

# THE KNIGHT TIMES

## ACA DECA

### Returning to States

By: Bruno Marvelli '26

SOCES' Academic Decathlon team has had an outstanding performance this year, demonstrating strong preparation, hard work, teamwork, and extensive knowledge throughout their competitions.

Thanks to months of studying, practicing, and dedication, many members earned high placements and recognition for their hard work. All of the member's success reflects both the commitment and the support from their advisor, Ms. Gordon, helping this be an impressive year for SOCES' DECA team.

Recently, a very successful competition was held throughout many schools from the Los Angeles Unified School District, where SOCES placed second out of 47 high schools. The schools were invited to compete in multiple categories, and once the awards ceremony commenced, those who placed first, second, and third were invited to the stage to receive medals recognizing their achievements. Overall, SOCES received 54 medals across the different subjects and events.

One of the most notable accomplishments came from Jeremy Rodriguez, who won the Larry McCormick Memorial Award, given to the student with the highest combined score in literature, essay, and speech, an award that has never been won at SOCES before. Another major recognition was the LADWP Science Award, awarded to Luke Bula for his amazing performance in the science sections.

Another highly respected member of the Decathlon team, Sarah Kovalev, stated, "I'm excited to continue our success this year, ensuring that our teamwork stays strong." Sarah's emphasis on teamwork highlights the strong collaboration within the SOCES team, where students constantly work together to prepare and push one another to perform their best. Garfield Schools placed first, but that didn't stop SOCES from moving forwards into the State competition, continuing their streak where they've advanced ever since 2021! In addition to the medals, some participants also received monetary awards

## Knights Going to States

### Speech & Debate Dominate Regionals While Mr. Barasch Wins Coach of the Year



By: Sofia Marvelli '26

Photo of Speech and Debate State Qualified Competitors

On March 7th and 8th, the Speech and Debate team competed in the TCFL Speech State Qualifiers. This tournament was regional, meaning different schools from the Los Angeles region competed against each other. Competition was tough with schools like Taft and Granada also participating. The competition lasted all weekend long as the team competed in a variety of events, including Declamation, Dramatic Interpretation, Duo Interpretation, and Humorous Interpretation.

In speech and debate, Declamation is an event where the students memorize and deliver impactful speeches in history. Declamation was performed by Madison Klaimon and Sophia Madrid. Moreover, Sydney DeVore performed the Dramatic

Interpretation which is dark and emotional. The Humorous Interpretation was performed by Mira Chetwynd. Quite the opposite from the Dramatic Interpretation is the Humorous Interpretation which is lighthearted and funny. All four of these events have a duration of 10 minutes.

In this competition, three duos performed Duo Interpretations: Wylie Peterson and Isabella Moritz, Moss Dunavan and Junia Park, and Aya Yusufbekoba and Hernan Tobar. Duos perform a mixture of Dramatic and Humorous Interpretations. By the end, four SOCES competitors qualified for the State Championship. Sydney qualified for Dramatic Interpretation, Aya and Hernan for Duo Interpretation, and Mira for Humorous Interpretation. The

State Championship takes place during a weekend in April in San Francisco.

In addition to the wins of our SOCES Speech and Debate competitors, Mr. Barasch, a teacher here at SOCES, won TCFL Coach of the Year, while Madison Klaimon's mother won judge of the year.

Sydney DeVore, senior and historian of the speech and debate team shared, "We had a lot of fun at this last competition of the season before states. I'm sad that state championships will be my last time working with this team. We have all come so far and I have truly found a family through speech and debate."



## ROBOTICS TEAM BREAKS TO WORLD

By Reyn Campbell '26

This month, SOCES's 2026 Robotics Team celebrates their remarkable success in making it to the Robotics World Championship. The team will be competing at the highest level after months of hard work, collaboration, and competition.

Our school's robotics team consists of two teams: the #20625 Team, with around 8 students, and the #20626 Team with about 10 students, all ranging from grades 7-12. They have all been rigorously working since September to prepare for the FTC (FIRST Tech Challenge), a nationwide competition where students across the country compete head-to-head in different robotics challenges. FTC is an annual themed, alliance-based game, with the theme and prompt



Photo of the Robotics Team with winning banner

differentiating every season.

The 2026 season is known as the "Decode Season." The goal of each team is to code an autonomous robot—a robot that operates without human interaction—to shoot multiple balls into the air and into a small basket. Points are given based on functionality, code, presentation, and additional features such as color coding. Teams operate under strict rules utilizing Java and block-based coding.

Team #20625 on SOCES Robotics ascended their way toward the World Championship by building their robot from the ground up, which took significant time and effort. The team is split into three subteams to maximize efficiency: the Design team, which focuses on creating effective iterations; the Programming team, led by Dan-

# CAMPUS NEWS

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for their strong performances. As the SOCES Decathlon team moves forward, this team strives to build off this year's success and compete at a higher level.

In the States competition, around 60 teams from across California will compete. Teams are divided into GPA groups, A, B, and C. The top two scores from each category are combined to determine the overall team score. In recent years, SOCES has also achieved outstanding milestones, such as qualifying for the National Championship in both 2023 and 2024 within the medium school division.

Ms. Gordon, the Academic Decathlon coach strives

to lead her team to victory. "The rewarding thing about being a coach for Academic Decathlon is seeing how surprised new recruits are by the idea that learning actually be fun," Ms Gordon said. "The idea that learning is fun is revolutionary."

As the SOCES Academic Decathlon team moves forward, the team hopes to maintain their momentum and success. With their dedication, growing experience, and team work, they're determined to build off this year's success and make an even bigger impact in the competitions ahead.



## SOCES Accredited by WASC

By: Justice Barnes '26

From March 2nd to the 4th, SOCES was paid a visit by the WASC organization, which stands for Western Accreditations of School and Colleges. WASC comes to schools and verifies that schools are teaching what they claim to be teaching, and they accredit diplomas and degrees for schools. Without accreditation and verification from WASC, our diplomas mean nothing, so it is very important that our school impresses them. There are different levels of accreditation WASC gives out to schools, which defines the time frame for when they will revisit. The best you can get is a re-visit after 6 years, then 3 years, and then 1 year, which would not be ideal. The last time WASC visited, SOCES received 6 years with a midcycle after 3 years. If SOCES meets this criteria to reach the 6 year mark again, it shows that our school is teaching what they claim to do and representing ourselves well. To prepare for the WASC visit, our school sent out a report for what our school represents, and informed students how they should act around WASC visitors.

Senior Samir Kaiumov states, "Compared to other schools, our school is pretty good

and deserves a good grade from WASC." A student ambassador program was initiated, where two students would be picked from each class to talk to the WASC visitors and tell them what the class is about.

Chef Avila, who played a huge role in managing the WASC visit, wants students to know, "It's not a Yelp review. Be on your best behavior, and make sure you understand if you do get called in, you are a representative of the school, and your responses help with our accreditation." Now, post-WASC visit, students are wondering- what are the results? While we don't have an official decision yet about accreditation, WASC has provided us with a final presentation with strengths, weaknesses, and other comments.

Senior Diego Robles is confident in our school's results and says how the SOCES "Environment is nice and it reminds me of a private school." WASC says that our school has "Strong Culture of Academic Excellence and College Readiness," with rigorous academic opportunities like AP courses, AVID, and dual enrollment, which allows our students for college and career success. They also said our 4th through 12th grade structure

## Robotics - Continued from page 1

iel Lemonkov, which focuses on tuning, autonomous pathing, and game strategy; and the Outreach team, led by Zaruhi Poghosyan, which focuses on publicity, presentation, and the team's notability. The outreach aspect is extremely important in FTC, as it helps increase the awards and points needed to qualify for the next round.

The road to the World Championship officially started in late January. In tournaments, teams deliver a 5-minute presentation of their project followed by 5 minutes of interviews, where judges ask questions about the robot and design choices. Judges also review team portfolios and observe performance during matches.

During the first round of qualifiers for LAUSD Region North, both teams performed exceptionally well. Team #20626 won the Connect Award, while team #20625 earned the Inspire 2nd Award, gaining enough points to move on to regionals. The winning streak continued in early March when team #20625 was selected as a third-place

alliance and received the Inspire 1st Award—the highest award in FTC—securing their advancement to the World Championship. Their robot drew significant attention from judges due to its performance, presentation, and clarity of communication.

The team was ecstatic to advance. SOCES Robotics Head of Outreach Zaruhi Poghosyan described it as "extremely rewarding to see our hard work pay off" and expressed excitement for improvements the team will bring to Texas. The team will now compete in the World Championship for the third time, with the SOCES community eagerly supporting them.

**SOCES OPEN HOUSE**  
**April 30, 2026**  
**5 PM - 7 PM**

allows us to better build our community through longer term relationships with teachers, counselors, and other students. A third strength WASC liked from us is our "Strong Parent and Family engagement," with "families [that] actively support the school through communication, volunteerism, and participation in school events." They admire parents' shared commitment to students' success at SOCES.

As for our growth, WASC thinks we need to "strengthen attendance intervention systems," by "enhancing early identification and monitoring processes to better support students experiencing chronic absenteeism and maintain their progress toward graduation and postsecondary readiness." This has been a common issue, especially this year with many seniors skipping school. Admin has acknowledged this issue and we are reinstating our old tardy system, which creates more of a penalty for unexcused tardies. WASC also believes that our school needs to improve

communication of schoolwide systems in order for staff and stakeholders to understand our schools priorities and procedures. One of the main factors of growth WASC would like to see from our school is to "Strengthen Vertical Alignment Across the 4-12 Program," to make sure that students in SOCES understand their expectations and their academic skills, along with developing well from elementary through high school.

On top of that, WASC would like to see our school, "Increase Consistency in Assessment and Grading Practices." Our school should continue to refine equitable grading and mastery practices to make sure feedback is accurate to how students are performing, and influence development in academics.

So, while we don't have an official accreditation decision yet, WASC has come to a conclusion that we have strong strengths, yet some weaknesses to work on. These weaknesses can easily be worked on and it appears our school has a very bright future.



Photo of student showing WASC Official around campus

# CAMPUS NEWS

## Spring Fling Transforms Into RIO CARNIVAL

By: Amanda Vuong '28

On March 20, 2026, SOCES ASB held the very first SOCES Spring Fling Dance, giving many students the opportunity to relax, have fun, and spend the night enjoying themselves. This event was filled with laughter and excitement. Although, this night couldn't have been such a success without the help and dedication of ASB.

They spent many hours dedicating their ideas to come to life. From planning things early on and spending countless hours organizing every detail for the dance, as well as coming up with the grand theme of Night in Rio, it made the night even more lively and creative. Their hard work and commitment paid off

when Spring Fling became such an unforgettable experience for the SOCES community.

ASB spent many weeks perfecting their work and making their ideas come to life. Many weeks leading up to the dance, ASB spent many hours working tirelessly to make lasting memories for everyone.

ASB student Christina Sargsyan stated, "We've had the theme for some time now... we felt it was a more spring theme choice... we used every class to work on the event and the past two weeks we've been working together as a class to bring the event together... publicizing the dance was the biggest struggle however it was worth it because it had a great turn out." They put



Sydney and Dresden voted Spring Fling King and Queen!

all the time and effort into making designs, posters and props, bringing so many vibrant colors and decorations that brought the Night in Rio vision to life. As well as selling tickets and promoting Spring Fling to all high school students for many weeks, their hard work, teamwork, and effort made Spring Fling such an unforgettable night. They always put in the time and effort for making such extraordinary events and making what a night to remember.

On the night of the dance, many high school students decided to spend their Friday night at Spring Fling. The room was filled with so

much energy as students gathered around with their friends and danced the night away. One of the many highlights of the night was the announcement of the Spring Fling winners adding more excitement. Among many other events, there were photo-booths, dancing, and food, giving many students opportunities to make long lasting memories and socialize.

Freshman Amit Melili states, "I had a lot of fun... I honestly didn't think I would enjoy it as much as I thought I would... everything was on theme and the way they decorated the gym was nice". This night at SOCES carried a lot of excitement

throughout the night giving the students a break from school and to finally enjoy themselves. It was one of the best events held at SOCES.

Overall, this year's Spring Fling was a huge success thanks to the work and dedication of ASB. Their careful planning, creativity and dedication made the event such an achievement. It gave many students such a wonderful night and experience. All the effort and time ASB put into making this night very



Photo of students dancing and posing at Spring Fling

## Elective Fair- Place for Students' Passions

By: Adlai Garcia '26



A student promoting AP Physics to students

Here at SOCES, there is freedom for students to choose electives besides those that meet graduation requirements. These classes are based on the students interests. SOCES often offers electives like Art, Music, Photography, Culinary, Computer Science, and Drama. Thus giving students the opportunity to try out different things and gain new skills.

Electives can make school more enjoyable because students are able to pick something they are interested in

and want to learn more about. When students enjoy a class, they often feel more excited to participate and be involved.

At SOCES the most popular electives are Art, Animation, and Ceramics. These electives are something students usually pick because of the different options it has. ASB is also very popular, it allows students to build essential leadership skills through tasks such as planning school events while also promoting school spirit. If you are someone who is interested either behind

cameras or in front of cameras, or even if you are someone who enjoys writing. There is another elective with a variety of options which is Media. It includes Yearbook which allows you to work with cameras, and Journalism to be a part of writing articles and publishing the newspaper. Finally, Broadcasting is an option if you love being on camera. It would be the perfect elective for students.

## Tardy Slip Return to SOCES

By: Justice Barnes '26

On January 28th, the school-wide tardy system made a return after a year of being gone. The tardies apply to every period; if you are even a second late to any class you have to go get a slip printed. For every 3 tardies you receive, you will need to do a reflection period. This acts as a detention, except you will be assigned a reflection assignment to do during the lunch period on Mondays and Wednesdays in room 303.

You should be especially worried if you have college classes! Dr. Crockett has stated that those with too many reflections may not be allowed early release from 5th and 6th period for college classes, and senior participation in events may be restricted. Admin has stated that this system was implemented again mainly because of how poor the senior class attendance rates are right now.

Senior Logan McLaughlin says, "This system that has been brought back should

not be further implemented in the school for the overall benefit of all students," as a student who has a low attendance rate and doesn't feel motivated to come to school. On the other hand, administrator Mr. Humphreys likes the new system and thinks it is effective because, "it is progressively disciplined. Everybody is late once in a while, if you're late one or two times, it isn't a problem, it's the third time that's a problem." He believes a system like this is fair because you get two chances before and it will reset every time you end up doing a reflection.

One thing Mr. Humphreys says he worries about, "students thinking they can just put off reflection time until they can't," and that "there's a point for seniors where they get so many reflections they can't do them," which is another issue. So, make sure to get to class on time and don't let those tardies and reflection periods build up!

**Red Cross Blood Drive  
Wednesday, April 8, 2026  
Glenn Hall**

**Save a life! Donate Blood!**

**Must be 16 years old.**

# Features

## Future Investors: Knights Diving into the Stock Market

Social Media is teaching our students the valuable lessons of investing.

By: Caleb Steinbach '26

This year, a trend has been growing among students at SOCES. . . Investing! What once seemed like a topic only adults on Wall Street would discuss and participate in has now become more common among SOCES students. From learning about stocks to tracking market trends on their phones, more students are beginning to invest more and want to expand their financial literacy for their futures. One major reason for this rise in interest is because of social media publicizing investing and making financial strategy more accessible. This introduces students who want to have a brighter future to understand concepts such as stocks, index funds, and diversification and strategies for managing risk. For many students it is a first exposure to the financial world. Bruno Marvelli, the President of the Investment Club at SOCES, states his reason for starting investing is, "I was tired of staring at the unused extra money in my bank account gaining only cents of interest every year, so I moved that money into stocks and bonds because I wanted a form of passive income."

The investment club

encourages responsible thinking about money, instead of promoting high risk trading habits members focus on long-term growth. Technology has also played a large role in making investing more accessible for students with apps that allow users to monitor the stock market from anywhere in the world at any time. Many students have noticed this great shift as well and believe this growing interest reflects a broader interest in financial independence. In a world where everyone is constantly hearing about inflation, housing prices, and economic uncertainty, learning about investing is practical and feels empowering. Students are reminded that investing should be approached with discipline and realistic expectations.

Bruno shows the importance of spreading your risk as he explains, "When it comes to investing into stocks, bundles, and more, it's important to diversify your portfolio. Spending

your money throughout many stocks and bundles is safer rather than placing all your money in one singular stock, ensuring that if one stock or bundle fails, you have others to keep your back."

The club encourages responsible investing instead of promoting risky investments. Members focus on patience and long term growth for many SOCES students investing is about more than just money. It is about gaining knowledge that could help them the rest of their lives, learning how the stock market works, and how risk is managed gives students a new perspective on the world's economy. As interest continues to grow on this matter, Investing may play a bigger role in how students think about their futures. At SOCES, investing is no longer just a topic but it is becoming a school wide skill that many students are exploring.



Image From Funzi

## Senior Prom Preview

By: Dresden Jones '26

As the most memorable event of senior year, questions have sprung about when the senior prom will be and where it will take place. Luckily, the answers are here! Prom will take place on May 29th, 2026 at the Taglyan Complex in Hollywood. The event will begin at 6 p.m. and the night will conclude at midnight. According to our friends on the prom committee, we should be excited for a night full of "very beautiful lights and floral decorations", says Isabella Moritz.

Isabella also shared that the event will have an amazing DJ, one that we're all familiar with, as it will be the same one from this past homecoming. Lastly, and arguably most importantly, food and drinks are guaranteed to be the greatest part of prom this year. It's been confirmed prom will feature a drink and mocktail bar with once in a lifetime recipes from our culinary classes' best.

This year's prom will be filled with great vibes as it's the celebration of the seniors and their completion of high school. From the start of the school year, the Senior Cabinet has been putting in an abundance of hard work towards this dance, ensuring it will be a joyous night for everyone. Ticket sales will be announced soon, and most likely occur in mid-April.

In addition, be sure to follow the Senior Class of 2026 on Instagram to be updated on important Senior information including details about Prom. All

our seniors should be looking forward to a wonderful night, full of beautiful decorations and lights, great music from a familiar DJ, and even better food and drinks. Considering all of these, our seniors are truly lucky this year and should all feel congratulated for all of their hard work.



Photo From The Dress Outlet

## SENIOR SUMMER PLANS

By: Siena O'Rourke '26

Seniors are looking forward to finishing high school and graduating on June 10th. Once summer starts, seniors will become free of the burdens that come with high school. So what will they be doing with this new free time?

Senior Vicky Kovalev revealed that she and her friend group are going to Honolulu, Hawaii for their summer trip. Vicky said she is very excited to travel out of state without her parents. She and nine of her friends are planning to visit Waikiki, where they hope to spend time at the beach, explore the area, and enjoy their first big trip together. The Knight Times also spoke to Henry Goldman, Garret Arch and Bruno Marvelli. Garret Arch shared, "We are going to Prague, Salzburg, and Budapest, planning to explore the culture of central Europe as well as hike some of the greatest mountains Austria and Germany have to offer."

Bruno Marvelli mentioned, "It's gonna be absolutely crazy. Once I leave Europe, I go straight to Brazil. Definitely gonna be a crazy summer."

So far only two seniors have committed to their future colleges. Last semester Luke Bula got accepted and committed to Yale. Just recently, Sofia Marvelli got into her dream school, Cal Poly SLO, and decided to commit as soon as she got the news. As college acceptances roll in, the senior class is slowly deciding on their future.

For many seniors that plan on moving far away after

graduation, this summer is the last time they will be in the same place as their fellow peers and friends. Soon, the Class of 2026 will transition from spending everyday together to going their separate ways. Wherever you may go after graduation, make sure to spend whatever time remains making lasting memories.



Image From Triangle Senior Year



Image From Red Kite

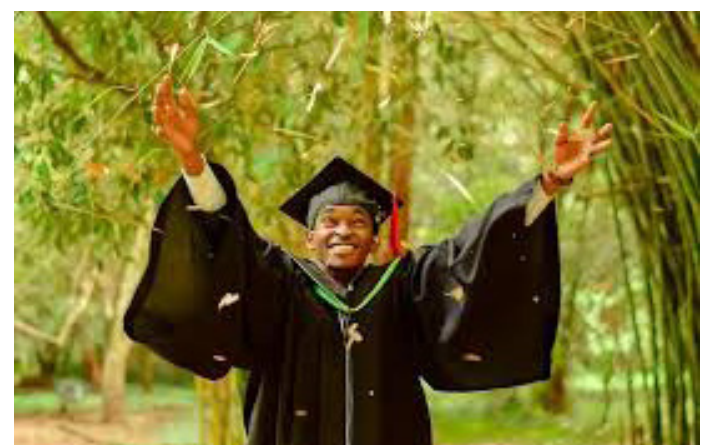


Image From CE Credits Online

# Features

## Music Turned Fashion at Coachella

By: Eva Bublil '26

Coachella is right around the corner, and everyone is saying this year feels like the new 2016 or Bieberchella. The lineup includes artists like Blood Orange, Justin Bieber, Sabrina Carpenter, Addison Rae, Disclosure, Young Thug, Fakemink, Karol G, Major Lazer, PinkPantheress, Sombr, and many other well known names. Would you be down to spend around \$700 for a 3-day ticket to see these top artists? Is the internet ready to see everyone's insane outfits this year?

So what should people expect? The answer is simple: chaos, but in a fun and exciting way. Coachella is huge, so expect a LOT of walking. There are going to be tons of influencers, celebrities, brand pop-ups, food spots, and obviously non-stop music everywhere. It's hot during the day, colder at night, and dusty. No matter how cute your outfit is, plan smart.

Outfit recommendations are definitely leaning more boho this year: long skirts, lace, boots, and straw hats with a white and creamy color palette. Think effortless but styled. Crochet tops, flowy dresses, layered jewelry, and statement sunglasses will be everywhere. But you'll also

see people on the other side of the spectrum going bold metallics, mini shorts, cowboy boots, sporty streetwear, and even rave-inspired looks with glitter and face gems. Coachella is basically a fashion show in the desert. So the real question is... are we going for the music, the outfits, or both?



Image From Fashion Magazine



Image From The Business Of Fashion



Image From NPR

## Bad Bunny Breaks Boundaries

By: Saedy Lopez '27

Bad Bunny's Super Bowl XLX performance was extremely symbolic, whether it was the words or the actual performance itself. A lot of it had to do with Puerto Rico. Another portion was on immigrants and our political system. There were numerous decorative elements and visual storytelling techniques, using props on the field to enhance the meaning. The HUGE sugarcane fields were the opening to the show; referencing Puerto Rico's culture and identity. As well as displaying Puerto Rico's colonial past and the slavery they experienced. The electrical poles that Bad Bunny climbed onto were to show the outages that often happen in Puerto Rico. The nail, stands, food workers, or construction was a recognition and giving praise to the jobs that are often taken over by immigrants. A lot of the performance had things that were a common occurrence for the community, like parties, the kid who was sleeping on the chairs is often gesticulating, along with the liveliness and the energy generally in/during

the party. There was also a sense of community in helping each other or in working together, something that says "everyone knows each other here." The whole performance was about representation and unifying. An opinion on what's happening now, and a huge thing in all of it was "The only thing more powerful than hate is love."

After the Super Bowl, our President watched and tweeted on the show. The main one that describes his whole general opinion on the show was, "The Super Bowl Halftime Show is absolutely terrible, one of the worst, EVER! It makes no sense." He also posted a rather long tweet basically expressing his criticism, saying the dancing was disgusting and basically a "slap in the face" to our country. Even before the performance even happened, there was an interview with him asking for his opinions on the matter, and he kept saying how it was a horrible choice and that the NFL was crazy for choosing him. He stated these things during 2 different interviews. In these same interviews, he stated how

he "much prefers Kid Rock's performance" and agreed with the conservative group Turning Point USA that organized an "All-American" halftime show that had Kid Rock as the face of it. He, in the interview, clearly had a good relationship with Kid Rock, who, multiple times during the interview, referred to him as "Bob". Trump praised him, saying he was the "most patriotic bad-ass," saying he was the best candidate for the halftime show. However, a large number of celebrities had more of a positive view on the performance and who the performer was. Celebrities that actually went to see the halftime show: Kendall Jenner, Justin & Hailey Bieber, Dave Grohl, and Kim Kardashian which were all seen on their feet during the performance happily. Other celebrities like Adam Sandler, Lady Gaga, Jenner Lopez, Shakira, Meghan McCain, Piers Morgan, and many many more all saw the performance positively. A lot refers to being making them happy and the freedom in it all. They also saw it was a representation and a general joy to watch.



Image From Northeastern Global News



Image From WIRED



Image From Allure



Image From FASHION MAGAZINE

# WORLD NEWS

## The Coldest Stage; The Hottest Competition

By: Ashley Levine '29'

After a long four years, the Winter Olympics are back! This year's Olympics took place in Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy. The games started on February 6, 2026, and ended on February 22, 2026. A whopping 93 different countries participated in the games, with over 3,500 athletes total. The events that were featured in this year's Olympic Games were alpine skiing, biathlon, bobsleighbing, cross-country skiing, curling, figure skating, freestyle skiing, ice hockey, luge, nordic combined, short track speed skating, skeleton, ski jumping, ski mountaineering, and snowboarding.

The country that won the most medals in these Olympics was Norway with 41. The United States won a total of 33 medals, placing second. Team USA won 12 gold medals, 12 silver medals, and nine bronze medals. The events Team USA won medals in were freestyle skiing, speed skating, alpine skiing, and figure skating.

History was made when the first openly LGBTQ+ woman won a gold medal as

part of the team event. This woman is Amber Glenn, who is a part of Team USA. She made her Olympic debut at 26 years old, making this year's Olympics her first Olympics ever! Unfortunately, she made a costly mistake during her short program. Instead of a triple loop, she did a double, causing her to receive zero points for that jump. Glenn received an overall score of 67.39 for the short program. This bumped her down to 13th place. She did, however, turn things around for the free skate. Her amazing performance brought her up to fifth place.

Team USA brought home multiple medals in figure skating. They won gold in the team competition. Madison Chock and Evan Bates won silver in the individual ice dance event. Alysa Liu won gold in the free skate. This medal ended the US drought. This is the first gold medal in this category since 2002. Liu is a crowd favorite. She won her first national title at just 13 years old and then proceeded to shock the figure skating community when she

walked away from the sport at 16. She returned to the sport at 18 and became a world champion at 19. Liu came to this year's Olympics focusing on having a good time. Winning a medal was not important to her; she just wanted to have fun. Ilia Malinin, also known as the "Quad God," was also a crowd favorite. He got the self-proclaimed nickname because of his exceptional quad jumps. Malinin is the first skater to land seven quadruple jumps in a single program. Many expected him to win it all, but unfortunately, a couple of tumbles crushed the fans' expectations. He lost 72 points, causing him to drop from first to eighth place.

The USA's hockey teams both put on quite a show at the Olympics. For the first time, the USA took home gold medals in both the men's and women's tournaments. After this monumental win, the celebrations caused quite a stir. President Donald Trump called the USA men's hockey team after their big win. On this call, Trump invited the team to attend

the State of the Union. He jokingly added that he would have to invite the women's team too. He mentioned that if he didn't invite them, he would be at risk of being impeached. Many saw this comment as sexist. Most of the men's team joined Trump at the White House, where they were fed McDonald's double cheeseburgers. The women's hockey team found a better way to celebrate. Rapper Flavor Flav is hosting a "She Got Game" weekend in Las Vegas from July 16-19th to celebrate the women's hockey team and other female athletes. Hilary Knight, a member of

Team USA's women's hockey team, along with Megan Keller, and Jack and Quinn Hughes from the men's team, went on SNL to poke fun at Trump. Keller joked, "It was going to be just us, but we thought we'd invite the guys too. We thought we'd give them a little moment to shine".

Overall, Team USA had an amazing Winter Olympics season. With many new accomplishments earned, the United States is waiting in anticipation to welcome the world's greatest athletes to Los Angeles, CA for the 2028 Summer Olympics!



Image From New York Times

## CARTEL CHAOS

By: Hesara Kahawitige Don '27

Havoc, disorder and confusion. The havoc began when on February 22nd, Sunday, Nemesio Oseguero Cervantes who was known as El Mecho and the leader of the CJNG, (Jalisco New Generation Cartel) was killed in a military operation in Tapalpa, Jalisco. During that operation two alleged members were arrested and six members killed. His death has caused havoc across Mexico for the locals and tourists. The streets are littered with burning cars and trucks as roadblocks, security forces attacked and scattered bodies found mutilated and at least one civilian dead. When will this smog and conflict clear? Mexico is unsure and the uncertainty and fear keeps those remaining inside.

El Mencho has been wanted for years and was seen as DEA's priority for trafficking immense amounts of fentanyl, methamphetamine, and more into the U.S. After entering the U.S and being deported twice, he stayed in Mexico, breaking off with the Milenio Cartel and from there in 2011, he created the CJNG. According to the DEA, the sole impact of this cartel in the U.S is a third of all the drugs entering the US, generating billions of dollars. They had even been declared along with seven other cartels as terrorist groups by President Trump. That being said, Cervantes's death has left a power vacuum, resulting in in-

creased violence over territories and routes. The residents are also affected with school closures and lockdowns in cities like Guadalajara. The economy is taking a hit as well as business in affected regions like Guadalajara are forced to close air freights, port operations and impact trucking leave the economy unstable.

Since 2018, Mexico has been set to co-host the 2026 FIFA World Cup, with cities such as Mexico City, Monterrey and Guadalajara set to hold the matches. However with the recent events, people are confused on what this will mean going further. A FIFA spokesperson insists that they have full confidence in all three co-hosts and that the consideration for relocating play-off games would be a last resort. All the while, Mexico's government has been facing scrutiny on their next steps as they must maintain pressure on the cartel to prevent re-grouping and also attempt to dismantle financial connections towards the issue. Additionally, must also provide towards residents and their concerns. While this issue does lie in South America it is important for all of us to stay informed regarding any type of news. Information can reveal truths and perspectives on anything and everything.



Photo of Cheerleaders at the Showcase

Image From TIME



Photo from KPBS



Photo from WTTW

# SPORTS NEWS

## LA RAMS Honor SOCES Flag Football

By Diangelo Silva '30  
with Knight Times Staff

On March 24, the LA Rams visited SOCES to recognize the flag football team—not for football, but to celebrate academics.

The team earned recognition for having the most improved GPA in the LA Rams Academic Challenge, highlighting their growth in the classroom. The recognition also included rewards. USA Football, the Rams, and Shell provided a combined \$5,000 to support the program. Each player received an athletic bag filled with gifts. They were also given a \$50 Shell gift card—not to keep, but to pass on to a teacher or staff member who has made a difference in their life.

The event became a celebration, with Rampage, the Rams mascot, Rams cheerleaders, and LA Rams front office members joining SOCES students and staff.

Players gathered in the gym and were recognized for their efforts beyond the field. While committed during games and practices, this award focused on their dedication to improving grades and supporting each other academically.

District leaders attended



SOCES Flag Football, SOCES Admin, SOCES Cheer, and the LA RAMS

the event to show support. Dr. Mylene Keipp, Administrator of Instruction for Secondary Schools, spoke about the importance of student growth and what this achievement represents.

“You can not be an athlete without a team. An athlete has a team up here and here [pointing to her head and heart]. You have to take care of your heart and mind. You have to believe in yourself. You have to be the model of what you want to see in

the world,” Dr. Keipp said.

Representatives from the Rams also shared their thoughts. Noel Grigsby Jr., Manager of Social Justice & Development and former LAUSD student, spoke about the impact of programs like this.

“Students come first, right? And what you do in the classroom will propel you for what you want to do on the football field or whatever playing surface

that you play on.”

Ellie Greenberg, Coordinator of Community Impact & Engagement, emphasized the importance of balancing academics and athletics. “We’re all student athletes,” Greenberg said, a former professional soccer player. “It’s most important to develop your mind, your curiosity, your love of learning and make that the priority, and sports is just fun on top of that.”

For many students, the moment felt bigger than just an award. It was a reminder that their hard work is being noticed. The team’s achievement shows that success isn’t only about games—it’s also about effort put in every day at school.

The Head Coach Paulina Santiago, and Assistant Coach Jennifer Crockett, said they are very proud of the girls and had many positive things to say about them.

Coach Paulina, known to most as Coach P, was not only a former here at SOCES, but started the team.

“I’m proud but not surprised. I knew they would raise their GPA. We did weekly group study in the library before practice. 2hrs weekly for the duration of our season,” said Coach P. “If they didn’t have school work they would go over plays or watch game film, so it also helped us in our game execution. Having a high GPA as a student is hard, and even more so for student athletes. For the TEAM to have a 3.41 overall GPA is impressive. Not only did we have the most improved GPA, we also had the 2nd highest GPA from all the schools that contested.”

By the end of the event, it was clear this recognition meant more than prizes. It was about growth, support, and the people

## Game Day Cheer Squad Shines with Strong Start of Competition Season

By: Samantha Montantes '27

On March 13th, the gameday season Cheer Showcase was held at CCLA. At the showcase, teams from the surrounding areas who will compete later into the gameday season “showcased” their routine. The teams were able to get a feel for how competitions will play out and compare their routine to others, giving them an idea on whether to adjust their routine.

Cheerleaders Sharibella Villar and Brianna Martinez say that performing is much different than practicing their routine, so it would be a big help to get that experience at the showcase. “It’s like a rehearsal for what the actual competitions will be like for them,” says Coach Trinyon, the new cheer coach. Coach Trinyon was personally nervous yet excited going into the showcase since the environment is new to her. Despite having little time to get the new team working together well, “we’ve been practicing hardcore” she says. “We’ve been giving them all the information and tools they need to perform to the best of their ability.”

All thirteen girls did exactly that in the showcase. Going into the showcase, the

girls had their routine down, only needing to clean it up a bit, says cheerleader Brianna. During the week before the showcase their hard work paid off and they ended up scoring 90 out of 100 on their overall routine. According to the team, this was the best they’ve scored out of all their competitions and it is all thanks to their hard work and Coach Trinyon’s efforts.

“They did so well and showed their teamwork and spirit,” says Trinyon. Their showcase was only the beginning of wins for the team. At the first competition on March 21, the girls started the season winning first in the match and placing second overall!

One of the team captains, Sienna Lumlert, says, “all the back to back practices of non-stop full outs and conditioning paid off. I’m so incredibly proud of all the effort and time our team has put into this routine.” Their next competition is on Wednesday March 25th at VAAS.

Everyone is welcome to come yell out the chant with the rest of the team while they compete. All the girls and Coach

Trinyon are grateful to everyone who came to show their support and yell out the cheers along with them, and to everyone who will do the same at the upcoming competition.

The next Game Day Cheer competition will be on Friday, April 10 @ North Hollywood.



# SPORTS NEWS

## Spring Sports Kicks Off With a Bang!

By: Olga Blanco '26 and Leibe Sue '26

Track started off their season at Hollywood High School, though it started off a little shaky, the runners seem to be demonstrating lots of potential for future meets. This year the team has expanded with lots of new runners joining the team.

Senior Captain Destiny Lee says "I look forward to cheering on this new team. Practice and consistency will contribute to this successful year, the more people practice the better they are and lots of people have been showing up and showing out. Yet, it feels kind of sad that this is my last sport and I first joined freshman year. I loved it ever since, so saying goodbye to such a passion is saddening."

Many seniors are upset that this is their last year participating in this sport but are ready to support the new members in their endeavours. Every year, members of the team, including Destiny, have been making it CIF for relays and hope to continue to go this year. Overall, the team continues to dedicate themselves in order to complete their personal and team goals.

Boys Volleyball has had

a strong season so far. Despite a rocky start, they have been able to turn themselves around and are staying strong. Every member has demonstrated lots of determination and an eagerness to improve their skills. Lots of their motivation has come from team bonding at practices and their amazing coaches, who push them to be the best versions of themselves. Senior team captain for Varsity; Aslan Manoukian says "A lot of the players are dedicated to the sport and have had a very impactful force towards the season. Lots of the seniors want to play their very best for this season because it is sadly our last."

They practice almost everyday trying to perfect their routines while creating teamwork and getting to know each other's skills. Some of the teams' goals are to win both states as well as hopefully making it to CIFs. Senior Riley Mannontarat says, "We have been a strong team despite some losses, with lots of team chemistry and hard motivation."

They are looking forward to the rest of the season

with a hopeful goal of getting into the playoffs. Our SOCES Boys Volleyball team is doing an amazing job and are motivated to make it further.

The swim season has just begun and the team seems to start off the season with hard work and dedication. Their first meet was a great success and it seems it can only go up from there. Undoubtedly, the team is working together to support each other and are striving to stay dedicated to their hard work. Furthermore, the members are clearly dedicated to the sport right now and are excited to demonstrate their skills this season.

"I feel excited because we have a good chance to make it to states this year since the team has been demonstrating effort. We also have a new assistant coach that has been helping run our team and although time management can be difficult for me personally, the team and the coaches are supportive. Last Friday, we had our first invitational meet and several of our swimmers got either their best time from last year, or demon-

strated improvement from the first practice," stated Senior Yaily Quezada.

Additionally, the softball season has been going really well and full of excitement for the players. Senior captain Lyric Heck shared that "The team has been working hard, improving every game, and building strong chemistry on and off the field. As a senior captain, it's been really rewarding to help lead the team and support my teammates while we all push each other to get better. I'm looking forward to continuing to grow as a team, competing in our upcoming games, and making the most of my final season with this group." Moreover, their most recent game against FairFax, resulted in a SOCES win with a score of 27-2. So far, they have been demonstrating good sportsmanship and are continuing to improve their skills further in hopes of winning future games.

Finally, the SOCES Baseball season has come to a start. They have had lots of challenges with the coaches, but have finally overcome that bump in the road. Finding a new

coach was a challenge, but when one was found, he sadly quit. The SOCES baseball team was devastated, and worried for their season, especially the seniors. Lots of love was given to the old coach but when he quit, they realized that they missed him. In mid-January, baseball players were given the news that a new coach was being hired. Excited to anticipate an amazing start to their season, they have been more motivated than ever. Senior, Colin Hauser says "I am excited for this season, we have done really well and are looking forward to having lots of fun this year! My goal is to make this year the best year ever and that we hopefully win CIF champions."

SOCES Knights are doing amazing so far with a winning streak ever since they played against Grant. With a new coach and a fresh start, our Boys Baseball team will do better than ever!

## APRIL SPORTS SCHEDULE

4/06/26	Mon	2:30 PM	BTEN	League	VAR	NoHollywood	1:30	N/A	Home	SOCES	Bonney	
		2:30 PM	Swim	League	VAR	Various	12:45	1:15	Home	Wood Hills Pool	Tabares	
4/08/26	Wed	2:30 PM	BTEN	League	VAR	Verdugo Hills	1:30	N/A	Home	SOCES	Bonney	
		2:30 PM	Baseball	League	VAR	Fulton	12:45	1:15	Home	Fulton	Tabares	
		2:30 PM	Softball	Non-League	VAR	Fulton	12:45	PA	Away	Fulton		
4/09/26	Thu	2:30 PM	Softball	League	VAR	Panorama	1:30	N/A	Home	SOCES	Cunningham	
		2:30/3:30	BVB	League	JV/VAR	VAAS	1:30	N/A	Home	SOCES	Sim-Kim	
4/10/26	Fri	2:30 PM	Baseball	League	VAR	Alliance Marine	12:30	1:00	Home	East Valley	Fuentes	
		4:30 PM	Cheer	League	VAR	Regionals	1:30	2:00	Neutral	NoHollywood	Tabares	
4/11/26	Sat	All Day	BVB	Tourney	JV	Various	N/A	N/A	Neutral	SOCES	Tabares/Fuentes	
4/13/26	Mon	2:30 PM	BTEN	League	VAR	Polytechnic	12:45	1:15	Away	Polytechnic		
		2:30 PM	Softball	League	VAR	East Valley	12:45	1:15	Away	East Valley		
		2:30/3:30	BVB	League	JV/VAR	Northridge	12:45	1:15	Away	Northridge		
4/15/26	Wed	2:30 PM	Baseball	League	VAR	Northridge	12:45	1:15	Away	Petit Pk	Fuentes	
		2:30 PM	Track	Non-League	VAR	Hawkins	12:30	1:00	Away	Hawkins		
4/16/26	Thu	2:30 PM	Softball	League	VAR	Grant	1:30	N/A	Home	SOCES	Cunningham	
		2:30/3:30	BVB	League	JV/VAR	Fulton	1:30	N/A	Home	SOCES	Sim-Kim	
		2:30 PM	Swim	League	VAR	East Valley	12:30	1:00	Away	East Valley		
		2:30 PM	BTEN	Non-League	VAR	Birmingham	1:15	1:30	Away	Birmingham		moved from 2/26
4/17/26	Fri	2:30 PM	Baseball	League	VAR	Canoga Pk	12:30	1:00	Home	East Valley	Fuentes	
4/18/26	Sat	All Day	BVB	Tourney	VAR	Various	N/A	N/A	Neutral	SOCES	??/Fuentes	
4/20/26	Mon	2:30 PM	BTEN	League	VAR	Grant	1:30	N/A	Home	SOCES	Bonney	
		2:30/3:30	BVB	League	JV/VAR	East Valley	12:30	1:00	Away	East Valley		
4/22/26	Wed	2:30 PM	Baseball	League	VAR	Reseda	1:00	PA	Away	Reseda		
		2:30 PM	Softball	Non-League	VAR	NoHollywood	1:30	N/A	Home	SOCES	Crockett	
4/23/26	Thu	2:30 PM	BTEN	League	VAR	NoHollywood	12:45	1:15	Away	NoHollywood		
		2:30 PM	Softball	League	VAR	Northridge	1:30	N/A	Home	SOCES	Sim-Kim	
		2:30/3:30	BVB	League	JV/VAR	Vaughn	12:45	1:15	Away	Vaughn		
4/27/26	Mon	2:30 PM	Softball	League	VAR	VAAS	12:45	PA	Away	Petit Pk	Tabares	
4/29/26	Wed	2:30 PM	Baseball	League	VAR	Panorama	12:45	1:15	Home	Panorama	Fuentes	
4/30/26	Thu	2:30 PM	Softball	League	VAR	Vaughn	1:30	N/A	Home	SOCES	Cunningham	