

# Google grub crawl

Tech giant cuisine tour delights with delicious, sustainable fare around every corner

BY KATIE MARTIN  
*Mosaic Staff Writer*

*Never be more than 150 feet away from food.*

This statement, according to one Google employee, most accurately describes the mindset regarding cuisine at the technology giant. Known for creating a search engine so ingrained in our society it's now used as a noun and a verb, the food offerings at Google have become similarly legendary among Silicon Valley's tech junkies.

Organized, clean and beautiful in their simplicity, the 31 cafés and numerous "micro-kitchens" offer an eclectic menu that spans almost every culture and can satisfy even the pickiest eater.

Google has long prided itself on its devotion to serving sustainably produced and locally grown food to its employees. Now, with nearly 18,000 employees at the Mountain View campus alone, Google offers food for free, even allowing workers to bring in a certain number of guests each month to eat in the cafeterias.



Kelly Chang | Mosaic Staff  
Go!, a low-key deli, is one of numerous cafes on the Google campus in Mountain View.

This was exactly how my friend Kelly and I were able to take a cuisine tour of one of the world's hottest tech companies. A former coworker of my dad's agreed to host us for an afternoon of food sampling and cafeteria exploration.

We met our guide at his building, a structure disconnected from the Googleplex but surrounded by lush lawns dotted with red Adirondack chairs, and immediately sat down to determine our course of lunching action.

Google provides their employees with access to an internal website that includes a café navigation system and daily menus. Underneath each item on the menu, color-coded ingredients are listed – something highlighted in green or yellow roughly represents "healthy" and "somewhat healthy," respectively, while food that some workers might want to avoid, such as bleached flour or heavy cream, are colored bright red. Small graphics that

## MOSAIC SPECIAL REPORT



Mahima Dutt | Mosaic Staff  
Brisbane couple Phil Kotzan, left, and Andrew Somera share a celebratory kiss after the Supreme Court justices rule in favor of same-sex marriage.

# COURTING MARRIAGE



Kelly Chang | Mosaic Staff  
Karin Jaffie of San Francisco joins other marriage-equality supporters at San Francisco City Hall on June 26 to cheer the high court rulings.

## Bay Area's LGBT community celebrates the end of Prop. 8, federal ban on benefits

*Mosaic Staff Report*

San Francisco drag queen Paul Pratt couldn't sleep the night before the U.S. Supreme Court announced landmark rulings that left him and thousands of other Bay Area same-sex marriage supporters celebrating a victory this week.

The editor of Gloss Magazine was one of a handful of residents who nervously filed into the streets of the predominantly gay Castro district early on the morning of June 26 in anticipation of the rulings. The court struck down the federal Defense of Marriage Act and Proposition 8, the 2008 voter initiative that banned same-sex marriage in California.

"It wasn't what we had hoped for, but they are victories for our community," said Pratt, who goes by Pollo Del Mar when in drag.

Hundreds of mostly gay-rights advocates congregated at San Francisco City Hall on the morning of the announcements, waving rainbow flags and greeting the decisions with screams and cheers. The post-ruling excitement continued into the night in the Castro neighborhood and across the Bay Area.

"The Supreme Court can make California whole again," said John Lewis, who with partner Stuart Gaffney, was a plaintiff in a high-profile 2008 lawsuit that argued California's gay marriage ban violated the state constitution.

## RAPE CULTURE: Blaming the victims

BY BRENDA SU  
*Mosaic Staff Writer*

Despite remarkable progress in recent decades toward gender equality in politics, the workplace and education, women still face stubborn obstacles in one critical area: personal safety.

Women and their advocates blame the persistence of sexual assault on what they call a culture of rape. In fact, the issue is so stigmatized that many victims are still afraid to discuss it.

"If someone's home gets robbed, no one ever blames them for having nice things," said Sue Barnes, director of the Rape Crisis Department at the YWCA of Silicon Valley.

But people react differently to rape. "When someone gets assaulted, they tell them, 'You shouldn't have worn that, you shouldn't have been there,'" Barnes said. "It's the only crime that I know of that blames the victim."

Debrianna Dimas, 22, of Chico was raped when she was 14 while living in San Jose.

People "asked if alcohol was involved because then it would be my



Jonae Scott | Mosaic Staff  
A musician rehearses for "In The Heights."

## One Night Only: Lincoln High stars return for benefit show

BY PERLA LUNA  
*Mosaic Staff Writer*

Musical director Anne-Marie Katemopoulos stands stern and draws silence from a 10-member band before leading them into the opening notes of a musical number.

Manuel Rodriguez, an alumnus of the performing arts program at Lincoln High School in San Jose, tears himself away from his ebullient chatter with cast mates to meld his voice with the rest of the cast. Together, their voices form a crescendo of tentative humming, gaining momentum as the chorus, all proud Lincoln High School alumni, transfers its zeal from words into song.

It's 24 hours to showtime, and the Lincoln High School performing arts department supporters are frantically putting together "In The Heights," a musical showcase featuring Lincoln's returning alumni. Their efforts are aimed at helping the program's support group raise \$40,000, which will be used for the 2013-2014 school year.

The short amount of rehearsal time is stressful for Rodriguez and his castmates. Still, for Rodriguez, being invited back to



MOSAIC 2013 | STAFF



**MARILI ARELLANO**  
From her El Monte home, Marili Arellano travels the freeways by bus to attend Miguel Contreras Learning Complex in downtown Los Angeles. A rising senior, Marili hopes the Mosaic experience will help develop her photojournalism skills. Reading realistic fiction and exercising are other things that Marili enjoys. The Mexican native likes traveling – just getting on a plane and going somewhere, she says. Marili also loves her mother’s tamales and moles, the zesty sauce for chicken and meat that includes various ingredients like chocolate and chile. The only girl among five children has a cat and a dog who get along. Besides owning pets, Marili has some pet peeves, particularly people who spit on the floor and those who misuse grammar online.

– Kelly Chang



**BRIZETTE CASTELLANOS**  
A rising senior and resident of the Boyle Heights neighborhood in Los Angeles, Brizette writes for her community newspaper and participates in the Art Club and Council of Youth Research at Roosevelt High School. In her spare time, she rides the Metro to explore the city and enjoys film. Her favorites include “Donnie Darko,” “The Wedding Crashers” and documentaries. Hip-hop artists like Drake serenade her while she’s getting ready in the mornings. She’s broken her left arm twice and her right arm once, and when she was born, her collarbone broke. Courageous Brizette once ventured into a seafood restaurant and sang karaoke with elderly strangers.

– Brenda Su



**KELLY CHANG**  
When it comes to Kelly Chang, the question is, “What can’t she do?” The rising senior at Aragon High in San Mateo plays on the Dons’ badminton, basketball and volleyball teams. She also plays the piano and the guitar and helps produce the school’s yearbook. The cat lover volunteers at the Peninsula Humane Society in her spare time. Kelly, 17, joined the Mosaic because she loves photography. She tries to capture moments that most people don’t remember or even think of remembering. Kelly says she “feels invisible behind the camera, since it’s different taking pictures than watching something.” She was glad to spend two weeks working as a Mosaic photographer because, Kelly says, she cannot sit at home and do nothing.

– Marili Arellano



**MATTHEW CHOW**  
Accomplished violinist Matthew Chow, 17, is a member of the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra. The Homestead High-Cupertino student toured Germany with the orchestra during the summer of 2012. Matthew applied to Mosaic to gain real-life journalistic experience. Matthew is considering working toward a law degree in college but also might explore a journalism career. If you ever find yourself Snapchatting Matthew, beware of his cat and dog Snapchats. He loves sending those.

– Chris Moreno



**MAHIMA DUTT**  
Mahima Dutt’s typical day looks something like reading, shooting photos and hanging out with friends. But last summer during a trip to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, Mahima, a rising junior at Cupertino High School, joined her family in a zipline expedition in the forests near the seaside town. Her parents got scared early into the adventure but not Mahima. She didn’t even flinch when facing the day’s longest and highest run. “It wasn’t scary at all,” she said. Mahima is considering applying to New York University to study journalism. She honed her skills with a camera at Mosaic, where she focused on improving as a photojournalist.

– Jonae Scott



The Mosaic class of 2013 joined program director Joe Rodriguez, center, on a tour of San Francisco.



**CORINE FORWARD**  
Corine Forward ironically “careens forward,” constantly tripping her way through life. Unlike most high school students, this rising junior boards at school. In her case, that’s East Palo Alto’s Eastside College Prep, and she already understands busy dorm life. Besides listening to hip-hop, R&B and a pinch of dubstep, Corine enjoys ESPN, “Law and Order: Special Victims Unit” and Tyrese Gibson of “Fast and Furious.” Likewise, her interest in metropolitan matters and her passionate journalism instructor fueled her journalistic interests and led her to Mosaic. Through this program, Corine hopes she will experience “real life” reporting and connect with other unique individuals.

– Iris Lee



**CERYS HOLSTEGE**  
When Cerys Holstege loves things, she loves them. Cerys, a rising junior at Mountain View High, is torn between four passions: journalism, astrophysics, dance and the TV show “Friends,” which she owns every episode of on iTunes. Given her wide-ranging curiosity, she will be delving into multiple interests this summer through Mosaic and an internship at NASA. In the fall, Cerys will edit the Focus section of the school paper, the Oracle. She enjoys journalism as a “lens through which to learn about the world.” In her free time, she might be found reading Kurt Vonnegut or baking cupcakes for friends.

– Hannah Knowles



**HANNAH KNOWLES**  
Hannah Knowles’ reserved personality masks a mind teeming with artistic creativity. Be it playing the piano, a 10-year passion for Hannah, running family programs at the Cantor Arts Center, or creating her own abstract art, she consistently finds a way to integrate free expression into her life. A rising junior at Castilleja School in Palo Alto, Hannah will be the Current Debates editor for the Castilleja Counterpoint during the 2013-14 school year. She enjoys journalism because it allows her to combine her writing abilities with her desire to tell people’s stories. Before finding her passion for journalism and the arts, Hannah hoped to be a mycologist, or someone who studies mushrooms.

– Cerys Holstege



**IRIS LEE**  
Whether it’s eating Indian curry, Mexican burritos or jalapeños straight from the jar, 17-year-old Iris Lee can handle it. Born and raised in Fremont as an only child, Iris loves pigging out on fiery foods, sleeping in and listening to 1960s music such as the Beatles and the Rolling Stones. She devotes her time to learning: While most take AP courses to add flair and numerical value to their report cards, Iris takes advanced classes at Fremont’s Livingston High to gain a deeper understanding of the world around her. The rising senior also hopes to continue developing the TV news show, VTV, that she created at school last year.

– Corine Forward



**WINSTON LEE**  
Winston Lee, 17, also known as “#Winning Winston,” is a rising senior at Piedmont Hills High in San Jose. Among his many interests in music is the Chinese rap group whose name translated into English means “24 Herbs.” During his free time, he likes to hang out with friends in an RV trailer that one of them owns. Besides being a calm guy with a good sense of humor, he also keeps Washburn Hall safe and secure from intruders. He is a proud black belt in Chinese martial arts. Although he hasn’t taken a journalism course, he likes to write and often submits his work to contests.

– Raphael Santa Maria



**PERLA LUNA**  
A fanatic of the sci-fi TV series “Doctor Who,” someone who shuns chicken but eats turkey and red meat, and the only person who can maintain a placid face when confronted by six of the devil’s minions -- dorm cockroaches -- Perla Luna is a fascinating roommate and Mosaic student. In addition to obsessing over TV shows about cannibals and crime-fighters, the Mexican-born Spanish-speaker expresses pride in her culture by participating in the Los Altos High Latino Student Union. Perla joined Mosaic to explore her passion for writing, and the rising junior plans to join her school’s journalism program in the fall.

– Sindhu Ravuri



**KATIE MARTIN**  
Katie Martin, a rising senior at Cupertino High School, has many talents. A self-proclaimed pop culture addict, she likes to follow the lives of Harry Styles (One Direction) and news anchor Anderson Cooper via the Internet. Katie is not just a fan of entertainers, she’s also one herself. She takes singing lessons and loves to sing songs from musicals. She also has played the piano for 11 years. An athlete, Katie plays middle for the Cupertino varsity volleyball team. So does Katie have a hidden talent? She says she can fall asleep anywhere in 10 minutes.

– Adriana Ramos



**CHRIS MORENO**  
Junior “Calm” Chris Moreno is anything but calm. Hailing from Alisal High-Salinas, Chris loves the rush of adrenaline from playing on the Trojans football team to pounding the life out of huge cockroaches creeping in the girls’ laundry room. Chris, 16, also enjoys playing basketball and tennis and running track. His sports dream? Attending a Super Bowl game. As a reporter for his school’s Trojan Tribune, Chris hopes to explore feature writing; at Mosaic he’s expanding his general journalistic horizons.

– Matthew Chow



**ADRIANA RAMOS**  
Adriana Ramos, a rising senior from Napa, is notable for her easygoing attitude and Ed Sheeran obsession. Outside of her academic career at Justin-Siena High School, she enjoys blogging about current events and pop culture as well as playing the violin. She also

interns at a nonprofit organization, where she creates and edits videos for its website. A native Spanish speaker, Adriana says she seeks to further her command of the English language through journalism.

– Katie Martin



**SINDHU RAVURI**  
Sindhu Ravuri, 16, is defined by her twin passions for journalism and dance. She came to Mosaic to experience real journalism and write articles of substance. A rising junior at The Harker School in San Jose, Sindhu’s enthusiasm for dance has taken her to extraordinary heights, including a performance for the German Parliament. Her favorite American actor is Brad Pitt for reasons unknown, or at least ones she won’t share. Sindhu will perform for the president of India later this summer. She looks forward to serving as editor of the global section of her school newspaper, The Winged Post.

– Perla Luna



**RAPHAEL SANTA MARIA**  
Raphael Santa Maria is a 17-year old San Jose resident with impressive familiarity of the downtown streets, particularly the best places to eat or hang out. His mellow charm and sarcastic humor put people at ease. Raphael is a chill and laid-back guy who likes to play X-Box games with his friends. Raphael was a layout designer and a reporter for his newspaper at Prospect High School in Saratoga. His goals include pursuing a journalism career and executing a wheelie on a bike.

– Winston Lee



**JONAE SCOTT**  
A rising senior at McClymonds High in Oakland, Jonae Scott has seven brothers and sisters -- five still at home with her. During the summer, Jonae goes camping with her family and considers herself to be “outdoorsy.” But adventurous perhaps is a better descriptor: She likes visiting new places and sampling new food. Jonae, 17, also volunteers with Youth Organization Leadership Opportunities, which helps teens involved in drugs or violence or living in troubled homes. The photojournalist wants to visit the South, particularly to attend college. She hopes to attend Spelman College in Atlanta after hearing about it from a friend. This summer, Jonae set her lens on the Mosaic program after taking journalism at McClymonds.

– Mahima Dutt



**BRENDA SU**  
Brenda Su, a rising senior at Milpitas High School and editor of the Union campus newspaper, had readers in panic with an April Fools edition that proclaimed: “PROM CANCELED!” Just joking. Brenda, 17, is much more than a prankster. She is a member of the school business club, DECA. After graduating she hopes to attend the University of Southern California to study business and journalism. Ultimately, Brenda aspires to score a job at Vogue magazine or with the Onion, where she hopes to combine her passion for business and writing.

– Brizette Castellanos

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Kelly Chang | Mosaic Staff

Joe Rodriguez co-founded the Mosaic workshop in 1993, when minority voices were rare in mainstream media.

# Mosaic Journalism Workshop celebrates 20 years of training high school students

BY HANNAH KNOWLES

Mosaic Staff Writer

When Mosaic began as a high school journalism workshop aimed at Latino students, no one thought it would reach its 20th year. Co-founder and Director Joe Rodriguez said he wasn't sure the program would survive its first year.

"The last night came, and I just thought the newspaper wasn't going to get done," he said.

But the next day, the 14 students of the inaugural Mosaic class went home with a copy of their own newspaper.

"That was one of the proudest mornings of my life," Rodriguez said..

Rodriguez and three other journalists – Donna Kato and Manny Gonzalez of the San Jose Mercury News, and Rosana Madrigal of KLVV radio – created the Mosaic Journalism Workshop in 1993, at a time when minority voices were rare in mainstream news media.

Their goal: reach out to the next generation of journalists by immersing them in a two-week whirlwind of real reporting.

Almost every summer since then, Mosaic has brought a diverse mix of teenagers to San Jose State University for what 2006 graduate Amanda Rivas called "newspaper boot camp."

For two weeks, high school students become working journalists. Interviews, rapidly approaching



Marili Arellano | Mosaic Staff

"When you're here, you're a Mosaic reporter," says Marcos Cabrera.

deadlines and multiple rounds of editing culminate in a printed newspaper at the end of the program. (Mosaic also has an online presence at [www.mercurynews.com/mosaic](http://www.mercurynews.com/mosaic)).

"We wanted to give students the experience of a real newsroom," said Kato, program co-founder. "We wanted to treat them like adults."

Though Rivas ended up as a project manager at KNBC rather than inside a newspaper newsroom, the San Jose resident is grateful for what Mosaic taught her.

"It helped me in so many ways with confidence,"

she said. "Going out there, cold-calling people -- it's not easy. And to be able to that when I was 17 was really, really cool."

Of 360 Mosaic alumni, 15 percent have gone on to have careers in journalism.

One alumnus, Kelly Yamanouchi of the class of 1995, recalled how Mercury News reporter Michelle Guido spoke to her group about searching hospitals for out-of-state license plates in order to secure an interview.

"I thought, that's what I want to do," said Yamanouchi, who now works at the Atlanta Journal Constitution. "I want to tell stories that other people will be captivated by."

Salinas' Marcos Cabrera, a student of the first Mosaic, called the program "a game-changer."

During Mosaic, Cabrera's main article fell through. However, his write-up on a news conference with the San Jose police chief was chosen over 13 others for publication. This gave him the confidence to pursue a career in journalism.

Cabrera, a pop culture columnist for the Monterey Herald, returned to Mosaic as a mentor because, as he puts it, he believes in the program. Though the workshop has grown since that first uncertain year, the heart of the program remains the same.

"Maybe the rest of the world considers you high school students, but when you're here, you're a Mosaic reporter," Cabrera said. "That has never changed."

# Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist took circuitous route to fulfilling his childhood dream

BY CERYS HOLSTEGE AND IRIS LEE

Mosaic Staff Writers

At first glance, John Branch appears to be an average guy. Few would think twice when seeing him walk down the street. A conversation with him in the supermarket checkout line would reveal only that he is tall, and he is friendly.

Few would suspect that he's the winner of 2013 Pulitzer Prize in feature writing for his New York Times narrative "Snow Fall," a multimedia extravaganza about a 2012 avalanche in Washington state. It's unlikely he would even bring it up.

Unassuming and self-deprecating, Branch, 46, makes casual comments voicing his surprise at his achievements and criticizing his self-proclaimed tendency to ramble. The Times sports writer

has a knack for making those around him feel comfortable, something he displayed as the featured speaker of the 2013 Mosaic High School Journalism Workshop.

It turns out the award-winning writer wasn't always a journalist, although, as a kid, he had his heart set on becoming a sports writer.

While other kids dreamed of becoming ballerinas or the president, Branch spent his time memorizing sports statistics and idolizing his favorite players. The allure of going to games and talking to famous players was unmistakable to elementary-aged Johnny.

As he grew older, though, Branch lost sight of his dream. Pressure and expectations from family, school and society led him to shelve his childhood

love of journalism and earn a business degree at the University of Colorado.

"It was the mid-1980s at the time and the middle of the Reagan presidency," Branch said. "Going to business school was cool. I did it because it seemed very practical."

However, following his head instead of his heart didn't feel right. At 28 and on the verge of beginning a successful business career, Branch was having second thoughts.

"I realized that the more successful at business I became, the harder it would be to leave it," Branch said. "The idea that that was where my life was headed long term made me re-evaluate everything. I knew that if I were going to change careers, it had better be now."

Although he had no reporting experience, aside from writing a weekly newsletter for Costco, Branch returned to the University of Colorado to earn a master's in journalism.

After graduating, Branch worked at the Colorado Springs Gazette from 1996 to 2002. Then he was a sports columnist at the Fresno Bee for three years before moving to the Times as a sports writer, finally fulfilling his childhood dream.

Branch quickly learned that being a sports writer was different from what he expected.

"You learn that you have to be careful about choosing who your heroes are," Branch said. "We all worship professional athletes, but as I get older and maybe more skeptical, I realize that sports are just a microcosm of society; there are good guys, there are bad guys, every team has some of both. The sports world these days is riddled with fallen heroes."

Given his unconventional path into journalism, Branch holds firmly to the belief that your life will take paths that are difficult to imagine -- but that



Kelly Chang | Mosaic Staff

New York Times sports writer John Branch won the 2013 Pulitzer Prize.

those paths all have something different to offer.

"Go into it with eyes wide open," he said. "Don't assume that you know where your career is going to go; don't assume that you know what you're in for; don't assume that you know what the people you're going to write about are all about. Be open-minded and be honest with yourself."

Even with the unpredictable nature of journalism leading Branch from one end of the country to the other, he sees it as one big learning experience.

"I think the reason we do this is because it opens a door to a world you might not know anything about," Branch said. "There's someone out there who knows a whole lot more than you do."

And every day, Branch is still learning.

"All we're doing as journalists is picking up rocks," he said. "You might find a worm, a beetle might crawl out. You don't always know what you're going to find, but that's how you find the story."

"Keep picking up rocks."



Nhat Meyer | San Jose Mercury News

New York Times sports writer John Branch spoke to the Mosaic staff on June 21.



# Taking pride in being thick

BY CORINE FORWARD

Mosaic Staff Writer

In: Jennifer Lopez. Out: Lindsay Lohan.

In the ever-changing world of body trends, thick is now in.

“A thick girl is a girl who works out, is shaped in the hips, has curves in all the right places and doesn’t have fat,” says San Jose resident Nancy Loya, 23, as she moves her arms in a Coca-Cola bottle shaped motion, mirroring what the thick figure looks like. “A lot of hot rap stars and thick girls are out there right now, and I think it’s a good thing. It’s giving these girls confidence in what they look like.”

With celebrities such as Kim Kardashian, Adele and Amber Rose in



Marili Arellano | Mosaic Staff  
Nancy Loya of San Jose.

the spotlight, more young curvy women are embracing their bodies for what they are. Experts are hopeful that the thick look will lead to the acceptance of more body types.

For black women, having curves has long been a point of pride. In a 2012 survey by the Washington Post and the Kaiser Family Foundation, 66 percent of black women, though heavier overall, had higher self esteem compared to 41 percent of white women. The thick attitude is spreading to other ethnicities.

“I think I’m thick. I’m not petite like other girls, but I own my curviness,” says San Jose resident Moselly Main, who is white. “It’s all about owning it. If you think you’re thick, you should embrace it.”

Adds Chaslie Lamas, a Latina from Richmond, “Who doesn’t want to be thick? It’s all over TV nowadays. It’s just the way to be.”

Thick or thin, striving to be something one is not, raises concerns. Body Image expert and author of Love Your Body, Love Your Life, Sarah Maria wants people of all ages to love their bodies no matter what size they are.

“Beauty can be at any size or age. It is more about redefining yourself as a person,” Maria says.



Jim Gensheimer | Mercury News  
Soccer star Brandi Chastain says the thick movement has empowered girls and women.

Maria approves of the thick trend. “People are growing awareness and increasing willingness to accept the thick body image. It’s a dramatic improvement in our society.”

Although magazines are full of images of what the perfect body is supposed to look like, Maria hopes the thick trend is the start of a movement. “There has been some change with plus size modeling, which has been great, but there is still room to grow and the way to do that is by getting the media willing to put different sizes and faces

out there like the Dove Company has been doing. I think we can reach a place where everyone loves themselves for who they are.”

Brandi Chastain, a former soccer player for the U.S. Women’s National Soccer team and known for chucking her jersey off after scoring the winning goal against China in the 1999 World Cup, says the thick trend is influencing athletes too.

“In sports, girls have to be strong and have these (thick bodied) characteristics to compete, so being thick has given

girls and women this empowerment,” Chastain says. Chastain sees the world “headed to health” by young girls and women placing weight as a priority. “It helps to be thick; there is a purpose for it all. My body does what it needs to do.”

Maya Rapier, 16, of Oakland also sees the positive in the trend.

“Thick is a word that makes so many girls feel better about themselves for not being super skinny,” Rapier says. “First it was just skinny and fat, now there’s thick. Think of what could be next.”

## Victims feel blamed

RAPE | FROM PAGE 1

fault, or they asked if I said ‘no’ loud enough,” Dimas said. “The media are the worst perpetrators in this rape culture, blaming rape on the victims. ‘What was she wearing?’ ‘Oh, she was alone?’ ‘How was she asking to be raped?’”

Dimas said, “This is insulting to males who are told that, basically, if a girl is wearing a short skirt they don’t have the ability to control their urges to violate her.”

Paullette Segovia, 37, of Pittsburg was sexually abused by a relative when she was an adolescent. She did not report the incident because she feared being disowned by her family.

“Because I was so young, he was able to manipulate my mind, to make me believe it was something that I wanted,” Segovia said. “This was someone who was 15 years my senior. I held that secret for a long, long time until I was in therapy” – in her 30s.

At the time of assault, she didn’t realize that what had happened to her would be considered sexual abuse.

Segovia, who works at the East County Alcohol Policy Coalition in Contra Costa County, eventually reported the molestation. The perpetrator served one year in county jail and is now a registered sex offender. Relatives on her mother’s side supported her abuser.

“It was the whole thing of blaming of the victim,” Segovia said. “It was really hard.”

However, Segovia said that when she read her statement in the courtroom, she “felt so empowered.”

Despite losing contact with some members of her family, Segovia said she believes she made the right choice by pursuing the case.

“Not many people can get that, 20 years after their abuse,” she said.

Society often blames victims for their sexual assaults, said Ellen Lin, director of counseling services at San Jose State University.

When a victim discusses her sexual assault with friends, they may imply that it was her fault.

“And it makes it very difficult for survivors to talk about what happened because of the reaction they

get,” Lin said.

Of the clients served by the SJSU counseling center during the 2012-2013 school year, about one-sixth of them reported having unwanted sexual contact.

“There are such misunderstandings and misconceptions about what causes rape and who contributes to rape,” Lin said.

While people may agree that women should not put themselves at risk, she said, little is done about perpetrators.

Men “shouldn’t be just assuming that if a girl doesn’t say ‘no’ it means ‘yes.’” Lin said.

Bonnie Sugiyama, assistant director of the university’s Women’s Resource Center, estimates that only one in eight victims reports sexual assault.

“All of society is part of rape culture,” Sugiyama said.

Most victims, she said, know their rapists. “It’s rare for someone to be running down the street and get raped, which are the big stories that go into the news.”

Part of the problem lies in the stigma surrounding sexual assault, Segovia said. Society is desensitized to sexual assault because of the provocative portrayal of women in the media and the objectification of women.

When others speculate that a woman brought the assault on herself, she said, it is an excuse “to take away from her pain, to take away from her story.”

The university holds workshops to combat the double standard set for men and women and to raise awareness about sexual assault. During freshman orientation, students watch skits on sexual assault and consent, followed by discussions

But Segovia said that education has to start at younger ages.

“Why aren’t we talking about this in schools?” she said. “We’ll talk about pregnancy, but we won’t talk about people being sexually assaulted?”

Dimas supports education initiatives on how to avoid assault.

However, the problem needs to be addressed at its roots. Dimas said, “I’d rather we tell people not to rape.”



Kelly Chang | Mosaic Staff  
Ellen Lin, director of counseling at San Jose State University, said society often blames victims for their sexual assaults.

## Asian-American teens challenge stereotypes

BY IRIS LEE

Mosaic Staff Writer

Cindy Meng is not rich. Her parents don’t force her to study every day, she doesn’t do homework on Friday nights, and she definitely doesn’t pass out when she exercises.

Meng is one of numerous teens who don’t fit into the Asian-American stereotypes, the ones that say that Asians are wealthy, under constant parental pressure, restricted to moneymaking STEM careers and athletically impaired. She rejects the typecasting and doesn’t let it define her.

“I run track and I challenge myself with advanced humanity courses like AP English, AP U.S. history and journalism,” says Meng, a rising senior at Irvington High School in Fremont.

“(My family is) not filthy rich at all,” she adds. “I don’t have overly studious parents with educational levels higher than bachelor degrees.”

One common assumption, which only got worse after Amy Chua’s Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother was released, is that Asian parents are strict and offer constant criticism. But that doesn’t describe Allen Peng’s parents. Peng, a recent graduate of Mission San Jose in Fremont, defines them as “open-minded.”

“My parents aren’t ‘helicopter parents,’ the type that floats around and makes a lot of noise,” Peng says. “They’re different - more like guides to help me reach my full potential.”

He says his parents just want the best for him. “I’ve been interested in international relations for a while, and my mom would print out pages of jobs I could get with this sort of degree,” he says. “I remember one time, I even thought about starting boxing and she was all chill with it. She was just supportive of (my endeavors).”

Irvington rising senior Jerry Quan’s mother isn’t a Tiger Mom either. “She has high expectations, but still cares about my well-being,” he says.

When it comes to career choices for Asian-Americans, boundaries are being expanded. While some enter the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) fields, others such as U.S. Rep Mike Honda, Hollywood actor John Cho and Dallas Cowboys defensive star Dat Nguyen have followed different paths. Bay Area students are also branching out.

Homestead rising senior Matthew Chow plans to study social science. Irvington rising senior Kelsey Wong aspires to be a journalist or presidential advisor, while Peng is looking into international affairs.

“People think all (Asian-Americans) do is math and science, but we are slowly breaking out,” Peng says. “Practical degrees may be useful for stable jobs, but

I just want to help people in the future.”

In professional sports, basketball player Jeremy Lin is changing perceptions. Oakland Technical rising junior Ameela Li is doing the same on a more local level.

“When I first moved here from Canada, I wasn’t used to the diversity. It was hard, because everyone was always making stupid stereotypical jokes like eating rice and bad driving,” Li says. “When P.E. and sports teams started, I was just a small girl everyone made fun of because ‘Asians can’t play basketball.’”

Recalling her “bad” middle school basketball tryout, she says, “Everyone thought I would quit immediately, but I worked as hard as anyone else out on the court and I started to fit in more. I have proven myself to some degree that I can do it too.”

Li is a point and shooting guard on her school’s basketball team. She was featured in The Oakland Tribune for her outstanding performances, and has won co-MVP and all-tourney awards.

So where do these stereotypes come from? UC Berkeley Asian-American Studies professor Elaine H. Kim says that many stereotypes stem from the older belief that “Asian-Americans are often considered ‘foreign’ and not ‘American’ - they were only considered as temporary laborers and not expected to become American.”

In addition, she noted that the Asians were a “model minority” with good habits, the majority “showing up on time, getting good grades, and working extremely hard.” These traits fueled some unrealistic societal expectations — thus, the stereotypes.

However, Kim sees slow societal change. “With more and more Asian-American people dabbling in creative fields, they are influencing society in a critical mass and showing up more in credits, media, etc.,” she says.

Homestead student Chow agrees. “The fact that I’m an Asian male journalist is already pretty much against the academic stereotype.”

With time, Kim believes that a critical mass of Asian-Americans will slowly dissipate stereotypes and influence previously “Caucasian-dominated” career paths. “When a critical mass of Asian-Americans demands something, there will be change. It just takes time,” she says.

As Wong grew up and began to immerse herself in Chinese culture, she learned how “rich” and “unlike the stereotypes” it is. “We aren’t limited - we were one of the most powerful empires once and even invented lasting advancements!” she exclaims. “It’s like, why should stereotypical jokes make me ashamed of that? There’s no reason to believe or indulge in them. Ignore the stereotypes.”



# After Newtown, gun debate divides San Jose

Complex problem resists easy answers, compromise

BY WINSTON LEE  
*Mosaic Staff Writer*

Demetri, a 36-year-old Marine combat veteran and San Jose gun salesman, has a simple solution to the gun control debate. “The number one gun control is this,” said Demetri, as he held up his index finger, aka his trigger finger. “Keep it straight and off the trigger until you’re ready to fire.”

Demetri, who did not wish to reveal his last name, is one of many local gun enthusiasts who opposes further expansion on gun control legislation.

Because of high-profile incidents like the December 2012 school massacre in Newtown, Conn. and increasing gang violence in San Jose, local peace advocates have called for stricter gun regulations in America.

In 2013, the San Jose Mercury News has reported 108 homicides that involved firearms in the Bay Area. But do firearms cause violence?

The gun control debate stirs controversy among San Jose residents with some citing the Second Amendment right to bear arms and others the government’s responsibility for ensuring peace and safety.

The debate involves numerous unanswered questions: Who deserves the right to bear arms? How do we ensure safety? Which factor is directly responsible for the violence, guns or people?

Open-ended questions like these trigger wide-ranging opinions among San Jose residents, from students and teachers to shooters and sellers.

San Jose residents on both sides of the debate were interviewed for this article. They included: two teachers, a peace advocate and a school principal on the pro-gun-control side. A military veteran, three professional shooters, and a high school gun enthusiast were asked questions for the pro-gun-rights side.

Each person responded to the following questions.

**What is the purpose of firearms?**  
“Firearms are security, in a way,” said Demetri.

He emphasized that having firearms widely available contributed to America’s victory in World War II.

Not all gun-rights activists believed in using guns for self-defense.

Peggy Lee, an English teacher at



Photos by Marili Arellano | Mosaic Staff  
A group of shooters take aim at the Fields Sports Park - Metcalf Gun Range in San Jose.

Piedmont Hills High School in San Jose, has seen this with her two hunting friends who are brothers.

“One believes the world is dangerous and that guns are needed for self-defense,” she said, “while the other believes that encouraging gun ownership will only create more violence.”

Mike Fullmore, a professional shooter from San Jose, recalled his early years of bird hunting with his uncle, which led to entering shooting competitions. He acknowledged the gun’s self-defense capabilities, but held more affinity toward its recreational and competitive aspect.

“There is the added benefit of defending yourself with your sporting item.” Fullmore said, “If I had to, I would defend myself with a gun.”

Charles Hill, principal of Strobridge Elementary in Hayward, however, refuted the purpose of automatic and semi-automatic weapons.

“I think in the original Constitution the purpose was to provide protection for every citizen,” said Hill, “but back then they had no AK-47 or Uzi, and there is a difference between owning a rifle for self-defense and owning a weapon with the ability to kill multiple people in a short amount of time.”

**What causes violence?**  
Ever since the media’s extensive coverage of the shootings at Newtown, and Aurora, Colo., the question has remained: What caused those incidents? Do guns kill people, or do people kill people?

Most members on both sides of the debate agreed that people with mental illnesses tend to perpetrate these kinds of



A handgun and bullets at the Fields Sports Park - Metcalf Gun Range in San Jose.

crimes. From Adam Lanza of Newtown, to Seung-Hui Cho of Virginia Tech, most of these perpetrators have been diagnosed with mental illnesses.

For Lee, their motives are incomprehensible. She agreed that only the mentally unstable would be able to commit such crimes.

“It’s hard to comprehend taking a life away, and it’s not normal,” Lee said. “I can’t comprehend why anyone would want to do that. Life is life.”

Michelle Córdova, president of the San Jose Peace and Justice Center, believes that the availability of guns to criminals and the mentally ill is the cause of violence.

Córdova also said firearms promote crimes such as drug and human trafficking and mass murder in places such as Central America.

“With guns, you’re really creating a

river of blood,” said Córdova.

Gun rights advocates were displeased with the way people associate firearms with violence.

Jeff Patane, a professional shooter practicing recently at the Metcalf Gun Range in South San Jose, said, “There is definitely a prejudice [against] firearms in our society.”

He used the April 15 Boston Marathon bombing as an example of the media blaming the incident on the bombers and not the bombs themselves.

“Why is it whenever guns are involved, it is the guns that are bad, but when [any other weapon] is involved, it is the people?” asked Patane.

Chuck Rossi, another professional shooter at the Metcalf Gun Range, said during America’s colonial era, handling firearms was a highly discussed matter with children and family members alike.

“Since now it is taboo to talk about anything related to guns,” Rossi said, “gun safety awareness has definitely gone down.”

Rossi believed such ignorance causes most people to blame violence on guns, rather than blame the people using them.

**What should be done?**  
Jordon Li, a gun enthusiast and 15-year-old rising junior at Milpitas High School in Milpitas, suggested police officers teach students about gun safety, along with anti-drug programs.

Li said, “In Switzerland today, gun safety is taught in their education curriculum.”

Kim, an English and history teacher at Hyde Middle School in Cupertino, emphasized the role of community-based events in discouraging gun violence.

“We try to reach the root of the cause, which are the isolated members of society,” said Kim. “We try to use community events, and we encourage healthy behaviors through team-building activities. As teachers, we keep a lookout for students who display violent behavior through different medium, whether through drawings or through writing.”

Likewise, Hill has conducted a program in which students exchange their toy weapons for books. Hill believes that encouraging educational values over play-violence would discourage students from using firearms to commit future incidents.

Conversely, Córdova advocated stricter gun policies, including building a federal database of all purchased firearms for officials to locate where the guns are being distributed.

She also said her organization has dedicated speeches, rallies, and petitions to enforcing further gun control policies.

“The violence will not stop until we have more gun control,” said Córdova.

Politicians, experts, and reporters alike have dived into this issue searching for a solution, only to surface unsuccessful. With so many angles to this sensitive problem, the likelihood of a compromise that would satisfy every shooter, teacher and resident in San Jose is slim.

Despite this, Kim still encourages people on both sides to get involved in the debate. She seeks legislation to satisfy those who stand by their firearms and those who demand peace in the community.

“I think it’s important for people to discuss this subject, in order to find a middle ground between gun ownership and limitations on who deserves the right to bear arms,” said Kim.

# SOLD INTO SEX SLAVERY – in India, and in California

BY SINDHU RAVIRA  
*Mosaic Staff Writer*

Nisha Khatun was 14 when she was gang raped by five men.

“Every day I used to have at least three buyers. They use the women and then looked down upon us as whores,” Khatun, now 18 and an escapee from sex slavery, said in an interview from India. “They used to extort money from us, beat the women, and threaten to burn the village.”

Millions of exploited children are bound by sexual servitude around the globe, in poverty-stricken nations such as India — but also in wealthy areas of the Bay Area, where the Internet has made trafficking easier.

Wherever they live, victims of sex slavery suffer trauma.

Abandoned on the streets at age

12, Carissa Phelps of California was trafficked and exploited.

“Your whole livelihood becomes based on someone else because you’re a slave,” said Phelps, who eventually escaped her pimp and rebuilt her life. She graduated from UCLA Law School and became an activist.

But trafficking is a difficult crime to investigate and successfully prosecute.

Minh Dang, 28, has become known worldwide for her battle against sex slavery. The San Jose native said her parents, in addition to sexually and emotionally abusing her, sold her in brothels and advertised her in newspapers. By age 10, Dang said, she became a sex slave.

“I wrote in my diary when I was really little ‘I have a sad life,’ and I knew that. It was painful to wake up everyday,” Dang

said. “I thought the only way out of it was to make my parents happy.” Trying to forget, she said, doesn’t work. “You can’t just tell someone when you’re being beaten, raped and tortured.”

Dang is a spokeswoman for Don’t Sell Bodies, a nonprofit started by actress Jada Pinkett Smith. Like other survivors, Dang speaks out as a way to overcome her experiences and move on.

Mosaic could not corroborate Dang’s story with law enforcement.

Her mother, Phuong Tran of Mountain View, vehemently denied abusing her daughter. In an emotional interview, Tran said that she could never hurt her daughter and to this day loves her immensely.

“You think any mom could do that to her kid at 8, 9 years old?” Tran said.

But children indeed are victims. Often, agents negotiate the prices of young children based on their beauty and age.

“The younger a girl is, the higher the price she would fetch. Smiling, voluptuous means higher prices,” said Ruchira Gupta of New Delhi, an Emmy-winning abolitionist who has attracted global attention to the issue of sex slavery in India. “Virgins are especially valued, since ‘johns’ believe that through sleeping with a virgin, they will cleanse themselves.”

Pimps sometimes smuggle girls across borders with police complicity. Gupta said the johns often torture victims as well as raping them. “It involves beatings and slaps or belts and ice. Customers even tried to throttle them. Survivors showed me marks of cigarette butts and knives stabbed all

over their wrists.”

Pimps can control victims with mind tricks. Dang said she was made to feel it was a daughter’s duty to endure, Khatun’s sister was held at gunpoint, and Phelps’ pimp claimed to protect and care only for her. Some victims



Savannah Sanders  
Minh Dang, formerly of San Jose, campaigns against sex slavery.

are forced to have children, who are then held hostage, to prevent escape. Also, they are taught to call pimps or managers “mama” and “papa” to make them believe that these people were their only relatives.

Young children then become dependent on drugs and alcohol to block out the experience of repeated abuse.

“I did get money that was used to get drugs which we would [do] later,” Phelps said. “I thought that through my money, I was contributing to my pseudo-family.”

Melissa Farley, executive director of Prostitution Research and Education in San Francisco, said that in California,

“Women are prostituting for gas money to get a job interview, for McDonald’s hamburgers.”

Mark Fisher of the human-rights group International Justice Mission said, “Every day we go about our lives driving past or sitting near a person who is going to be sold 10 times a day for \$50.” Children arrested for prostitution, he said, are enslaved. He estimated that there are 17,500 victims of human trafficking in California, 72 percent of them Americans.

Due to its location, resources and increasing population, San Francisco and the Bay Area have the highest rates of trafficking in the state, according to the California Alliance to Combat Trafficking and Slavery Task Force.

U.S. State Department numbers indicate sex trafficking is rapidly growing.

“There is an increase in human trafficking,” said Mike Massoni, South San Francisco chief of police. “Now, however, we see more awareness of it. Complaints come from almost all ethnic groups.”

There are an estimated 27 million Dangs, Phelps and Khatuns suffering from sex slavery around the globe. It generates an estimated \$32 billion each year.

“To my horror, slavery still exists in our lifetime, in our world,” Gupta said. “But it is not inevitable and constant. Things can and will change, because all victims want to save their daughters from the same fate.”

Phelps agreed.

“If we empower local survivors one by one, we can create an army for freedom.”



Aapne Aap Women Worldwide  
Nisha Khatun, left, and other girls were rescued from sex slavery by abolitionist Ruchira Gupta. They are pictured in 2012 in Fordganj, Bihar, India.



# Mentoring offers special rewards for both parties

BY ADRIANA RAMOS

*Mosaic Staff Writer*

“If I ever get to retire, having won the Lottery, the first thing I will do is mentor” full time, Pam Lehner says.

That’s how much Lehner values mentoring.

Lehner was matched with Leslie Cervantes seven years ago. “I got more than I ever gave,” says Lehner.

Mentor-mentee relationships are not one-sided. Students receive guidance and contacts while mentors have an opportunity to become re-energized and influence the future.

Lehner says her experience with mentoring has given her great rewards on a personal level.

“It keeps me young and energizes me,” she says.

Working with the Partners for New Generations, a mentor and tutor program, Lehner has served as a mentor of at-risk high school students. She initially made a commitment to mentor Cervantes for one year.

Cervantes met Lehner when she was a high-school senior. When the two were first paired, Cervantes, who is Hispanic, questioned whether she would be able to

relate to Lehner, who is white.

“What would I ever have in common with her?” Cervantes remembers thinking.

But they soon discovered their similarities. “We both love flowers, we both get teary-eyed quickly and we both are quick to love,” Lehner says.

Cervantes learned how valuable Lehner would become when her laptop was stolen the day before her Santa Clara University application was due.

Cervantes called Lehner and asked for help for the first time. Lehner invited Cervantes over to her house to use her computer and to finish the application. That experience cemented their relationship. Visits, phone calls, and lunch get-togethers soon followed. After the one-year commitment passed, the two stuck together.

Spending a lot of time in Lehner’s house gave Cervantes an opportunity to see what a healthy relationship looked like. Lehner learned a lot about Latin culture from Cervantes. “She was my first real connection with a young Hispanic woman, and I was her first real connection with an older white woman,” Lehner says.

“She didn’t realize there were so many things that she could do despite people thinking she couldn’t because she was Hispanic, she was a woman, she didn’t have financial means,” Lehner says. “In many ways, that all made her into an even stronger woman once she discovered that she had the power not to have people put limitations on her. I think that having a mentor really helped her with that.”

Lehner was a sounding post for Cervantes, drove her to college visits and encouraged her to talk to college representatives. With Lehner’s support, Cervantes graduated from high school. She went on to graduate from Santa Clara University and is now studying to become a police officer.

Lorena Ruedas believes mentorships go two ways.

“The mentees are contributing to society, and contributing to me; the contributions are all part of a circle,” says Ruedas, a coordinator at the Office of Diversity at UC Davis School of Medicine.

After completing her master’s a year ago, Ruedas taught a human potential seminar at a Sacramento City

College. The class included a group of young Chicano boys who came from neighborhoods with gang activity.

Teaching soon evolved to Ruedas mentoring the boys. “I learned that despite coming from rough backgrounds, they could still have the resilience to pursue higher education,” Ruedas says. “Mentoring them helped me to see the potential for the next generation.”

In Ruedas’ experience, a good mentor

“pulls the strengths you already have out.”

“These boys had an amazing ability to connect with others,” Ruedas says. And Ruedas hopes she helped them recognize this quality.

“I’d like to think they realized what they couldn’t see for themselves,” Ruedas says. “It’s not just a victory for me or the students but really for the community.”



**Jonae Scott | Mosaic Staff**  
Pam Lehner, left, became Leslie Cervantes’ mentor seven years ago.

# Teaching kids, and adults, to be social detectives

BY KATIE MARTIN

*Mosaic Staff Writer*

Standing up or slouching in a chair? Using formal language or casual expressions? Telling jokes to add humor to an awkward situation or simply staying quiet?

Social choices such as these – and the more nuanced, which fall somewhere in between – are a necessity for maintaining positive relationships with others. While most people develop increasingly sophisticated social skills as they age, some, often including individuals on the autism spectrum, fail to pick up basic cues as children and have difficulty blending in with their peers.

Social Thinking, created in 1995 by speech language pathologist Michelle Garcia Winner, aims to combat these issues through direct instruction. Groups of up to four students, divided by age and ability, work with therapists at clinics to broaden their social skills by participating in group activities both in and outside of the clinic. Currently, there are two clinics in San Jose and one in Boston.

Social Thinking is about the subtle choices we make. Since specific social reactions cannot be applied to every scenario, the main focus is on teaching students to consider the perspectives, feelings and intentions of peers and then responding appropriately.

“We have them think about their own social expectations; when they have good thoughts about people, when they have weird thoughts about people, how what we do affects how others think and feel,” Winner said.

This, Winner explains, is where the difference between being “social” and “Social Thinking” lies. While being social refers not to partying or frequenting big events but to simply having the ability to share space with others unobtrusively, Social Thinking is about breaking down abstract communication norms into concrete ideas that all clients can understand.

The most basic form of this breakdown is called “social behavior mapping,” in which students consider three facets for determining appropriate behavior: the situation, the expectations for that specific scenario and how others will feel about their reactions. Being a “social detective” – the terminology Winner uses with younger children – and using clues from one’s surroundings leads to adaptability in a variety of situations.

“It’s a Pandora’s box,” Winner said. “Everything you isolate can be expanded upon.”

Stacey Howard, whose 16-year-old son attends sessions at the San Jose clinic, echoes these sentiments. Her son was not diagnosed with ADHD, as well as growth-motor and visual motor deficits, until he was 11. Social Thinking has aided in boosting his confidence as well as his understanding of nonverbal communication.

“(Social Thinking) provides

individual therapy, but their real niche is that they provide small group opportunities to practice skills in a safe environment without judgment,” Howard said. “It allows for immediate intervention and explanation.”

The Social Thinking clinics serve students ranging in age from 3 to 70. The outfitting of the therapy rooms reflects this gap: two tables – one small and plastic, with an accompanying set of brightly colored chairs, the other tall and made of wood – decorate their respective halves of the room. Despite the disparity, curriculum is similar across all age groups, albeit presented in different ways.

For even the youngest clients, Social Thinking introduces the concept of “thinking with your eyes.” According to Winner, children from “many diagnostic labels,” including ADD, ADHD and non-verbal learning disabilities, can benefit from this tactic, as many do not otherwise understand exactly what to look at when asked to make eye contact. Being taught simply to follow the eyes of others, though, can lead once again to “clues” about others, as eye movement is often used to indicate emotion.



**Mahima Dutt | Mosaic Staff**  
Michelle Garcia Winner created Social Thinking in 1995.

Social Thinking is made kid-friendly through the usage of comics that depict the “unthinkables.” Villains like Rock Brain, Glass Man and Mean Jean, named for their inflexibility, easily-triggered breakdowns and cruelty, respectively, are defeated by SuperFlex, the hero equipped to handle every social situation with calmness.

The teaching strategy changes once children approach upper elementary school and teenage years. This, however, is often when the obstacles come into play.

“(Sociality) affects mental health,” Winner said. “As kids get older, they have awareness of how they’re not included the same way other kids are. As we help (students) to become more aware, (depression and anxiety) may become an issue.”

“There’s so much nonverbal language by middle school, and then there’s so much sarcasm in high school,” Howard said. “Not hearing the sarcasm, not reading the body language, just listening to the words that are said, not how they’re said, not the way they’re delivered, not the tone or pitch – it becomes a challenge.”

Teens also have the challenge of dealing with rapidly shifting social norms – the skills they may have acquired during earlier years of Social Thinking are no longer relevant. The “hidden rules for a 7-year-old,” speech language pathologist Pamela Crooke explained, are not nearly as nuanced or mature as those of a 16-year-old. To an extent, Social Thinking requires undoing some rules and substituting new ones as students age.

These changes once again draw on the importance of using perspective taking rather than strict rules.

“Social Thinking is not teaching the ‘doing’ It’s teaching the thinking underlying the doing,” said Crooke.

Even adults seek help with Social Thinking deficits, though Crooke and Winner note that while children often need generalized instruction,

most adults come into the clinic with a specific problem to address, like working alongside others in an office setting or communicating more effectively with family members.

A high priority for therapists who work with adults is doing more than sitting around a table at the clinic; Crooke often meets with her group of grownups at a coffee shop or at the mall so they can practice their skills in public settings.

Both Crooke and Winner are quick to emphasize that Social Thinking instruction is neither a cure nor a quick fix for social deficits. However, treatment can be “one piece in the puzzle” of the multifaceted social spectrum.

“Unless you’re a good social observer,” Crooke said. “You can’t be a participant.”

# In the minority

BY CERYS HOLSTEGE

*Mosaic Staff Writer*

Lauren Davancaze, a rising junior at Mountain View High School, describes herself as fiscally and socially conservative, a categorization that puts her solidly in the minority on a campus that sits in the heart of the liberal Bay Area.

“Sometimes I feel uncomfortable, because it’s an uncomfortable thing to be alone in your views,” Davancaze said. “A lot of people tend to look down on conservatives since we are an obvious minority.”

According to the Bay Area Center for Voting Research, the region is the most liberal in the country, with Berkeley, Oakland and San Francisco among the top 10 most progressive cities in the United States.

Liberals often pride themselves on being tolerant and accepting. But this acceptance sometimes doesn’t extend itself to conservative students, who say they feel the majority is accepting of everything -- except for them.

“We have a famously open-minded and accepting community, but we sometimes forget that we are excluding people who don’t necessarily think in the same way,” said Hannah Hsieh, a rising freshman at Stanford University and graduate of Castilleja High School in Palo Alto.

This creates an atmosphere where conservative students say they become hesitant to voice their opinions.

“More conservative students tend not to put themselves out there and instead try to stay under the radar,” Davancaze said. “We are the minority and we don’t want to be looked down upon. Humans want to be accepted. If there’s a part of us that we feel isn’t going to be accepted, we will try to keep that back.”

Esha Naik, who was co-president of a club for young Republicans at her high school in Napa, says some students keep silent for fear of being judged.

“A lot of people are almost embarrassed to say they’re Republican,” said Naik, a rising freshman at Saint Mary’s College in Moraga and graduate of Justin-Siena High School.

Alex Kemble, who was co-president with Naik, saw a similar phenomenon.

“People think of ‘conservative’ as a bad word. When people hear it, they automatically prejudice you,” said Kemble, a rising freshman at the University of Nevada, Reno. “If a person were to say that they were for traditional marriage, they would be crucified at our school and in our area. You’re just not allowed to say that.”

Alex Manlapaz, a junior at San Jose State University, said she would have a negative reaction to someone who spoke out against gay marriage.

“If I heard someone say that, I would think it was wrong,” Manlapaz said. “People would be mad at them for their opinion. We try to respect them, but we’re such a liberal area, they just seem uptight.”

This can create tension in

friendships and peer groups. Davancaze was once warned about trying to join a group of friends at Mountain View High School because they would think she was “too conservative.”

“We know that with our friends, politics are just not a topic that should be talked about,” Naik said.

Conservative Bay Area teens say they’re frustrated that, in general, their views aren’t given a chance.

“People get so high-strung about being against Republicans that it’s hard for them to even listen to our views,” Naik said. “They’ve always been taught to be anti-conservative.”

Some liberal students do make an effort to be inclusive of their more conservative friends. Vlad Terson, a rising junior at Mountain View High School and friend of Davancaze, said that he used to try to sway the opinion of his differently-minded peers, but has learned to be more open-minded.

“Being liberal is all about being tolerant,” Terson said. “It’s important to be tolerant of both sides. Having conservative friends is really a gift, as they do enrich the conversation.”

In some Bay Area high schools, the anti-conservative stigma isn’t just limited to peers. Some teachers tend to present only one side of an issue -- the liberal side, according to Naik.

“I feel like the reason a lot of the students at our school are so strong about their liberal views is because they’ve been influenced by the teachers in our religion classes,” Naik said. “Their mindset gets skewed to believe that the only way to think is that liberal point of view.”

Kemble said he’s been called out by a teacher who made a statement during class, and then declared that he knew Kemble would disagree with him.

“We had never even talked about the issue together. I’d prefer if teachers would just keep politics out of the classroom,” Kemble said.

Conservative students say one-sided political discussions present acute dangers and that balance is necessary for compromise and progress.

“People don’t see other perspectives as legitimate world view. It’s not a healthy mindset,” Hsieh said. “Part of being an educated and well-rounded person is being able to understand and empathize with other viewpoints. People need to realize that there are very smart people who believe things -- even if they’re different from what they believe -- for good reasons.”

Having their views constantly opposed has only reaffirmed the beliefs of some conservative students.

“It’s made me have to delve into why I believe what I do, because every day my beliefs might be challenged by other people,” Davancaze said. “In the end you have to get over the fear of being judged, and I think it’s getting over that that makes you stronger. It’s definitely made me stronger. You learn to stand up for your beliefs, even if you are the only one standing.”





**Marili Arellano | Mosaic Staff**  
Jenni Chang, left, arrived at the Civic Center with partner Lisa Dazols dressed for the occasion.



**Marili Arellano | Mosaic Staff**  
A green-costumed Nikolas Lemos stood vigil outside the City Hall entrance.



**Marili Arellano | Mosaic Staff**  
Crispin Hollins, left, and Luis Casillas look content in San Francisco after the rulings.



**Kelly Chang | Mosaic Staff**  
Enrique Chavez waves a U.S. flag in the predominantly gay Castro District when the rulings are announced.

# GAY RIGHTS ADVOCATES AND SUPPORTERS CELEBRATE SUPREME COURT RULINGS

## GAY MARRIAGE | FROM PAGE 1

The couple appeared in downtown San Francisco with other dignitaries such as Lt. Gov. Gavin Newsom, the former San Francisco mayor who in 2004 led the city in issuing marriage licenses to gay couples -- in violation of state law.

"This is a historic moment for all loving couples, and really all fair-minded Americans," said Lewis, who married Gaffney during Newsom's tenure.

With the end of DOMA, the federal government will now treat legally wedded same-sex couples as identical to heterosexuals in terms of benefits, including immigration sponsorships. (Thirteen states and the District of Columbia currently recognize same-sex marriages.)

Jaden Duong, an Australian living in San Francisco, welcomed the high court's decision on DOMA.

"My partner's here in the U.S. for work," he said. "I'm here on a tourist visa indefinitely because of DOMA. Now they have to recognize us ... which means his work visa includes me."

Michelle Cook of San Jose hopes the end of DOMA will provide immediate relief for her and her wife. The Veteran's Administration had stopped paying the couple's disability compensation because

officials said federal law did not recognize same-sex marriage.

"This means my acceptance, liberty and my basic freedoms," added Gregory Desierto, 30, of San Francisco. "There are so many feelings that are difficult to translate to words."

Hundreds of thousands were expected to continue to celebrate at the annual San Francisco Pride festivities scheduled for the weekend.

While same-sex marriage supporters cheered their victory, Proposition 8 proponents were weighing options for a legal challenge. They might try to limit the scope of the decision to only Alameda and Los Angeles counties, where the four plaintiffs who challenged the constitutionality of Proposition 8 reside.

But legal experts told news outlets that they expect thousands of gay and lesbian couples across the state to apply for marriage licenses beginning sometime in late July. Many of these couples have waited years for this moment.

"I couldn't celebrate loud enough," Craig Person said at a rally at San Jose City Hall. "I can remember my college years and waiting for a bill on gay marriage. For once, a lot more people will be more comfortable with their sexuality."

Newsom told a crowd in San Francisco, "It's a

remarkable journey that we are still on. It's messy and it's complex, but it's a worthy journey."

But at Our Lady of Peace Church in Santa Clara, an 83-year-old woman who requested anonymity saw the ruling as part of a "cycle of lost values."

"To see this happening is going to change family structure," she said in Spanish. "What can gay marriage produce? Certainly not children. Those who are in favor are against God."

Rev. John Rodgers of First Century Evangelist Group in San Jose offered another perspective.

"Jesus commands us to love, so my faith doesn't conflict with my sexual orientation," said Rodgers, who is gay.

Bob Rucker, director of San Jose State University's School of Journalism and Mass Communications, agreed with Rodgers. As a Catholic, Rucker said his faith and support of same-sex marriage are compatible.

"Civil matters should have a separation of church and state," said Rucker, who is gay. "The church can advise and it should, but it should only give moral guidance. The church can't be the law ... just because I'm with a man and I'm a man doesn't mean God won't bless my love."

Rucker, an African-American from Chicago, put the Supreme Court decisions into historical context:



The U.S. Supreme Court announced rulings on same-sex marriage during the final days of the 2013 Mosaic. Editors dispatched a team of reporters to San Francisco and San Jose to capture the emotions on an historic day in the Bay Area. Brizette Castellanos, Matthew Chow, Hannah Knowles and Brenda Su reported from San Francisco. Iris Lee, Winston Lee, Perla Luna, Chris Moreno, Adriana Ramos and Raphael Santa Maria reported from San Jose. Katie Martin wrote the story.

"I got the same profound feeling I felt with the civil rights movement," he said. "Something as powerful as the Supreme Court gives us an air of freedom."

Despite the struggles activists still face in states that don't recognize same-sex marriages, David Chiu, San Francisco board of supervisors president, remains optimistic about the future of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community.

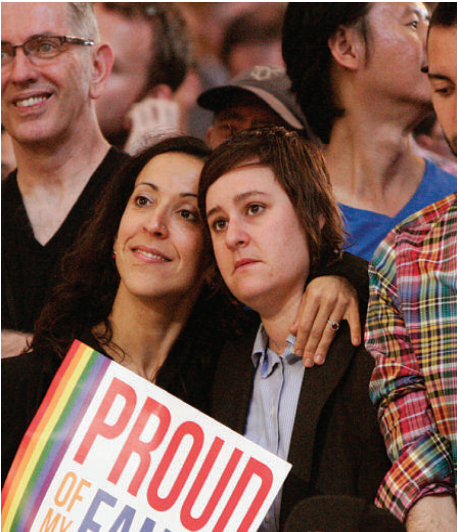
"As goes San Francisco, so goes California," he said. "As goes California, so goes the whole country."



**Marili Arellano | Mosaic Staff**  
Suzy Loftus and daughter Bibian wait in anticipation for the Supreme Court decisions.



**Kelly Chang | Mosaic Staff**  
Gabrielle Jones wears rainbow-colored eyeshadow for a San Jose rally.



**Mahima Dutt | Mosaic Staff**  
Lori Bilella, left, and her partner Renata Moreira came to City Hall in San Francisco to show their pride.



**Kelly Chang | Mosaic Staff**  
Johnny Zych, left, and Terry Vargas show their support for same-sex marriage in San Jose.



# Gay Scouting puts churches in a bind

I go to a black Baptist church in Oakland that condemns homosexuality, but we all know there are gay members. The talk around the church never ends. It goes from, “He walks with a bounce” to “She dresses as if she doesn’t know what a skirt is.” The talk is there but no one does anything about it.

Ever since the Boy Scouts of America opened its arms to gay youth last spring, many socially conservative churches have been in a fix. Should they shut down their Scout troops and risk losing their liberal or moderate members? Or should they continue hosting the Boy Scouts, throw away a core value as a church and drive away conservative members?

This is the debate that must be answered by every conservative church with a Scout troop by Jan.1, when the Boy Scouts of America’s policies take effect. According to the Washington Post, over 70 percent of Scout troops are supported by churches. If churches tell the Scouts to take a hike, the Scouts will have to find new places for their young members, straight as well as gay.

My church does not host a Boy Scout troop, but I can only imagine the hardships my fellow congregants would have to face in deciding if they should continue hosting them. Most Baptist churches condemn homosexuality and live by the Bible, which states in Leviticus, “You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female; it is an abomination.”

But as some Baptist churches like mine quietly accept gay members, endorsing the gay lifestyle is a different story.

I don’t discriminate against gay people, but allowing gay Scouts would be a huge turnabout for churches. As far as religion goes, I think churches should be able to stand by their beliefs and values, even if it means rejecting the Boy Scouts of America. Scouting is voluntary. It is a choice. And it’s important to live by your moral convictions. I think all churches in this predicament should do the only thing they can do, which is to stop hosting Scout troops in order to maintain their values.

Now, many churches on the liberal side would argue that the kids come first and it is their duty to support all children regardless of sexual orientation. I’m not a religious or political conservative, so this has nothing to do with politics. But I am a religious person who believes churches should love all people. I understand that this is an unsettling decision that won’t end nicely for everyone. But at the same time, that doesn’t mean churches have to endorse gay Scouting at the expense of their moral duty to God.

## Be courteous — because I’m human

I do not want to be the recipient of kindness and courtesy directed specifically toward women or the weak.

That’s how the Oxford American Dictionary defines chivalry.

I do not need protection because I am a girl. I do not need you to open the door for me, I do not need you to constantly offer me your jacket, I do not need you to pull out my chair before I sit down simply because I am a girl.

If I go through the door first, I will hold it open for you even if you’re a man and I’m a girl. If you want my jacket, I will give it to you. If you need me to help you hold your books, I will.

Lumping women and the weak into a category of people who are worthy of pity and protection is doing nothing but reinforcing women’s inferiority, doing nothing but fostering an inherent belief that women are less capable than men, doing nothing but exemplifying Western culture’s notion that femininity is secondary to masculinity.

In this capacity, chivalry in the modern sense is nothing more than perpetuating the idea that men are the dominant gender.

Be kind and courteous to me because that’s the right way to treat other human beings, not because I happen to have long hair and wear dresses.

I want to know that the reason people are polite to me is because they are polite people. If you do hold the door for me, I’m not going to feel offended and yell at you for thinking I’m a subservient woman who can’t open the door for myself; I’ll be grateful and smile in appreciation.

Just don’t open the door for me because I played with Barbies as a kid.

Open that door because treating other people with compassion and kindness and humanity — regardless of mental or physical capacity, regardless of gender, regardless of race, regardless of age — is the decent thing to do.



IN MY OPINION  
CORRINE FORWARD

BY RAPHAEL SANTA MARIA

Mosaic Staff Writer

Twelve-year-old Burt Garcia is a frequent player of the “Call of Duty” video game franchise. He likes to earn violent kill-streaks and head shots, in hopes of realizing his dream of being No. 1 on the leaderboards.

A student at Bret Harte Middle School in San Jose, Garcia said he has been mashing buttons and rotating those joysticks since he was about 5 years old, with no effect on his academic performance.

“I get straight-A’s, so my mom doesn’t care,” said Garcia when asked if his parents are concerned at all with his hobby.

In the wake of recent tragedies such as the Aurora, Colo., movie theater shooting and the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in Newtown, Conn., the public is worried that violent video games are training their children to become the next James Holmes or Adam Lanza. Both of the accused killers were avid video game players.

The issue is nothing new. In 2005, now-state Sen. Leland Yee, D-San Francisco, wrote Assembly Bill 1179, a law which required “violent” games -- games that included killing, maiming, dismembering or sexually assaulting an image of a human being -- to be labeled as such.

The law, which was deemed unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court, would have prohibited the sale of such games to minors.

An e-mail statement from Lee’s press secretary, Dan Lieberman, read, “The concern that led to AB 1179 was that video game violence is, by its very nature, more interactive than passively watching acts of violence on television, and as mentioned, often reward the player for committing acts of violence.”

Professor Bryan Gibson, director of the experimental program in the psychology department at Central Michigan University, agrees with Lee’s stance.

Through his research, Gibson has concluded that violent video games can cause an increase in aggression long after the game has been turned off.

He believes that video games have the ability to “increase the psychological connection between the player and the character.” You’re not just watching the character, you are the character. And that can prove to be problematic, he said.

Some experts believe that exposure to the violence in video games for extended periods, especially for younger audiences, can desensitize them to real-world violence, inspiring some of them to be a danger to those at home, or in school.

Christopher J. Ferguson, an assistant professor of psychology at the Texas A&M University, disagrees.

Ferguson, who has written extensively on the topic, said many recent studies that draw a correlation between video game violence and aggressive behavior are “un-standardized,”

wherein researchers pick the results that best fit their hypotheses.

People “tend to go through a moral panic,” said Ferguson. He said the issue dates back to ancient times.

The Greeks were concerned the audiences would imitate what they saw in plays like “Oedipus the King,” which included acts of violence like murder and suicide. Consequently, violent scenes were performed offstage.

In the ‘50s, the Batman & Robin comic book series was often scrutinized because of supposed themes of homosexuality. Some critics even delved into interpreting pederasty, a male homosexual relationship between an adult and an adolescent.

Referring to the incidents in Connecticut and Colorado, Ferguson said when these sorts of tragedies occur, people are given a false “illusion of control,” in which they can easily “demonize somebody and say ‘It’s that guy, those guys, or these people.’”

Ferguson said the focus should not be on video game violence as a culprit.

“The missed opportunity here was to talk about mental health,” he said.

Ferguson said video game violence is just a means of serving up a simple solution, when the issue is much more complex.

“We seem to have trouble learning from these events,” he said. “There always has to be a ‘bad guy’ if no one else is around to point fingers at.”

# Resisting Adderall, and refusing to succumb to the ‘Harvard or death’ mentality

Maybe it’s because I’m too much of a wimp to take any kind of drug. Maybe it’s because I don’t fancy the sleepless nights, heart-pounding pressure, nor the addiction to something that isn’t my favorite food. Maybe it’s because I obey my parent’s command to never, ever take it.

Whatever the reason may be, I’m scared of taking Adderall.

Sure, such a stimulant would help me concentrate, stay focused, and speed through homework and tests. But is it worth the addiction, the withdrawals, and other dangerous side effects that come with drug abuse?

Apparently, many college students think so. The National Survey on Drug Use and Health reported that an estimated 6.4 percent of full-time college students age 18 to 22 use unprescribed Adderall. There are most likely a number of high school students who also abuse the drug. But what about me?

I do want good grades. I do want to score high on the SAT, a national test that goes a long way in deciding college admissions. I want to be praised by my friends and teachers, and hopefully be accepted to my dream colleges. That’s why I maximize my study habits by investing in prep books, study aids,

and the occasional Frappuccino for those all-nighters.

But investing in Adderall? I don’t know.

It’s tempting, I have to admit. The stories sound like miracles. Five hours worth of work done in two? I can only dream of working so efficiently. Not only would I study better and learn more, but I would have more time to spend with my family and friends. Maybe I could even dedicate more time to volunteering at the library, or begin to work on that novel I’ve had in mind for years.

And maybe, just maybe, I would finally be able to compete with others.

I may not be too smart, but I work my hardest in school. I stay after school to study and review with teachers. I’m punctual with homework (usually), and I always ask questions in class. But often, I feel like my efforts are never enough. Every day I look at the gifted students at my school leaving their fifth advanced placement class of the day, laughing without a worry about their grades.



IN MY OPINION  
WINSTON LEE

Because of this envy, I’m scared that someday I will resort to using Adderall or any other study drug just to compete with them.

A perfect 4.0 grade point average is now the norm for those competing for admission to the top schools. As acceptance rates continue to drop every year, the race towards the top gets even more intense. With pressure from parents to earn stellar grades and outperform their peers, students are compelled to resort to study drugs, when pure hard work just isn’t enough in this academic market.

But does the end justify the means? Sometimes I wonder whether taking Adderall would be worth it. Would I rather work my hardest, only to fail to come out on top? Or would I rather take the pill, and surpass my class, earn scholarships and make my parents proud? Despite such desirable notions, I still shake my head and flush them out of my life.

To me, resorting to Adderall is like dealing with the devil. The idea of selling my soul and health in return for stellar scores and Ivy League admission just sounds terrifying.

Worse, Adderall abuse reveals how students become slaves to the horrible academic infrastructure. Thanks to standardized testing, dropping admission rates, and grade inflation, we have come to

a generation where students are forced to value their test scores over their health.

Personally, I blame the “Harvard or death” mentality that forces competitive students to sacrifice their health in order to appease their parents or themselves in the rat race to prestigious colleges.

I’d rather earn clean, honest grades. I believe that receiving back a test marked with an “A-plus” is much more rewarding after weeks of studying and note-taking alone. Without drugs, I know that I earned my grade through discipline and hard work. Using Adderall to help me study would never give me the same confidence I have through pure studying.

I suppose some people don’t care about how much effort they put in, as long as they get their A at the end of the day. I pity those who can’t appreciate the experience of mastering difficult material through natural reading and writing.

I understand this Adderall culture is most likely not going to end in the near future. As long as pressure to get into college is still high, people will find ways to gain an edge in the game. But for whatever reason students choose to use Adderall, I beg them to stay away from this insanity.

# Affirmative action: a tool to combat racism

As a middle-class Asian-American, I admit that I’ve lamented how affirmative action hurts my chances at getting into prestigious colleges. Oh, if only I were Native American, black, Latino or even Cambodian. Harvard, Stanford and Princeton would all grovel at my feet for my attendance!

However, I support affirmative action until racism has ended in our country. This policy is critical to the betterment of society and for the improvement of higher education. Affirmative action is necessary to combat years of oppression for disadvantaged races.

I’m glad that the U.S. Supreme Court in June preserved affirmative action in the case of Fisher vs. University of Texas at Austin. Unfortunately, in California, Proposition 209 had already banned affirmative action in 1996. Since then, Latino enrollment in the University of California system has significantly decreased.

Statistics have shown that whites and Asians have higher rates of employment and make significantly more than blacks, Hispanics, and



IN MY OPINION  
BRENDA SU

Native Americans. Education leads to better and increased job opportunities, but better education is seen in families who can afford it. It is difficult for a person to get a job without a good education, and it is just as difficult for him to get a good education without a financially stable background.

For those who are born into poor families, whose parents have not been college-educated, it is difficult to break out of this cycle and compete with people like me — those with college-educated parents. The psychological effects are as great as the socioeconomic ones.

I’ve heard people tell African-American students, “Blacks don’t take AP classes.” I’ve even heard Hispanic kids say, “I’m Mexican. I don’t take honors classes.” Imagine trying to succeed in the face of such adversity. Obviously, with so many factors working against disadvantaged races, telling them they can’t succeed to the point that they believe it themselves, it is only fair that they get a boost in college admissions.

In 1961, President John F. Kennedy began a policy of equal employment opportunity, and instructed employers to “take affirmative action to ensure that applicants are employed without regard to their race, creed, color or national origin.”

This helped African-Americans since they

could no longer be discriminated against in the workplace because of their color. Similarly, affirmative action seeks to expand opportunities to disadvantaged races.

Furthermore, affirmative action creates a diverse learning environment for universities. In this global economy, learning social sensitivity is crucial to succeeding in the real world — not to mention it’s kind of essential to being a decent human being.

This is not “reverse racism,” as critics of affirmative action have denounced it as. Reverse racism doesn’t exist, at least in the world of college admissions, because we live in a society that favors the wealthier, more educated majority.

Affirmative action is not a perfect system. Not all whites or Asians are educated and wealthy. Similarly, not all blacks or Hispanics are poor. However, we need to look at the big picture and look at how we can better society as a whole, and one solution is affirmative action.

Nevertheless, it’s the best thing we have to ensure equal opportunity. While race should not be the key factor that decides a student’s acceptance into college—that would be academic achievement in general—race should be taken into account. Affirmative action is not reverse racism. It is a vehicle to end racism.



# Supreme Court didn’t go far enough in Prop. 8 case

After 25 years, my parents are getting married. The night before the U.S. Supreme Court ruled to reinstate same-sex marriage in California, my mom Megan texted me. “I’ll be watching for the decision at 7 a.m.,” she wrote. The decision came June 26. For my two lesbian mothers, it meant that they now had equality in the eyes of federal law and state law. I’m thrilled with the court’s rulings. The justices took enormous steps toward equality for gays and lesbians when they struck down the federal Defense of Marriage Act and upheld a lower court’s ruling that had voided Proposition 8, the voter-approved initiative that banned same-sex marriages in California. An hour or so after the rulings were announced, I texted my mom back: “I’m so happy for you,” I said. But the high court needs to go further in the future, and that needs to happen soon.



Instead of ruling on the merits of Proposition 8 itself, the justices dismissed the case because its sponsors lacked the standing to defend it when state officials refused. In doing so they missed an opportunity to take the ballot measure head on and establish true equality for same-sex couples nationwide. After the rulings were announced, National Center for Lesbian Rights leader Kate Kendell reminded an overjoyed crowd at San Francisco City Hall that many gay couples “are looking at what we have with a mix of disbelief, awe, celebration, and also dispirit. Because for them, their day-to-day life in 37 states is not going to change.” Kendell added, “So our commitment has to be: look what we’ve done here, and we’re going to help you do it wherever you live.” Some argue that two pro-gay rulings are enough for one day, that broader changes would have been too much at once. But there is always room for more change when the basic equality of millions is at the heart of an issue. Others caution that if the court had accepted the Proposition 8 case, the justices might have ruled against same-sex marriages. This point is important but it should not be an excuse for



Courtesy Kay Knowles  
Megan Lovelace, left, and Kay Knowles of San Jose raised two children.

much longer. We can’t wait indefinitely to correct injustices, especially when public opinion has shifted toward favoring same-sex marriage. A Gallup poll in May found that 53 percent of Americans support legalizing gay marriage, a dramatic increase from about 27 percent in 1996. I am reminded of a conversation I had with my mom Kay many years ago about how her partner Megan adopted me and my brother shortly after we were born. Our conversation went something

like this: when Megan was interviewed as part of the legal adoption process, state law required her interviewer to recommend she be denied simply because they could not legally marry. The adoptions caseworker wrote, “The California Department of Social Services does not believe that this adoption is in the best interest of the child and recommends denial of the petition. The Department believes that a child’s need for permanence, stability, belonging, and connectedness are best met when the parents have a commitment to each other demonstrated by marriage.” Megan eventually got approval to adopt from a sympathetic judge. But this doesn’t make the lack of recognition for couples like my parents any less hurtful. Because of Proposition 8 my parents were automatically less qualified to raise my brother and me, no matter how devoted they might turn out to be. Though gays in California will soon no longer face such hurdles, the vast majority of same- sex couples have yet to be acknowledged by state law. The Supreme Court’s recent rulings mark great change. But at the end of the day they are just the beginning.

# Teachers, get your head in the game

I attend a high school in the Silicon Valley that prides itself on high standardized test scores and a high academic performance index score. However, I have witnessed far too many examples of teaching incompetence. I still remember my freshman biology teacher, who, until the last month of the term, had not learned my name. And mind you, I spoke up in class, sat in the first row for several weeks and even made the effort to come in outside of class time to work. But for that whole year, my name in fourth period was “Dude.” This isn’t just a problem in freshman-level classes either. I’ve endured Spanish, chemistry, literature and even calculus classes where my teachers have turned out to be true disappointments. I know what you’re thinking: This boy is just another rebellious teenager trying to complain about everything and blame everyone but himself. But consider a report in June by the National Council on Teacher Quality on teacher preparation programs, that shows a downward spiral in the competence of our current and future instructors. Only 11 percent of California high school teaching programs earned the study’s maximum grade for preparation. Clearly, our teachers aren’t meeting the standards. In Finland, the education system is sound



and stable. Teachers are as respected as doctors and sometimes even as well paid. Only the best of undergraduate students can even consider applying to teaching programs at graduate schools. The competition for teaching jobs allows for only the best and brightest minds to take up those positions – minds that can inspire and motivate students. Minds that can understand the struggles that students face in school and give them hope for opportunities and possibilities available. But that isn’t the case here. There’s a major problem when the profession of teaching is so frowned upon in the United States that nobody wants to pursue it as a career. People who could otherwise make great teachers and motivators shirk away from it because of the skimpy salaries and the disdainful looks that friends and family pass their way. And what happens to us poor high school students? We’re stuck with teachers whose discontent with their jobs is so evident through their expressions that we lose motivation to put in our own efforts in the classroom. It’s a teacher’s job to care about their students, to make the effort to understand them, to motivate them to succeed in their individual ways and to never give up on them. It’s their job to comfort students when they suffer, counsel them when they struggle and encourage them when they succeed. Yes, it sounds quite like a parent’s job, but when students spend nearly as much time at school as they do awake at home, then how can the job of a teacher be any less important than that of the students’ own parents? Unfortunately, more teachers are treating their jobs as boring mundane chores. How

then can one expect their students not to do the same? It breaks my heart when teachers insist that their way is the correct way or when they lead their classes through unoriginal curricula. For example, almost every teenager in America is required to read Harper Lee’s “To Kill a Mockingbird,” a novel about two young siblings becoming exposed to the prejudice in the adult members of their community. It’s a complicated book, but teachers ask us to write about it in very simplistic and formulaic ways. My teacher told us we needed five – and only five – paragraphs to explain the symbolism in the book. This was absurd. I have seen this sort of cookie-cutter teaching even in advanced and honors classes. What if Joe can write an amazing essay, but he needs more than five paragraphs? He gets a C grade for not following directions. But even worse, he learns that the way he writes is wrong and that his work is not adequate. That’s not what education is about. I’m not at school to learn how my teacher wants math problems solved or how my teacher likes essays to be written. I’m at school to learn how I think and how I can contribute my God-given talents to benefit the world. But too many teachers don’t understand this and work simply for a paycheck – and an unimpressive one too. Teachers, the future of the world lies in your hands. You have arguably the most important responsibility – to inspire, motivate and guide the next generation. So get your head in the game.

# Heros are overrated

I hate standing on the sidelines. But when the time comes, that’s what I do. Actually, that’s what a lot of people do. From the 1964 White Knight murders of three civil rights workers in the American South to the recent rape case at a Steubenville public high school in Ohio, the bystander effect has been a huge part of every human society. A few days ago, I was in Chinatown when a bicyclist tipped over in the middle of a busy street. His backpack spilled open, his glasses flew off, and I saw everything in a sort of trance. Despite the whizzing cars, everyone around me ran to the stranger—it took me a good while before I followed. While the man drew a comfortable crowd, I was so frustrated with myself. Why couldn’t I just run and help this man? Fear grips me in the time of need. While I look up to superheroes, those glorified individuals that muster up bottomless courage like it is second nature, I see how their gallant actions bring dire consequences. But like always, human nature seems to take over. When these heroes take a stand, they suffer some sort of blame that they wouldn’t have gone through without breaking out of that bystander effect. It makes me wonder...why do it then? If there’s more of a risk to lend a hand than to walk on by, what’s my motivation to help besides the knowledge that it is the right thing to do?



Way back during the infamous 1692 Salem witch trials, a group of young Puritan women began to act strangely, accusing village enemies and neighbors of being “witches.” The immature lies slowly grew into mass hysteria and led to the execution of 19 innocent people, including John Proctor, a man who stepped out from the bystanders and tried to stop the manhunt. While I don’t condone the false accusations, I understand why so many did not step out and try to save people from the witch hunt—they didn’t want to end up like John Proctor. Speaking out is honorable, but it may not be the best thing to do. Going against the majority would mean thrusting their loved ones and themselves into the spotlight—the truth could strangle the people they care about. Standing on the side is an escape from the danger, an automatic shield from the raging battle going on in the middle. It’s a sure, safe way to avoid worsening a situation and protect loved ones and yourself. The respectable, obvious choice is to break out of the shell and play hero, swooping down to rescue the victim from the approaching peril. Of course, that’s the right thing to do: It’s what parents have taught us. It’s the “good” choice, the one that’ll earn me pats on the back and enlightening words of praise. In 2011, a woman crossed a metal barricade above Vernal Fall, Yosemite, and slipped into the raging Merced River. So did the two men who reached out and tried to save her. Instead of receiving medals and cheers for their heroic attempt, they got ice-cold water and blackness. The rest of the hikers screamed and screamed, but didn’t make a move toward the three floating figures. But does that mean the onlookers were weak or spineless? No. With good reason, these bystanders were afraid of the 317-foot drop and well aware of the “stay away from water” signs. Retreating was the next best option. Even though it’s distressing to watch a nearby individual face danger, sometimes you can’t do anything for them and should prevent others and yourself from succumbing to the same fate. While many associate bystanders with cowards, they are not synonymous. The bystander can be a different sort of hero, the one who double-checks her actions, thinks before he acts and is careful to take care of others in the heat of the moment. It’s not so much about saving someone in front of you, but knowing when you cannot positively contribute to the situation. It’s about swallowing innate desires to save the condemned. That takes a different kind of bravery—the kind that’s already wired in our brains, but for some reason, is mistakenly looked down upon.

# I love my country of origin; I reject its binds on women

I remember learning in history class that Indian women had to throw themselves on their husband’s burning funeral pyre as he was burning to ashes, sacrificing their lives right then and there. I sighed in relief when I heard that this fatal sexism no longer exists. Until I found out that wasn’t exactly the case. It was the same day that my mother told me how, growing up in India, she wasn’t given the option of becoming an engineer or doctor, had to sneak out to play sports and was constantly under male protection. I was absolutely shocked. The first thought that my overwhelmed brain could digest was, “How come the smartest woman I know was sold so short?” To this day, I don’t understand the answer. Don’t get me wrong, I love India and Indian culture. In fact, I pride myself on it all the time. However, the fact that to this day my country of origin still subjugates women takes me aback. As a 16-year-old



raised here, I can’t imagine not being an independent person who can take a bite of anything life has to offer. I can’t imagine living life knowing that I have so much potential, but having to be limited to a little box simply because of my anatomy. Last year as a high school freshman, I thought I’d do more research into how much this issue still exists. To my surprise, patriarchy in India is everywhere. In Rajasthan, baby girls are killed at birth since parents could only see them as a burden for whom they would have to pay dowry. However, male babies are seen as gifts from the gods, so to speak. All over the subcontinent, women still have to wear bright vermilion across their hair parting, a large black necklace, and fully draped saris if they are married, while men continue to roam around wearing whatever they feel like. In fact, I see my own female cousins being pushed into marriage too early and having to quit their jobs, only because their family and in-laws see childbearing and domestic work as a woman’s only calling. Why is this fair? This societal notion is reflected all over Indian movies, only instilling it more in

people’s mindsets. Big budget films which attract mass audiences are solely male-driven, and the female role in those films is either a helpless girl who, if she’s lucky, gets to be in half of the movie, or plays a love interest for the boy. Also, this new idea of an “item song,” in which actresses dance half-naked singing lyrics about how they can, for lack of a better word, cater to men is repulsive. These women are supposed to be leaders for the nation, but their job descriptions have forced them to attract male audiences for a few extra box office bucks. Instead of accepting this gender inequality as an inevitable fate, we should emulate Indian leaders like Kiran Bedi as examples. She demolished all norms for a female, and focused on building a career by becoming the first female Indian Police Service officer, advocating for women’s rights every day. Now a social activist, she is not afraid to fight for her cause. And, more important, she is not afraid to look a man in the eye and say, “You’re not superior to me, and never will be. You’re simply my equal,” a thought loud enough for hopefully all of India to echo.





Kelly Chang | Mosaic Staff



Marili Arellano | Mosaic Staff



Marili Arellano | Mosaic Staff



Mahima Dutt | Mosaic Staff



Kelly Chang | Mosaic Staff

Nebraskan Nicole Bennett, left, watches her children Elaina, 2, and Cole, 6, dig at the beach.

# SPINS & GRINS

By MAHIMA DUTT

Mosaic Staff Photographer

The beginning of summer greeted visitors to Santa Cruz with refreshing sea breezes and the lingering smells of fried food. At the wharf, tourists readied their cameras to snap photos of the sea lions that reside underneath the pier. Children played in the sand near the shore while screams and shrieks could be heard from the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk where thrillseekers rode the Double Shot and Giant Dipper roller coasters. The long day concluded with the sun melting into the Pacific as a bright, milk-white moon cast shadows over the seashore.



Kelly Chang | Mosaic Staff



Jonae Scott | Mosaic Staff



Marili Arellano | Mosaic Staff



Marili Arellano | Mosaic Staff



Kelly Chang | Mosaic Staff





Kelly Chang | Mosaic Staff

Jose Reos serves Google employees and visitors at Charlie's Place.

# ‘Never be more than 150 feet away from food’

**GOOGLE | FROM PAGE 1**

illustrate potential allergy triggers accompany every item as well. The menu is intuitive and user-friendly, formatted much like other Google applications. It’s practically indistinguishable from Google Docs.

Our first stop was just a few steps away in one of the numerous micro-kitchens located in each building. Fresh seasonal fruit is displayed in bowls on the countertops next to coffee and espresso makers, and monogrammed vending machines offer sodas, juices and fancy waters. Mugs, plates and silverware line open shelves. The company uses only real or compostable flatware. Dishwashing is not in the Google job description, so employees can drop used plates off at any micro-kitchen.

The building where we began houses a café called Moma. At the advice of our host, who is on a mission to sample cuisine from every cafeteria on campus, we chose to avoid the long lines of Moma in favor of food he assured us would be even better. He mentioned, however, that he typically eats breakfast at Moma – bacon, scrambled eggs and pancakes had been available earlier in the day.

We decided to walk across the street to the Googleplex – passing numerous young engineers atop brightly colored bikes – and head to Charlie’s Place, the campus’ main cafeteria. Named after Google’s former executive chef Charlie Ayers, the café is spread out in a Fresh Choice-esque style, with Chinese street food, Japanese cuisine, various Indian dishes, a salad bar, a burrito station, gourmet



Guests enjoy outdoor seating at the Google campus in Mountain View.

pizzas and more. Kelly and I were overwhelmed, but after grabbing a tray, it was easy to fill my plate.

The pizza I sampled was reminiscent of flatbread, topped with goat cheese and tangy peppers on a soft, chewy crust. I particularly liked the salad bar that included black beans, crumbly hard-boiled eggs and homemade salad dressings, and later grabbed a drink from the make-your-own Italian soda station.

Charlie’s Place is adjacent to a spacious room – according to our host, it also doubles as a presentation and meeting area – with dark walls, bright lighting and plenty of tables and chairs to accommodate the hundreds of employees who gather there during lunchtime. But Google dining appears to be a family affair, as small children were present at many tables.

We moved on to Go!, a low-key deli that

operates on a ticket system. The process is as simple as picking up a ticket and a golf pencil, checking a box next to one of the four or five sandwich choices of the day and handing the ticket over the counter.

Immediately upon stepping outside, we saw several large, lush garden patches. Plaques surrounding the fences revealed that the food grown inside, including blueberries, tomatoes and a variety of herbs, is used in the cafés.

Comfort food reigns supreme at Yoshka’s Café, the next stop in our Tour de Food. Such offerings as gnocchi and other warm, creamy pastas are set out buffet-style. Kelly and I went straight for the organic frozen yogurt. Labels on the dispensers identify the local farms where the yogurts are made. The available flavors, raspberry and blackberry, were thick and textured with tiny berry seeds. Speaking of desserts, I also sampled a fluffy, multi-layered cake with raspberries and a rich mango filling courtesy of Tetsuwan Atom Café, a sleek Japanese joint.

*Never be more than 150 feet away from food.*

At Google, the maxim turns out to be true. No matter where we went, good food was always around the next corner. Perhaps meals simply taste better when they’re free, but Google’s commitment to sustainable living through high quality dining is admirable.

I’ll be eagerly awaiting the introduction of Google Catering.



A worker cuts meats at Charlie's Place.



One of many pizza choices at Charlie's Place.



Steaming baskets at Charlie's Place.



Mango raspberry cake at Charlie's Place.

# Famed surfer Shaun Tomson shares secrets of self-motivation

**BY RAPHAEL SANTA MARIA**  
*Mosaic Staff Writer*

“You never know what can happen with one little book,” said professional surfer, businessman and author Shaun Tomson as he discussed his new book, “The Code.”

Tomson belongs to the U.S. Surfers’, South African Sport and Arts and International Jewish Sports halls of fame and started two clothing companies of his own, Instinct in the ‘80s and Solitude in the ‘90s. He is now reaching out to those who might not particularly have the strength within themselves to move forward and extend their arm towards “the light that shines ahead.”

The book is meant to start a movement of positivity, inspiring readers and reassuring them that anything can be done with commitment to the future, emotional dedication and a passion for what you do.

Tomson’s surf career took off in 1977,

when he won surfing’s prestigious IPS World Championship, and now he’s admired as one of the greatest, most influential surfers of all time.

The idea to write a book started when a friend of his was holding a surf competition in Santa Barbara’s Rincon Beach a few years ago. He was invited to speak with a group of kids to raise awareness of an ongoing issue with septic systems polluting the water in Rincon Point, a very popular spot to surf.

With a tight budget of \$120, he was to give each kid a keepsake reminder that they could take home with them.

In 20 minutes, he created a code of promises to be environmentally friendly, consisting of 12 lines and 105 words, each promise beginning with the words “I will.”

“I will heal.” Tomson said dwelling on the past is unhealthy. Looking toward the future is a step in the right direction.

“I will imagine.” Tomson urges readers to reminisce and look back at the “good old days.”

“I will tell stories.” Tomson wants to inspire others to share their own experiences.

Tomson shares stories of how he overcame some of the hardest times in his professional and personal life, from the challenges he faced becoming a professional surfer in the ‘70s, to the tragic death of his son Mathew.

On April 24, 2006, Mathew died playing the “choking game,” in which players attempt to cut off oxygen to the brain to achieve a state of euphoria.

His accidental death was surreal to Tomson and his wife, Carla. He was so full of life, with a bright future ahead of him. He was studying at the private school Clifton in South Africa, where Tomson had studied.

Just an hour before, they were speaking on the phone about normal things parents talk to their

son about.

They ended the conversation by saying, “I love you.”

They would have never known those were the last words he was ever going to tell them.

Tomson reasoned that everyone has a different code, different promises they make to themselves. Tomson’s code was influenced by those who impacted his life and events that happened to him during his career as a surfer, and on through to becoming a husband and father.

Tomson said the book can be applied to any situation, whether you’ve lost a loved one, are going through hard times with your studies, or you’re just simply looking for some inspiration.

He believes time heals everything and that anyone can accomplish what they set out for in life, starting by making a code of promises and reading them out loud, each beginning with two simple, yet powerful words: “I will.”



# Jazz camp offers creative outlet in era of art education budget cuts for many San Jose area schools

BY HANNAH KNOWLES  
*Mosaic Staff Writer*

Amanda Ramirez likes jazz for its freedom. “There are no rules,” the 13-year-old San Jose vocalist said. “You can be unique. In jazz everybody has their own style.”

Amanda is a veteran of the San Jose Jazz Society’s summer camp, a two-week musical laboratory at the Mexican Heritage Plaza that offers Bay Area middle and high school students a chance to explore their creative sides.

At a time when school art department budgets are being slashed or eliminated, the jazz camp offers a lifeline for the musically inclined.

Camp instructor Oscar Pangilinan said he believes that “for kids this age, who are coming into their own, they’re being given an opportunity to find their individuality through music.”

According to a 2012 national survey by the Washington-based advocacy group Common Core, more than half of public school teachers for grades third through 12 reported a reduction in resources and time for the arts.

The trend can be found in the South Bay, said Suzanne Oehler of the California Alliance for Arts Education. The Santa Clara County Office of Education reported that 30 percent of school districts cut their art department budgets in 2011.

Funding varies widely by district, Oehler added. “We have schools that have very little parent funding, and some that have a lot,” she said.

The schools that need funding the most usually have the least, Oehler said.

Money isn’t the only issue. Some districts with sufficient funding often don’t schedule time for arts programs. At the end of the day, their success is measured by standardized test performance in math and reading. So when priorities compete, Oehler said, the arts are “the first to the bottom of the list.”

Oehler recalled how one school, Empire Gardens Elementary in San Jose, offered no arts at all.

That is, until a year ago, when school officials introduced a lunchtime arts program twice a week.

“The kids would run to the library,” Oehler said. The program could accommodate only 50, leaving “a line of kids out the door,” she added.

Pangilinan and his fellow jazz camp teacher John Worley also see a need for more arts education. Pangilinan emphasized the development opportunity that music — and in a broader sense, art — provides.

“Music is a way to train yourself,” Pangilinan said. “It teaches you to set goals for yourself and achieve them, and it does it in very real, tangible ways.”

Pausing, he added, “Music gets into the more creative element. There’s something intangible



Photos by Kelly Chang | Mosaic Staff

Jazz camper Amanda Ramirez says playing music is like telling a story: “You keep adding on to the story, making up notes as you go along.”

in it that nourishes our soul, and I think when you’re taught to appreciate and understand and play music, it unlocks parts of yourself that you wouldn’t unlock otherwise.”

Both instructors agreed that jazz, in particular, is geared toward students’ need for creativity and self-expression because it is more open to interpretation and improvisation.

Worley, a Mountain View musician, said that with jazz, “it doesn’t matter who you are, or where you come from, or what you look like.”

The students at camp seemed to feel the same way.

Sam Mendoza, 16, already knows he wants a career in music. Being surrounded by the encouragement of friends and teachers at camp made him even more confident. The Lincoln High student said he learned about what was “going on behind the music” instead of “just rehearsing” it they way he does in school.

Drew Flowers, a classmate of Sam’s at Lincoln, said he appreciated the atmosphere of learning that extended beyond practice sessions. Even during lunch break, kids jammed with other campers or sat together singing.

Trying to explain what she learned from the



From right, Jonathan Delgado, Henri Vega and John Alcantara play saxophone at jazz camp at Mexican Heritage Plaza.

program, the 13-year-old camper Amanda just smiled and repeated something her teachers have said.

Playing jazz is “like telling a story,” she said. “You keep adding on to the story, making up notes as you go along.”



Saul Sierra instructs student Jordan Ando at piano during Summer Jazz Camp in San Jose which fosters kids interest in music.

# Disadvantaged students turn struggles into success

BY MATTHEW CHOW  
*Mosaic Staff Writer*

An alarm beeps at midnight. Christopher Rodriguez of Santa Clara rolls out of bed. A short car ride brings him to the station where he helps his parents unload and compile stacks of the San Jose Mercury News, fold them into plastic bags and organize them in the truck for delivery.

He is rewarded with a dense layer of ink on his hands and the thought that four hours of nightly work helps his parents barely stay above the poverty line.

Rodriguez’s story is one of sacrifice and struggle. It also resembles the classic American tale of springboarding from hardship to a better future. Like him, students across California have demonstrated a similar commitment to overcome obstacles to their success.

“I would work four nights a week, so it was tough balancing family responsibilities with other activities,” said Rodriguez, 18, a graduate of Homestead High.

Despite sacrificing sports, sleep and a social life to work with his parents, Rodriguez did so well at Homestead in Cupertino that he was accepted at Stanford University, where he will attend in the fall.

Poverty is a huge challenge.

Rodriguez, whose parents emigrated from Peru, wrote in his college essay, “I wore hand-me-downs until second grade, lived in a car for a few days when I was 5 and was evicted from two different houses.”

In an interview, he said, “I didn’t learn how to bike until recently, and my childhood didn’t seem complete, because my parents were busy and couldn’t be there for me.”

Busy and exhausted parents can’t provide the same support that middle-class students get.

“It isn’t that parents don’t want to help their kids; it’s that they don’t



Marili Arellano | Mosaic Staff

Christopher Rodriguez, center, poses with his dad, Julio Rodriguez, his mom, Patricia Medina, and his brothers, Luciano Rodriguez, left, Nathan Rodriguez, right.



Estephanie Ramirez

Sacramento with a single disabled mother, knows what she means.

“When I told my mother I had been accepted to Harvard, she simply said, ‘Oh, good job,’” Chen said.

Students like Chen put up with confused parents and endure enormous

know how to be supportive,” said Liz Roselman, assistant principal of Willow Glen High in San Jose.

Laguna Creek High School graduate Lloyd Chen, 17, who grew up in Elk Grove

struggles. But what sets these students apart from other disadvantaged youth?

Chen said he’s thought about this. “I always wanted to be better than everyone else. If I hadn’t been as competitive, I wouldn’t have had this ambition or drive.”

Alisal High School graduate Jissella Duarte, 18, found inspiration in observing her parents’ work ethic. Her father works as a truck driver for more than 14 hours a day.

“Seeing how committed my parents are to our family is very motivational,” she said.

Duarte, of Salinas, also attributed much of her inspiration to her love of reading.

“Ever since I was 5 or 6, I would read every night,” she said. “I’d hide books

under my pillow when I slept so that in the morning, I could read as soon as I woke up. Instead of going out into the streets and joining gangs, I stayed at home and read.”

Many underprivileged youth shut themselves off from people who could help them.

“They’re so used to their family members and friends letting them down that they’ve learned to put up walls,” said Claudia Saavedra, Willow Glen High attendance liaison.

On the other hand, successful students seek out and appreciate help that comes their way.

“My mother has always been there for me,” Duarte said. “When I forgot my homework, she would drive it to school for me. She would always remind

me that if I didn’t work hard, I would have a hard life.”

Rodriguez credited his parents with being supportive. Also, his American studies teacher encouraged him.

“She saw the potential in me and pushed me to do more,” Rodriguez said. “She showed me what I was really capable of.”

But many students don’t have that role model.

At the beginning of her sophomore year at Willow Glen, Estephanie Ramirez, 17, had hit rock bottom. She was failing every class because of truancies.

“But I got tired of doing the same thing, of ditching school,” Ramirez said. “I wanted to do better in life.”

However, parental support at home wasn’t enough, so Roselman and Saavedra intervened and sent Ramirez to a residential program for at-risk youth.

Thus, Ramirez’s metamorphosis took place at an intense five-month program, the Grizzly Youth Academy in San Luis Obispo.

“They teach their students to build resiliency and not give in to their environments,” Saavedra said. “And they learn to really appreciate things that they once took for granted.”

Ramirez rose to the challenge, achieving a 3.8 grade point average, joining clubs and even discovering a passion for running.

“I feel so much happier now, and I believe I can do anything and succeed if I try,” Ramirez said.

She’s determined to go to college and become a nurse.

“I want to show my family that I can do it on my own — that I’m different now,” she said.

“It’s our job to figure out the best way to support these students,” Roselman said. “There isn’t just one pathway in life; we have to redefine ‘success.’ But when they finally graduate and walk the stage, it opens many doors.”





Mahima Dutt | Mosaic Staff

Mel Olivares, left, assists Katie Gustafsi with a project at TechShop, which offers classes for kids.

# DESIGNERSDELIGHT

San Jose’s ‘mad scientist lab’ helps inventors build dream creations, including remote-controlled pup limo

BY BRIZETTE CASTELLANOS

Mosaic Staff Writer

Michael Bolanos has an interesting way of walking his dog. The inventor likes to take Benji for a ride in downtown San Jose in a remote-controlled contraption that he built from junk parts.

“Awesome,” is the typical reaction from strangers when seeing the fluffy, white hound “co-piloting” the vehicle.

The head-turning “pup limo” looks like the bottom of an electronic wheelchair with a white plastic basket on top of it. Benji sits inside the plastic cart while Bolanos, 42, guides the vehicle through foot traffic with a handheld device.

Ultimately, the San Jose inventor hopes his whimsical project will evolve into something useful for dog owners. He plans to add GPS and an obstacle avoidance system to make the vehicle safer and more practical.

For now it is one of the many creations surfacing from TechShop San Jose, a community workspace that provides members with the tools and support to create and construct their dream projects.

Bolanos and his robotic creations underscore the need for a communal place for hardware builders and dreamers who congregate in the heart of Silicon Valley to tinker and experiment.

“Everyone that is in here has some kind of creativity, everyone that is in here has an idea that they want to see become reality, and you know, we make it easy for them,” said Raffie Colet, general manager of the San Jose facility.

The setting is comfortable despite its boxy warehouse space. The rooms buzz with the whirring of machinery while the smell of popcorn and coffee wafts in the dusty air.

TechShop has six locations nationally, including three in the Bay Area, where it began in 2011. It has three more planned for Chandler, Ariz., Brooklyn, N.Y. and Washington, D.C. The concept dovetails with

Silicon Valley’s startup culture, where gadgets and apps are invented in garages.

TechShop’s owners promote their enterprise as part fabrication and prototyping studio, part hackerspace and learning center. As one blogger said, it’s a “mad scientist’s laboratory” for builders with more than \$1 million worth of professional equipment and software available to members.

For a \$125 monthly subscription, members can dabble in metalwork, wood cutting, computer-assisted design software and 3-D printers.

“You see all the tools and you’re like, ‘Wow, this is cool’, especially if you’re into tools,” Bolanos said. “But there are so many people here that are experts, there’s one guy who is a wood guy and there’s one who is an engineer ... willing to talk to you and share ideas and you learn from them, and they don’t charge you anything.”

Before constructing his “pup limo” by rummaging through TechShop’s “bin wall,” Bolanos built a smaller robotic device he calls Dina. It is modeled after Benji, the Havanese and poodle mix he rescued from a shelter seven years ago.

Bolanos has taken a long road to find his calling at TechShop. The kid who wanted to be an inventor said he was kidnapped by his father when he was 8. He said his dad moved him to Texas for a year. When Bolanos returned to San Jose he said his grades suffered – he added that he had received straight A’s before the situation.

Bolanos eventually moved beyond his troubled past. He received a two-year degree in electronics and engineering at Heald College in 1992. According to his LinkedIn resume, Bolanos has worked in information technology in the South Bay for almost two decades.

Now the man known as “Hitek Mike” is hoping to catch a break by devoting his time to the TechShop creations.

“I had a choice between a nice place to live and TechShop -- I chose TechShop,” Bolanos said.



Michael Bolanos of San Jose used the TechShop to build a remote-controlled vehicle for his dog Benji.

**TechShop San Jose**  
300 S. Second St., San Jose  
408-916-4144

Open every day, from 9 a.m. to midnight  
Information: [info.sj@techshop.com](mailto:info.sj@techshop.com)  
[www.techshop.ws/ts\\_sanjose.html](http://www.techshop.ws/ts_sanjose.html)

## Teen techies market their apps – and genius



Jonae Scott | Mosaic Staff  
Anish Aitharaju 16, a rising senior at Homestead High in Cupertino, invented a mobile app now used by five schools in the Fremont Union High School District.

BY HANNAH KNOWLES

Mosaic Staff Writer

Anish Aitharaju, 16, saw his age as an advantage rather than an obstacle when he set out to create Deckshuffle.

After all, if anyone knows about cell phones, it’s teenagers.

Two years ago, Aitharaju noticed that his Homestead High’s online resources were often difficult to use. So he made a mobile app where resources such as school information, news and grades could be found in one easy-to-access place.

“Age is never an excuse not to do anything,” the Sunnyvale entrepreneur said. “It’s probably easier to learn while you’re young.”

He believes that being a student made it easier to contact schools and advertisers, and gave him a better understanding of what students on the go needed.

Increasingly, teens such as Aitharaju are stepping into the tech world and the app market before graduating from high school.

Karen Thurm Safran, an executive at iD Tech Camps and Teen Academies, said that “tech is cool now” with youth—especially in Silicon Valley, where tech giants Apple, Facebook and Google are located.

The iD programs’ relatively new courses in app creation have become popular, Safran said.

“Kids are making apps, they’re selling them, having them integrated into their school curriculum, and they’re making a lot of money,” she said. “It’s just phenomenal what these kids can do at a young age.”

More than a million careers in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) will be unfilled in the next 10 years, Safran said.

Aitharaju had a clear vision of his app from the beginning. The challenge was the technical knowledge to make this vision a reality. Aitharaju’s brother, who founded a mobile technology company while still in college, helped him learn the necessary computer languages.

“I have an entire family of software engineers,” Aitharaju said.

Though he is following in their footsteps with Deckshuffle, Aitharaju wants to become a surgeon.

The first incarnation of his app “didn’t go as well as planned,” Aitharaju said. It had to be manually updated, and worked only on Androids.

Undeterred, Aitharaju began anew. He ended up with Deckshuffle.

During his junior year, he worked closely with the principal at Cupertino’s Homestead High to implement Deckshuffle at the school. Soon all five schools in the Fremont Union High School District used the app; a Facebook page helped it gain national attention. Aitharaju recalled how one student from Maryland requested Deckshuffle for his school.

“The next day, his entire district was on the application,” Aitharaju said.

This summer he and his brother have an ambitious goal: add 500 more schools to the app. They plan to promote Deckshuffle through blogs,

Facebook and Twitter.

They might even create a Deckshuffle video in the hopes that it goes viral.

The app is created to help the community, Aitharaju explained. Advertising profits go back to the school districts.

“It’s really a win-win situation,” he said. “The business gets more exposure, the students get an application, and then the school gets more money.”

Aitharaju encouraged other would-be teen app creators to dive in, but emphasized the hard work required.

Once you have an idea, he said, “it’s really about having the dedication to pursue it. It’s a daunting task, and it takes a lot of time. You want to quit sometimes.”

The dedication paid off for Aitharaju. He may not plan on a career in tech, but he recognizes how valuable tech-savvy will be in the future.

Asked if he had another app in the works, Aitharaju laughed and said no. “One is enough,” he said.



# 17 again?

What if you could do it again? What advice would you give your 17-year-old self? Mosaic staffers posed the question to people who’ve achieved success. Staff members Marili Arellano, Brizette Castellanos, Kelly Chang, Mahima Dutt and Adriana Ramos conducted the interviews.

*“If I were 17, I would take Spanish and Chinese instead of French. Chinese was not offered at my high school but Spanish was. I should have taken Spanish. I have very few regrets because I’m a lifelong learner, and I’ve been able to change course, fortunately. Then, the second thing is I’d learn to program. All that time I sat in calculus and trigonometry, I would like to be fluent in a couple programming languages.”*

– Geri Migielicz,  
executive editor of Story4.org and former director of photography for the San Jose Mercury News



Mahima Dutt | Mosaic Staff

*“Well, first, I’d probably not leave home and stay in school. I was incarcerated at like 13 years old. So at 17 I was in the California Youth Authority getting ready to hit prison for my first time.*

*I came from a broken home. My mom and dad divorced and they left us (10 children) living with our grandmother. I went out on my own. You know, out there robbing and stealing we were able to survive and at times just rented apartments for a few months and other times just be on the streets.”*

– Robert Rios,  
a former gang member who is a community activist speaking out against gang violence.



Kelly Chang | Mosaic Staff

*“When I was 17, I was doing a lot of military contracting and design, so I was actually working and going to school. For the most part, I did so much when I was 17 and I wasn’t a normal 17-year-old. So when I was 17, I was traveling a lot, probably two months out of the year I was deployed doing certain projects. I guess if I could have, one thing I would have done is spend more time doing the fun stuff. I would have taken a few weekends off and hung out with my friends and done things like that. While they were playing video games, I was either playing sports or working.”*

– Raffie Colet,  
general manager of TechShop San Jose



Mahima Dutt | Mosaic Staff

*“If I was 17 again, I would be careful about the hair products because I used stuff to do the Jheri Curl and all that stuff and look what happened. Other than that I wouldn’t change too much because I had a very strict education in Chicago. My parents were very strict about deadlines. They made me watch the news, they made me read a newspaper. I thank them profusely ‘till this day because the more I knew about the world the better I presented myself and the better I was able to open doors to get jobs and interviews. The only thing (to change) I guess is I would’ve dated better and I would’ve had better hair.”*

– Bob Rucker,  
San Jose State’s director of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication



Kelly Chang | Mosaic Staff

*“I would have learned to play the guitar, because, like with so many young people even today, I loved music but I never picked up an instrument. I should’ve been more of a rocker.”*

– Gary Soto,  
Berkeley/Fresno author of 11 poetry collections, including “New and Selected Poems,” a 1995 finalist for the Los Angeles Times Book Award and the National Book Award.



Courtesy Carolyn Soto

## ‘Most Obnoxious’ now popular comic strip writer

BY KATIE MARTIN

Mosaic Staff Writer

Santa Rosa resident Stephan Pastis is the man behind the profane, violent and politically incorrect animals featured in “Pearls Before Swine,” one of today’s most popular comic strips.

Pastis, a Southern California native, attended both UC Berkeley and UCLA’s School of Law. He was a practicing attorney in the Bay Area until 2002, at which point he quit “with glee” after his venture into comics began to pay off. Six “Pearls Before Swine” treasuries and two National Cartoonists Society awards later,

Pastis recently released his first children’s book, “Timmy Failure: Mistakes Were Made.”

A dream career now doesn’t mean Pastis was exempt from that awkward teenage stage we all know too well. Those years, however, ultimately proved to be a contribution in shaping his life as a writer and illustrator.

### What were you like as a teenager?

Skinny, big glasses, I think I was 6 feet tall, 120 pounds. I spent a lot of time alone in my room. I was really obnoxious. We had those awards in graduations, like Most Likely to Succeed, and I got Most Obnoxious, both in 8th grade and 12th grade. I never really stopped talking. I did well in school and I would just get bored. I probably wanted attention, and I just wanted to make people laugh. So I was always goofing off in class and all that stuff. I’m still that way today. I just get paid now.

### So the way you were as a teenager played into your career path?

Yeah, I mean, I think if I had been raised now, I probably would have been diagnosed with something like some ADD-related thing, but those are probably your most creative kids. What better training for a profession of trying to make people laugh than trying to make people laugh?

### Did you do any drawing when you were younger?

Yeah, in fact I was just doing a bonus section to the next book, and I went through and found all my childhood drawings. I actually found something I did when I was about 8, which (was a drawing that) said on it, “My name is Stephan Pastis, I have brown hair and brown eyes and I want to be a cartoonist when I grow up.”

### What sort of drawings did you do?

I mostly drew people and animals, just like one-panel strange situations. In fact, I found one drawing that looks to be my mom and my dad colored in with crayon and behind them, with his hands on both their shoulders, is what looks to be a mobster.

### Is there a mistake from your teenage years that stands out?

Oh man, there must be ... you know what’s funny? I wasn’t a bad kid. I didn’t do drugs or get arrested or anything, so I don’t really have a big mistake. I was perfect.

### What do you think about the transition from teenage years to adulthood?

Well, college is the real big transition because that’s the first time you’re living on your own and you have to cook for yourself and do your own laundry. College is really the first time that you grow, and there seems to be a second transition when you start working. In college, you have lots of time and no money, but when you work you have lots of money but no time. And you’re no longer being told you’re so important. Suddenly, you’re 26 and no one cares if you have a birthday.

### If you could go back to being 17 years old and change something, what would it be?

I would not focus so exclusively on getting a 4.4 GPA. I look back on that, and I wish I had just had more experiences with life – going places, doing things, girls. I think, I was just so single-track on grades. It definitely opened doors – it’s how I went to Berkeley and then UCLA, but I think if I could talk to 17-year-old me, (I would say), “I know your whole focus is getting into Berkeley, but everything will be OK.”

When you’re that age, everything seems so dramatic, like, “I’ve got to get this or I’m dead.” But when you get older, you go through so many transitions, and there’s no reason to get that excited. So I wish I had sort of relaxed and not gone too crazy.



ART REVIEW

San Jose exhibit shows intimate, timeless Leibovitz

**BY BRENDA SU**  
*Mosaic Staff Writer*

For more than 40 years, photographer Annie Leibovitz has shot images that have come to define celebrity culture. Her work includes a nude John Lennon wrapped around Yoko Ono, Whoopi Goldberg in a bathtub of milk, and a naked and heavily pregnant Demi Moore.

“Pilgrimage,” her latest collection of photographs, surprises devout fans of Leibovitz because it lacks people. Instead, it is a collection of stills and American locations. This traveling exhibition is at the San Jose Museum of Art until Sept. 8.

This work is personal and reflective. With her partner of 15 years, Susan Sontag, Leibovitz had compiled a list of places they wanted to see before Sontag lost her battle with cancer. Upon Sontag’s death in 2004, a pilgrimage seemed appropriate, and Leibovitz sought to fulfill the couple’s dream.

Equipped with her digital camera and accompanied by her three daughters, Leibovitz traveled from the Concord Museum in Massachusetts that housed Ralph Waldo Emerson’s bed to the John Muir National Historic Site in California for Muir’s botanical specimen. The



Mahima Dutt | Mosaic Staff

Sterling Lanier reads the caption of the photographs at the Annie Leibovitz exhibit at the San Jose Museum of Art in San Jose.

photos were taken between April 2009 and May 2011.

The collection mainly depicts relics from two dozen famous American figures. A photo of Annie Oakley’s red heart hangs next to Elvis Presley’s Graceland and his motorcycle. Farther along the walls are photos of Charles Darwin’s stuffed pigeon and Sigmund Freud’s couch.

The wall tags explain the location and history behind the works. There are several photographs of Thomas Jefferson’s Monticello home, where he cultivated over 50 varieties of beans. One photo is a close-up of bean pods.

One of the most famous photos from this series is a downward shot of Niagara Falls, which graces the cover

of Leibovitz’s publication of the same name. The waters are an intense, deep blue, and the thick mist is ethereal.

However, this photo, along with the image of Old Faithful at Yellowstone National Park, seems out of place in “Pilgrimage.” Although they are both incredible images, they do not fit with what seems to be the theme of the other photographs: evidence left behind by iconic figures. Nevertheless, this is Leibovitz’s self-reflection, and who are viewers to judge?

The rich colors of “Pilgrimage,” especially the photograph of Martha Graham’s studio, make her work look almost like paintings, lending the photographs a dreamy quality. The details of every photograph are

intricate. The photograph of the bed that Henry David Thoreau slept on at Walden Pond appears simple at first, but upon closer inspection, viewers are awed by the textures of the woven bed,

“Pilgrimage” is refreshing and shows another dimension of Leibovitz. Rather than the carefully positioned and lit portraits that she has become famous for, the photographs are thought-provoking and intimate.

The photos are timeless. Virginia Woolf could have left her clutter on her desk right before Leibovitz shot the photo. The photographs make viewers reflect on their mortality as they view the artifacts of people long gone.



Josie Lepe | Mercury News

Annie Leibovitz’s exhibit is called “Pilgrimage”

MOVIE REVIEW

“THE HEAT”

Unlikely duo team up in ‘The Heat’ for humorous buddy comedy with a heart

**Starring:** Sandra Bullock, Melissa McCarthy, Demian Bichir  
**Director:** Paul Feig  
**Rating:** R for language, crude content and violence  
**Grade:** A-

**BY MATTHEW CHOW AND KATIE MARTIN**  
*Mosaic Staff Writer*

It’s hot outside, and “The Heat” is a perfect summertime escape. The action-packed, expletive-laden police comedy is sure to fire up audiences with its hilarious scenarios and skillful writing.

“The Heat,” directed by Paul Feig (“Bridesmaids”), pits high-strung FBI agent Sarah Ashburn (Sandra Bullock) against Shannon Mullins (Melissa McCarthy), a detective who never fails to cross (make that, annihilate) boundaries. The two form an unlikely duo when they’re forced to collaborate on a drug bust.

McCarthy, best known for her Oscar-nominated breakout in “Bridesmaids” and her Emmy-winning role on TV’s “Mike & Molly,” once again plays the socially inept sidekick with spirit and hilarity. Opposite the straight-faced Bullock, McCarthy’s comedic talent shines as her character cusses out colleagues and chases down criminals. Often resorting to using her car as a battering ram, throwing fruit and playing Russian roulette during interrogations, these unorthodox tactics make Mullins not only a hysterical lead character but also a surprisingly effective cop.

Bullock returns to comedy after making a few dramas. Though a brilliant agent, Ashburn’s arrogance repels other officers. When a promotion opportunity arises, her boss (Demian Bichir) gives her an ultimatum: Solve the case of a ruthless Boston drug lord or pass up the job.

This deal leads Ashburn straight to Mullins. Their first run-in takes place during an interrogation, in which Mullins interrupts with her usual flair

as the uptight Ashburn disregards her threats. Mullins, angry that Ashburn is taking over the local case without her knowledge, tries to undermine the investigation. Ashburn ultimately agrees to join in partnership with her polar opposite.

Written by Katie Dippold, the script combines equal amounts of humor and heart as Ashburn and Mullins build the sort of companionship neither has ever experienced. Through drunken late nights, encounters with Russian mobsters and occasional bouts of violence, the two begin to rub off on each other. They form a bond solidified by their differences and willingness to take advantage of each other’s best qualities.

The character development makes this movie more than just the lighthearted romps that are far too prevalent in comedies today. It’s refreshing for a comedy to feature two female leads who spend time discussing matters other than men. Their skills and humor are the focal points of the film.

Screaming for Bieber



Jonae Scott | Mosaic Staff

Kristi Kuehn screamed for the chance to win tickets for her kids to a Justin Bieber concert.

**BY ADRIANA RAMOS**  
*Mosaic Staff Writer*

Madison Crowe, 16, is a huge Justin Bieber fan. And she’s not afraid to scream to prove it.

On June 22, Crowe joined other “Beliebers” outside ULTA, a beauty and cosmetics store on El Paseo de Saratoga in San Jose, for a chance to win tickets and meet Bieber in person during his June 26 stop at the HP Pavilion. The fan that produced the loudest yell, measured by a decibel meter, got the seats.

Crowe has loved Bieber since she was in the seventh grade. “I found out about him because of a TV show, and I just liked him because of his singing. I didn’t like him because of his looks then, but now I do,” she said.

Crowe even has the name Madison Crowe-Bieber on Facebook.

Bieber, 19, burst onto the scene in 2008 after he was discovered on YouTube. He’s gone on to have five No. 1 albums and danced his way into many teens’ and tweens’ hearts.

“I just think he’s a really good singer and super handsome. I have all of his old posters with his floppy hair in my room still. And I still enjoy his music,” Crowe said.

Her infatuation with Bieber has lasted longer than some predicted. “People were like: Oh, you’re going to get over him, you’re not going to like him anymore,” Crowe said. “And then, like since 2009 to 2013, I still like him,” Crowe said.

Fourteen-year-old Thaila Nuguid understands the craze for the Biels. “I’m so crazy for Justin that I would travel to the Philippines for him,” Nuguid said. “I get Twitter updates on my phone, all for Justin.”

Her love for Bieber led her to enter the meet and greet contest. “We have tickets already but we’re trying to get better seats,” Nuguid explained.

After pulling off her loudest shout, 12-year-old Cassidy Ochoa voiced her admiration for Bieber. “I love him because he’s inspired me,” Ochoa said. “He’s shown me how to always keep going.”



Gemma La Mana | Twentieth Century Fox

Detective Shannon Mullins (Melissa McCarthy, left) and FBI Special Agent Sarah Ashburn (Sandra Bullock) bust some moves during a night out on the town in “The Heat.”



# Fan fiction spurs copyright debate

BY PERLA LUNA  
*Mosaic Staff Writer*

“Boycotts and Barflies,” a chick-lit, fan fiction novel featuring some famous literary characters, was never intended for publication.

Yet someone literally copied and pasted Ohio writer Victoria Michaels’ work of “Twilight”-inspired fan fiction. After some minimal changes, the thief slapped his name on the cover. Michaels said it was published by an independent publishing house.

Despite the blatant plagiarism, getting the publishing house to sign back the copyright to Michaels was an ordeal because “Boycotts and Barflies” was originally “Twilight” fan fiction. In essence, Michaels was aiming to protect property stolen from her, even though that property began as a stolen idea itself.

“I think (the story) was out for purchase from this other person for nine months before someone found it and brought it to my attention,” Michaels said. “So it was already out there in the world and again, it was just important to protect it as mine.”

Recent media attention has sparked the debate about copyright issues surrounding fan fiction, stories written by fans that are connected to source material, usually popular genre work. It’s gone beyond the fans and creators and evolved to a broader audience.

Amazon.com recently announced it was going to sell fan fiction for at least two established entities, “The Vampire Diaries” and “Gossip Girl.” The company is actively seeking work from fan fiction writers as well.

Fan fiction stories are a subdivision of genre fan culture, connected to the source material from which they are imagined in specific and important ways. Fans on such websites as FanFiction.net, which hosts more than a million stories on the books section, post these “fanfics” or “fics.”

For most fans, writing these stories is an expression of love for the work.

“Fan fiction is (about) appreciating the work that they’ve seen and wondering what would happen if x, y and z (occurred). I mean, it’s done by fans who love the original work,” said C.J. Morris, a fan fiction writer who specializes in such science fiction shows as “Star Trek” and “Doctor Who.”

Fan fiction has also become a way for aspiring writers to test their skills. It’s a simple way to enter a world that has already been set up and populated with fully fleshed-out characters.

“It gives me a bit of practice,” Morris said. “I like the fact that people tend to like my work. I like the comments that I get. When I receive a bunch of positive comments, it makes me happy.”

For die-hard fans, fan fiction helps fill the gap between books, movie sequels or television seasons.

Some famous writers like Joss Whedon (“Buffy the Vampire Slayer”) have come to terms with fan fiction writers. Whedon asks that fan fiction writers stay respectful to the world he’s created.

“As long as an author can (set boundaries), then at least they have a way to stop it if they’re uncomfortable with it,” Michaels said.

Not all writers agree with that line of reasoning.

Laura Resnick, who has written several fantasy and romance novels, said fan fiction is on the same level as stealing. It’s easy for fans to misconstrue and misrepresent the work they are trying to honor.

“It’s like if you came into my house, (told me you) really liked my couch and took it without my permission,” Resnick said.

All of this leads up to the tricky case of Michaels, a fan fiction writer whose work was stolen from her.

In order to regain back copyright for her story, Michaels was forced to push for a trial against the publishing house that had printed her work.

“I felt like I needed to protect it because it had already been put out there,” she said.

She urges fan fiction writers to be careful about where their work is being viewed.

“I think everyone,” she said, “just kind of has to do what’s right for them.”

# Saving troubled youth from homelessness

BY SINDHU RAVIRA  
*Mosaic Staff Writer*

Before turning 15, Mauro Zavala Leon of San Jose had been placed on probation for smoking pot and drinking alcohol. He was put into foster care, and found himself without any money, or family to support him. His future didn’t seem promising.

But when he turned 18, mentor Katee Peek entered the picture and helped change his life.

“She’s always been there,” Leon, now 18, said. “Even though I’ve had stressful times, she’ll say, ‘Just try to stick it through,’ and so I do.”

For eight months, Peek has helped teenagers



Katee Peek

in foster care and on probation prepare for and find jobs. Peek’s dedication and empathy for “her kids” stem from the inspiration they give her, and their determination as well. Furthermore, studying counseling at Santa Clara University helps her with professional knowledge and understanding teens.

Peek and colleagues at the nonprofit TeenForce in San Jose have helped ease the struggle for 245 teenagers in three years, helping them avoid homelessness.

“Hearing the stories of what my kids have gone through, it is very humbling to see how far they’ve come,” Peek said. “I have youth who have no family supporting them and still make it to work. They are very resilient; the confidence they build from a one- or two-month job just gets to the heart.”

Peek said homelessness is a huge threat for children transitioning out of the foster care system.

“I have been working with many kids under 18 that have been living from couch to couch,” Peek said.

Leon has been working a stable job at the pest-

control company Planet Orange and spoke at TeenForce’s hiring fair on June 26.

For a while, he said, Peek was the only person he could call and talk to. Leon, who moved from a group home to his aunt’s residence, said, “I just need to get into school, get a license, and I’m set.”

The youth development coordinator for TeenForce, Peek said even spending just an hour can help transform a motivated teen.

“After just one lunch, a youth had this air of confidence I never heard from him before. He got offered three jobs, and I think the whole office was in tears,” Peek said about one client. “Seeing kids succeed, it makes me and my co-workers just glow. We are all very proud of them.”

For her work, the San Jose Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce recently awarded Peek one of four Women in Leadership grants.

With the award, Peek hopes to increase awareness of the need to support youth transitioning from their lives on probation or in foster care.

“As long as I am working with youth,” she said. “I’ll always be happy.”

# Alumni theater boosts Lincoln arts

STAGING STAR | FROM PAGE 1

his alma mater for “In the Heights” feels more like “coming home” than a job.

The Lincoln High School performing arts department convinced and prepared him for a career in the entertainment industry. If it had not been for the renowned and rigorous program, perhaps he would not have had the chance to eventually work on musicals like “Spring Awakening” at the San Jose Repertory Theatre and “Chicago” at Welk Theatre in San Diego.

Rodriguez and other returning alumni know their collective effort will contribute to a larger, more meaningful cause. The musical, with its themes of personal sacrifice and resourcefulness, tenacity, and the enduring bonds of friendship to overcome hardship, embodies the adversity the performing arts program has endured the past three years, and its subsequent recovery.

The tribulations started in 2010. Due to its academic performance numbers, Lincoln High was labeled a Program Improvement school, under the federal No Child Left Behind Act. This designation meant incoming ninth and tenth graders who did not meet basic proficiency on mandated state tests had to take a double period for either math or language arts, or in some cases, both.

The San Jose Unified School District forced Lincoln to allocate funds to staff double-class periods, taking away funding for performing arts. It left the school scrambling to find a way to fund classes like musical theory, beginning drama and electronic music.

No one at Lincoln was going to take this sitting down. Parents and alumni formed the Lincoln Performing Arts Coalition (LPAC), a nonprofit group to provide financial assistance to the performing arts program. The coalition came up with a battle plan to keep and retain the classes put in danger as a result of the allocation.

“There was a complete, quick and rapid mobilization by the community, at the time by the

parents of the [students at the] school,” said Peggy Mahony, president of LPAC and mother of a 2012 graduate.

The plan LPAC came up with was twofold: host annual holiday and summer benefits to raise the \$40,000 needed to keep the endangered programs fully funded, as well as accept donations via Paypal on their website, [www.lpac4arts.blogspot.com](http://www.lpac4arts.blogspot.com).

Boasting alumni in places ranging from the San Jose Opera to Barnum & Bailey Circus to New York’s Broadway, LPAC decided to recruit former students to put on a production for one night only, with just 24 hours to rehearse beforehand.

“We’re getting really good at it, although we’d rather not do it at all because it’s a lot of stress on everyone’s systems. But it’s for a good cause” director Chuck Manthe said. “It’s good stress, though. It’s fun stress.”

Everyone involved with the show knows their toil will merit them a crucial reward. The summer benefit production would not only contribute to LPAC’s support of the two classes on the chopping block -- musical theater and jazz choir -- but it would give alumni the opportunity to give back to a community that had so profoundly shaped their lives.

“I love that I can give back what they gave me more than 10 years ago,” said Yolanda Valdivil, a regional theatre performer and alumna of the class of 2002.

The primary hope of all involved in the production is to raise the amount of money needed to keep the program going for another year.

The alumni, like the LPAC, believe that the performing arts program plays a pivotal role in the lives of the students who take part in it. For many, a huge debt is owed to the program for introducing them and giving them the expertise to succeed in their passion.

“If it wasn’t for the program here I wouldn’t be as involved in the arts as I [am] today,” Rodriguez, class of 2010, admitted earnestly.

This is because the challenges and rewards of

the program transform them into creative thinkers with skill sets that can be used regardless of whether or not they pursue a career in entertainment.

Furthermore, it gives students the unique opportunity to use the performing arts program as a way to express themselves and their creativity in a secure environment.

“There’s something about the arts that is freeing and liberating,” Valdivil said.

Giving the students a way to express their creativity is likewise an important factor in the community’s desire to keep the program alive and well.

Cristal Leo, now a doctor and alumna of the class of 1994, passionately explained that “When people don’t have an outlet for creativity, it can turn inward and be destructive or it can be let loose outward to the community at large.”

For her, having the allocations taken away funding for the arts program is simply “disheartening,” a sentiment many of her fellow Lincoln Lions share.

Some believe that it appears the performing arts department at Lincoln High School has already hit rock bottom and has resurged, thanks to the efforts of those parents and students who banded together.

“We’re feeling very reasonably optimistic at this point,” Manhony said. “I don’t get the sense that we’re going to need to do any more than what we are doing.”

Whether the department may be on a high or low, it will always be loved by current and past students. Their fondness and dedication for the program transcends the barriers of time and distance, as alumni from a variety of graduation classes travel from all over the country to take part in this one show.

The Lincoln performing arts department is worth that much to them.

“I just think it’s invaluable,” Mahony said. “It’s a tremendous and unique opportunity that needs to be preserved intact for everyone else to enjoy for all the years going forward.”



Jonae Scott | Mosaic Staff

Musicians rehearse for the Lincoln Performing Arts Coalition’s production of “In The Heights.”





Jonae Scott | Mosaic Staff

Top prospects from the California and Carolina leagues met in San Jose for the first time in the 17-year history of the minor league all-star game.



Kelly Chang | Mosaic Staff

Christian Puccinelli, left, and Ryan Griffins plead for autographs from their favorite players at Municipal Stadium.



Jonae Scott | Mosaic Staff

All-Star officials recruited Little Leaguers to fetch balls during the Home Run Derby competition.



Kelly Chang | Mosaic Staff

Triple-amputee Nick Kimmel, a Marine veteran and baseball fan, talks with a player before the game.



Kelly Chang | Mosaic Staff

One of the all-stars takes a whack during the Home Run Derby competition.

# SHOW STOPPER

Fans greet future big leaguers at minor league all-star game in San Jose

BY CERYS HOLSTEGE

Mosaic Staff Writer

Donning a jersey and cap of the San Jose Giants, an eager 9-year old Bailey Borbas stood patiently in San Jose Municipal Stadium: He wanted to meet some of the top prospects in minor league baseball.



Kelly Chang | Mosaic Staff  
Bailey Borbas, 9, enjoys the minor-league atmosphere.

Star Game, the first time the 17-year old series has been played in San Jose. California lost 12-2, but the result didn't detract from the occasion's distinctive blend of minor league intimacy and major league fanfare.

"It's more family-friendly, I would say, than major leagues," said Bailey, who will be a fourth grader at Los Gatos' Hillbrook School in the fall. "You can see it a lot more. It's a smaller stadium, so you're closer to the game."

The exchanges between fans and players that characterize minor league games, even major events such as the California-Carolina matchup, drew fans young and old to Municipal Stadium on a cool, late-spring night.

"You're closer to the players," said Gerald Sul, a San Jose resident and San Francisco Giants fan. "Everyone

is able to get to know them personally. If you're a fan who comes out here constantly—and that's probably a good idea—you get to watch them grow and develop and probably even root for them more when they go on to the next level."

Just ask Christopher Gazik, 10.

"I was here when Pablo Sandoval was here and I met Buster Posey; I have his signature," Christopher said as he bounced on his toes, grinning with pride.

More than a few Giants have performed in San Jose along the way to stardom: Madison Bumgarner, Matt Cain, Tim Lincecum and Jonathan Sanchez all showcased their pitching there before heading north to San Francisco's AT&T Park.

The all-star game, a showcase in which top players are selected to play by a committee, gave local fans a chance to see some of the big-time prospects from the East Coast after a steady diet of California League games this spring. Carolina stars such as Francisco Lindor and Robby Hoffinger joined budding Giants slugger Angel Villalona for the game.

Young fans such as Christopher and Bailey were eager to be in the presence of soon-to-be big names in baseball, and so were the aspiring major leaguers at the game.

"It's a lot of fun just being around the guys knowing that at the least you've played with guys who are going to be in the big leagues someday," said Harris, the left fielder who leads the San Jose Giants in runs, home runs, and RBIs.

At least for a few hours at the park Harris and his fellow honorees got a sense of the big-time.

Country music star Craig Campbell sang the national anthem, and a gasp from the crowd of 5,007 announced the arrival of the game ball, which was dropped off via helicopter.

Games like this one embody the motto "Minor league baseball is major league fun."

Just ask Bailey.



Kelly Chang | Mosaic Staff

"You're closer to the players," San Jose fan Gerald Sul said of experiencing a minor league game in San Jose.



# Fast, fancy footwork: Street soccer attracts players, fans

BY BRENDA SU

Mosaic Staff Writer

Under the blistering sun in a fenced playing field aptly named The Cage, Julio Aquinos weaves a soccer ball around the legs of his opponent. Spectators stand just inches away behind the fence, fingers wrapped around wires.

They gawk at fancy footwork they'll never see in traditional soccer matches. Spectators find it difficult to keep up with the game; the ball is a blur and possession constantly changes. Fans flinch as the ball hurtles toward them and crashes into the fence – but it's still in play.

Wildly popular in Brazil and Holland, street soccer has recently taken hold in the United States. Teams of four play on a field a mere 30 yards by 20 yards, and there is no designated goalkeeper. Players love how the small field creates an adrenaline-packed game that allows them more contact with the ball and requires more agility.

On June 22 and 23, the fifth annual Street Cup Soccer Challenge in San Jose drew 70 teams in categories ranging from under 6 years old to men's and women's Open. The tournament also was held in six other cities in California and Texas this year, three more than in previous years.

"Street soccer is a lot more fun than running around the field in traditional soccer," said San Jose's Alexis Mata, 12. "You get to do more moves in a smaller area."

Aquinos's team, the Valedores,

emerged with a 6-2 victory. The game lasted for just two 12-minute halves, but Aquinos, 32, was drenched in sweat when he left The Cage. In the round-robin tournament, the Valedores ended up playing every other team in its category.

Aquinos, of San Mateo, enjoys the fast pace of the game.

"Since the area's so close, the other players can get to you easily, so you have to get rid of the ball fast," he said.

Players said they love performing tricks and fancy footwork.

The "panna" involves faking out in order to get the ball through an opponent's leg, said Alexis Mata, who has been playing soccer since she was 5. The "annap" sneaks the ball through an opponent's legs from behind.

"Ground combinations move the ball around the feet," said Louie Mata, director of Soccer in Slow Motion, which helped host the event. "It's almost like a dance with the ball."

He continued: "Street soccer shows the more creative side of soccer."

Soccer in Slow Motion holds advanced summer camps for street soccer players. The oxymoronic name reflects on how the instructors teach their students to first practice the moves slowly.

"Street soccer doesn't really matter on scoring as much" as traditional soccer, said Eddie Valle, 12, of Sacramento.

Valle also prefers street soccer. "It's more about the player's styles," he said.



Mahima Dutt | Mosaic Staff

In "The Cage," teams compete in a street soccer tournament June 22 at the San Jose Flea Market.

# Stanford star Ogwumike an inspiration in parents' homeland

BY CORINE FORWARD

Mosaic Staff Writer

Conference player of the year, Pacific-12 defensive player of the year, collegiate All-American -- the list goes on for Stanford basketball star Chiney Ogwumike.

But her success does not end on the court.

Last April, Ogwumike, 21, studied abroad in her parents' homeland of Nigeria as part of the requirement for her international relations major. She interned in the office of the minister of petroleum and also worked with the charity Access to Success to help build a basketball court.

About basketball, "being a Nigerian-American and growing up with the best of both worlds, I've realized that it's so much more than a game," Ogwumike told the Mosaic. "You can influence people and all you'll have to look back on is your memories."

Initially, it was difficult to find time to travel for her requirement because of the year-round demands of basketball. Instead of giving up, Ogwumike waited for the perfect chance.

She worked with Stanford professors, who said, "Hey Chiney, if you ever have an internship opportunity that's academic based somewhere, we can approve that" because basically they're looking for the abroad experience, learning in a foreign place," Ogwumike said.

The 6-foot-3 power forward from Houston, Texas, seized the opportunity to go to Nigeria where she lent a helping hand in the National Assembly, listened in on lectures and was "a fly on the wall" in the petroleum ministry.

"They even took me to London," Ogwumike said. "The minister of petroleum gave a distinguished lecture and the whole department went to support her. It was a great experience."

After several weeks of work in Abuja, the capital of Nigeria, the rising senior headed to Benin City -- a five-hour drive -- to help run a basketball camp.

"I always try to say yes to anything I can," Ogwumike said.

So she agreed to help raise funds



Nhat Meyer | San Jose Mercury News  
Stanford Cardinal's Chiney Ogwumike takes a shot against Michigan.

with former professional basketball player and Nigerian native Andrew Lovedale for Access to Success.

Ogwumike started her own campaign to raise money to build a basketball court. So far she has secured \$3,500.

"That's not too bad of progress," Ogwumike said.

During her senior year this fall and winter, Ogwumike plans to continue her campaign.

"No matter where you are around the world, a basketball camp is a basketball camp; you go and teach the same skills," said Ogwumike, who is training in the gym now to prepare for a Final Four run next year after the Cardinal's letdown in the Sweet 16 last season.

"It was a great experience to meet people so passionate about the game in places outside of the U.S., too," she said.

Ogwumike experienced life in a new light in Nigeria.

"It opened up the door for a bigger calling for me," she said. "I am not just playing for myself, I'm playing for people that look to me for opportunities."

# 13-year-old 'Sonic' streaks through long-distance runs

BY CHRIS MORENO

Mosaic Staff Writer

Don't tell 13 year-old Miguel "Sonic" Vivaldo that he can't make an impact in his community. He's likely to run all over that notion.

"Kids can change the world and make a difference" were the words of the inspirational long-distance runner and community activist, who is one of the youngest ultramarathoners in the United States, according his trainer, Kermit Cuff.

With each race he completes, Vivaldo's hard work and training are becoming well known throughout Sunrise Middle School, where he is a rising eighth grader, and in the surrounding San Jose community.

Vivaldo, born and raised in San Jose, has entered 10 races since he began running in September 2012. He went out with a group of boys from his school who were taken to Coyote Hills for a training run.

Initially, Vivaldo had no intention of running a long distance, but he volunteered to be placed in a long-distance group.

As everyone watched the young boy attempt to run 11 miles, no one gave him much of a chance to complete the entire distance. But out of the blue, "Sonic" was born.

Cuff, a Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority employee who runs marathons in his spare time, was at the training and saw Vivaldo complete the 11-mile run. He was immediately impressed.

"After seeing him complete that run I knew he was special and had a gift," Cuff said. He took it upon himself as to help Vivaldo in any way he could.

It wasn't just the running that intrigued Vivaldo. He loved the idea of being able to make a difference with running.

On the suggestion of his trainer, Vivaldo followed the footsteps of his role model Nishad Singh, a 16-year-old runner who raises money for charity. Vivaldo plans to run his first charity race Aug.17, at Harvey Bear Ranch in San Martin.

He will participate in the Run-De-Vous and attempt his first 100-mile race. He wants to give the money to the Norawas de Raramuri, who help provide aid to the Tarahumara, a small tribe in Mexico.

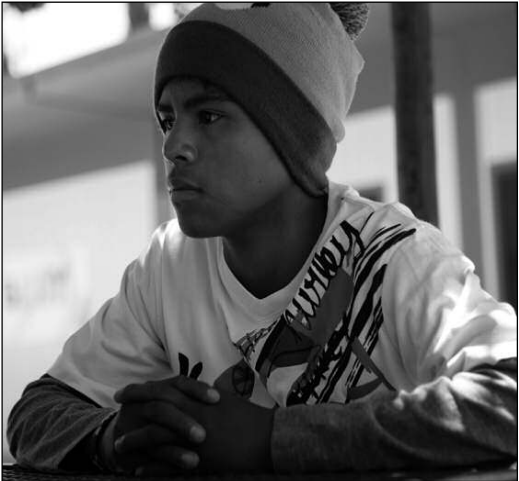
It's been a windsprint of progress since Vivaldo ran his first official race on Dec. 15 -- a 12.3-mile course at Rodeo Beach.

"After that first race I knew I wanted to continue to do this," said Vivaldo. "I actually didn't like running as a kid, but after I realized I was good at it, I started to like it."

He has run in almost all terrain, including deserts and mountains. The open-air conditions suit him.

"I like to run in nature," he said, "because I find it to be very beautiful. I don't enjoy running on a track."

Vivaldo has been the youngest runner in each of his



Jonae Scott | Mosaic Staff

Miguel "Sonic" Vivaldo, 13, at Sunrise Middle School in San Jose, will run 100 miles to raise funds for the Norawas de Raramuri, a group supporting the Tarahumara tribe in Mexico.

racers. He has been a motivator to many of the racers, when they see a 13-year-old boy so dedicated to finish the race.

"He likes to stay toward the back of the race, even though he can finish much faster," said Cuff. "He likes to help others who might be struggling and encourages others to continue and finish the race."

The March 24 race at Canyon Meadow was a memorable one for Vivaldo and Cuff. It marked the first time he ran a 50-kilometer, or 32-mile, run. Not only did he complete the run without stopping, but completed it with a bloody nose.

"He is the most determined, self-motivated boy I've ever met," said Cuff, beaming with pride.

Vivaldo now trains an average of 40 miles a week, running with no set daily routine. He runs anywhere from five to 20 miles a day. He says despite the hard work, "I can keep myself balanced with training and school."

Teresa Robinson, school director at Sunrise Middle School, is very supportive of Vivaldo and has seen him run in marathons. She said Vivaldo's accomplishments have had a positive effect on campus.

"Everyone is excited to have someone like him at school," said Robinson. "Other kids at school have now started running to support Vivaldo when he trains."

Vivaldo and Cuff both agree they have developed a close bond. Cuff travels with Vivaldo to each race for support.

Due to financial constraints, his mother, Ana Vivaldo, has been unable to attend her son's races.

She is raising Vivaldo and his older brother Jose in a small, one-bedroom house. She is currently unemployed.

Ana Vivaldo said she is saddened by the fact that she hasn't been able to see her son race, but mentioned that she is very proud to have a son like him.

Overcoming those hardships, Vivaldo demonstrates determination rare for someone his age.

"I really do believe kids can make a difference and can achieve anything," he said. "I didn't believe I could run such long distances, but I did it."

# Suspenseful Sundays, emotional games for fantasy football fans

BY CHRIS MORENO

Mosaic Staff Writer

Back in 1990, before the Internet made fantasy football as easy as clicking a football icon on a computer screen, John Ryan got his start in the game.

In those days, Ryan recalled, fantasy football players did not have the advantage of the Internet for research or to even keep score.

"Fantasy members would have to wait until Monday morning for the players' stats to be posted," said Ryan, a former NFL beat writer and columnist.

Twenty-three years later, Ryan of San Jose believes fantasy football is easy as ever, thanks to online play and the abundance of websites that offer advice and strategies. It's also still a lot of fun for him -- even more so than other fantasy sports, like fantasy baseball.

"(Fantasy football) doesn't require you to keep up with it at all times like fantasy baseball does," said Ryan. "It does not take much time out of your week and doesn't feel like a chore."

With the 2013 NFL season set to begin in September, millions of fantasy football fans are gearing up for a new year of fantasy drafts, roster changes, starting lineup decisions and more. According to the Fantasy Sports Trade Association, 24.3 million people in the United States and Canada played fantasy football in 2012.

Giants and A's Magazine writer Laith Agha has played both fantasy baseball and fantasy football every year since 2000.

Agha enjoys it because "playing fantasy sports lets me be competitive with friends in a different environment from on-field sports," he said. "I'm kind of a nerd when



Jonae Scott | Mosaic Staff  
John Ryan of San Jose has played fantasy football for 23 years. His strategy involves taking as many running backs as possible and getting a quarterback in the middle rounds.

it comes to fantasy sports. I like to check them regularly, like a social media."

Agha and Ryan had tips for first-time fantasy sports players.

As a former fantasy sports columnist and current sports writer, Agha stays updated on most things that happen in the sports world. But even he needs some guidance during game week.

When he does need some more information, Agha said, "I usually go to Rotoworld.com, or ESPN.com for extra information."

When it comes to the fantasy draft, Ryan's preferred method is to "take as many running backs as I can and get a quarterback in the middle rounds"

On the other hand, Agha said, "I take the younger players because they are more exciting to watch

during games. They tend to get more points."

While experts like Ryan and Agha have their own proven approaches to the draft, other fantasy players offered their own suggestions.

Oscar Rodriguez, 15 of Salinas, said, "This year I would take an elite wide receiver and an elite running back in my first two rounds of the draft, waiting for a quarterback until the mid-rounds"

Fabian Escamilla, 16, of Salinas, said, "I just plan on getting what I believe are the best, unexpected draft steals."

There are so many fantasy sports websites and experts to choose from, it can be difficult to figure out who to trust in the early going.

Fantasy gurus like Michael Fabiano, Jason Smith and Elliot Harrison of NFL.com are among the most popular. They offer draft tactics, player stat predictions and even their own mock drafts.

While the wide variety of options available to fantasy sports players can be a great draw, perhaps nothing beats the emotional attachment fantasy sports players seem to get from playing.

Fantasy sports add an extra element of suspense of watching every game on Sunday. The emotions you get on game day are unexplainable, Ryan said.

"You find yourself wishing for things that are very unlikely to happen throughout the game," said Ryan.

One thing all those interviewed agreed on -- it doesn't take much time or effort to be part of a fantasy team and stay up to date on it.

"Nine times of out 10," Rodriguez said, "most people that give fantasy a shot will come back to it and won't regret giving it a chance."





Mahima Dutt | Mosaic Staff



Kelly Chang | Mosaic Staff



Marili Arellano | Mosaic Staff



Kelly Chang | Mosaic Staff

Vendor Jagdish Rai, center, offers a mosaic of posters for sale at San Jose Flea Market, which is open Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

# SHOP TILL YOU DROP

BY MARILI ARELLANO  
*Mosaic Staff Photographer*

The San Jose Flea Market is shopper central for those who love exploring narrow alleyways in search of hidden treasures. The four-day-a-week bazaar on Berryessa Road is a community of family-owned vendors who offer eclectic wares, including floral clothing, paintings and produce. For a half century it has provided San Jose with a vibrant marketplace that these days is filled with the smell of tasty street food and the sounds of music.



Mahima Dutt | Mosaic Staff



Kelly Chang | Mosaic Staff



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Siblings Givani Garcia, left, and Jasmine Garcia sample barbecue beef found at the sprawling market on Berryessa Road.



Kelly Chang | Mosaic Staff



Marili Arellano | Mosaic Staff