she loves to see the smiles on children's faces when they receive ice cream, and enjoys her long walks.

"Work is work, and we have to do what we can to survive."

## Resources

**NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION HOTLINE**  
800 273-8255

**TEEN YOUTH HOTLINE**  
1-888-247-7717

**CRISIS LINE 24HRS**  
408 279-8228

**ALMADEN VALLEY COUNSELING SERVICES**  
6529 Crown Blvd. Suite D  
San Jose, CA 95120  
408 997-0200

Offers low-cost services to teenagers, with services provided by therapist interns.

**ADVENT GROUP MINISTRIES**  
90 Great Oaks Blvd., Ste. 10  
San Jose, CA 95119  
408 281-0708 x822  
5 p.m. - 9 p.m., Monday - Thursday

Offers counseling and psychotherapy to teenagers, at no cost or low cost based on income.

**YWCA HEALING CENTER COUNSELING SERVICES**  
408 295-4011 x259

Offers on-campus counseling to students in San Jose Unified School District for issues including anxiety. Low-cost services for other students located in downtown San Jose clinic at 375 S 3rd St, San Jose, CA 95112.

**LAS PLUMAS MENTAL HEALTH CENTER**  
1650 Las Plumas Ave. #K  
San Jose, CA 95133  
408 272-6726

Helps people with mental illnesses; low cost

**ALUM ROCK COUNSELING SERVICES**  
1245 East Santa Clara St.  
San Jose, CA 95116  
408 294-5000

Offers outpatient and therapeutic behavioral services to youth.

# Arts+Entertainment

## FACES OF SUBZERO

Artists flood San Jose's SoFA District for the combined SubZero Festival and First Friday Art Walk in early June. From top-bottom, left-right: Michael Travis Osterback greets visitors to his Good News Wood Salvation booth, Teddy Cruz dedicates his "Urban Rooms," Courtney Hartman dances inside Laurie Shapiro's installation, "Before You Were Born" at the San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles, "William Schaff stands by his "Fly Me to the Moon" painting at Anno Domini, Andrew Heine works with acrylic, Frank Jerolimov sets up scale model Burning Man sculpture and calligrapher Ken Davis creates a sign.

PHOTOGRAPHS  
BY ZUNERA ASHAR  
HERIBERTO CORTES  
JENNIFER RAMIREZ





Artist Ketra Oberlander, who lost much of her sight at age 40, speaks about her exhibition, "Homo Identus," at the Triton Museum of Art in Santa Clara. (Zunera Ashar / Mosaic)

## Blind artist explores identity of disabled people

By **ASHLEY TORRES**  
Mosaic Staff Writer

After Ketra Oberlander became visually impaired in mid-life, she pursued an art career to share her story among art enthusiasts and disabled individuals.

"People would ask me, 'what can you see?' and what they really mean is, what can't you see," she said, adding that she decided to "just paint what I see and that way people will understand. I'll have this way to communicate with them."

And communicate is what Oberlander does in her new art installation at the Triton Museum of Art in Santa Clara. "Homo Identus" explores how society's depiction of disabled individuals is inaccurate, and will run until Aug. 13.

"This is my chance to do something new, to say something meaningful -- to create a body of work that can work on an international level, and I decided to absolutely go for it," said the visually impaired artist.

Oberlander, 54, became visually impaired at age 40 due to

cone dystrophy, a rare genetic disorder that alters the color receptors in the human eye.

"I'm colorblind, but I'm sure I see color," said Oberlander at the museum's Brown Bag Lunch discussion. She understands what color is partially due to her mind's perception of color. Aside from this, her vision is completely distorted.

It's like "spreading vasoline on your glasses and staring into the sun," Oberlander said.

Before her art endeavors, Oberlander worked with the alternative press in Kansas City, and transitioned to freelance journalism for the Web in the early 2000s. However, she wished to share her experiences with visual loss through a form of expression other than writing.

"Because I was a writer and an editor, I was aware of how language can be used to communicate," Oberlander said, adding that she decided the "best media of expression for what I was expressing was not a lingual thing."

She began painting after enrolling in an adult art course offered by the Santa Clara Unified School District in 2003.

"No one was more surprised when people liked my art than me," Oberlander said.

The positive reaction received from her art displayed in group shows with the Santa Clara Art Association encouraged her to pursue an art career full-time.

The "Homo Identus" art installation, which took 16 months to prepare, contains hundreds of figurines shaped as male and female figures. The people symbols were chosen "because it's about people and [the message] needed to reach people faster."

The exhibit was inspired by her desire "to find a new way to express the limitations of disability in a community."

She used modern technological art tools, such as laser-cutters, to carve out each piece. Each figure embodies an individual in her life, and how she sees them as a part of her life. She uses a broad assortment of colors and textures to represent the vibrant personalities of each person she has chosen.

"I liked thinking through whether or not I was capturing that person as I saw them and them speculating, having fun

with the flights of fancy, about how they might see how I see them," said Oberlander.

Apart from "Homo Identus," Oberlander has three pieces on display in the museum's Warburton Gallery. Each work in "ArtsAble: Seeing the Unseen" was done by physically impaired artists, such as Mary Dignan, a deaf and blind mosaic artist.

Oberlander's untitled works consist of oil as the art medium on canvas. A detailed portrait of a purple flower and another of a wave crashing on the rocks along the coastline contain hues of purples and blues and a coarse texture to bring the vivid images to life.

In 2008, Oberlander opened up the Art of Possibility Studios in Santa Clara. The business was designed for disabled artists to have their art licensed. However, in 2012, it shut down due to revenue problems.

"I realized many of the obstacles have nothing to do with the disability," Oberlander said. "It's other people's perception of the disability that is the far greater problem than the disability itself. Hands down."

## Virtual reality exhibit bridges gap between tech and public

**"Our mission is to inspire the innovator in everyone."**  
— Marika Krause, public relations manager, the Tech Museum



Neesha Pammi tries out Birdly, a multisensory virtual reality experience at The Tech Museum of Innovation in San Jose. (Heriberto Cortes/Mosaic)

*Museumgoers take virtual flight and sculpt with digital clay*

By **SOPHIA RODRIGUEZ**  
Mosaic Staff Writer

You are soaring high above the Manhattan Skyline, feeling the cool breeze on your face. Looking down at the rooftops of thousands of buildings, your muscles begin to ache from flapping your wings, but the view is so beautiful and the experience so mind-blowing, you cannot help but continue your flight.

Suddenly, as Manhattan Beach comes into view, the words "Simulation is Over," appear before your eyes. Removing your headset, you prepare to visit the other stations at the "dig-

ital experience lab" that is Reboot Reality.

Opened on May 26 as a permanent exhibit at the Tech Museum of Innovation in San Jose, Reboot Reality contains several virtual reality (VR) simulations created by technology companies such as Google and Adobe, with the help of artists and researchers.

In addition to Birdly, which simulates flying, Reboot Reality includes Wetbrush by Adobe, which allows you to create 3D paintings on a screen; Tilt Brush by Google, where you use a headset to create 3D art pulled from your imagination; and Medi-

um by Oculus, where you experience 3D sculpting with digital clay. Each of these interactive simulations are intended for people 13 years of age and older, but Reboot Reality includes others for younger children.

The purpose of Reboot Reality is to bridge the gap between the public and tech companies, to ensure that the public has access to new innovations they cannot afford. The Tech hopes that this influences the younger generations to take up careers in the STEM industry.

"Our mission is to inspire the innovator in everyone and a big piece of that is making sure every kid has access to STEM education and feels confident to pursue a career in STEM. We also hope to inspire people to use technology to solve big prob-

lems," said Marika Krause, the Tech's public relations manager.

A Reboot Reality goer, Ying Liang, 24, believes that children would benefit from this lab because it would put them in touch with their creative side and inspire them to work in the technology industry. Liang said that an exhibit such as Wetbrush by Adobe is particularly accessible to kids since they simply use a digital brush to make realistic paintings.

Liang added that while virtual reality could be treated simply as a toy, it could also become a valuable tool.

Krause agreed. She pointed to the Diridon Project by Gensler, which allows you to walk into a world where you can see the blueprints of a building translated into 3D before construction begins.

Krause said a simulation such as this can improve the life of architects because they would be able to virtually step into a building before it is physically created.

Neesha Pammi, 44, also a museum-goer, said that she can see how a virtual reality system could be used in the workplace, as her husband is an architect and is beginning to work with a system similar to the Diridon Project.

Simulations can also improve communities by helping people develop their sense of empathy, said Clarissa Buettner, a gallery program specialist. She pointed to Stanford University's Human Interaction lab, where Reboot Reality visitors can live the life of a homeless person and experience the struggles they go through on a daily basis.

In the simulation, you sit at your desk, staring at the few valuables still in your possession. Your landlord knocks, asking for the rent money you owe, moments before evicting you. After selling what's left of your valuables, you begin to sleep on an overnight bus, dealing with sex offenders, thieves, and the anxiety of getting back on your feet.

Pammi can attest to how real the simulations feel. In addition to the Diridon Project, Pammi also tried flying with Birdly. She said that the experience actually made her feel dizzy afterwards. During her first ride on Birdly, her husband encouraged her to take a dive from the skyline, down to the streets of Manhattan and she said, "You can go all the way down, but there's no way I'm going to do that."

# Arts+Entertainment

## Grade school students explain global events at San Jose City Hall rotunda



Fifth graders from Horace Mann Elementary show off school projects based on current events at San Jose City Hall. Issues explored included pollution, pay inequities, and LGBTQ issues. (Heriberto Cortes/Mosaic)

By **DARRYL CERENO**  
Mosaic Staff Writer

The City Hall rotunda had circles of tables, all with cardboard posters labeled with topics such as bullying, pollution and immigration. The fifth-graders were standing in groups of four to six in front of their posters, and gave the parents and observers short lectures.

The Horace Mann Elementary Exhibition is an annual event held at City Hall that their fifth graders use to educate themselves on current issues and propose solutions to these problems.

The coordinator of the Horace Mann Exhibition, Ramon Sanchez, and the principal, Lori Gustafson, said the children are taught to research about current issues throughout their elementary school years.

"They learn about a lot of different topics and

issues over the years through the planners (lesson plans) that we do with them. And then in fifth grade they are really able to showcase something they are passionate about, and take action," Gustafson said.

The children displayed a high level of education as they talked about their projects. Despite being fifth graders, they spoke with the vocabulary of a high schooler, and they had prepared evidence to back up claims they made.

The students spoke with a fire in their voices, demonstrating a desire to move forward and address these problems with legitimate solutions.

One of the projects that stuck out was about water contamination, a controversial topic because of issues such as Flint, Michigan's water crisis. The kids cited how over 750,000 children have died every year due to water contamination in the world, and they listed several ways to avoid con-

taminated water, and even ways on how to help fix the issue.

Another project of interest was made by Horace Mann's special education class about littering. They discussed topics ranging from why people would litter, to facts like how men are more likely to litter than women.

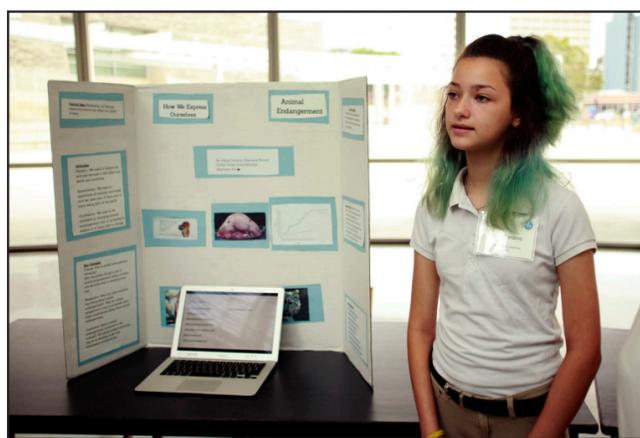
The kids had an intimacy with their projects, and seeing all the hard work they poured into them, it was evident that they wish to see their solutions put into action. They want to push for change in the world and make a difference.

"Expressing our feelings, ideas and actions affects our global society" was the central idea displayed in the project about gender equality, and it illustrated the purpose of the Horace Mann Exhibition.

"Our goal is to create a global citizen," Gustafson said.



Left, Ivonne Ramirez brings fifth graders from Horace Mann Elementary show to show off their Exhibition projects. Right, Kiana Cordova, a fifth grader at Horace Mann, stands by her school project on endangered animals. (Heriberto Cortes/Mosaic)



## Manchester attack puts spotlight on security

### San Jose venues make guest safety a priority

By **LUCY NINO**  
Mosaic Staff Writer

Fans young and old went out to have fun and forget their troubles for a night at Ariana Grande's May 22 concert at Manchester Arena in England. But the three-hour show ended in tragedy and fear after a suicide bomber killed 22 people and injured 59 more.

Before the attack, the scene in Manchester was very familiar to a night in late March in San Jose, where Grande filled SAP Center with nearly 12,000 fans. The Manchester tragedy provides a grim wake-up call for venues in Silicon Valley that regularly bring in large crowds.

The San Jose McEnery Convention Center often draws large crowds with events such as the recent Fanime convention, which saw a crowd of 34,000. The City National Civic Auditorium is a hotspot for electronic dance music (EDM) shows, the Center for

Performing Arts hosts Broadway tours and the California Theater is the residence of the Symphony Silicon Valley and Opera San Jose.

And thousands of people came to downtown San Jose this week for Apple's Worldwide Developer Conference (WWDC), an annual technology convention hosted by the Cupertino tech giant featuring CEO Tim Cook.

Angela Smith, an incoming freshman at University of Colorado in Boulder, is a frequent Bay Area concertgoer who said the Manchester attack has made her more wary of where she is, yet it doesn't discourage her from going to more shows. "Added security would definitely be OK," Smith said. "Usually it's just a bag search and maybe a pat down, but I have security checks down, so it's pretty quick."

Megan Sidlow also has some concerns about an Aug. 2 concert she's planning to attend at Oracle

Arena. "I'm a little worried about the Ed Sheeran concert," said Sidlow, a rising senior at Branham High School in San Jose. She fears the show could be a huge target for terrorism because its location in the Bay Area and Ed Sheeran together symbolize Western culture and innovation.

But officials at San Jose venues like the City National Civic and SAP Center are confident in their emergency and security measures, which they say are being constantly refined.

"We work very closely, in all the venues, with the promoters and/or clients that lease the properties," said Diana Gruber, director of safety, security and parking at Team San Jose, which manages the City National Civic. Gruber said if Team San Jose doesn't feel that a client has asked for sufficient protection, the agency works with them on greater precautions.

The level of security depends on the type of event. For example, the Sesame Street shows during the weekend of June 10 at the City National Civic would not require guests to go through a metal detector, Gruber said. Stricter safeguards are enforced

at corporate events, on the other hand, such as the use of badges and extensive bag checks. Gruber noted that the security of tech events -- like Apple's WWDC -- has changed over past years from a "nonchalant" atmosphere to a more "controlling" one.

These safety procedures function best when guests work with security forces, though. "If we don't get warned about something that could possibly look strange, be weird, not sure of, then that possibility [of an incident] gets greater," Gruber said.

Team San Jose's Vice President of Marketing and Communications Laura Chmielewski agreed. "You've got to be hyper vigilant, you've got to know that anything can happen anywhere at anytime," Chmielewski said.

The same principles apply to security at SAP Center, where Jim Sparaco, director of public relations and business operations for Sharks Sports & Entertainment, said that SAP staff is ready to act in an emergency. "We've prepped for it, we've planned for it, we have procedures in place that we practice and review," he said.

SAP Center partners with the

San Jose Police Department and the San Jose Fire Department to protect its guests. The two departments have jurisdiction over the outside perimeters of the building, while SAP Center is responsible for the building itself.

The metal detectors and bag checks that are a constant presence at SAP are only part of the security picture. Most guests know about the big and small security policies in effect all the time in the arena, but not the ones behind the scenes.

For example, radio station pop-ups that were usually just outside the building's exit before concerts will be moved further from the arena and into the nearby parking lots. SAP Center also pays close attention to the amount of staff at every event, sure to employ enough guards and ushers accordingly.

"We will continue to look at our procedures and make sure we are at the forefront of doing everything we can to make sure that our patrons are secure," Sparaco said.



Neil Farris owns Hijinx Comics, the oldest comic book store in San Jose. (Heriberto Cortes/Mosaic)

## Comic book stores strive to ride **SUPERHERO** wave

As comic book culture takes off, shops looking for ways to bring in new customers

By **ALYSSA LOREDO**

*Mosaic Staff Writer*

Geek culture is booming, with movies like “Avengers: Age of Ultron” making \$1 billion at the box office in a matter of weeks. But with superheroes being the rage these days, are comic book shops sharing in the success?

There are 10 comic shops in Santa Clara County, with just three of them -- Hijinx Comics, SpaceCat Comics and Art Boutiki -- in San Jose. That’s a big drop from a generation ago, according to one shop owner.

“In 1994 there were 94 comic shops in San Jose alone,” said Bruce Tritch, owner of SpaceCat Comics on West San Carlos Street.

For at least the past decade, comic books have also been available in digital format, so you might think that explains where readers have gone. But of the \$1.03 billion the industry made in 2015 according to retail tracker Comichron, only \$90 million was sold digitally. A Washington Post study in 2014 showed only 9 percent of millennials liked reading books in that format.

And buying digital copies of comic books isn’t cheaper, either. The digital version of a comic book costs the same amount as a physical copy.

But a good part of comic book sales may be going to collections called trade paperbacks, which are popular on retail sites like Amazon.com and Barnes & Noble.

“It’s so much easier, I just don’t like to go into the store and see if they have the comic book I

want,” Erik Guzman 17, from San Jose said. “But I would go to a comic book store if I knew of any.”

But for other readers, price does play a part. “Why would I spend money on them when I could read them online for free?” said Malik Brown, 27, a San Jose resident who said he’s not very invested in the collecting culture. “I’ve never been very organized,” he said. “It’s so much easier to access them online.”

Popular legal online reading sites such as Crunchyroll, Comixology, and Weekly Shonen Jump make it easier for fans who want to keep up with their favorites without paying.

There’s a social factor many miss out on when they read online or buy their books from big retailers, however. “When I was in fifth and sixth grade I would go to the store with my friends. I used to read the original Ninja Turtles. We all liked Wolverine,” 40-year-old Joaquin Alcantar of San Jose said.

Tritch, the owner of SpaceCat, agrees about the social aspect. “You don’t get the interaction,” he said. “My customers are my customers because they don’t want to support Amazon and Barnes & Noble.”

Tritch reciprocates that appreciation with his customers. He goes through an order form at the end of every week to ensure he’s getting what people want. He loves to see his employees help customers find comic books they want to read and suggest new series.

“The best part of interacting is connecting with the inner child in everyone; finding their joy, and sense of wonder,” he said.



Some shops have expanded by selling other pop-culture items as well. “I sell Funko Pops, and fidget spinners,” Anna Cebrian, the owner of Illusive Comics and Games in Santa Clara, said. “If a mom comes in to buy a spinner, she might pick up a comic for her kid. Conversely, if a kid comes in for comic books, they might pick up a toy.”

Despite the challenges and the shrinking number of stores, comic book shop owners are optimistic that as geek culture takes over pop culture, new faces will pop in their stores.

“I hope more people come in,” said Neil Farris, who has owned Hijinx Comics on Lincoln Avenue for the past eight years. “I think we’re doing just fine.”

Farris has 150 people subscribed to his comic service, showing him that they would rather subscribe through him than through an online service like Comixology or directly from publishers like DC and Marvel. And comic-book culture’s mainstream acceptance is a big part of that, too. “We’ve eliminated the nerd factor,” Farris said.

## Youth crimes come down to need and want, teens say

For some young people, crime pays the bills

By **JOCELYNN MIJANGOS**

*Mosaic Staff Writer*

When San Jose residents look at the city’s crime rate, they may automatically think that an adult committed the crimes.

After all, in the past month, 34 percent of recorded crimes were known to have been committed by an adult, according to San Jose police. Those same figures say 3 percent were committed by juveniles.

But that might not tell the whole story, because 63 percent of crimes during that period were declared inconclusive about who did them. And according to interviews with police as well as teens who talked to Mosaic about committing crimes in the city, that number for teens is likely higher than just 3 percent.

Police say the majority of those crimes involve stealing.

“The No. 1 property crime is auto theft. Residential burglary is a close second,” said Lt. Gregory Lombardo of the San Jose Police Department. “Property crimes are easy to commit and are lower risk for the teen in terms of being caught. Breaking into cars and houses usually don’t involve any confrontation with potential victims.”

Some teens said their families have fallen into hard times and that they had to resort to stealing to help support them. Mosaic is withholding the full names of teens who admitted to crimes in interviews to protect their privacy.

Angel said his family needed help paying for basic needs, making him risk his clean record.

“I needed to pay bills,” said Angel, 16. “Car payments, house payments, gas bills, electricity bills, grocery shopping, you know, trying to help out my family. We needed it quick, we were desperate. I

had to help my parents somehow.”

Some teens like 15-year-old Joe felt as if that stealing was something they needed to do to have money in case of an emergency.

“It’s easy money. Yeah, you can get caught, but if you need money you gotta do what you gotta do,” Joe said.

However, Lombardo disagreed with the notion that most teens are committing crimes out of necessity.

“Most of the teens are reluctant to give information about why they commit the crimes. Obviously, property crimes will yield something of monetary value, but it’s unclear exactly why they commit the crimes to begin with,” Lombardo said. “However, I don’t think that I have heard any teenage suspect say that they committed a crime to support their families.”

Lucky, another 16-year-old San Jose resident, said he resorted to crime for the thrill of it. He said he was in the sixth grade when he and his friends jumped a teen boy, pointed a gun at him, and made him walk home without any shoes or pants.

“Many of us have different reasons, whether it was they were talkin’ (expletive) or under the influence, most of us know that it is for the fast money,” Lucky said.

When he was committing crimes, he said, it didn’t matter to him whether his family was struggling.

“I was always kicked out of my house by my actual family, and I was starting to be with my friends a lot and they would do stuff like rob places or steal cars,” Lucky said. “And you know I looked up to them, and I was wondering why I wasn’t doing it. So I started doing the exact same things they did because they were in the end my family.”

## Entertainment creating awareness of social issues

Shows like Netflix’s ‘13 Reasons Why’ are bringing up important topics for today’s teens

By **ISAIAH AGUIRRE**

*Mosaic Staff Writer*

Mental health, gender identity and immigration are subjects seeing more mass media coverage in American society today than ever before. But entertainment, such as television shows and movies, has also become a powerful force in social change.

The Netflix original series “13 Reasons Why” and its storylines involving teenage bullying and suicide have inspired many teens in America to discuss those issues. The show has drawn some criticism for its handling of these topics, but it also has been praised for spreading awareness.

Luis Magaña, an openly gay graduate of Andrew Hill High School in San Jose, sees such involvement as a positive. Having feared scorn from family members and strangers because of his sexual orientation, Magaña likes that the industry “is going out and spreading the word to those who aren’t aware.”

“Younger audiences tend to be more receptive,” Magaña said, when it comes to the themes presented in television, making it more likely for them to empathize with those struggling today.

Storytelling has long been a means of passing on information. And modern storytelling has long had a reputation for taking on themes considered taboo for their times.

Movie adaptations such as Harper Lee’s “To Kill a Mockingbird” and musicals including John Waters’ “Hairspray,” have brought social issues such as racism and segregation to audiences for generations.

More recent programs have presented themes that would have been near-impossible to create in the past. Mental health and suicide could be considered commonplace television themes today, but would be scarcely found in the past. The growth of multicultural shows and casts stems from more concern for cultural identity, racial divides and immigration.

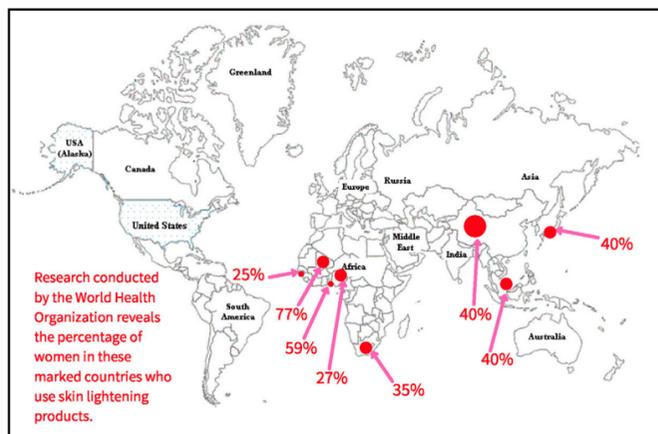
The entertainment industry’s spotlight on social issues may be even more relevant than ever. With increasing access to the Internet and streaming services, more Americans, especially younger generations, are telling their stories through entertainment programs in order to increase discussion and awareness.

Young adults around the Bay Area facing discrimination and other issues, like Magaña, have some praise for the entertainment industry’s catalog of socially involved works. But others have shown more mixed opinions about the topic.

Seventeen-year-old Jade Martinez is half-Mexican and half-Lao -- from the Southeast Asian country Laos -- and says people are sometimes confused about her race or claim she isn’t “Mexican enough” or “Asian enough.”

Martinez said she has enjoyed modern works such as the movie, “The Edge of Seventeen,” a young girl’s coming-of-age story, and it’s “refreshing” take on racial depictions. But her views on the industry’s work as a whole are not entirely positive. Martinez doesn’t see the industry as doing enough for the people facing conflicts today.

“I don’t think the entertainment industry is doing a bad job,” she said, “but I do think so much more can be done.”

**COLORIZE, from page 1**

avoid playing out in the sun because they may tan and become too dark.

“My mom doesn’t want me to tan,” Amanda Nguyen said, a 16-year-old Vietnamese and Filipino girl from Milpitas. “I can definitely see that my Filipino side of the family and its community generally want their children to appear lighter.”

Kamidi would sometimes try to explain to her mother that there’s nothing wrong with being dark, with little success. Her mother grew up in India in the time where remnants from British colonization and the mindset that lighter was better remained strong.

“The media in India will glorify anyone who is light skinned or has Eurocentric features,” Kamidi said. “On one hand, I get why my mom believes that I should have lighter skin, but then on the other hand I try to change her perspective too.”

The message that fairness equates beauty can result in young girls disliking their own appearance. Chinemerem Nwuzi, a 17-year-old Nigerian who lives in San Jose, recalls when she was 11 years old and didn’t feel comfortable in her own skin because there was no representation for black women. “Even the black women in the media were of lighter skin color and didn’t have natural curly hair,” Nwuzi said.

Companies take advantage of these women’s insecurities to sell them skin bleaching products. According to research conducted by the World Health Organization, 61 percent of the dermatological market in India consists of skin lightening products.

Lihem Russom, an 18-year-old Eritrean in San Jose, realizes the hypocrisy when people who are naturally light-skinned are praised for looking golden when they get a spray tan, but people who have that skin color naturally aren’t even acknowledged. “They have that skin tone for a few months and we have it for our entire lives,” Russom said. “When they have it, it’s amazing, but when it’s on us, it’s seen as ugly.”

Fair and Lovely, an Indian company, creates popular skin bleaching products used commonly in many South Asian countries but is also marketed internationally. Their advertisements consist of videos of dark skinned women who cannot obtain a husband or achieve their dream goal — whether it’s modeling, acting, dancing or business — unless they lighten their skin using the company’s products.

Kamidi says she feels betrayed whenever Indian celebrities endorse these skin lightening products. “I feel like we should be moving forward and teaching young kids that it’s OK to have darker skin, not that they should make it lighter,” Kamidi said. “I wish there was more being done by celebrities who have a voice.”

With social media, though, people can voice their opinion against the idea of bleaching skin. A movement took place in 2016 on Instagram and Twitter called #UnfairAndLovely where South Asian girls would post pictures of themselves and speak out about how women can still be beautiful without having to lighten their skin color. Similarly, #BlackOutDay was also created in 2016 but specifically for black people to post pictures of themselves to represent themselves in an ordinary light instead of like the idolized lighter-skinned blacks in show business.

“I would see these darker black women on Twitter who are just so beautiful and it made me realize that there is nothing wrong with my skin color,” Nwuzi said.

Kamidi recalls being torn between thoughts that there is nothing wrong with being dark-skinned and feeling she wasn’t pretty enough because of her skin color. “It was those posts from the #UnfairAndLovely movement that made me realize how beautiful those people are regardless of their skin color,” Kamidi said.

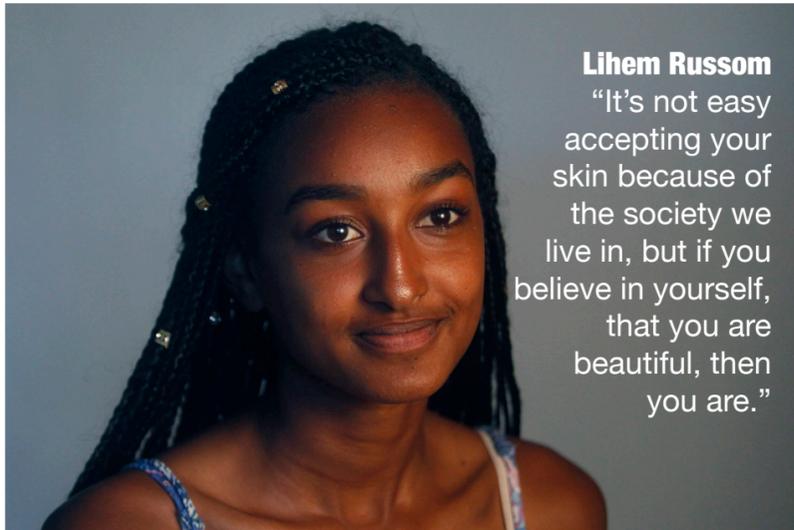
“People should not alter their appearance just so others deem them as pretty because beauty is subjective and a social construct,” Nguyen said. “Focus on yourself and how you treat other people and that’s what really important than what’s on the outside.”



**Sanya Kamidi**  
“My friends who are lighter than me would always be called beautiful and light and so I ended up always associating beauty with fairness.”



**Amanda Nguyen**  
“People should not alter their appearance just so others deem them as pretty because beauty is subjective and a social construct.”



**Lihem Russom**  
“It’s not easy accepting your skin because of the society we live in, but if you believe in yourself, that you are beautiful, then you are.”

Photos and map by Zunera Ashar / Mosaic.

## San Jose flood victims struggle to recover months later

Residents cope with displacement, building new lives

By **ASHLEY TORRES**  
Mosaic Staff Writer

Three months after the Coyote Creek flooding, many residents of the Rock Springs and Naglee Park neighborhoods in San Jose are still struggling to recover.

“The flood affected my academic life, and school was harder for me. I didn’t realize how home was so precious to me,” said 16-year-old Daris Duong, who has lived in the Rock Springs area near Happy Hollow Park for five years and was displaced after the floods.

His family of six lived on the second floor of their apartment complex on Rock Springs Drive, and was advised to evacuate around noon on Feb. 21, as the creek’s waters rose.

His family was transported to safety by firefighters in a red raft. They took shelter in his aunt’s apartment near Oak Hill Memorial Park. As a junior attending Yerba Buena High School, Duong recalls it

being harder to focus in school because he was in a new environment.

“I was more stressed out and felt really displaced,” he said. “My aunt’s place is really loud so it was harder for me to focus.”

Duong returned to his home on June 2, but his family is still trying to replace as much of their belongings as they can.

He said his father’s vehicle, which was expected to be his as soon as he received his driver’s license, was completely destroyed.

Despite the the flood losses, Duong said he tries “to keep a positive attitude and be happy.”

Lee, a landlord with two apartment buildings in the Rock Springs area, said that his tenants lost not only their belongings but their homes.

“All their possessions were gone. They were uprooted and had to find a new place to live in a matter of a few weeks,” said Lee, who did not want to give his last name.

After receiving the flood warning, he

said his first thought was to check on his tenants. “I wanted to make sure all my tenants were out. After that, I wanted to check in with my insurance agent to make sure I was covered.”

The floods affected his health because of the emotional stress of “trying to figure out what happens to the tenants and what happens to the unit.”

Lee is still struggling to find reliable contractors to repair the foundations of his two apartment complexes, and to get permits from the city. However, the city did waive the permit fees.

“It has been a few months now and I still don’t have any tenants,” he said. “It’s going to be all new tenants, anyway, because everyone just chose to leave.”

About two miles north, in Naglee Park, Eric Heckman is still struggling to repair the damages to his home. He purchased his house with knowledge of the past Coyote Creek flood in 1997. To prevent flood-related damages, he built 3-foot stone walls in his backyard, with entrances

that could be blocked with sandbags.

The wall was built to withstand major flooding, but he didn’t anticipate how much rain would fall in 2017.

“Every minute was another foot” of water, said Heckman. Large parts of his home, especially his basement and backyard, were severely damaged.

San Jose has offered a variety of help to flood victims, including emergency housing. High schools in the area, such as James Lick, converted certain buildings into shelters for flood victims. Organizations, including Sacred Heart Community Services and Goodwill of Silicon Valley, donated clothing to individuals who could not restore their belongings.

Louansee Moua, chief of staff for Tam Nguyen, the city councilman who represents Rock Springs, recalls the floods as the “most horrific thing” she has seen in her 12 years at city hall.

“It was heartbreaking but people are very resilient,” Moua said.

## ADDICTION, from page 1

experience great pain knowing that they have a loved one suffering. Natural bonds and any relationship to an addicted loved one can be broken.

John had a healthy relationship with his mother. He felt he was safe at home and enjoyed the time he had with her.

"Me and Moms didn't have no trouble, we had a normal relationship that a mom and son would have," John said.

But once John began to use heroin, he stopped interacting with his mother and avoided being in the same room with her.

Often he would not come home under the guise that he was working or studying. His mother rarely questioned it because she was busy with work.

Brittany Simmons, a drug counselor at Asian American Recovery Services, said teenagers who are abusing controlled substances tend to isolate themselves from their parents and basically stop all forms of communication to hide their affliction.

"The isolation causes the family to slowly drift apart. Addiction's lasting impact on relations with family members is the destruction of any natural bond," Simmons said.

John said his mom would have tried to help if she knew what that John was an addict. He added that she would make attempts to connect with him because she knew that something was wrong, but he always gave her the cold shoulder.

John doesn't know what happened to his mother, but he believes he failed her as a son and thinks about her often. Drugs tore him

away from his family, and he said there's a permanent mark left on his mother when John chose to abuse heroin.

Dr. Thanh Mai, a San Jose psychiatrist, has done extensive work with drug addicts. He has dealt with families affected by addiction before, and has much to say about the subject.

"It tears up the family," Mai said. "The family will be at a complete loss."

Mai said families that have a loved one become addicted causes so much strain in their relationship that it literally breaks any natural bond. Families tend to end up blaming things beside the illness of addiction, and it worsens their relationship with an addicted loved one.

John said his drug use started early on when he was in high school when his friends began shooting up. He didn't immediately follow what they did, but after a while of hanging around with them, he decided to try it once, and then tried it again and again until he did it daily with his friends.

According to a coordinator from Nar-Anon, an organization that deals with families affected by addiction, environment plays a huge role in kids getting addicted. Being surrounded by users can usually take its toll on kids.

Cristina, another counselor from Asian American Recovery Services, is a recovering amphetamine abuser who started using at the age of 9, and continued abusing amphetamines until she turned 18.

Cristina said she was surrounded by drug users in her neighborhood, and they influenced her to use drugs. She was introduced to the popular party drug Ecstasy by the age of 9, and she slowly ramped up the frequency until she switched to crystal meth.

Her family was ignorant of substance abuse,

so they blamed her drug addiction on her being "possessed by spirits." Instead of getting her professional help, her parents took her to temples for "spiritual healing."

Cristina was eventually taken away from her parents and put into foster care because they didn't give her proper treatment.

The stress caused by her drug abuse continues to hurt Cristina's family. She said her parents didn't know how to deal with an addicted child, so they would push aside their emotions and leave everything pent up, and to this day they still act as if she was never an addict.

Her siblings were also affected by her substance abuse, as she was the one who took care of them due to their parents always working. Her siblings would stop seeing Cristina as often because she was always out getting high.

Eventually, Cristina was able to get the help she needed, and now she dedicates her career to helping other teenage addicts and drug abusers.

John hasn't contacted any of his family since he left Oregon, and he feels that if he did, he would be met with anger and disappointment. Despite this fear he has, all John wants to do now is find his way back home and see his mom again.

"Parents, never give up," Mai said. "You are their lifeline, and if you give up, the streets will take them."



"Addiction's lasting impact on relations with family members is the destruction of any natural bond."

— Brittany Simmons, drug counselor

## Silicon Valley De-Bug gets funding boost to help jailed teens



An employee works at Silicon Valley De-Bug, an advocacy organization for incarcerated teens. Below, Charisse Domingo hopes a \$1.3 million grant will enable De-Bug to help more families. Lower right, Gail Noble describes how her son's struggles motivated her to join De-Bug. Her son is now 26 with a good job and supporting his family. (Heriberto Cortes/Mosaic)

By JOVETTE CORTES-MEZA and ANDREW BENITEZ  
*Mosaic Staff Writers*

The offices of Silicon Valley De-Bug are still buzzing after learning that they would receive a share of the \$1.3 million grant to improve advocacy and treatment of jailed teens.

The grant comes from the Positive Youth Justice Initiative, a foundation that works with communities across California to transform juvenile justice practice and policies.

The group recently awarded funding to 11 groups including Bay Area social-justice groups De-Bug, Communities United for Restorative Youth Justice (Alameda County), RYSE Youth Center (Contra Costa County), and Young Women's Freedom Center (San Francisco County).

The 11 nonprofit organizations focus on participatory defense, which revolves around community organizing to help people facing criminal charges, and to provide support for communities and families that are struggling alongside their youth.

According to PYJI, in 2015, black youth in California were 7.7 times more likely than their white counterparts to be incarcerated. Latino youth were 2.6 times more likely than white youth to be incarcerated. In Santa Clara County, Black and Latino youth were 7.5 and four times more likely than white youth to be arrested, according to the group's research.

De-Bug was especially grateful for the grant because funding doesn't come through their buildings every day. De-Bug applied in February, and received confirmation of the grant in March.

"It's pretty difficult. But our attitude was always, we are going to do this work whether or not we get resources. If we get grants, it just expands our scale," said Raj Jayadev, director of De-Bug.

The organizations all have different goals for

the grant, but De-Bug has already planned out and even used some of the grant to their benefit.

"The grant has helped us travel, it has helped us to fund other hubs that decided to take on participatory defense work," said Gail Noble, community organizer and advocate for De-Bug.

"We were excited because it's not like a usual grant, we get to meet these groups and work with them, we have a call every month, we had a gathering in March where we got to bring a family who themselves had their son charged as an adult," said Charisse Domingo, an organizer for De-Bug.

De-Bug recently had a five-day workshop in Los Angeles and invited organizations from places like Nashville, Baltimore, and Pennsylvania, areas that all struggle with youth incarceration in their communities. De-Bug provided a backpack full of supplies that would aid their participatory defense work. The funding for this workshop came from the PYJI grant.

With the grant money, De-Bug hopes to help other hubs and reduce youth incarcerations in zip codes that have the highest rates.

"Gilroy has one of the top five highest arrest rates for youth, in the county. Eastside San Jose is one and so we are partnering with CARAS, to empower families that are struggling with the same situations," Domingo said, referring to a Latino advocacy group based at Gavilan College.

The grant will also help fund causes like Noble's, who joined De-Bug after receiving help from the organization in 2008, when her son Kamir was arrested after an altercation over a bicycle that ended with a man's finger being broken.

"De-Bug was amazing, they didn't know me and the dedication they put into helping me with my son's case. I couldn't even form a sentence, that's how broken I was," said Noble. "Before we can help someone else we have problems in our communities that we need to fix."





## BONDO to BOXING

Former auto body shop attracts kids to new gym in in San Jose neighborhood

By **JUVENTINO CEJA**  
*Mosaic Staff Writer*

Brian Zuniga, 14, started boxing five months ago, at his cousin's suggestion. He has since lost 47 pounds, now weighing 196 pounds. Zuniga boxes at the newly-relocated Golden Gloves Boxing, a boxing gym and training center in North San Jose.

"The coaches are like family," Zuniga said. "Everyone in here knows each other."

Golden Gloves Boxing recently opened up on 13th and Empire streets, after relocating from 27th and Santa Clara streets. The boxing gym hopes to make a difference in the neighborhood and to guide youth by helping them become more active and giving them positive role models. The new location used to be an auto

shop, giving the gym a garage door in the front, which is often left open. Daniel Sanchez, who followed the gym to its new location, said this gives the gym a more welcoming feeling, since everyone is out in the open.

Coach Richard Soto remodeled the facility.

"As long as I'm helping here and I'm healthy, I'm good," Soto said.

Bongie Manguino, another coach at Golden Gloves, said he has been boxing for over 10 years, with a hiatus when he tore his retina. Manguino said he started boxing because he wanted to be productive, instead of just hanging out with his friends after work.

"What you learn in boxing relates to what you learn in life," said Manguino. "When you're setting up one round and it doesn't go as planned, you just can't call

a timeout."

Manguino said the club members have formed a community. A few days ago, he said, they had a birthday party for a little girl at the ring.

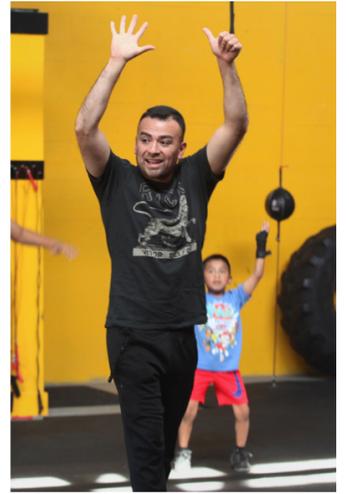
Parent Ricardo Martinez signed up his son in Golden Gloves to instill self-discipline.

"All he did was play video games," Martinez said. "It's helped him become more productive."

He said his son now follows a routine of going to school, attending the boxing class, having dinner, doing his homework and crashing after.

Jacob Leon, 14, joined Golden Gloves a month ago. He said boxing has helped him become healthier.

"Boxing helps wash away stress," Leon said.



Cesar Ullices, owner of the Golden Gloves Boxing and Training Center, leads a children's boxing class. (Jennifer Ramirez/Mosaic)

## Track star's future looks bright

By **JUVENTINO CEJA**  
*Mosaic staff writer*

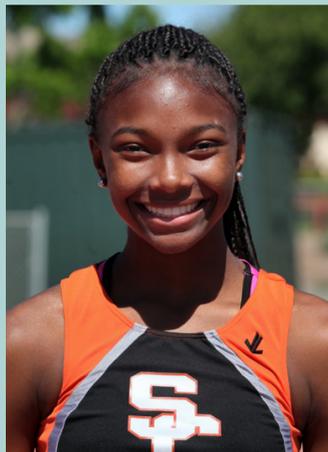
For the second year in a row, triple jumper Arianna Fisher of San Jose's Silver Creek High School made it to the state meet, having come in 1st place in 6 of 7 triple jump events this season.

Fisher came in 4th place for her preliminary event at the state meet in Clovis, jumping 40' 10.75". She came in 11th place in the finals with a jump of 38' 8". She didn't beat her personal record of 41' 7.25", but if there's one thing she's learned in her track career, it's resilience.

"You have to learn how to shake things off. When you have bad jump days, you can't let them get you down," Fisher said.

Fisher, who will be a senior this fall, said she is ready for next year and will try to jump as far as she can.

She doesn't know what college she wishes to attend but she has been sent multiple recruitment forms for track scholarships from schools such as University of Southern California, University of Arizona, University of Nevada and Harvard University.



(Jennifer Ramirez/Mosaic)

Fisher must maintain a 2.0 GPA to continue track, but she has kept it at a steady 3.3.

She comes from a track family, starting with her mom who is a track and field coach at Overfelt High School. Her sister Arika also is involved in track, and just finished her second year at Tuskegee University, running the 400 and 800 meter race, and the 4x100 relay for the university track team.

Fisher has been hanging around tracks since she was 5 years old, watching from the bleachers or helping her mom set up hurdles or shovel the sand pits at meets and practices. She attributes her love of track to her family.

"My family is very supportive of me. They try to show up to every event," Fisher said.



A boxing student laughs with training center owner Cesar Ullices. (Jennifer Ramirez/Mosaic)



Coach Richard Soto instructs a young client. (Jennifer Ramirez/Mosaic)

## Giant race

Runners break from the starting line of the San Jose Giant Race, June 3 at Municipal Stadium. The race benefits the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's Team in Training program and the Junior Giants. (Heriberto Cortes/Mosaic)

