Hilda Solis Quarantine Diaries: Students record their lockdown lives

Hoping the World is Okay
By Kayleen Prado
My family and I are all healthy, and we are thankful for that. In terms of my daily schedule, I wake up at 10 a.m. and join my biology Zoom meeting, then I do my other assignments and try to finish everything so I can have the rest of the day without doing work. Coronavirus didn’t prevent me from doing anything too important, though I didn’t get to visit my cousins for Easter, and I was pretty sad about it because I haven’t seen them for over a year. I hope people are taking this seriously and staying inside their homes so people don’t keep spreading the virus. If the coronavirus gets taken care of, then people can go back to work and students can go back to school. I don’t really like doing online school, but it’s the best for everyone’s safety. I am hoping this virus leaves as soon as possible so we can all go outside again. I hope everyone in the world is okay, and for seniors because it is the last year in high school and senior activities are being cancelled and those are memories I am going to miss out on. It is just hard to be sad, but I know that staying inside is the best we can do. I also watch TV and listen to music to keep myself busy. I am not leaving my house at all. I have not been out for a while now, and I miss how my life used to be. I know if this continues, then special events will be cancelled, like prom. It is mostly sad for seniors because it is the last year in high school and senior activities are being cancelled and those are memories I am going to miss out on. It is just hard and I hope that this can be resolved because I want to go back to enjoying life. ✨

I Turned 18 in Lockdown
By Guadalupe Corrilo
My life during the Great Coronavirus Quarantine has been difficult. My family and I would usually go out to church on Sundays, and then go shopping or eat out somewhere. Now that this happened, I barely go out and the fun times we have had are slowly fading. The good thing is that apart from not going outside at all, I can focus on other things like spending quality time with my family. My daily routine consists of waking up quite early, eating breakfast, and working on my schoolwork throughout the day.

“My 18th birthday was in late March, and my family celebrated a bit, but we weren’t able to invite anybody.”

I finish around 4 p.m., but sometimes later because I take breaks throughout the day. My 18th birthday was in late March, and my family celebrated a bit, but we weren’t able to invite anybody. This was a bit sad, but I know that staying inside is the best we can do. I also watch TV and listen to music to keep myself busy. I am not leaving my house at all. I have not been out for a while now, and I miss how my life used to be. I know if this continues, then special events will be cancelled, like prom. It is mostly sad for seniors because it is the last year in high school and senior activities are being cancelled and those are memories I am going to miss out on. It is just hard and I hope that this can be resolved because I want to go back to enjoying life. ✨

Gaming now a school sport
By Alan Paxtor
Video gaming, or esports, is officially a part of California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) sports, the organization that governs high school sports here in California. Students are given the opportunity to represent their schools by playing video games, meaning that they will be playing against other schools like any other sport.

The idea of having esports in high schools was brought up around two years ago, but the official announcement was made in September of 2019, according to Chris Fahey, the Director of Corporate Sponsorship for CIF. The agreement was signed to last for three years with PlayVS, which created a special esports competition platform.

The CIF website states that having esports in your school can be beneficial for the player because they will be able to gain skills that will help them throughout their lives. For example, playing on an esports team will help teach students about a team environment and add to personal development. While playing for a high school esports team, players will also have the opportunity to receive scholarships and gain exposure for professional opportunities.

“"As a sport, I think [gaming] is as competitive as baseball, basketball, and soccer.””
– James Ng, Hilda Solis

Students can compete in the games Rocket League, Smite, and League of Legends. In order to sign up for any esports team, the player must pay a fee of $64. Once they pay, they will receive access to the content and games that they need. League of Legends has its game days on Tuesdays, while Rocket League and Smite have their game days on Thursdays. The esports spring season started on February 17, 2020 and will end on April 17, 2020. For the teams that qualify for playoffs, their games will start on April 21, 2020. Then the teams that advance to the championship will play their games sometime during mid-May.

In the premier league in fall of 2019, Sunny Hills High School from Fullerton won the championship for League of Legends, according to NASEF (North American Scholastic Esports Federation).

Recently, I had the chance to interview a couple of people and receive their opinion about the topic of esports.

“As a sport, I think that it is as competitive as baseball, basketball, and soccer,” said James Ng, a teacher at Hilda Solis Learning Academy, who once worked with SEGA. “I mean, you have to think about strategy and you have to think about tactics. I think it’s here and it will only continue to grow.”

Brian Luna, a Hilda Solis student who plays video games, chimed in, “Personally, I think it’s a good idea because some kids don’t like physical sports, so this can be an opportunity for the gamers at home that are good at playing.” ✨
Editor’s Note

Back in January of 2020, 28 Hilda L. Solis Learning Academy students embarked on a mission in Marisa Moran’s English classroom: to become journalists. On Wednesdays, we would have Editorial meetings to discuss what was happening on a local level, or in their neighborhoods, across the city, or even in the world; whether it was the citywide mourning of Kobe Bryant or a project that Hilda Solis juniors were taking on to create PSAs about mental health issues. When a student told me that there was a serious “plague” happening in China, I laughed it off—used it as part of our discussions about how being a journalist also means being able to distinguish between real news and “fake” news. Little did we all know then, that this would become the biggest story any of us had ever seen. Now, four months later, the entire world has changed due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, and these young journalists’—sheltering at home since mid-March—deeply have been affected the most. Luckily, and a real testament to the students’ dedication and the leadership of their teacher Ms. Moran, almost everyone had completed a draft of their stories and we were able to edit them virtually. On top of the amazing reporting students did, they also shared what was going on in their lives during quarantine, which is collected here in an incredible package of stories illustrated by artist T.K. Lê. One of the most important aspects of journalism that I wanted to share with these students is about how reporting on your community helps keep people informed, but also connects us. I am so excited that we were able to produce this newspaper and share it with the Hilda Solis community, to really show how even though we have to be apart, we are still together. I am honored to have worked to steward the first issue of the Jaguar Times, and even prouder to have worked with these young journalists. Keep writing everyone.

— Neelanjana Banerjee, PEN America High School Journalism Program Instructor

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Jaguar Juniors assigned to make PSAs that could save lives

By Brian Luna

In January 2020, the Hilda L. Solis Learning Academy junior class was assigned to create short public service announcement videos about mental health in their advisory period, which would be submitted to the Directing Change Film Contest. Directing Change is an organization that wants to educate youth about health through multimedia. The films' topics range from suicide prevention to mental health awareness, and the contest even has a Spanish language category.

“I didn’t know what to expect, and the way that the students got into it was interesting,” said James Ng, the librarian and media teacher at Hilda Solis, who is helping coordinate the films.

One of the PSA videos made by the students shows a group of friends laughing and having a great time with upbeat music. As the laughing and giggles go on, the camera focuses on one kid in the group starting to get sad, and the music changes to a sad type of song.

“I think the majority of the [videos] were good because it shows that the effort was there,” Ng said. “I think it was awesome just knowing all the kids did these videos through their phones.”

I, as a fellow student, witnessed all the students making these videos. A couple weeks in, you could see the students running around after school or during lunch trying to get every reliable clip for their film. Some even used props to make the films more eye-catching.

Alan Pastor, a junior at Hilda Solis, described his experience and the obstacles he went through while making his PSA video.

“Trying to come up with creative ideas to make a unique video that will stand out to people was challenging, and also trying to come together with my team because we all have different schedules,” Pastor said. He also said that the technical parts of the project, such as recording and editing, were also hard. Some students were busy or some were not experienced with video production, so there is no doubt they ran into obstacles making these videos. It was a new experience for the students as well as a lesson in thinking about mental health.

The films will be entered into the Directing Change Film Contest, competing against PSAs from other schools. The winners receive cash prizes and get their films posted on the Directing Change website.

How can these films help? At their best, they will help raise awareness about mental health issues and normalize the idea that everyone is going through something.

Ng also stated, “The PSAs are important because [they] get us to think about issues beyond our own life and to make us more aware.”

Although people may think others look okay just by the smiles they show, there is always the chance they might be looking for help.

There needs to be more awareness about mental health services

By Guadalupe Corrilo

Teens in Los Angeles, California—and across the country—are experiencing negative mental health issues, and schools are not doing much to deal with them. I believe that the lack of mental health information contributes to terrible outcomes like school shootings and teen suicides.

High school administrations pay extra attention to the safety of students and their physical health. As more teens experience suicidal thoughts, depression, or anxiety, the need for awareness, resources, and assistance in high schools should be a top priority, especially at Hilda L. Solis Learning Academy.

Mental health issues have risen significantly among teens over the last decade. As reported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the third leading cause of death in teens is suicide. The most common mental disorders among teenagers are anxiety and depression. Furthermore, approximately half of all students age 14 years or older with a mental illness drop out of school, according to teen mental health treatment center Paradigm Malibu.

The resources provided to the school, according to Brenda Cervantes, a counselor at Hilda Solis Learning Academy, are referrals to two agencies that specialize in mental health, which are Hillsides Family Services and Alma Family Services. Cervantes also said that an LAUSD psychologist named Ivette Lamas comes to Hilda Solis twice a week. In an extreme situation, where a student is really struggling with their mental health, then the MHET (Mental Health Evaluation Team) will get involved. If it is something minor—for example, a student crying but not being a danger to themselves or others—then Ms. Cervantes will care for that student.

50 percent of Hilda Solis students surveyed were unaware of mental health services offered at the school, and less than 25 percent felt like their needs were being met.

“I feel alone sometimes, but I don’t really know who to turn to,” said student Brianna Cardenas, 17, from Hilda Solis Learning Academy. “There should be more information because some people need help.”

According to a survey of Hilda Solis students, 50 percent were unaware of mental health services, and 21 percent felt like their needs were not being met.

“We need a psychologist that’s here more times a week,” said Hilda Solis student Alyssa Buenrostro, 17.

Karla Corrilo, 14, another student at Hilda Solis, states, “I don’t know the days the psychologist is here and my friends and I don’t really talk about that.”

Some students do not know who to turn to because many are uninformed and that leads to not acquiring needed care. Even though there are some resources in school, it is not something that is talked about openly, which is where the lack of awareness comes into place. In order for students to feel better, there should be programs and assemblies so that teens know what help is obtainable.

A report by the World Health Organization stated, “The consequences of not addressing adolescent mental health conditions extend to adulthood, impairing both physical and mental health and limiting opportunities to lead fulfilling lives as adults.” The significance of awareness and addressing such mental health problems can be beneficial because it encourages students to feel worthy.

Raising awareness will not only help students gain information but also create a healthier understanding of mental health, and allow students to feel as if their mental health problems are valid. Therefore, a change has to come in which every student can seek mental health help and know more about what resources are available to them.
Local / Hilda Solis News

Shared Decision Making needs parent participation
By Evelyn Ramirez

Hilda L. Solis Learning Academy is a small school, but students and parents can engage in the education and success of students through the Shared Decision Making (SDM) Committee, which is the perfect way to have your voice heard and be involved in making a difference.

SDM Committee involves different school participants cooperating to identify educational issues, define goals, formulate policy, and implement and assess activities to help students reach standards of excellence. Also, SDM is a place to be involved with the teachers, students, and most importantly, the parents of the students who attend the school.

According to Hilda Solis Principal Jose Avila, he and teacher Rose Ksolk are co-facilitators of the SDM along with nine other members that include school staff, students, and parents.

“We focus on school-wide community decision making,” he said. “We focus on academic results, health, safety, and bringing parents/families in as partners.”

Some teachers at Hilda Solis said that one issue is that not enough parents are involved in this opportunity. It seems like the reason that some parents aren’t involved is that they are not informed of the things going on in their child’s school, or they simply don’t have the time.

Not having enough bilingual teachers hurts students
By Kayleen Prado

As a student who speaks both English and Spanish, I feel like I get a good education, but the students who don’t understand English are at a disadvantage.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the percentage of English Language Learners in U.S. public schools was about 10 percent nationally, but 20 percent in California schools. At Hilda Solis Learning Academy, 10 percent of students are English language learners (ELL). The percentage of bilingual teachers is unknown, but teachers do try to help the students who are learning English.

For students who don’t speak English or understand English, it’s hard for them to learn in school because they can’t get help from teachers who don’t speak Spanish. Students come to school but they have to ask other students for help, because they don’t understand. Most ELL students don’t really speak up and ask for help, so they just sit in class without learning.

“Teachers should become bilingual so students can learn more in class,” Martir Argueta, Hilda Solis teacher, said. “But students should ask the teacher for help if they don’t understand.”

“I don’t learn in class when teachers are only speaking English.” — Hilda Solis ELL Student

Vanessa Marrufo, a Hilda Solis ninth grader, said, “I feel like some kids, like me, that are English learners are not really learning, because most teachers don’t speak Spanish, and I don’t learn in class when teachers are only speaking English.”

She also said, “Teachers are always trying their best to help the English learners like me understand in class,” but it is hard if they can’t translate.

In conclusion, I hope school administrators take this issue seriously and ensure there are more bilingual teachers and resources for English learner students. ❖

One year after LAUSD Teachers’ Strike, has there been any change?
By Leslie Ornelas

In January 2019, over 30,000 teachers went on strike to make things better for themselves and their students. One year later, I wanted to check in to see if those changes have been put into place.

The most important part of the strike was that it helped the teachers get attention and show the public that they have a lack of resources.

“We were supposed to have gotten a raise, and without getting one, it made it difficult financially,” said Martir Argueta, a teacher from Hilda L. Solis Learning Academy. “I believe it was because politicians do not appreciate the work teachers do.”

No one taught students when the teachers went on strike, because the district didn’t have enough money to pay for substitutes.

“I did not get taught when teachers were on strike and I was just sitting there doing nothing,” said Hilda Solis ninth grade student Karla Corrillo. During the strike, there were only supervisors taking care of students, so it was like a day care center.

“They were hoping to have fewer kids in classrooms, but it didn’t really seem to happen.” — Marisa Moran, Hilda Solis Teacher

One year after the strike, there really doesn’t seem to be much of a visible change.

“They were some changes that improved the benefits of most teachers, but not everything affected us here,” said Argueta.

Another teacher, Marisa Moran, agreed, “They were hoping to have fewer kids in classrooms, but it didn’t really seem to happen.”

According to an article at EdSource.org, one year after the strike, there has been an increase in counselors and librarians, and more funding for some community schools, but there has not been a reduction in standardized testing or an increase in the numbers of school nurses, which were other demands. Also in the article, it said that LAUSD spends $18,788 to educate each child, which is much lower than in New York City, where they spend $29,000 on each child.

As a student, it feels like the teachers’ strike was nothing, and it’s not fair for the teachers or the students. I hope that there will be a change while I am still a high school student. ❖
Trump’s impeachment trial almost made me lose hope

By Stacy Vaidiva

On the morning of January 21, I was very anxious to know the final verdict of Trump’s impeachment trial. After 13 long hours of intense deliberation, the trial finally came to an end. He was impeached, but the Senate rejected the evidence that would have removed him. “When I found out I was going to lose, I felt devastated.”

How am I supposed to believe in democracy when it is obvious that the president utilizes his power to inflict hate toward immigrants?

It is known that Donald Trump attacks immigrants. According to an article in Mother Jones, Trump “wasted no time in overhauling [the] immigration system with high-profile moves” as soon as he took office, like separating asylum seekers from their children, trying to kill the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, and building a wall along the border between the United States and Mexico. Basically, Donald Trump has been doing whatever he can to stop immigrants from staying in the United States.

Immigrants do not want to cause any harm to anyone; they only want a better future in this country. Trump is not just throwing up obstacles for refugees, but he is also denying people who are applying for immigration legally as well. Mother Jones reported that “the denial rates for 13 categories of family-based and employment-based visas and residency permits have spiked since he took office.” The president has been denying residence for too many immigrants, despite them having done nothing wrong.

I feel disgusted that the president of the United States promotes racism toward immigrants. I am the daughter of an immigrant woman from Michoacán, Mexico, and that makes me proud.

Presidential candidate Bernie Sanders broke it down well when he told the New York Times that “Trump exploited the state of despair many Americans have fallen into over recent decades to convince voters that undocumented immigrants were to blame for unemployment, drug addiction, and economic struggles in many communities.”

I feel disgusted that the president of the United States promotes racism toward immigrants. I am the daughter of an immigrant woman from Michoacán, Mexico, and that makes me proud. I appreciate every-thing my mother does for my sister and me. She is a hardworking mother, and I think that it is disrespectful to see how Trump refers to immigrants.

It is immoral to talk about immigrants in a way that will affect their image, especially because immigrants help the country in many ways. They especially help the country’s economy. Innumerable immigrants work up to 12 hours a day in service jobs and in agricultural fields. Many American citizens reject working on these fields, and they will not accept being paid the minimum wage. Thus, the government relies on immigrants to work these jobs and boost the economy. Trump’s anti-immigrant policies are so overwhelming that they lead some people to be scared to vote and others to simply believe that voting does not make a difference.

“I will vote just to do my part as a citizen,” says 19-year-old Carlos Lopez, a student at Cal State L.A. “It may or may not make a difference, but as long as I know I did my part, I’m cool.”

Even though I’m not 18 yet, I think voting is the start of a better community since voting will allow us to determine our future president. If we really want immigrants to be respected, we should NOT give up.

So, remember, don’t lose hope, because if you vote, you can and will make a change.

It doesn’t matter who is president, deportation is wrong

By Steven Escoto

In Los Angeles, there are many Mexican families that have struggled to get here and make their lives here. When Trump was elected, it seemed like he was really against immigrants. He wanted to deport every Mexican and build a wall that would physically separate the U.S. and Mexico. Even though this wasn’t the actual reason for his impeachment trial, I thought it should be.

But in talking to both friends and teachers, maybe the situation is not so black and white.

I talked to a friend of mine, another student at Hilda Solis Learning Academy, whose family came to this country from Mexico and was undocumented. He said that Trump and his decisions won’t really affect his family now, because they have gotten their documentation. “Without my brother’s help, my family may have been affected or even deported,” he said.

I also talked to a teacher at Hilda Solis, Martir Argueta, who told me that President Obama actually deported more people during his administration than Trump has. “Donald Trump isn’t the brightest president nor the best,” he said. “But at least Donald Trump says what he is gonna do while other presidents just did it.”

According to a CNN story about this issue, Obama’s policy was to focus on undocumented immigrants who had committed serious crimes and those who had arrived recently, where Trump is going after people who have lived here for 20 years. So, it is a complicated issue and I think shows that no one in the government cares too much for immigrants.

If your family is struggling with immigration issues and afraid of deportation, you should try and get your documents together and find a good lawyer. It is better to go to a lawyer than to use a quick-fix business that might be a scam. When searching on the internet, I found places like the Arnaout Immigration Law Firm, the Nasseri Law Group, the Diamante Law Group, and Attorney Eric Price here in Los Angeles.

Whether it is Trump or Obama, I think the main issue is that deportation is bad. People have been working hard to have a life in America and, no matter the president, they are trying to kick these hard-working people out of the country. We need to wake up and notice that our presidents and government are corrupt!

Who Hilda Solis Students Would Vote for in a Presidential Election

Twenty-eight Hilda Solis students were surveyed to ask who they would vote for to be U.S. President.

Who would you vote for in the upcoming Presidential election?

- Trump
- Bernie Sanders
- Joe Biden
- Steph Curry
- The Rock
- Ms Moran

53.0% Trump
17.9% Bernie Sanders
10.7% Joe Biden
6.4% Steph Curry
4.3% The Rock
2.9% Ms Moran

Who would you vote for in the upcoming Presidential election?
The Great Coronavirus Quarantine of 2020

Continued from page 1

Hilda Solis Learning Academy closed its doors on March 16th, along with the rest of LAUSD, and students began a new life of shelter-in-place with families and trying to school from home. They share their new normal in this special package.

Bored or Dumb
By Vanessa Martinez

So far quarantine isn’t so bad. I just hope it doesn’t make me go crazy. My daily schedule has changed a lot. I have been going to sleep so late that it’s making me get eye bags. I have gained a few pounds, but not a lot—I am trying to not eat a lot. During quarantine, I have been watching anime because there is actually nothing else to watch. I wish I could go outside like usual and go out with my friends. To be honest, I actually miss school. I would always complain about wanting to go home but I actually miss going because seeing my friends was fun. This year, I was supposed to go to Mexico during the summer but I guess that is not happening. Also, my grandpa was supposed to come to LA from Mexico, but we hope that this whole thing will be over soon so that he can come. My friends and I are still in contact with each other; we help each other out with homework and basically just text with each other throughout the day. I also hate the fact that we have online school. It’s very stressful and not easy. With this whole quarantine, everything is closed, which is making my life a little hard. I can’t even go out shopping or get my eyebrows done; I look like a mess now. I think this is actually making everyone go crazy because on TikTok everyone is either dying their hair, cutting it, getting bangs, or doing something crazy to their hair. I also cut my hair because I was either bored or dumb. I don’t really regret it but once we go back to school, everyone is going to regret what they did to their hair.

I Want to Go Back to School!
By Brian Luna

Before the coronavirus spread, my family’s life had changed a tiny bit but to a certain extent. My family before the virus has always been at-home type, so us staying at home is not a problem. One thing that did change was the fact that it is so hard to get anything from the market, because either someone is fighting for toilet paper or there’s literally nothing to get. Right now, my mom is still going to work and she works at a clothing company. My mom usually leaves the house around 7:00 a.m. and comes back home at around 6:00 p.m. I’m in charge of the house during the week. After she leaves, I wake up around 6:00 p.m.. I’m in charge of the house around 7:00 a.m. and comes back home at around 12 a.m., and then I wake up at 12 p.m. I’ll do school work if I remember that I have it; otherwise, I watch Netflix or YouTube or a game with the boys.

The homie Alexis and homie Juan have been playing a lot of Call of Duty: Warzone. We have already won four games. I watched all of AJ and the Queen on Netflix, which stars RuPaul and a little kid. I watch random Overwatch or Minecraft videos on YouTube. I basically stay at home most of the time anyway, so this whole thing hasn’t really changed my life.

I Miss My Friends
Melina Vargas

On the weekends, my family and I used to go out and visit our cousins, or my older siblings, and now it feels like we haven’t even seen them in such a long time. Our lives have changed very much; we’re not used to being together all day, every day. It is difficult with my parents not being able to work right now. In the mornings, my parents are the first to wake up. My mom usually goes downstairs and makes us something to eat. If we need something that’s essential, my dad will go out and get what we need. I usually sleep in late, and when I wake up, my parents are usually eating and I’ll join them. Usually, I have a Zoom meeting with my biology teacher at 10 a.m., but when I don’t, I do sleep in a little later. My mom usually cleans around the house, and when she’s done, she’ll use her phone or watch TV. My dad is always doing some kind of work for the house in the garage. If I don’t have work to do, I will usually lie around and use my phone. I don’t do much. This virus ruined a lot of things that my family had planned. We have a couple of parties and big events to go to, but it was all canceled. I would enjoy seeing my friends at school, and now I feel sad that I haven’t seen them in a long time. I started watching some movies and shows on Netflix, like a movie called Miraage and a series called Tiger King. I usually listen to corridos in my room. I know I can help by staying inside and if I do go out, I keep away from people at least six feet or more. I have not left the house much since it first started, but I do go out to buy some snacks or I go with my parents to buy groceries.

Nerve-wracking
Ashley Valera

The pandemic has greatly affected me and the people around me. The virus is not really something that scares me; what scares me more is having to worry about my family. At the moment, my family does not have paid employment, which means we are not earning enough money to be able to afford basic household items. I have pets which I care for very much, and it is nerve-wracking to think about them suffering from starvation. I feel stressed, but I am also glad I can stay home and be with my family. I start with my day by waking up late, like around 12 p.m. in the afternoon, then do my skincare routine, and I begin my school work. I’m struggling with my school work, because I can’t get the help I need. Later in the day, I usually do random activities while watching Netflix such as paint or draw. I enjoy watching my

Illustrations by T.K. Lê

JAGUAR TIMES
Spanish soap operas on Netflix; they have me cry- ing because they are really good. Lately, I have been doing so many hairstyles and listening to music. I also play with my pets or use my phone and Facetime my friends for a very long time. This quarantine has really messed up my sleeping schedule because I have been staying up till 3 using my phone or laptop. The coro- navirus has caused me to miss very important events such as birthdays, celebrations, and gatherings. I have missed a few of my friends’ birthday parties because they were cancelled due to COVID-19. I have missed my usual Sunday service at church and I also missed out on youth group. Even though life has been chaotic, I still manage to live and enjoy it inside. Hopefully, this ends soon so I am able to go out and do fun things with my friends.

**Sleeping Late**

Jacqueline Corrilo-Cornejo

My life during the coronavirus 2020 quarantine has been quite difficult. I can’t go out anymore. I don’t get to see my friends anymore and it is hard to see other family members. I do not go to places I usually go to like school and church. My mom really does not go out for groceries now because she has taken precau- tions. So basically, our lives have been significantly different from how it was before. My daily schedule is like the same every day. I wake early or late depend- ing on how late I went to sleep. Then I eat and use my phone for a bit, and then I get started on homework. I might have Zoom meetings here and there, and then continue doing school work. Sometimes I stop midday or in the evening to get some reading done. Then I get to use my phone late at night and that is why I get so sleepy during the day because my sleep schedule is so messed up. I barely have time to do anything fun so that is basically my daily life routine. The coronavirus caused me to miss important things like the AP exam and upcoming SAT tests. Especially since it is my ju- nior year, these exams mean a lot to me. I know I can help the spread of the coronavirus by staying home, even though it is hard. I am not leaving the house to do anything. I miss going to school every day and I feel like I’m stressing more now than before. I hope the spread of the virus stops soon.

**Baking When Bored**

Leslie Ormeas

My coronavirus quarantine at home has been so boring. My daily schedule is just: wake up, eat break- fast, help my mom clean the house, do homework, eat again, do exercise, shower, watch some TV or be on my phone, and then I go to sleep. During spring break, instead of doing school work, I just watched movies and shows on Netflix. I haven’t left my house since I got off school. I actually want to go back to school because I don’t like doing online school. I feel like I do more work at home than I did at school. Also, when I’m bored, I bake a cake or cupcakes or play board games with my family and do puzzles. The coronavirus made me miss going to Universal Studios during my spring break with my family, but that’s not too much of a big deal. Sometimes, I help my mom cook when I finish my schoolwork early. My sister and I play the Wii when we’re bored and don’t have anything else to do. I just want to go to school and see my friends and hang out with them, but I’m not even going to see them until the next school year.

**Hard Times**

Steven Escoto

During the quarantine, my family and I have been spending more time together, playing games, and eating as a family, and even just talking to each other a lot more. But the downside of that is that both my parents lost their jobs, so we don’t have much money for groceries. My parents have been trying to apply for unemployment so we can get more money. Coronavi- rus caused me to miss my volleyball season, which is sad. I also miss watching sports like baseball, which I really wanted to see this year. Otherwise, my daily schedule Monday through Friday is to wake up and do some homework, then go down and eat breakfast, and exercise to stay in shape. After that I watch Netflix and Hulu all day, then play PlayStation with friends. I leave the house to shop, but not that often, and I also go to drive-throughs to buy food like McDonalds and In-n-Out. I like being home, knowing that the teach- ers aren’t giving us that much homework, so I finish earlier than before. These days have been going by really fast.

**Hard to Concentrate**

Jade Echavarría

Since the coronavirus quarantine has begun, not much has changed in my life. The biggest change is that school has been canceled. And with that cancellation, I’ve had to do my school work from home, as well as every other student, which, honestly, hasn’t been the best. I had planned to wake up at around the same time as school starts and do my work in the same pace as a regular school day, but unfortunate- ly, since my brothers are in much lower grades than I am, they didn’t have online homework, leading to them not being in any rush to complete it. With this, they decided to become nocturnal and stay up until my dad comes home from work, which is usually around 2 to 3 a.m., and watch TikToks on their phones at full volume causing me to not be able to go to sleep at my usual time. Going to sleep really late has also resulted in waking up much later than I prefer, so I wasn’t able to attend any Zoom meetings for my classes. Along with that, since I don’t have a desk, I’ve had to resort to doing all of my work on my bed, which proved to be very uncomfortable since it felt like I was just sitting around on my bed all day, making me feel like I wasn’t getting anything done. And along with having their phones at an abundant volume, my brothers also love to play-fight with each other, make a lot of noise, scream for no reason, and other activities that cause a great deal of noise, as any child does. And the problem is that I am very easily distracted and can concentrate best in silence, so that made it even more difficult to work on my school as- signments, especially when it came to reading. Aside from school-related activities, my personal life hasn’t changed at all. Normally, I don’t go out other than to go to school or when there’s some sort of family party or when shopping for clothes, so the quarantine didn’t affect me in that way. Other than those minor inconveniences, nothing much has happened. So, in conclusion, it’s just been boring.

**Learning to Ball**

By Joshua De La Hoya

My life has not changed at all, except that not going to school is a blessing because I don’t have to wake up early. I am not leaving the house because it’s dan- gerous, but my brothers are leaving the house to go get groceries. My life during quarantine is confusing because I have no idea what to do sometimes. I have been playing basketball because my mom bought a hoop, and I have been playing non-stop. I’ve been do- ing nothing but eating, sleeping, and playing basket- ball and video games. At least I can ball up now.
and watching movies to being weirdos and getting on one another’s cases because we have no one else to do it with. Though many are unhappy with being given schoolwork during this time, I find it has kept me sane. It has also given my parents more opportunities to sit down and get to speak to us, whereas before Co-
rona, our lifestyle consisted of getting up and rushing 
out the door. So now we all get to take a moment and 
really spend time together.

Missing Softball Season

Jillian Perez

Life has been crazy. I feel as if this pandemic took us all by surprise. All of the new rules and cancellations are sad to me because I absolutely love going out and 
exploring Los Angeles. I don’t think life is completely horrible for me right now, but I would really love to be back at school, the malls, and out with friends having a great time. However, there are a few things that have disappointed me: baseball season has been postponed and I was really looking forward to attend-

Binged and Studying

Alan Pastor

The coronavirus quarantine has affected many peo-
ple’s lives, including mine. Since school was canceled, my sister and I have been taking online classes, and my parents haven’t gone to work. My family goes out only when we need food or other necessities. Recent-
ly, my sleep schedule has been weird because I go to sleep really late and wake up around 1 p.m. Then I do my school work, and once I’m done with that, I watch TV, play video games, help my parents clean, and play with my dog for the rest of the day. I’ve been watching random movies on Netflix and binged a season of All American, which is about a football player from Cren-
shaw who gets recruited for the Beverly Hills High School team. I finished all 16 episodes in like two or three days. The quarantine has affected the way I’m preparing for my AP English test because I am not able to go to school and learn. Although we are still learning online, it doesn’t feel the same as being in the classroom. Coronavirus has also made me miss my track season, which I was really looking forward to, but I still have next season unlike some seniors now who have to miss their final season. I haven’t been able to see my friends since we’ve been in quarantine, but I have been talking to them online and we’ve been texting. Overall, it does get boring being at home and not being able to go out, but that’s what we need to do during this time until the situation gets better and we can go back to living our normal lives.

Missing the NBA

Angel Alvarez

During the coronavirus quarantine, my family and I have been staying home way more than usual. My family usually works all day but now they have been coming home pretty early. But besides that, our life has kinda been the same. My schedule consists of 

Worried My Dad Could Get Sick

Gessel Espinoza Perez

Frankly, my experience with this whole coronavirus situation is conflicting. Every day we are faced with more information that both helps families become aware of the situation, but also instills fear over the basic act of going out and possibly getting sick. The issue is that many cannot stay home, because they have to go to work or school, helping out around the house, or taking care of errands for our parents when we can because their immune systems are more fragile than ours. For the most part, our lives continue to go on, but it has become apparent that we all miss school and our friends. My family and I have found many 

Bored in the House

Christopher Rivera Ramos

When the coronavirus first started, everyone got 
freaked out and it made them panic shop. I was not 
worried at first, and then got really worried. My fami-
ly was running out of toilet paper and food so we went to the store, and it was really packed. There was a big line to get to the grocery and to check out, and all the shelves were almost empty. When they announced that school would be closed because of the virus, I knew I was going to miss everyone and be really bored, but I was kind of happy for the first week because we weren’t really doing school work. When they told us that we still needed to do work from home, I was really bummed out, but I knew I would be able to wake up late. Now, I don’t really go outside the house anymore and text friends sometimes. I was watch-
ing videos and scrolling social media on my phone 
but lately, I really have no idea what to do when I’m bored and I feel that I have nothing to do. It kind of makes me feel crazy. The virus has really changed me because I actually started to read a book for fun; it’s about a case where a kid killed a family’s son and they want to get justice for their son. In the end, I’m going insane without going out of the house and I want to go back to school as soon as we can. 

Glued to the News

Andrea Solis

During the coronavirus quarantine, I have been stuck at home, but have been watching the news and on so-
cial media obsessing over the latest news from around the world. I saw that in Panama, it is way worse than California and other places. In Panama, women can leave the house on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fr-
days, and men can leave on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, and no one is allowed out on Sundays! And they have people enforcing these orders, plus all the shops are closed there. I also saw that social media influencer Tatun Dahl tested positive even though she didn’t have any symptoms! Otherwise, there was a whole week where it rained non-stop, so we were stuck inside all day and couldn’t even go outside to walk our dog, who has been stuck at home with us. Overall, we’ve mostly been watching TV or on our phones.

Do you think we will survive the Corona virus? (28 responses)

JAGUAR TIMES
ogy to check for assignments. When assignments are uploaded, I begin to work on schoolwork as soon as I can. If I am caught up with all my classes, I’ll read a book. I have finished approximately three different books, like *I Am Princess X* by Cherie Priest, *Anatomy of a Boyfriend* by Daria Snadowsky, and *The Sun Is Also a Star* by Nicola Yoon. I have started a couple more, but I did not like the stories and got bored. When I get annoyed from classwork or reading, I help my sister with her homework or play Call of Duty mobile. I also like to watch movies. I found this website where one can watch all the movies for free, including ones in theaters. Then I walk my dog around the block. This pandemic caused many events to be cancelled. I had so many plans before all this happened. I was going to take the AP Language and Composition exam in May, but now it is going to be online, so I have also been practicing for that. My mother’s birthday will most likely be cancelled as well. My goal was to go out and buy her a gift that she would really love, but unfortunately, the quarantine interfered with my plans. I was also about to volunteer at a local library this spring break, and that got postponed until summer break. I was really excited about all of my plans, but this pandemic is a dangerous disease that everyone should take seriously.

**Spending Time with Dad**

Robert Lopez

During the Coronavirus quarantine, my life and my family’s life have changed a little bit. My dad is not working, and my brother and I are not physically attending school, which means we have been spending most of our time together. It is a little bit more complicated to keep up with my school schedule, but nothing to worry about. The economic part has not affected us radically. From what I know, we have enough money to stay stable for a while. Because of my increased time at home, my schedule has been a little bit more active. I wake up sometime between 5 and 7 a.m. in the morning and try to do some exercise, take a shower, and then I check Schoology in order to keep track of all the assignments and their due dates. If I have any online sessions, I check the time of the session and then I organize my schedule. I have been spending most of the time with my dad cooking. In the meantime, I try to work on some assignments. While we are eating, we usually watch an episode of *Lucifer* on Netflix. After that, my activities vary depending on the day. Sometimes I read, write, play guitar or mandolin, play the piano, draw, listen to audiobooks, listen to podcasts, study Farsi, play with my brother, and, if I have some time left, I watch movies or a series or I just play videogames. I usually go to sleep between 12 and 3 a.m. I am not sure of how I can help against the virus other than staying home and following the hygienic routines recommended. I have been out of the house to buy food. Although one would expect everything to be empty, the truth is that life does not look like it has changed at all.

**Taking Care of My Siblings**

Evelyn Ramirez

My daily schedule during coronavirus is busy. My mom made it clear that since I’m on “vacation,” I need to help with the food, cleaning, taking care of my siblings, and everything else at home. Along with that and my schoolwork, I try to find time to exercise and having fun with my siblings, like having drawing contests (even though I always win). Otherwise, I spend time on my phone or playing video games. I miss going to the store down the street to buy candy like Trolli and going to the park to hang out on the swings. I wish that the coronavirus never happened, so I could still enjoy some freedom. My parents don’t let me or my siblings go out at all, not even to go with them to the supermarket. It seems as if they are exaggerating by keeping my siblings and me, but what can I do?

**Videogames and Schoolwork**

Alexis Hernandez

When coronavirus first hit, it didn’t seem like it was going to be a big deal. My mom told me that it wasn’t something to worry about and to just take precautions. But then everything changed. My daily schedule starts off by checking on any assignments that have been published in Schoology. After I finish checking, I start to do the ones that are the easiest to complete first, then the harder and longer assignments. Otherwise, I play videogames when I have spare time. My aunt and cousins came to visit from Florida but we weren’t able to see them due to social distancing rules. I’ve been watching the news more at this time of the virus, and I think we can all help by staying home and only going out only for necessities. The times that my family and I go out are only when we need to get groceries. If everybody was doing this, we could stop the spread and help decrease the rates at which people are getting infected.
Homelessness can offer freedom from society for some

By Roberto Lopez

Although homelessness can be perceived as a low point in today’s society, some individuals actually choose this lifestyle for the freedom it offers. Throughout all of Los Angeles County, the numbers of individuals identified as homeless have reached exorbitant numbers. In January 2019, the Los Angeles Almanac released the results of the homeless count. Around 58,000 individuals were identified all around Los Angeles County — up 5,000 from the year before. In the city of Los Angeles, the numbers reached 36,000 individuals, according to the Los Angeles Homeless Service Authority. Politicians, and the community in general, have looked for solutions in order to decrease the amount of homelessness in Los Angeles in recent years.

Before writing this story, I always related homelessness with fear, hunger, suffering, and similar issues. After all, that is the image given to us by modern stereotypes. Walking around East Los Angeles, I had the opportunity to interview various homeless people to understand their struggles and/or challenges. What I found was more complicated than what I expected.

During my research I found Alex, a 44-year-old white man, who identified as homeless.

“If I wanted, I could go back to my parents’ hacienda and they would give me a job and I would live in one of those big, nice houses. But I don’t want to spend the rest of my life in front of a computer. That would kill my mojo,” he said.

Alex explained that being able to go wherever he wanted to go, whenever he wanted to, and do anything he wished to do gave him a sense of freedom. He said that most people are caught up in the system of society and unable to think freely or be individuals.

William Johnson, another 35-year-old homeless man I spoke to, said, “You know, you don’t need all that stuff people get nowadays. You only need a place to stay, something to eat, and strength to keep going on. It’s not easy. But it feels good being the only one in charge of your own life.”

He went on to say, “Things like iPhones, brand new clothes, and online services are not necessary. They will just make you stay in a comfort zone. Always keep yourself out of that place.”

William explained that all the commodities that we use nowadays just ease people’s lives. “The only thing that someone needs is confidence and courage to face any upcoming challenge,” he said.

I had always thought about homelessness as a black and white issue. With more than 50,000 homeless people in Los Angeles County, including minors, family members, and other individuals, only negative images are presented. However, I learned that the situation is more complicated than it seems. Homelessness can indeed keep someone from obtaining something desired; nevertheless, it is important to reflect whether that desire is really necessary. Not many things are required to live. Avarice will not provide any advantage for the person who will always want more and more. It is important to establish a balance and learn that although the economic situation of someone might not be the best, they can be even more free than anyone else, for they have learned to be patient and live with the minimum required, enjoying life.

Homeless people often have mental health problems

By Christopher Rivera

As you walk on the streets of Los Angeles, you might notice something everywhere you go: there are a lot of homeless people on the sidewalk. I wanted to understand more about what causes homelessness and interviewed people who were either currently homeless or had been homeless in the past, and I discovered that mental health issues are a big part of the problem.

A study from Harvard Medical School states, “In the year 2000, 30 percent of homeless had a combination of mental health and drug or alcohol problems.” Another statistic from the Brain & Behavior Research Foundation showed that “according to a 2015 assessment by the U.S. Department of Housing Urban Development, 564,708 people were homeless on a given night in the United States. At a minimum, 140,000 or 25 percent of these people were seriously mentally ill.”

Rosie Ramirez, 46, and I met through my mother, because they were friends. She had been homeless before and I asked her what happened. She told me she had been in an “extremely horrible accident” that broke the bones of her left foot, and that after her accident, she got depressed.

“Before my accident, I was able to walk without any help,” she said, but afterwards she was physically disabled and depressed, and this made her lose her job. For a while she was homeless, but now she lives in government housing.

I also talked to a homeless man named Jose, 32, who I saw around my neighborhood. He had also been in a really bad car accident, which led to his current situation. I wanted to know how people treated him.

“Many people think that I am really lazy, but my parents kicked me out of the house,” Jose said. He also went on to say that he was “depressed and that it got worse when [he] got homeless.”

Being homeless and depressed and cut off from his family, Jose said that he doesn’t feel like he can change his situation.

After talking to these homeless or housing unstable people, I saw that they need help and often it is mental health help, and that the reasons they became homeless were out of their hands. More than housing, these people need help finding jobs and trying to get help for their problems.
Animal abandonment reaches its highest point in U.S History
By Carla Ruiz

"Until one has loved an animal, a part of one's soul remains unawakened."

This famous quote by French writer Anatole France circled through my mind as I walked into the South L.A. animal shelter. My ears were pounding from the loud barking of the pit bulls caged inside, and my eyes suddenly filled with tears as I came to the realization that these animals are victims of how cruel humanity can be.

Animal abandonment is a major issue in the United States that many people choose to ignore, and for that reason, the rate of abandoned animals continues to dramatically increase every year. As someone who was born and raised in East Los Angeles, I cannot help but notice the multiple stray dogs and cats I encounter on the streets every day. At first, I was like the rest of society and did not really pay much attention to them, until one day I encountered a small stray white poodle. It was at that moment that I had a flashback to my childhood dog, who was also a poodle, and who I loved and cared for so much. That memory made me reflect on how serious animal abandonment really is.

"Personally, I believe people who knew they were not going to be responsible for their pets shouldn't have gotten one in the first place," said Jillian Perez, a close friend who owns two dogs.

According to Aidanimals.com, around 3.5 million dogs and 3.4 million cats are abandoned in the United States alone.

So what are some steps we could take as a society to reduce the rate of animal abandonment in the United States?

"One can reduce the numbers of animal abandonment cases in the U.S. by neutering/spaying their pets and also by adopting animals from shelters instead of buying them," said Sophia Dominguez, an employee at the South LA animal shelter.

If one spays/neuters their pet(s), that automatically cancels out any chance of them reproducing and therefore the animal population is less likely to increase. With a controlled population of animals, there would be fewer abandoned animals on the streets. Puppy mills are also very common all around the United States. They are large facilities that are in charge of breeding dogs in poor conditions and then selling them to customers at a high price. It is best to avoid this type of facility because mills are one of the biggest contributors to animal cruelty. The best option is to adopt a pet from an animal shelter because this helps reduce overpopulation and saves a life because animals who do not get adopted get euthanized.

These steps go a long way to helping reduce the rate of abandoned animals in the United States. How can one help contribute to the reduction of abandoned animals if one does not own a pet? Any person can contribute by following these two steps. The first step is to report an abandoned or stray animal to any local animal rescue and protection organization. For example, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA)'s mission, as stated by founder Henry Bergh in 1866, is to provide effective means for the prevention of cruelty to animals throughout the United States. Abandoning an animal is a form of animal cruelty and therefore, if one witnesses an animal being abandoned, one should immediately reach out to the ASPCA or similar organizations. The second step is to spread awareness about this topic. Don't be shy about informing relatives and friends about the dangers of animal abandonment.

Please keep in mind all the steps mentioned above and take initiative. If we all get involved, our furry little creatures won't suffer the pain of being abandoned any longer!
Vaping videos big on social media
By Jacqueline Corrilo-Cornejo

On Instagram, a teen posts a video of a group of friends doing different types of vaping tricks. One girl blows out the smoke, and it forms an O-shape and even little clouds. Music is playing in the background, and the friends are laughing and smiling toward the camera. Then the video displays a variety of flavors available for purchase. The teen who posted the ad can earn money selling the product to others who are interested. When teens see how much fun the friends are having and want to feel the same, they can buy the product and eventually influence many others.

Influencers sometimes post themselves vaping, which can also influence teens to do it. Young individuals posting pictures and videos of themselves vaping has become quite a concern for parents and adults, especially because of the risks to health that vaping poses for young people.

In a survey of Hilda Solis Learning Academy students, 86 percent reported seeing vaping videos on social media. According to Inverse.com, Instagram influencers are making the FDA feel like they are losing the war against vaping. "Instagram has banned paid vaping influencers and JUUL shuttered their Instagram and Facebook accounts after pressure from the FDA in 2018. But despite these measures to counter pro-vape posts, the content still dominates the conversation," says Julia Vassey, a UC Berkeley researcher.

Influencers have been banned from promoting any kind of vaping equipment, but now they aren’t the only ones doing it. Regular teens have taken over that role in posting countless images of them using the equipment and selling vape pens.

Young people helped spread the word to other young people, using hashtags like #jv— one of the main e-cigarette companies—according to NPR. Many teens are on social media every day, so it is easier for them to see this kind of behavior and act upon it. An article in the American Academy of Pediatrics about a study that showed teens were being influenced by vaping ads stated, "Adolescents were twice as likely to use e-cigarettes if they had seen ads in retail stores." This finding proves that vape advertisements are not good for our community because they influence teens to purchase the product.

"Vaping is usually advertised on social media. I see it all the time. I don’t know why, but teenagers feel the need to post it to Snapchat for other people to see," said Jillian Perez, a junior at Hilda Solis Learning Academy. Teens post vaping videos to show off, but little do they know that this could encourage others to try it.

"Parents need to get more involved in their children’s lives. Vaping is not healthy for anyone at all. There needs to be consequences for the children who vape and those who post about it on social media," said Jillian.

Peer pressure is a real thing—many teens get into vaping because they see their friends having a good time. Vaping has real consequences on brain development for younger people, not to mention lung disease, so people need to get educated about vaping and stop trying to make it cool on social media.

Why do young people vape even though they know it is bad?
By Manuel Esquivas

As I was walking out of the changing room after PE, the third period class walked in. One of the boys tapped me on the shoulder and whispered into my ear, "Hey, you wanna take a quick hit? I just got a new flavor. It hits hard." He pulled out his vape pen from his pocket and showed it to me. I came up with a quick excuse to decline it.

"Nah, I’m gonna be late to class. I got Garcia next period," he said, with confidence in his voice.

I rolled my eyes. "I don’t really want my older brother’s vaping habits to get to my younger sister who’s in middle school," he said. "I sure hope that if I catch her vaping, it’s at a very early time so I can get her the help she needs."

I wondered if he’d ever caught someone vaping at school, and what he would do if he did.

"Honestly, I would talk to them about vaping and ask them why they find it so enjoyable," Joshua said. "Then I would try to tell them the downsides of vaping. If I’m not able to convince them, then I would report it to a teacher I can trust or another adult," he said, with confidence in his voice.

I felt like this was a great interview but I needed some more sources, so I decided to interview someone that vapes. The person requested that I kept their identity a secret, so I happily obliged. I did this interview in person during lunch one day at school.

I started out by asking why they started vaping.

"I vape to get the feeling of something, anything. I also do it because I find it very relaxing. I usually smoke weed as well," he replied.

But I was really curious about how he started.

"I was peer pressured into trying it," this person told me. He said it was the first semester of sixth grade in 2017. He was in the locker room and his best friend asked if he wanted to try it. "It’s the best feeling there is. It feels like a rush of emotion and it feels all tingly inside. It makes me feel like I’m on top of the world sometimes. You should try it," — a student who vapes.

"At first, I didn’t want to, but then I was called names so I decided to try it. But what I really wanted to know is how they felt when they vaped. "It’s the best feeling there is. It feels like a rush of emotion and it feels all tingly inside. It makes me feel like I’m on top of the world sometimes. You should try it." — a student who vapes.
There are too many weed shops in East L.A.

By Melissa Vargas

Walking through the streets of LA, the smell of cannabis fills the air. On every other corner, it seems, you see dark buildings with big green plus signs. These buildings and that smell just might make kids start to wonder and experiment.

“I know some friends that have wanted to try marijuana just because of the weed shops.”

There are over seven hundred regular weed dispensaries in the Los Angeles Area, not including the ones that aren’t certified. On the corner of Hammel and Gage in East LA, there is one located very close to Belvedere Middle School. Nearby on First Street, there is another dispensary on the same street as an-other middle school and a high school. This one is not discrete at all. There is a sign listing all of the types of marijuana they sell. On Cesar E. Chavez Avenue, there is another dispensary with a big sign reading “Smoke Shop.”

“I know some friends that have wanted to try marijuana just because of the weed shops.”

The feeling of being high, and after a long time of using the drug, they become addicted and need it to feel normal. Then, after a while, they feel the need to use something stronger. This is why marijuana is considered a gateway drug. If weed shops are going to be near schools, they should be more hidden, more discrete, just to be less influencing to younger people.

Another teacher from Hilda Solis, Martir Argueta, says that weed shops are much more visible now, with the legalization of medical marijuana and recreational marijuana, and he believes this will have an effect on kids. “Younger people that pass by will generally begin to get curious, start to wonder about these shops,” he said.

Hopefully in the future, there will be more regulations making these shops more discrete so younger people, who don’t necessarily know the consequences of smoking marijuana, won’t be so influenced.

Too Much Homework Affects Student Health, Well-Being

By Karla Corrilo

Many students at Hilda Solis Learning Academy believe too much homework is affecting them. In a school survey, almost 40 percent of students said they spent three hours or more a night! The amount of homework that teachers are assigning to students is affecting students mentally, but also physically. Many students believe there should be a change in the amount of homework they are receiving.

“I usually feel stressed when I am doing my homework and this is bad for my health,” said Irismel Lezama, a Hilda Solis ninth grader. “Too much home-work does impact a student’s life because they won’t be able to enjoy their free time, or be able to join a sport because students will be overwhelmed with finishing their homework.”

“I think homework affects a student, because it puts a large amount of constant stress on the student which can result in harmful physical affects to the body.”

She said she spends up to four hours a night doing homework, not leaving her much time to do anything else.

“I think homework affects a student, because it puts a large amount of constant stress on the student which can result in harmful physical affects to the body,” said Haley Harrington, a Hilda Solis health teacher. “It’s possible that younger people like the feeling of being high, and after a long time of using the drug, they become addicted and need it to feel normal. Then, after a while, they feel the need to use something stronger. This is why marijuana is considered a gateway drug. If weed shops are going to be near schools, they should be more hidden, more discrete, just to be less influencing to younger people.”

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Kids Are Getting Smartphones Way Too Young

By Andrea Solis

Lately, I have seen many children using smartphones with unregulated access to the internet. I may be only fifteen, but this seems crazy to me!

I first noticed this trend with my younger cousins, who have expensive phones that they don’t take very good care of. Plus, they are on them all the time. My cousin Angel is eight years old, and he has an iPhone 6 that he is on all the time. I watched him walking with his eyes on the phone and he almost got run over because he wasn’t paying attention.

According to Common Sense Media, 53 percent of kids have their own smartphone by the time they are 11, but the number of eight-year-olds with phones grew to 19% in 2019 from 11% in 2015.

63 percent of Hilda Solis students think that kids should be 12 years old before getting a phone.

I wanted to know what age is appropriate for a child to get a phone. I interviewed one parent who said, “A phone can become very dangerous [for kids], especially if they talk to strangers or give their contact info to random people.”

I surveyed my classmates at Hilda Solis and 63 percent of them think that kids should be at least 12 years old before getting a phone.

Elizabeth, a student at Hilda Solis, said, “Children under the age of 10 shouldn’t be able to get a phone because they don’t know how to handle it. My parents had not gotten me a phone because I would have lost it.”

In another article on Common Sense Media, it said that “42 percent of kids are spending 30 plus hours a week on their phones.” It seems like most parents give a child a phone so they won’t be bothered and can get some peace and quiet.

I did check in with my aunt and uncle about how they feel about the phone behavior of their kids. They were both concerned, saying that their kids should be 12 or older before getting a phone.

Angel’s parents did check in with his teachers about his phone behavior. Angel’s health teacher, Elizabeth, said, “Children under the age of 10 shouldn’t be able to get a phone because they don’t know how to handle it. My parents had not gotten me a phone because I would have lost it.”

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New law lets California college athletes finally get paid
By Alexis Hernandez

A question that always comes up regarding college athletes is whether they should be paid. People ranging from parents to professional athletes agree that college players should get paid for providing their services. Universities profit so much from the players, while the student-athletes receive nothing in return from the schools.

For the first time, a change to this policy is being implemented in the state of California. This change is needed because it will benefit students both in their education and with their future careers as professional athletes.

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) has received harsh criticism for the way they handle certain situations with their players. In fall of 2019, Gavin Newsom, the governor of California, signed into law the Fair Pay to Play Act which lets college players collect endorsement money from big-name companies without getting punished by NCAA officials. They are also allowed to get agents, according to NPR.

“Collegiate student athletes put everything on the line—their physical health, future career prospects, and years of their lives to compete,” Gov. Newsom said in an official statement about the new law. “Colleges reap billions from these student athletes’ sacrifices and success but, in the same breath, block them from earning a single dollar. That’s a bankrupt model—one that puts institutions ahead of the students they are supposed to serve. It needs to be disrupted.”

The action by the governor received high praise from college athletes and many professional level players. Governor Newsom indicated that this is only the beginning of college athletes getting fair treatment for their level of play.

Whether college athletes should be compensated was a debate for many years. Many of these college athletes tried not to give their opinion on the situation because they could risk punishment for violating some of the rules set by the NCAA. The punishments range from suspensions to even getting scholarships taken away. The NCAA is still unhappy about the new rule, according to NPR, saying it creates unfairness, since athletes at California schools will be getting paid but not in other states.

This situation did not stop many professional athletes from speaking out and voicing their own views on the matter. In a locker room press meeting, Los Angeles Lakers superstar LeBron James called the NCAA “corrupt” and said that the NBA should “develop their minor league” to give an alternative option for young basketball players.

Besides professional athletes giving their opinions, many people in the community also have thoughts.

“Universities nowadays get thousands of dollars from games that their students play and they do not get compensated anyway,” said Ruben Salazar, the coach of a middle school basketball team in Boyle Heights, Los Angeles.

His disagreement with the NCAA’s previous no-pay policy shows how much he cares about his players. He wants the best for them because they are the future athletes that, hopefully, will one day play professionally.

One other reason that Ruben feels that players should get compensated is because the “universities use the faces of these players to earn money.”

Friends and family members of these college athletes are also concerned. Melissa Saezco, a college student from the University of Central Florida, stated that “compensating players can help pay off certain things in school, such as books or any other materials needed for school.” As a college student, she knows how hard it is to pay for certain items at school, especially for those with low income.

Serena Davis, the parent of basketball player Raul Davis, also stated that “[Raul] got injured in a game and had to have surgery, and it made me think about what the school could do to help him financially.” She fears that paying out of pocket for these kinds of treatments will lead her to a shortage of money.

Though the NCAA has agreed to changes finally, there is still a struggle to figure out how the new rules will be implemented by 2023. Until then, college players will have to continue to play without hopes of receiving a paycheck.

Los Angeles Dodgers Were Cheated Out of the 2017 World Series, and I’m Furious
By Jillian Perez

Almost three years later, the Dodgers community, including myself, was full of anger as the Astros were called out for cheating throughout the 2017 World Series.

Major League Baseball concluded the team cheated during the 2017 season by using a camera to steal signs being relayed from the opposing team’s catchers to their pitchers, according to a NBC Los Angeles news report. Astro players were aware of every pitch that was going to be thrown. A trash can was hung on every pitch to notify the batter what pitch was coming.

It was really disappointing to think that after the Dodgers lost the 2017 World Series, many Dodger fans were so upset that they talked badly about their own players. Tons of fans bashed Clayton Kershaw for giving up a couple of hits, blaming the whole thing on him. Two years later, they are apologizing because they realized the series was not at all fair.

“Well, I felt disappointed that LA was cheated out of a championship,” said Hilda Solis Learning Academy teacher James Ng, a Dodger fan. “I am an L.A.-native and to find out that something had happened to my hometown, it’s just disappointing.”

It’s really, really sad to see how far the Astros would go for victory. And you see the consequences of it. People’s lives have been pretty much destroyed.”

— Jjallil Sandoval, a former Houston Astros minor league player.

This incident has not only affected those associated with baseball, but the whole city of Los Angeles.

“It’s really, really sad to see how far the Astros would go for victory. And you see the consequences of it. People’s lives have been pretty much destroyed,” said Jjallil Sandoval, a former minor league player of the Houston Astros organization. “It’s a shame. It’s an organization that normally has good players and character, but I don’t know if it will ever be able to rebuild from this.”

There has been lots of talk about whether or not the championship should be taken away from the Astros.

“Yes, I do think the championship should be taken away from the Astros, because they didn’t win fair and square,” says Yvonne Hidalgo, a Dodgers fan.

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Kobe’s Death Hit Us Hard

By Angel Alvarez

The whole world was shocked on January 26, 2020, when Kobe Bryant was killed in a helicopter crash. Los Angeles will never be the same. Here at Hilda Solis, we celebrated Kobe Bryant Day on February 24, 2020. Students came to school with Kobe merch, and some were still devastated by the death of the NBA legend. As soon as you walked into school, you could feel how many people were sad.

Kobe meant a lot to me. I have looked up to him since I was a kid. I know for a fact Los Angeles will never forget about him because he did so many things for the community, as well as leading the Lakers to win five championships.

I interviewed two friends about their feelings and the impact Kobe has made on them.

Brian Ortega, a ninth grader at Garfield High School, said Kobe was his idol, too. “He inspired my game,” Ortega said. “Even though I didn’t know him personally, it felt like I did.” He talked about how Kobe was great because he was a fierce scorer and took on leadership roles in basketball like no other.

“He is the best basketball player ever,” Ortega continued. “He was a great father and husband and one thing I learned is to never be scared of your opponents and have the mamba mentality.”

Ortega also said that he saw tributes to him all over the city. “Everywhere I go I see his face, even buses,” he said, tearing up. “I just really miss him.”

Joshua De La Hoya, a ninth grader at Hilda Solis High School said that it was shocking to lose Kobe at a young age. “It is sad for someone who has gone so early in their lives,” he said, “and it had a big impact on people who worshiped him and admired him as a basketball player.”

Women Athletes Should Get Treated Equally, Paid More

By Vanessa Martinez

Gender equality in sports has been an issue for a very long time, especially around equal pay and being treated differently on the field and in the media.

In March 2019, members of the U.S. women’s national soccer team filed a lawsuit against the U.S. Soccer Federation because of unequal pay between the men’s and women’s teams. As part of the lawsuit, the U.S. Soccer Federation claimed that the men’s team “requires a higher level of skill” than the women, according to BuzzFeed. This claim was made even though the women’s team has won consecutive World Cup Championships and the U.S. Men’s team didn’t even qualify for the 2018 World Cup.

More people should be paying attention to this really clear example of the inequality between men’s and women’s sports.

I am especially interested in this topic because of my own experience playing softball. I had two amazing coaches, one woman and one man. They always tried to make us better athletes and help us improve on running, batting, pitching, etc. They made us do the same warmups as the boys. They didn’t treat us any differently than the boys, which is something I liked. With their help, we won the playoffs and then the championship.

Maria Vasquez, an athlete from Thomas Jefferson High School said, “Women work just as hard as male athletes and we are seen as ‘weak’ and not strong as them. In other parts of the world, a lot of girls are not allowed to play sports and it is not fair for them that they can’t participate, even though they want to. I wish that all female athletes could be seen as strong and inspiring women.” She also said, “Growing up, I always heard parents or family members telling girls in their family that playing sports was not for them. It didn’t affect me as much, but I do hear that kind of talk out there.”

Coach Franky Mendez from Ramona Opportunity High School said, “I treat the girls and boys on the softball and baseball team no different from each other. Both genders get treated the same and get put through the same workouts. Whatever the boys do, the girls do the same, like in workouts.” He also said, “The boys do not have better equipment than the girls. They have the same old busted equipment.”

I think what Coach Mendez is saying is that people treating women athletes differently is “dumb.” He doesn’t care whether you’re female or male; he will do what’s best for you and will push you to reach your goal.

This inspires me as an athlete, even though I think the larger structures around sports are unfair for women.
Born to Run: My experience with Students Run Los Angeles

By Robert Lopez

Being part of Students Run LA, an organization that was created in order to provide students to opportunity to run, has definitely changed who I am as a person. The events are arranged so that every participant is able to start training for the Los Angeles Marathon, which is the last event of the season.

I remember when I was first recruited for the program. I was about to decline for the simple fact that I would be forced to wake up early in the morning to run the required miles. My father told me that I should at least give it a try and if I did not like it, then I could leave it. I certainly made the right decision when I did try it out. It started as a mere hobby, but the more I ran, the more I wanted to force myself to do more. During the first season, we did not have enough spots for all the runners, and I was not supposed to run that first marathon. However, one of the runners offered not only a spot, but a whole new experience.

If I am honest, I did not have a real motive for running the marathon other than to see how far I could get. That was enough for me. At the beginning, the races were simple. Then, slowly, we moved to different areas, and during the events, I found new languages, new cultures, new people, and new places. Meanwhile, I found a family in my team. There were always times when I wished I could just stop running and then I would ask myself why I would choose to run over and over. Every time, as egocentric and selfish as this may seem, the answer was always the same during my first two seasons—not everyone can finish a marathon, not everyone is able to do it for free, not everyone has the opportunity that you have and once you’re done, you will go home, sleep, eat, and have a great story about how you achieved what few can.

Everything changed this season. I have learned to lead a team along with my teacher. From my partners, I have learned that will is all you need in order to achieve any goal. They showed me the strength of the mind even when everything seemed to be against them. I also learned to listen to my body, when I can go faster and when I should go slower, and it always tells me the way it likes to run. I found my pleasure in running.

Now that I have completed three marathons, I would like to prepare myself for the next one. I wish to see how far I can run. I want my family to be proud of me, especially my brother, who just finished his first marathon.

Because of the Coronavirus quarantine, I haven’t been able to train since it is best to stay at home right now, but hopefully I will get the opportunity to go running again.

Running has given me a new passion, and SRLA has given me the opportunity to run.

Esports in schools is a good but controversial idea

By Joshua De La Hoya

As of last fall, gaming has become an official high school sport in the LA Unified School District! Many schools have already put up posters to recruit players. Students can compete for scholarships and potentially earn cash through this sport.

I wanted to look into what people think about this new sport, how people think gaming affects our community, and if they think gaming is good or bad. To me, gaming as a high school sport isn’t surprising because this generation of kids is very invested in their phones and their games. But I’m not the only one who thinks this way.

According to a Bloomberg News profile of Michael Semale, the professional gamer started going to tournaments at 13 years old and six years later, he signed a contract with a gaming management company who pay him $4,000 monthly and gave him a signing bonus of $50,000. Along with getting paid, according to Collegeraptor.com, a University of California-Irvine esports scholarship will award around $15,000 towards your education.

I asked two of my friends what they think about gaming being a high school sport.

“I think making gaming an official sport is good for our community because more people will be able to get some form of income if they want it as a job,” Jasson Montalvo Bonilla, a ninth grader at Hilda Solis said. He even thought that esports might be able to have an effect on the dropout crisis because gaming is so popular.

Fellow Hilda Solis ninth grader Angel Alvarez agreed. “I think gaming is going to be good for our community because then more children will be invest in school.”

I was surprised when a survey of students at Hilda Solis found that 50 percent thought gaming is a bad thing for school. I asked one of my classmates Steven Escoto why, and he said because he thought people should focus on their education more than gaming. But I think bringing esports into schools shows that you can do both.