



Illustration courtesy of senior Linnaea Marks.

## Students Should Be Allowed to Decorate their Graduation Caps

CO-EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OWEN SPARGO

The San Luis Coastal Unified School District recently made the decision to ban decoration of graduation caps for all high schools in the district, including San Luis Obispo High School. Though the intention is to create uniformity and maintain formality, the decision strips away self-expression and the individuality of seniors in the graduating class.

The main argument from the district for prohibiting decorating graduation caps is that allowing decorations can detract from the formal tone of the event and prevents uniformity among the individuals graduating.

“Graduation is a formal ceremony. It’s an event that strives to honor each individual but also the class as a whole. For that reason, there’s a lot of effort in our district to not have too many comparisons between people at our graduation ceremony and just maintain that level of formality,” said principal Rollin Dickinson.

Dickinson cited examples of decorations that could potentially be problematic such as “subtle racist jokes” and “bad words” that have been used on graduation caps at other schools in the past.

The concern that people would take advantage of decorating these caps is understandable. Even if we decorate caps with the intent of self-expression there of course is always the possibility that people will find some way to sneak in a sexual innuendo or two. But, if the district really wanted to allow students to decorate their own caps, there are ways of ensuring that the caps don’t distract from formality.

“We’ll be able to easily monitor what people have on their cap when they walk out there. I wouldn’t expect anything inappropriate,” said senior Sasha Allen.

If we can monitor the caps, with a combination of oversight from administration and students of the ASB, we shouldn’t have our expression prohibited. It’s not convincing that this concern outweighs the benefits afforded by allowing students to show their individuality as they graduate.

“It’s a last chance to show this school who you are and what you want to showcase for your friends and family and teachers and it’s just a lovely and creative and

expressive way to be yourself,” said senior Tekuru Schwartz.

Gowns, walking across the stage, wearing formal clothes: these are elements of uniformity that already exist with the ceremony, so why not allow one component of expression? Yes, graduation is a formal event meant to create a sense of uniformity among the graduating class, but the issue is we are not uniform. Our graduating class is a beautiful array of individuals each with our own unique high school experience and distinct path ahead of us that needs to be celebrated and shown to our friends, family, and peers. Uniformity suggests that our experiences, including all of our triumphs as well as the endless obstacles and struggles we faced, are the same.

If students were allowed to decorate their caps, many students would represent elements of their identity or something relevant to their futures.

“I probably would put a big Swedish flag on mine,” said senior Uno Unemar.

Some students wanted to put pride flags on their caps, some wanted to have flags to show their nationalities and ethnicities and others wanted to put quotes from people that inspire them. These decorations are not a simple hindrance to formality: they tell the stories of our graduation and the four year journey of high school. It’s better to run the risk of some hate or bad jokes if it means that students are not censored.

Dickinson claims however, that self-expression is still present in other parts of the graduating experience such as the school’s senior showcase.

“We have a lot of other events leading up like the senior showcase and senior recognition assembly. There are all these events that just precede graduation that provide a lot of opportunities for student expression and for voice and performance. But the graduation itself is the most formal out of these events,” said Dickinson.

Though this is true, graduation is the final moments we spend together as a senior class. It is the final moment for us to look back at how much each of us has grown and developed. The ceremony is our graduation: not the administration, parents, or anyone else’s. If the ceremony is really about the students, then we should be making it our own and that means allowing our self-expression.

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## NEWS

EDITOR: OWEN SPARGO &amp; WESLEY BARTLETT

## Letter from the Senior Editor-in-Chiefs

CO-EDITOR IN CHIEF OWEN SPARGO

Dearest Tigers,

I will preface my beautiful tear-jerking parting words with one note. I have only attended San Luis Obispo High School for one year. I pretty much only know those of you who I've had the privilege of meeting in my classes throughout this school year. However, in just my one year being here I have felt welcomed and included in the senior class and in our school's community.

So, you probably don't want to hear (extremely reliable) advice from an outsider that you barely know. But nonetheless, I hope that you'll find it in your heart to humor me.

If there's one thing I've taken away from my high school experience it is that the worst thing we can do to ourselves is to compare ourselves to one another.

I moved from a town in the East Bay and went to a school called Dougherty Valley. It's ranked 18th in California in high schools and it follows the usual reputation of a Bay Area school: right from the womb everyone's minds are set on going to Harvard or Yale and if you aren't attending a school ranked in the top 20 you are undoubtedly deemed a failure. The biggest priority is school and people would do anything to boost their resumes and become the most desirable candidate to an admissions officer possible. It was toxic, and the only way to prevent yourself from falling behind everyone else around you was to compare. Compare yourself and feel so inadequate that the only way to cope is to load on extracurriculars, study until midnight every night, and start a nonprofit.

But then I moved here. It was like experiencing a culture shock: away from the pressure cooker environment of a high

concentration of immigrant parents and STEM opportunities thanks to the Silicon Valley (among numerous other factors), I found a community of people that didn't constantly compete with one another. Students here aren't finding ways to beat one another or get ahead of their peers. There's a sense of unity: people care about one another and want to see them succeed. Grades aren't everything and school isn't life. College is just one of the many amazing paths that people can take.

So my advice is keep this same sentiment going into the future. Everyone is off to their own future paths and careers. In our individual environments, some people around us will achieve what is conventionally perceived to be success and of course it won't be easy to not compare. And I'm not just talking about academics. It's too often that we compare ourselves when it comes to things like our bodies or our social media presence. There's no point in trying to be better than other people or to achieve something equivalent, because each and every one of us has lived our own separate lives. We have unique struggles and triumphs that make each of us completely incomparable to one another.

Yes, it's inevitable that we see the grass greener on the other side. But, all it does is set you back further as you tie your value to other people. Every single achievement, no matter how large or small, is meaningful and worth recognition. Relish in the joys of your individual journey through life.

I am so incredibly excited to see how our class's paths will diverge as we move forward. No matter where we go, we're all very capable and deserving of success.

With much love,  
Owen



Photo courtesy of photographer Sophia Lea.

CO-EDITOR IN CHIEF SOFI SHAW

Howdy, Tigers!

Over the course of my high school career I've had plenty of ups and downs just like anyone else. My heart was broken so many times, and I felt plenty of sorrow, but not without beautiful moments to balance it all out. Looking back on my time here, I think my biggest piece of advice to anyone would be: let life happen.

I am clearly an expert, being so old and wise. I am also 18 and incredibly audacious.

I know that my sentiment may seem simple. You might think, "life is always happening... who does this girl think she is?" The reality, for many people, is that existence is terrifying. We'll do anything to have a grip on everything that's happening and will happen.

I made many attempts to try and plan out my future over the years, but nothing has gone accordingly. In the moments things veered off the path, everything felt chaotic and, if you know me, you know I hate not having control. I can't say that I've deleted my "future" Pinterest board though. Baby steps. Retrospectively, I'm glad my plans haven't stuck. My life was totally changed by "sure, why not"s.

Who would've guessed my APUSH final paper would determine my college major? Who would have thought a last minute RENT audition would let me meet my first love? No one. That's the beauty of life, I think.

Everything is so unpredictable by nature.

Don't avoid life out of fear of feeling pain. That pain shapes us into well-rounded and emotionally intelligent individuals. At any age we should constantly be growing and changing. Stagnating will cause a much different kind of sadness. A kind of sadness without tears or outburst but perhaps something much worse. It's the kind that feels numb and monotonous. At least big emotions also come with catharsis. Rather than the feelings existing in some deep part of our souls, they're released.

So, feel everything the moment it happens. Scream, cry, punch your pillow, and slide dramatically down walls. Learn what works for you personally to cope with these emotions. There will be a lot less time for that in our bustling adult lives. Now is when we learn to cope with failure and rejection. These same rejections will seem funny and maybe even trivial in a year or two. Try everything and be kind to people. Live your life.

Now that I've given my piece of mind, I want to thank all my teachers for how they've furthered my passions and ambition. I can't even imagine what the pandemic was like for you all and I'm so proud that you made it through and still positively contribute to student's lives every day.

To my classmates, I wish you so much joy going forward. You absolutely deserve it.  
Yours,  
Sof

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Photo courtesy of reporter Cordell Conover.

## Seniors Reflect on The Construction Changes at SLOHS

REPORTERS CORDELL CONOVER AND JO CALL

San Luis Obispo High School students are looking forward to the conclusion of Measure D, a government bond that was passed in 2014 that allows for the construction of public school facilities.

So far, the projects on SLOHS' campus have cost the school over 64.6 million dollars, and construction is set to complete in 2023.

The construction has not let up these past four years, and seniors have experienced these relentless changes firsthand. Some seniors feel that the construction has grown more invasive in their years as upperclassmen, in some cases adversely impacting their learning environment.

"I would say [the campus] is definitely more impacted. Now a lot more of the campus is closed off than it was when I came in," said senior Kalani Ruiz.

In the time that seniors have spent on campus, they have been able to watch as the majority of this new construction has taken place. Aside from staff, they are best placed to see the reach of Measure D's impact on the school.

"The one hundred building was mostly open [when I was a freshman]. We didn't have a small gym yet. That finished, I think near the end of my freshman year," said Ruiz.

Most of the buildings at SLOHS are newly remodeled, making the school a nicer environment for students to learn in. However, with the construction intensifying over the past four years, some seniors think not all of it is necessary.

"I don't think its necessary right now because we

have so much construction already going on. The cafeteria can wait another year," said Ruiz.

When it comes to administration, however, the opinion is far more sympathetic - staff members, who have seen SLOHS in its previous states and will still be working here to see continuous changes take effect, have a different perspective. "The updates and improvements were needed and directly support our students, staff, and programs now and for years to come," said SLOHS principal Rollin Dickinson.

The construction has also impacted many of the buildings students are used to seeing around campus. The locations of important landmarks continue to shift, forcing students to adapt new routes.

"We had a track, we had a bigger library with lots of computers. Now, the library is not as big as it used to be. It's not as easy to use as when I came in," said senior Viktor Mejia.

Sports teams are also a group on campus that bear the brunt of the construction. The track and field team has been particularly affected with the track out of commission.

"We can't use the track anymore. I only had like six pole vault practices. So, my track and field experience has not been as good as it would have been," said Mejia.

After years of construction, the SLOHS water polo and swim and dive teams have finally been able to practice on campus.

SLOHS has received quite a few other upgrades to its facilities in the past four years. The math building, the small gym, and the weight room are only some of the buildings that have been improved.

However, many seniors agree that there are still places around the school that are past due to be addressed.

"They definitely should have expanded the parking lot. It's getting worse by the year when we have more students. There should be designated areas for who can park where. Certain spots are reserved for seniors or something like that," said Ruiz.

The SLOHS parking lot's inaccessible nature has been a point of contention with students for years now. Due to the school's placement, the lot only has two entrances and two exits, filtering onto San Luis Drive. This leaves the area ripe for congested traffic, and the hill situated at the school's back does not allow for further expansion - however, administration is certainly open to student input on this issue.

"School parking lots are notoriously challenging spaces due to a high volume of varied traffic during brief periods of time. If our students can come up with good solutions to the problems that they see, we are always open to hearing them. Those ideas can inform future planning," said Dickinson.

There are also further changes coming to SLOHS that current seniors won't get to experience.

"We are still in the process of creating a new student commons, library, kitchen, agriculture building, and more classrooms and labs," said Dickinson.

The Measure D updates to SLOHS' campus have been a decade in the making, and this year's seniors have been there to see a majority of those changes. One thing's for sure: for the class of '22, it will be a relief to get away from all that banging in the middle of school!

## New Holt Field to Host Class of '22 as its First Graduates

REPORTER MICHAEL LANIER

From administration to the Associated Student Body, students and staff are working hard to make sure this year's graduation goes according to plan.

"I've been sitting in on meetings with administration about things we can do for graduation, like if we want to have birds being released or if we want to have things playing on the TV, stuff like that," said senior Sasha Allen.

The last few graduating classes' ceremonies have been impacted by COVID-19 and construction. For example, the class of 2020 sported the "drive-thru" graduation, with students driving through the school's parking lot with banners while wearing their caps and gowns. The class of 2021 saw their graduation occur on the practice field, due to the newly begun renovation of Holt Field.

"No masks, it'll be on the main field and not the practice field," said senior Jake Gearhart when as-

ked how he thinks this year's graduation will be different from last year's.

Seniors are looking forward to these changes from last year's graduation, and a return to the usual style of the ceremony.

"The last 2020 graduation was obviously a drive-through. Last year, it was pretty normal. It was outside with everyone just with a limited capacity, but I think ours is going to be special and kind of more back to normal with a bigger crowd and on our actual football field," said Allen.

Not only are students excited about graduation, but staff members are eager to see how the event pans out.

"I am looking forward to graduation and all of the events and moments, big and small, coming up. Our senior class is an inspiring group of people: positive, creative, bright, and resilient. It will be so fun to celebrate them in this way," said Principal Rollin Dickinson.

Many students and staff are aware of the ongoing construction part of Measure D and are looking forward to using the new facilities. The construction has been in progress at San Luis Obispo High School since 2014. The newest undergoing construction project is the renovation of Holt Field, which began at the end of the 2020-2021 school year and is almost completed. The newly completed field will serve as the graduation site for the SLOHS class of 2022.

"Maino Construction has done an outstanding job this past year with our new track, field, and stadium. They work hard and take a lot of pride in this big, high-profile project, and our school and community," said Dickinson.

As it looks now, seniors will graduate on the soon-to-be completed Holt Field, and lots of planning is going into the event. *Expressions* wishes everyone in the class of '22 a great graduation, and a fantastic rest of your lives!

# Your College Decision Doesn't Define You

PEOPLE & CULTURE CO-EDITOR TARYN LONSBROUGH

College Decision Day took place for San Luis Obispo High School seniors on May 2, 2022.

With post-graduation plans being displayed proudly in the form of bolded school titles printed on t-shirts, many seniors are excited to announce where they plan to commit to for their next few years.

But what about those who are potentially embarrassed by their college and/or post-graduate decisions?

It is evident that there has always been a consistent pressure placed upon high school seniors to not only go to college, but to go to one that is 'socially acceptable.'

Standards towards college decisions create a hostile environment for seniors to live with during fall to spring, which is the waiting period from when they submitted their applications, to when they now have to decide.

Factors that play into making college decisions often go beyond just the school's name.

Such elements include, but are not limited to, each student's financial capabilities to afford an often unaffordable education, their level of dedication to receiving a college degree, and even the ability to move away from home in the first place.

"I feel like I made the right decision, financially, because if I were to go to a four-year college, then I would be in debt. I am not embarrassed because I'm gonna be living a college experience here in a college town, and I feel like I'm not gonna be missing out on much. The only thing is people look down on those who go to community college. I think it is a good choice to save money and it is going to have the same majors I would get at another college," said senior Ana Escalera, who plans on studying Nursing at Cuesta College in the fall.

One realization that is challenging to grasp, due in part to society's judgement, is that any post-graduate path you may find yourself on can still drive you towards your goal, even if it may look different than you initially intended.

"The more everyone can keep their eyes on the big picture, and keep the waiting period into the context of their larger life, the easier it will be to maintain a bigger-picture outlook when they hear back, especially if there's a disappointment," said Kate Sheehan, a licensed clinical social worker and managing director at University of California, Los Angeles.

Raising hopes to an extreme amount doesn't benefit you, nor make it easier when rejections do undoubtedly occur.

It is great to strive to get accepted into some of your 'reach' schools, but the idea of passing cruel judgment and snarky comments on to those who aren't planning on attending a certain University of California campus or private school is highly irrelevant to attaining future successes.



Photo courtesy of reporter Kylie Self.

"I'm proud of the students who got into the lower acceptance rate schools, but I always feel like students feel pressured to get into the best schools they can after taking rigorous classes, because, after all, that's why they did those additional classes; taking all those classes would feel like a 'waste' if they didn't get into their dream school. Some who attend four year schools tend to look down on two year schools because it means they weren't 'good enough' to get into a four year school. But no matter if you're going to a two year to transfer or straight away to a four year, we'll all end up with the same diploma with the same degree labeled on it when we graduate from college," said senior Talia Arroyo, who plans on attending California State University, Chico in the fall.

No matter where you plan to attend college, if at all, this decision is personalized and should not be mocked by the superiority complex held by those who believe ivy leagues and UCs are the only respectable educational institutions.

Source: [uclahealth.org](http://uclahealth.org)

## High School Musical Does Not Portray the Real Experience

REPORTER OLIVIA CUSICK

High school is one of the most glamorized experiences in media, and San Luis Obispo High School students feel lied to.

"High School Musical" is a 2006 film about sports star Troy Bolton (played by SLO local Zac Efron) falling for both theater and Gabriella Montez (played by Vanessa Hudgens).

The story is an exciting tale of love and perseverance under parental pressure- but SLOHS seniors feel the high school experience they were promised was nonexistent.

Senior artist and swimmer Hannah Stevens said "High School Musical" is a great movie. I didn't think life would be exactly like it. But I think as far as friend groups, it kind of made it seem like you would find a close group of friends. I think it sort of over-exaggerates things like the cliques. Overall, I think parts of it are true. There are different segregations in our environment, but you can mix and match. You don't just have to do one specific thing. There's a lot of drama in real life. I think that things can get really confusing sometimes."

The friendships in "High School Musical" are largely based on the activity that the character participates in.

For example, most of Troy Bolton's friends are also on the basketball team. For SLOHS students, this isn't the case.

"I expected more choices. More choices for classes, more choices of friends, and I expected more clubs and social events. The baseball song made it look like sports would be cooler than they are," said senior swimmer Henry Carter.

The film also makes it seem like every person must fall into a category, like participating in a sport, art, or activity. At SLOHS it's clear this is not always the case.

"Well, first things first, I didn't hurt my knee playing basketball, and I'm pretty sure Troy did. I mean, it's not all glamorous and you definitely don't win every game. Movies are always about the underdog. Sometimes the team who seems on top is just going to win," said senior athlete Emily Ruessell.

High School Musical is definitely different from how high school looks today.

Some have made the modern connection to "Euphoria," but honestly it's more in the middle. No songs and dances, but slightly less overdoses and shootouts.

## Cuesta Isn't a Bad College: Stop Treating it Like it is

OPINION EDITOR KARL KARSH

Seniors at San Luis Obispo High School are all familiar with Cuesta College.

Everyone talks about it and quite a few people judge Cuesta pretty harshly because it's a community college.

Here's the thing: Cuesta isn't a bad college and people need to stop treating it like it is.

"I think that Cuesta is a good school," said senior Leslie Cruz.

There are many reasons why Cuesta is a good college, but there are two very specific reasons why people need to stop giving hate to Cuesta.

Reason number one: just because it's a community college doesn't mean it's bad. A community college, for the first two years at least, will teach students the same things that any other college can.

"I plan to go to Cuesta because it's two free years of education, so I can get general education out of the way, and then when I go to my actual college, I'll be able to focus on my major," said senior Cyrus Balderama.

If someone who lives in SLO County goes to Cuesta for two years, they can get the general education that they would get everywhere else for free.

After those two years, they could go to a different college for their specific

major, therefore getting the same education as everyone else and coming out of it with less debt.

Even if a student isn't planning on going to another college after Cuesta and just wants to further their education, Cuesta is the perfect fit for that.

Reason number two: Cuesta provides SLO residents the two year scholarship, otherwise known as the Cuesta Promise.

Anyone who has residency in SLO County can go to Cuesta for two years for free.

"I'm going to Cuesta because, financially, it's the best option for me and my family. The Promise Scholarship is honestly a lifesaver. With it I'll be able to pursue a degree essentially for free," said senior Elliot Graham.

This scholarship is extremely beneficial for anyone struggling financially, or anyone who just doesn't want to be in too much debt later on. Sure, Cuesta isn't a prestigious four-year college that requires astounding grades to get into, but that's why it's such a good school.

It's a college for students who are struggling to afford college, students who are diligent workers that want a further education, and so on.

If Cuesta isn't for you, that's fine. There's a different college for everyone, so get over yourselves and stop unreasonably hating on a school or people who go to that school.

# According to Seniors, These are the Best Electives at SLOHS

REPORTER RILEY WILKERSON

Unlike some other schools, San Luis Obispo High School offers a multitude of different elective and pathway courses that are available for students to explore and enjoy. With that, the question has arisen: which electives are the best to take? SLOHS seniors offer insight and recommendations, after four years of experience taking different courses.

“My favorite has to be welding tech. I took it as a freshman and learned about electricity, metal, and safety. Mr. Fay makes the class entertaining and the best part is getting to do something that so few high schoolers get to do,” said senior Gavin McDiarmid.

As of right now, there are over 150 elective courses and ten Career Technical Education (CTE) pathways. CTE pathways are courses taught by industry-educated people in order to give students relevant training for the workforce. Students are encouraged by counselors as well as teachers to experience and learn about a variety of focuses, from Floral Field Experience to Advanced Strength and Conditioning.

“Students should think of it as career exploration. Everything you do in high school is trying to figure out what you’re good at and what you want to do. Electives let you explore possible career paths you could take,” said CTE Department Instructional Leader Zach Roper.

Elective courses also give students the opportunity to further their understanding of a field they are already interested in. Through these courses, students are able to immerse themselves in an environment where they can absorb a lot of knowledge about their interests.

“My favorite has probably been Agricultural Leadership. It gives me another opportunity to be involved in FFA and help out any way I can, which I enjoy a lot. I love being involved in the program, and you are able to surround yourself with knowledgeable people,” said senior Dylan Hall.

Participating in SLOHS athletic programs is also available to all students.

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Capstone Media Arts	Capstone Construction 2 A&B	Capstone Careers with Children 2	Capstone Eng Draw 3* A&B	Int Design A&B	Capstone Hospitality A&B	Capstone AP Comp Sci A
	Cabinetry, Millwork & Woodworking			Capstone Fashion Interior Merch A&B		Info Support & Development

Photo courtesy of reporter Riley Wilkerson.

With 21 sports occurring throughout the school year, there are opportunities for all to become involved in athletics.

Tiger sport teams have consistently shown that they are the best in their respective leagues and it is a great chance to challenge yourself while meeting new people on campus.

“I would say explore sports. Cross country is a really hard sport and, coming into freshman year, I wasn’t really looking forward to running every day after school. It was a great way to stay in shape and was fun while I was doing it,” said McDiarmid.

Whatever interests you, whether it is agriculture, design, or music, there is an opportunity for all students at SLOHS to explore what intrigues them.

# Berkeley Might Sound Nice, but is it Right for You?

GRAPHICS EDITOR LINNAEA MARKS

Seniors at San Luis Obispo High School and across the country have been competing relentlessly to get into an ever elusive University of California school.

As a school system with some of the lowest acceptance rates, the UCs are considered among many students to be the best option for a four-year education. When I got my acceptance letter for UC Berkeley, I immediately thought I would attend because of its glowing reputation and competitive programs.

“What draws me to Berkeley is mainly the rich culture and history of activism,” said senior and future Berkeley student Tiki Schwartz. Berkeley has the amazing history of starting the student free speech movement in the 1960s that quickly spread across campuses around the country. “Berkeley is such an icon as it’s known for its amazing professors, revolutionary protests, and is just an overall interesting, organic place,” added senior Kai Matson. Many future Berkeley students, especially those interested in political science or environmentalism are drawn to the campus’s history of public action and political involvement.

“What drew me to Berkeley the most was the incredible amount of school spirit,” commented senior Makenna Siebenlist. “Berkeley is also the top public school in the nation, which made it the best, most affordable option for me since I am in-state.”

Berkeley is, undoubtedly, an exceptional institution; it’s the first public school to rank first on Forbes’s list of the best universities in the country. But, after doing some research, I discovered that Berkeley, and the UC system as a

whole, wasn’t right for me and might not be for other future college students.

The most obvious factor that deterred me from Berkeley and all UCs was that they lack a graphic design concentration. As a student hoping to pursue a career in graphic design, I was extremely disappointed to read that they had no major in the graphic arts.

Another key difference between the UC system and any other California institution that helped me choose Cal Poly is that UCs are research-based.

While UCs are ideal for anyone planning on going to graduate school, I want to gain experience in my field and enter the workforce after four years in college.

When asked about their reservations about attending Berkeley, students expressed a few concerns. “Berkeley has a huge housing crisis and I’m worried about finding affordable places to live after my freshman year,” said Matson. “It’s also such a giant school in such a large city, so I’m concerned about being able to meet friends.”

Siebenlist summed up the atmosphere at Berkeley perfectly: “I’ve actually talked to quite a few alumnis about who does and doesn’t thrive at Berkeley and all of them have said that it is a very good school for independent people.”

If you are a self-reliant individual eager to start your college journey on a big campus, Berkeley could be right for you.

In another life, one in which I was pursuing a different career and felt more comfortable as a little fish in a big pond, I might have chosen Berkeley. The seniors attending Berkeley in the fall are all strong, independent students who will thrive in that environment, and I congratulate them and wish them luck in their academic endeavors.

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# Seniors Reveal What They Think is the Most Exciting Sport on Campus

REPORTER RILEY WILKERSON



Photo courtesy of Health and Sports Editor Sonia McSwain.

With hundreds of athletic events having taken place in the past four years, San Luis Obispo High School seniors are no stranger to stands stacked with supporters. With the distinguished athletic programs all accustomed to success, seniors choose which team is the most enjoyable to cheer for.

“It’s gotta be soccer. We have a really professional program and if I could describe it, we play liquid football. It’s super sick to watch and is for sure the best sport to watch,” said senior John Phelan.

This year, student sections in a variety of sports were consistently filled with boisterous and spirited students. Students and athletes alike agree that a fiery, loud crowd makes it more fun for everyone.

“The involvement in the student sections is the best. Obviously, the Homecoming game for football. That usually gets the most and it makes it really fun. I think the more students show up the more fun it is,” said senior Max Templin.

Along with hyping up the athletes, watching a sporting event gives spectators the ability to interact with others and experience something that wouldn’t usually happen in the classroom.

“It is fun because it’s sometimes unexpected when a lot of people show up who I am usually not in a crowd with. It’s a cool opportunity to participate in something where everyone wants the same thing,” said senior Ava Carlson.

The energy that the crowd gives the team is a huge benefit of having a big student section.

“It definitely benefits the chemistry of the team and how we interact. For soccer, having a big crowd at the game gives us more energy and attitude to get the job done. The games where the most students come are usually the ones where we perform the best,” said Phelan.

With there being 21 different active sports teams at SLOHS, there are countless opportunities to show tiger spirit, in one way or another. The amount of student spectators at games shows how much students love their school and want to support those who represent SLOHS.

“I think we’re set apart from other schools because we have cultivated a culture that is competitive and has been very successful-but also values teamwork, hard work, character, and balance above winning,” said athletic director Marci Beddall.

With large student sections becoming the new normal at SLOHS sporting events, hopefully, in the coming years we can continue to make ours the best and most inclusive athletic program possible.

## Here are the Final 2021-2022 Tiger Sports Rankings!

REPORTER KAI WINSTEAD-LEROY

With San Luis Obispo High School spring sports teams finishing their various meets and tournaments, these are the rankings, as they stand, for each team. Every team this year put in a lot of work, and many of them succeeded in their leagues. This table is based off of available information about each teams’ placement in their respective leagues.



Graphic courtesy of reporter Olivia Cusick.

Boys Varsity Cross Country	1st in league and state
Boys Varsity Tennis	10-0 (1st in league)
Girls Varsity Tennis	10-0 (1st in league)
Girls Varsity Volleyball	10-0 (1st in league)
Girls Varsity Swimming	1st in league
Girls Varsity Water Polo	7-0 (1st in league)
Boys Varsity Volleyball	7-1 (1st in league)
Boys Varsity Track	1st in league
Boys Varsity Wrestling	1st in league
Boys Varsity Football	4-1 (2nd in league)
Boys Varsity Basketball	8-2 (2nd in league)
Girls Varsity Basketball	7-3 (2nd in league)
Girls Varsity Soccer	7-3 (2nd in league)
Girls Varsity Softball	13-5 (2nd in league)
Boys Varsity Swimming	2nd in league
Boys Varsity Golf	2nd in league
Girls Varsity Golf	2nd in league
Boys Varsity Soccer	7-3 (3rd in league)
Girls Basketball	7-5 (3rd in league)
Boys Varsity Baseball	10-8 (3rd in league)
Boys Varsity Waterpolo	5-5 (4th in league)
Girls Varsity Beach Volleyball	1-1 (4th in league)

Graphic courtesy of reporter Kai Winstead-LeRoy.

# Eleven Elite 2022 Senior Athletes Commit to Play At the Collegiate Level

HEALTH AND SPORTS EDITOR SONIA MCSWAIN AND REPORTER CORDELL CONOVER

**Eleven elite athletes at San Luis Obispo High School have committed to play at the collegiate level for their respective sports. The impressive athletic prowess and dedication to their sports has earned them a spot on high ranking teams throughout the country, and are prime examples of the SLOHS athletic program. On May 18, all eleven students signed their commitment letters at an event celebrating their achievements, adding their names to the long list of past SLOHS athletes that have also chosen to play in college.**

*Expressions sat down with all eleven athletes in order to gain more insight into their lives, and to understand how much sports meant to them.*

**Senior Naya Koc's** skills as a talented swimmer have been highlighted throughout her time at SLOHS. Getting into the sport when she was young, Koc was exposed to the sport often, and quickly jumped at the several opportunities that would help improve her skills. Koc's domination against her opponents and her willingness to support her fellow teammates will be remembered for years to come. Breaking numerous school records, Koc's legacy will continue on after she graduates. Koc has committed to further her athletic and academic career at California Baptist University, joining a highly competitive Division One program.

"I'm excited for all the training and being on the next level. I can't wait to see how it can help me achieve my goals, as well as continue to excel as a swimmer at Cal Baptist," said Koc.

**Senior Malia Maire** got into diving after spending years as a gymnast. After a series of injuries and surgeries, Maire wanted to continue her love of doing flips and twists, this time in an aquatic environment. Quickly falling in love with the atmosphere and dive community at SLOHS, Maire dedicated her time to constantly practicing her skills and form. Her hard work paid off tremendously, as she broke the SLOHS dive eleven list record with a score of 434.20, as well as earned the SLOHS dive six list record with a score of 270. Maire will continue her diving career at Eastern Michigan University, which is home to one of the best aquatic facilities in the nation.

"On the high school team, the environment was so much fun and getting to go into the pool at the end of the school day was something I looked forward to the most. I can't wait to be a part of a new family at Eastern Michigan," said Maire.

**Senior Sofia Latta**, after watching a Cal Poly volleyball game when she was nine, was inspired to play volleyball. With support from her stepmother, who played volleyball for the University of California, Santa Barbara, Latta devoted her time and energy into becoming a better volleyball player. Latta, known for her bubbly personality, credits her growth as a player to her teammates, who constantly cheered her on, as well as her coaches, Kennedy Meaney and Nicole Linman. Latta's infectious spirit and her desire to always uplift others inspires future players. Latta committed to play volleyball at Walla Walla University and plans to major in biology and pre-dental.

"I fell in love with volleyball because of its fast pace, intensity, technicality, and of course, the relationships I've made. I'm so lucky to continue to play the sport I love and can't wait to start working hard at Walla Walla," said Latta.

**Senior Nancy Ernstrom** is another athlete who has committed to play at the collegiate level. Ernstrom, who got into stunt through her time as a cheerleader for SLOHS, fell in love with the sport due to the strong bonds she made, the intense skills she got to learn, and through the competitive nature around the sport. Stunt, which joined the SLOHS athletic program five years ago, is a relatively new sport being played at the collegiate level. Ernstrom is thankful to SLOHS and her coaches for getting her into the sport, as well as being supportive of her throughout high school. Ernstrom committed to Hope International University for stunt and is extremely excited to move on to a high level.

"Going to play in college is really exciting, especially for stunt, since not many schools have teams. I'm excited to learn new skills that you can't do at the high school level and go into a more challenging environment," said Ernstrom.

**Senior Riley Wilkerson** is known for her infectious enthusiasm and competitiveness as the goalie for the SLOHS girls soccer team. Wilkerson, who got into soccer because of its fierce atmosphere and large sense of camaraderie, worked hard to push herself to get to the next level. With the inspiration from her past coach, Brittany Viboch, as well as athletic director Marci Beddall and history teacher Jeff Brandow, Wilkerson received lots of support when it came to her athletic pursuits. Wilkerson will continue to play soccer at California Polytechnic State University, a school she's admired since she was little.

"The competition, the change of pace, and the speed of everything is so amazing. Soccer is pure energy and adrenaline, and I can't wait to continue to play," said Wilkerson.

**Senior Luke Holland's** impressive achievements as a runner for SLOHS have earned him a spot competing at the collegiate level. After join-

ing the track and field program his freshman year, Holland quickly bonded with his fellow teammates and was determined to keep up with varsity runners. Holland's drive to push himself athletically would aide his team in several league championship titles for track and field as well as cross country. Despite not having a home track to run on for the majority of his time in high school, Holland owes a lot of his success to the great coaching staff and training programs he's been exposed to at SLOHS. In the fall, Holland will join the track and field program at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

"The change of scenery will be really nice, especially since the school is in an area surrounded by nature. Getting to be on the campus and get amazing coaching is a win-win," said Holland.

**Senior Marina Warren** is an undeniably talented athlete when it comes to volleyball. Having gotten into the sport after her dad signed her up for a local club team, Warren continued to improve upon her athleticism and skills over the years. In her freshman year, Warren made the varsity indoor volleyball team at SLOHS, and would aid her team in winning the state championship the same season. From then on, Warren's spirit and positive attitude would lead her team to victory in the coming years. Not only has Warren's domination been evident indoors, but her strength has proven her to be an extraordinary beach volleyball player. Warren's hard work has led her to play both indoor volleyball and beach volleyball at California Polytechnic State University.

"Volleyball has always been an escape from my worries or stress. I'm so grateful to have been coached by so many amazing people and to be a part of the program at San Luis Obispo High School. Onto the next chapter! Thank you, everyone!" said Warren.

**Senior Rory Devaney** comes from a long line of track and field athletes, and is a natural when it comes to competing at throwing events. After destroying the SLOHS discus record during his senior year, Devaney continued to blow away the competition for the remainder of the track and field season. Devaney's interest in the physics side of throwing, as well as his enjoyment at being able to chuck something into the air and watch it fly pushed him to strive for excellence. The atmosphere that surrounds the throwing community fostered Devaney's love for track and field, and inspired him to follow in the footsteps of his family members. Devaney committed to continue to throw at California Polytechnic State University and is excited to continue to enhance his throwing ability.

"I love San Luis Obispo, and even though I wanted to explore, it's a really good place to be. I'm lucky to have the opportunity to be part of a great program, meet new people, and be exposed to more diverse perspectives," said Devaney.

**Senior Julie Smith's** first track experience was running in sixth grade, and from then on, she knew she wanted to improve her speed. With the support of her teammates and athletes from other schools within the track and field community, Smith was driven to compete at a high level. At San Luis Obispo High School, Smith realized that there isn't any growth in comfort, as well as the importance of pushing oneself out of their comfort zone, and used this mindset to drive her running career. Smith's resilience inspired fellow teammates to persevere through obstacles in order to achieve greatness. Smith will continue her career as a track and field athlete at Seattle University, and is thrilled to be able to keep doing what she loves.

"I am so thankful for the chance to become faster, to become stronger, and to continue competing. I can't wait to meet new people and experience new friendships," said Smith.

**Senior Lewis Westwood** was originally a soccer player, but took up track and field his sophomore year for conditioning. After seeing what track and field and cross country had to offer, Westwood quit soccer and began taking running more seriously. Westwood liked the positive culture and the healthy coping mechanism it gave him. San Luis Obispo High School has given Westwood the tools he needs to be successful. He is thankful to his coaches, Adam Basch and Nancy Steinmaus, who have helped him further his running career. Westwood will take his passion and success to California Polytechnic State University, where he is excited to run for their track and field and cross country team.

"I am mostly excited about meeting new teammates and being able to race in new places, against new people," said Westwood.

**Senior Rainier Gorton** is the only senior athlete going overseas to play at the collegiate level, as he takes his soccer skills to England. Soccer became something Gorton enjoyed starting at a young age. Gorton improved at it fast to earn a spot on the varsity team. Being on the junior varsity team his freshman and sophomore year motivated him to improve his skills to get to varsity. Professional soccer has been another huge inspiration for Gorton to strive for excellence, as he grew up a fan of the Arsenal Football Club. Gorton will take his soccer talents and use them to play for Richmond University in the fall.

"I'm most excited to be abroad, live in a different country, meet a lot of new people, and become the best soccer player I can when I move there," said Gorton.

*Expressions would like to wish all eleven seniors luck in their athletic pursuits, and congratulate them once again for their exciting achievements.*

# Congratulations, Class of 2022!

Disclaimer: Any post-high school plans were self-reported directly to *Expressions*, College & Career Services, and the counseling office. *Expressions* does not claim any responsibility over misreported information.



**Seattle Pacific University**  
Jasmine Riffle

**Seattle University**  
Julie Smith

**Montana State University**  
McKenna Cassidy  
Konrad Moss  
Brian Vormbaum

**Yale University**  
Phoebe Browning

**Western Washington University**  
Eden Lerner  
Levi Spalter

**Boise State University**  
Caden McConell

**Purdue University**  
Christopher Jewell  
William Warden

**University of Michigan**  
Kyndal Hernandez

**Northeastern University**  
Maren Ritterbuck

**Walla Walla University**  
Sofia Latta

**Gonzaga University**  
Aidan Kaiser

**Eastern Michigan University**  
Malia Maire

**University of Massachusetts Amherst**  
Berlyn Ellsworth

**George Fox University**  
Jacob Van Doren

**Oregon State University**  
Alexander Bolster White  
Holland Roberts  
Ava Walsh

**University of Oregon**  
John Phelan  
Jay Villarreal

**US Air Force Academy**  
Weston Jenkins

**Northern Arizona University**  
Jane Elliot  
Morgan Mosichuk

**Arizona State University**  
Anessa Alvarado  
Ava Carlson  
Colton Peterson

**University of Arizona**  
Alex Caprau  
Jack Krill  
Samantha Ross

**Embry-Riddle University**  
Lucas Murphy

**Colorado State University**  
LeeAnn Moore  
Kenneth Murphy

**University of Hawai'i at Mānoa**  
Aeven Sylvester

**Baylor University**  
Ryan Anderson

**Texas Christian University**  
Emilia Gambucci  
Hannah Gill

**University of South Carolina**  
Savannah Brewer

**Cornell University**  
Hayley Lorenz  
Owen Spargo

**Columbia University**  
Colin Guan

**Barnard College**  
Sabrina Garcia

**Pratt Institute**  
Lily Daane

**Pennsylvania State University**  
Mia Robinson

**University of Pennsylvania**  
Sophia Garcia

**Gallaudet University**  
Natalya Beck

**University of Maryland**  
Makenna Osterfeld

## Cuesta College

Grant Adams  
Cameron Armstrong  
Kaitlin Atnip  
Kevin Avalos Ramos  
Ulibeth Avila  
Andrew Ayala  
Sage Backlin  
Cyrus Balderama  
Brady Banta Jr.  
Zoe Bartholomew  
Charlotte Bigler  
Ashlynn Bowen  
Audrey Browder  
Kaya Burden  
Alyssa Butterfield  
Jorge Carreno  
Oscar Castillo  
Owen Cederberg  
Ren Chan

Yubay Chao Cervantes  
Nicholas Chaves  
Holly Church  
Justin Choi  
Niko Cimbur  
Gavin Cohen  
Lesliey Cruz  
Julie Cushing  
Carmen Davila  
Trinity di Santo  
Nolan Dorn  
Ryan Duffy  
Yesnil Eschezuria  
Ana Escalera Rodriguez  
Baden Ewen  
Grace Farmer  
Allysondra Farrior  
Andrea Finn  
Moises Flores

Edgar Flores Meza  
Anne Fredrickson  
Calianna Fritch Armstrong  
Leslie Galicia  
Jacob Gearhart  
Daniel Gonzalez  
Elliot Graham  
Tatiann Gumbs  
Dylan Hall  
Caesar Holifield  
Alex Hostmeyer  
Bethany Infuso  
Gabriel Irwin  
Caillou Jefferson  
Calleb Jefferson  
Jasper Jones  
Ipek Karagozlu  
Kaden Keech  
Olivia Keller

Tyler Kowalski  
Sevan Kurkeyerian  
Michael Lanier  
Lauren Lepe  
Lennea Lepe  
Kyle Lodge  
Ojanni Lopez Guzman  
Juan Macias  
Jaylen Marchetti  
Simon Marks  
Richard Martinez  
Lindsay McKee  
Stella McSween  
Viktor Mejia  
Alexis Meza Mendez  
Logan Miller  
Katelynn Montes  
Danny Moollor  
Daniel Owens

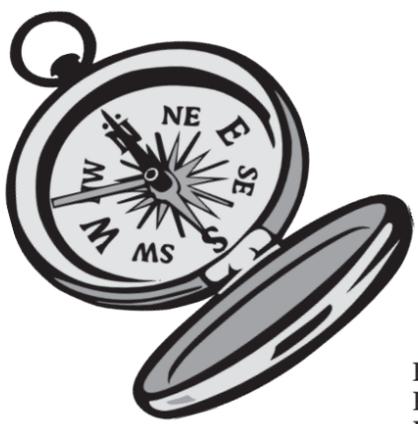
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Abbygail Perez  
Jason Perez Esguerra  
Blayke Perry  
Blaize Phillips  
Ashley Picasso Ramirez  
Jacqueline Pina  
Nicolas Pittarelli  
Alexis Quaresma  
Juan Ramirez Bastida  
Brian Ramos Morales  
Samuel Reichmuth  
Ashlyn Rice  
Gavin Righetti  
Lakeisha Rios  
Dominic Roide  
Andy Rojas  
Miley Rosecrans  
Anthony Ruelas

Kalani Ruiz  
Aradi Saligan  
Nathan Santillan  
Alexis Sargenti  
Sydney Sharp  
Ari Slade  
Sabrina Slusser  
Hannah Stephens  
Braidon Stewart  
Samuel Strickland  
Paris Uhler  
Benjamin Varni  
Boaz Victor  
Desi Villagoodwin  
Diego von Engel  
Frances West  
Emma White  
Karliana White  
Ashley Wilson

## California State Polytechnic University - San Luis Obispo

Delaney Browder  
Katelyn Browder  
Charles Carter  
Henry Carter  
Helena Corpuz-Carr  
Sofi David  
Gregory Dekhtyar  
Khashayar DeMartini  
Rory Devaney  
Natalia Doane  
Violet Emerson  
Eliana Feuerstein  
Cameron Ghent  
Kea Gildersleeve  
Ian Hammons  
Olivia Huff  
Bryson Jakins  
Charles Jansen  
Ellyna Jenkins  
Carson Krueckel  
Chase Kubinski  
Matthew Le  
Mikayla Maire  
Levon Maksoudian  
Linnaea Marks

Gavin McDiarmid  
Alexandria Melton Johnson  
Devan Minicucci  
Akiko Murakami  
Isaiah Reynolds  
Olivia Rosplock  
Emily Russell  
Brittney Sagredo Zambrano  
Jasmine Santiago Adame  
Nivashini Saravanakumar  
Ryan Schisler  
Fiona Stevens  
Gustave Stork  
Emma Stoudenmire  
Samuel Sunata  
Maxwell Templin  
Cassidy Thomson  
Jeremy Toews  
Eva Voss  
Michaela Warnke  
Marina Warren  
Lewis Westwood  
Riley Wilkerson  
Kai Winstead-LeRoy

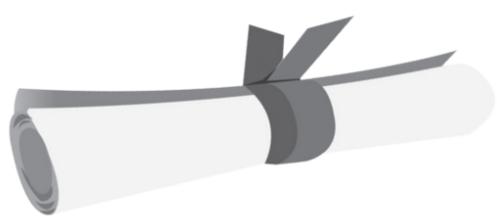


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Bobby Pedregon  
Aidan Cheetah  
Cesar Galindo Paez  
Angel Sigala  
Evan Sosa-Hammond  
Joseph Morrow

### Out of the Country

Etienne Brennan- University of Toronto  
Romane Farge- PPA Business School  
Rainer Gorton- Richmond University in London  
Freja Aboe- Roskilde Business College  
Zayde Valle- National Taiwan University



## ARTS &amp; ENTERTAINMENT

EDITOR: SOFI SHAW

# Senior Artists: What are their Future Plans? Sof's Album of High School

REPORTERS JANE CULBREATH AND MICHAEL LANIER

As seniors solidify their college decisions, some San Luis Obispo High School students have chosen to pursue their passions in the arts.

Senior Ahmee Smith, for example, is planning on majoring in visual arts at University of California Santa Cruz.

"I've been doing art since I was a really little kid. You scribble on paper and your parents call it art, but I was drawing things all the time since elementary school, and I just never stopped," said Smith. They plan to follow their passion for art into a career in design or animation.

Similarly, Senior Kel Uhler plans to pursue a career in animation by majoring in studio arts at Cuesta College.

"I'm doing studio arts, and I'm hopefully gonna go into digital animation. I want to learn how to use different mediums like charcoal or claymation. I grew up watching cartoons, so seeing fandoms making something for everyone to come together and enjoy makes me want to create something like that," said Uhler. Both Smith and Uhler share the love for creating art for other people to enjoy.

On a different path, Senior Isaiah Bueno plans to major in jazz studies at California State University Northridge with hopes of doing freelance gigs and releasing his own music.

"I've really liked music for a very long time, so I knew that it

was something that I wanted to do. A key person in my life that really influenced me was one of my really good friends, Lorenzo, who graduated here two years ago. I'm very fortunate, because he was a pretty big influence for me as a musician and for my goals," said Bueno.

Though these students have the passion to pursue these goals, they are also aware of the challenges they may face in their careers.

"I think I will definitely face low income. Getting paid for gigs is not a lot. You don't really get paid, and that's just how it is in the music business. So I'm gonna have to really, really, really devote myself to my instrument in order to make a good amount of money," said Bueno.

Smith expressed similar concerns with making a career out of their art.

"I probably chose a harder life path to be able to make a living on my own, or find jobs outside of college that relate to my major, but I'm gonna try to get through. I've already tried selling some art of mine, and it's definitely hard to get started when you don't have much of a following or you're not a famous creator. But you just keep doing it and take what you can get," said Smith.

Despite the possibility of difficult circumstances, students who choose to pursue the arts have the drive and passion to fulfill their goals.

A&amp;E EDITOR SOFI SHAW



Photo courtesy of pitchfork.com

Seniors at San Luis Obispo High School will leave high school with fond memories, often connected to music. As predictable to everyone around me as it may seem, the album that defined my high school experience would be "Punisher" by American singer-songwriter Phoebe Bridgers. This album was released in June of 2020, the summer before my junior year.

The opening track "DVD Menu" transitions into "Garden Song" which is dreamy both sonically and lyrically. In fact, the subject of the song is dreams. Bridgers sings: "And it's gonna be just like my recurring dream / I'm at the movies, I don't remember what I'm seeing / The screen turns into a tidal wave / Then it's a dorm room, like a hedge maze," an accurate depiction of the surreal nature of dreams. Bridger's vocals are front and center on this track, with the instrumental mostly consisting of soft baritone electric guitar.

The next track, "Kyoto," takes a bit of a turn in terms of energy. The album goes from a song sopping with melancholy to a high-

energy, indie rock piece. The choice of using horns on this track stands out, adding to the feeling of adrenaline that the song has. The lyrics, however, don't reflect the upbeat energy of the production. Bridgers sings about her fraught relationship with her father and how she's moving on.

Halfway through the album, "Chinese Satellite" comes in as a sweeping tale of Bridgers' lack of faith and personal inability to participate in religion. Bridgers expresses that she wishes she could believe in something. The strings that were done by American multi-instrumentalist Rob Moose on this track add a perfect touch to the emotional vulnerability on top of the lyrics.

"Moon Song," the next track, is a heart-wrenching piece about loving someone who you would do anything for, even if it means being hurt. This is my personal favorite off of the album, by the way. One of the most powerful parts of the whole album is the last verse of this song. These lines alone demonstrate Bridger's simple and masterful lyricism.

The penultimate song off of the album, "Graceland Too," is incredibly sentimental. Bridgers recorded it with the other members of their band Boygenius, American singer-songwriters Lucy Dacus and Julien Baker. It's a platonic love song to a friend going through a rough patch. The lyric: "Said she knows she lived through it to get to this moment" is incredibly impactful and bittersweet.

The best way to describe "I Know the End" would be "insane." This song is about everything and nothing. It begins very subtly, the focus being Bridgers' voice. Close to the two-minute mark, more and more backing vocals come in and the pace starts to pick up. Percussion and horns enter, adding to the intensity. It's simultaneously apocalyptic and nostalgic. The whole thing rounds out with a chorus of blood-curdling screaming. It is an incredibly effective ending, leaving listeners in a state of catharsis post-listen.

Give it a listen, Tigers. Maybe it'll define your next four years.

## Senior Spotlight: Theater Performer Emilia Gambucci

REPORTER LEANNE LEICHTFUSS

Senior and actress Emilia Gambucci is saying goodbye to San Luis Obispo High School, as she graduates this year. Gambucci has been involved in theater productions since her sophomore year, and has performed in "RENT," "Seussical," "Clue," and "The Wizard of Oz."

**Expressions:** Which role did you most enjoy playing, and why?

**Gambucci:** I would have to say that the role I enjoyed playing most is a tie between Mimi (RENT) and Dorothy (Wizard of Oz) because I could relate so closely to both of those characters; Mimi and Dorothy are also both strong female roles that felt very empowering to play.

**Expressions:** What got you interested in theater in the first place?

**Gambucci:** I initially got interested in theater due to the musicals my elementary school used to put on. Every year the sixth graders got to put on a musical and that always seemed really fun to me, so, when the opportunity came to me to try out a theater-based summer camp when I was eight, I went for it and I haven't looked back since.

**Expressions:** How big a part has theater played in your life?

**Gambucci:** Theater has played a huge role in my life from the moment I auditioned for my first musical in elementary school. Being on stage taught me how to be confident and let myself freely be creative without any boundaries—that's the beautiful thing about theater; you get to travel to new worlds and dive into exciting stories without ever leaving the stage.

**Expressions:** What are your plans after graduation?

**Gambucci:** After high school, I plan on attending Texas Christian University to study Theater and hopefully transfer into their Musical Theater program in my second year. Then, after college... I honestly don't know; it's my ultimate goal to one day be on Broadway, but I could honestly see myself joining a local theater company somewhere, or even becoming a choreographer or director.

**Expressions:** Are there any particular reasons why you chose to go to TCU?



Photo courtesy of senior Emilia Gambucci.

**Gambucci:** TCU is one of the best liberal arts schools in the nation and they also have an incredible theater program. Out of all the schools I toured and applied to, they were also definitely the most welcoming and friendly.

**Expressions:** If you could change anything about the SLOHS theater program for future students, what would it be?

**Gambucci:** The only thing I would change for future students would be to get more involved with theater, period; there seems to be a lot of stigma around joining our drama program or being "theater kid," and that really sucks. Theater is for everyone and I think that everyone at SLOHS should join, at least for theater production."

**Expressions:** How are you feeling about graduating?

**Gambucci:** I am honestly so excited to graduate and go to college. There are definitely parts of high school that I will miss, but I am so ready to just get on with the next chapter of my life and find out what the rest of life holds for me.

Graduating high school can be an exciting, rewarding experience, and Expressions wishes Emilia Gambucci well in her future endeavours.

# Meet the 2022 Valedictorian Colin Guan

REPORTER LILY SCURRIA

Colin Guan is currently the San Luis Obispo High School senior, who according to his class rank, is expected to be the class of 2022 valedictorian.

*Expressions* talked to Guan to get a better understanding of his background, which led him to become first in his class and his overall feelings toward attaining this honor.

**Expressions:** How did you end up at SLOHS?

**Guan:** My family moved here from Phoenix, Arizona for my dad's job. He worked at Cal Poly, but now he actually doesn't work at Cal Poly, so we're just kinda here. I've been here since sophomore year.

**Expressions:** How does SLOHS feel compared to your last school?

**Guan:** I only spent one year there, and I mean, every school has its pros and cons, but I would say I do like this school. Everyone's been friendly. The teachers have been really great.

**Expressions:** What school-related accomplishments are you most proud of?

**Guan:** I would say the music club that I started. I'm really proud of the fundraising we've done and the events we put on. It's been a lot of fun to work with the club members and do stuff like the concert we did last December. We raised, I think, eight hundred something dollars for a charity. It was good to see everyone, all the musicians performing for a good cause. The club is called SLO Jam.

**Expressions:** How much weight do you think colleges and people should put in class ranks?

**Guan:** Actually, I don't know. My first thought was that since schools vary so much, being number one at one school doesn't mean the same thing as being number one at a different school. But, at the same time, class rank can sometimes be a good indicator of where you fall within your own school. So, in that case, I guess it could have some value, but I do think people put too much weight on it.

**Expressions:** Do you feel a lot of pressure in regards to being at the top of your class?

**Guan:** Yeah, I guess I have felt a little bit of pressure from people who feel like I don't deserve to be number one because I didn't go to this school for all four years. I feel like people think, "that's some random person who just came with advanced advantages from their previous school," in terms of class rank. Also, a lot of the pressure is kind of internal too, like, "Oh, I have to give this speech," or feeling like I'm playing into stereotypes that Asians are always academically motivated. But, I think it's probably just me that thinks that.

**Expressions:** Were you informed that you would have to give a speech at graduation? Do you have any ideas about what you're going to write about?

**Guan:** I have not been, and I have not started writing it. I haven't really started thinking about it. I really hope to hear something soon, like just a confirmation or something, so I know that I can start preparing, because it's not a light task. The thing about me is I don't feel super connected, to be honest, to the school community because I was only here for three years, and almost two of those years were online, which was unfortunate. But, I hope to say something that has value to everyone and that people may find helpful in some way for their life after high school.

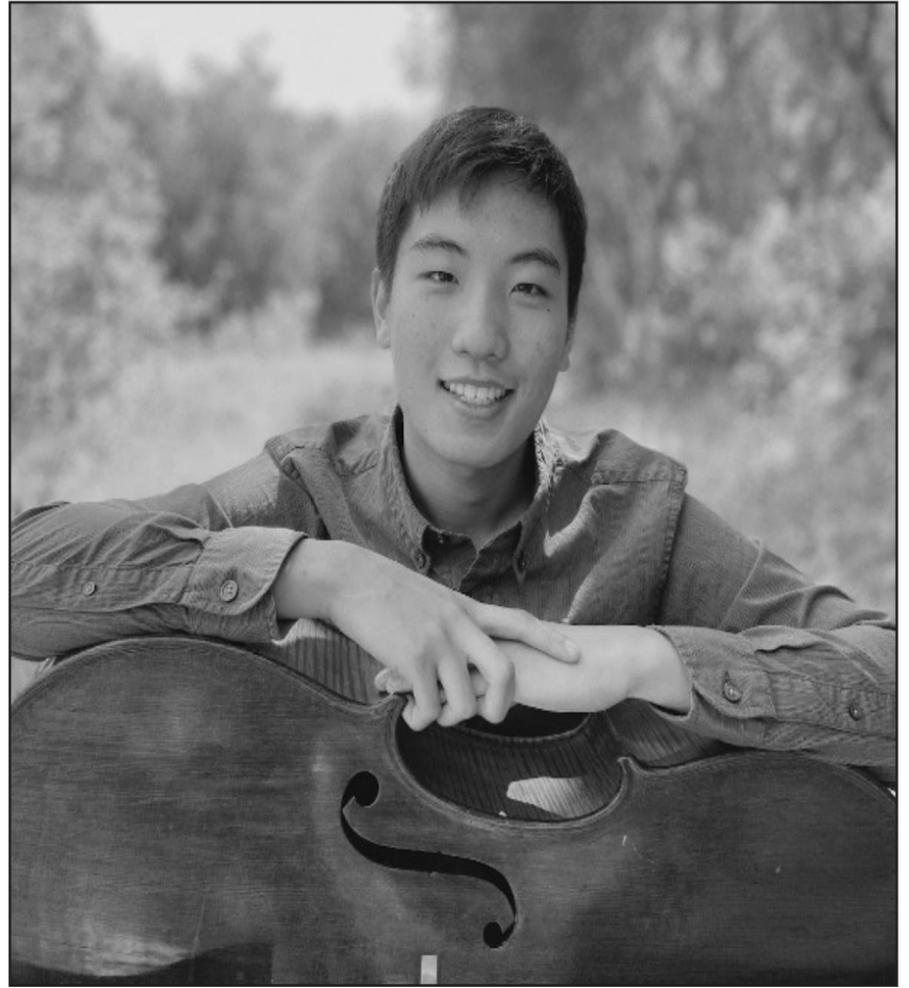


Photo courtesy of senior valedictorian Colin Guan.

**Expressions:** Do you think all your hard work was worth it?

**Guan:** I didn't do this work to be the valedictorian. I would have done it whether this school has class rank or not, so that wasn't really something I was thinking about. And, as to whether I regret it or not; I mean, to be honest, I don't think I sacrificed that much to do the work that I did. Yeah, I could have had a little bit more fun during high school, but I genuinely love learning in school, and I am glad I spent my time doing what I did.

*Expressions* wishes Guan the best in regards to giving his speech at graduation, as well as in his future academic career at Columbia University.

## This Year's Salutatorian Candidates

REPORTER KAI WINSTEAD-LEROY

As the school year wraps up and the transcripts of San Luis Obispo High School seniors are close to being completed, many students find themselves looking at their class rank. The question of "who's this year's salutatorian" is on the minds of the top students. *Expressions* interviewed prospective salutatorians to get insight on their class rank.

**Expressions:** What is your class rank as of today?

**Senior Sofia Garcia:** I am tied for third in our class.

**Senior India Draznszak:** I believe I am third.

**Senior Jacob Zakaria:** I am ranked second with a 4.72 GPA (grade point average).

**Expressions:** How has your experience being at the top of the class changed your perception of education?

**Garcia:** I think for the last few months, it's been pretty toxic just because people have asked a lot about it and like, "Oh, what's your rank?" I think there's a lot of implications about if you were just taking Advanced Placement (AP) classes to be in the top five or if you actually enjoyed high school.

**Draznszak:** It kind of hasn't, because I only realized what my rank was in the middle of this year. I realized class rankings were a thing and I checked it and I was number three. I guess it kind of didn't affect me because I just took a lot of hard AP classes.

**Zakaria:** Being at the top of the class hasn't changed the way that I perceive classes at all; I know there will always be other students that are smarter than me in each of my classes, even though I may be higher in class rank.

**Expressions:** How much weight do you think colleges should put in class ranks?

**Garcia:** I think at this point, college is ridiculous, and it seems kind of superfluous. You really can't measure a student based on what rank they are in the class, especially considering how some schools are Pass/Fail. Some schools will have like a 4.00 GPA scale and some schools have a 5.00 GPA scale. If everything was the same across the US, that would be easier to measure. You can't make comparisons because it's so random, and no one has the same kind of system. To me, numbers just don't really measure a person's capabilities.

**Draznszak:** As someone who has a really high class rank, I like them. But, you know, that's kind of biased. I think comparing people to other people on their performance isn't always fair when people perform well in different things. I don't think class ranking should be super weighted.

**Zakaria:** I don't believe that colleges should put much weight into class ranks, as the difference in GPA from rank one-to-fifty is usually not substantial. I do believe, however, that looking at class rank can be useful for colleges to see the extent to which students are willing to challenge themselves and work hard.

**Expressions:** Do you feel any extra pressure with being at the top of the class?

**Garcia:** My experience is that I really liked harder classes and I like the environment in AP classes because the students are more dedicated to it and

it's not as frustrating to be in class having to deal with people who don't want to be there. So, I love taking AP classes, and I like a really wide variety of subjects. I did AP art history last year, and then AP stats, so it was really cool to take classes of a higher caliber, plus you could get AP scores for credits for colleges.

**Draznszak:** I didn't feel any extra pressure. I just think AP classes are harder and have a bigger workload. I mean, the AP tests are a lot of pressure, but not necessarily too much pressure for me.

**Zakaria:** No, I haven't felt much pressure because my grades reflect how hard I work, and I am in total control of that.

**Expressions:** What is an accomplishment that you are most proud of?

**Garcia:** I think that one of my biggest accomplishments would be my ability to balance taking the higher caliber classes and still have the ability to enjoy other activities. Granted, I didn't do water polo for junior and senior year, however, that was mostly because of COVID.

**Draznszak:** Just being so high up in the class rank, but I don't consider school super important. So, I guess just showing up to school everyday and making it through four years.

**Zakaria:** There hasn't been one specific class that has been extra special or challenging for me. I am overall just proud that I was able to take 16 APs and do well in all of them.

**Expressions:** Was it worth it? Do you wish that you could change something?

**Garcia:** I really don't think that I sacrificed much because I love school and I love learning. I honestly have never pulled an all-nighter. I took six AP tests my junior year, five this year, two my sophomore year, and none my freshman year. But I just did not really sacrifice that much time. I think I was pretty social and I did sports and music, so it was just a fun time.

**Draznszak:** I enjoyed the classes I took. If I didn't, I would have definitely said go back and go through the college prep classes and do the easier stuff, but I was fine in the class. I guess, unless you are really interested in chemistry, AP chemistry is a hard class that might not be worth it.

**Zakaria:** I would say that it was worth it knowing that I challenged myself to the maximum extent possible. I honestly can't remember many days where I had more than two hours of homework, so it never really affected any other aspects of my life.

**Expressions:** What are your post-graduation plans?

**Garcia:** I just committed to the University of Pennsylvania, so I'm super excited for it. You don't really declare a major, however, bio is my intended major. I really want to go into this program. It's like a mix of humanities and sciences, and you learn psychology from an artist perspective and you combine the two, and then I want to go into medicine in the future.

**Draznszak:** I am going to University of California San Diego as undeclared, but hopefully it will be cognitive science when I do declare, and then I will figure it out from there.

**Zakaria:** I am attending UC Berkeley and majoring in Molecular Biology.

These well accomplished students are sure to continue their excellent work in college.

# Walking Down Memory Lane

REPORTER JANE CULBREATH

After four long years at San Luis Obispo High School, many seniors reflect on their memories and growth since freshman year.

*Expressions* talked to seniors on campus to hear about their favorite experiences in the last four years and how they have changed in their time at SLOHS.

**Expressions:** What was your favorite memory from freshman year? Why?

**Senior Jay Villareal:** Being a part of something larger than me in a new environment. That was also the year I made most of my long term friends. My first high school basketball game was also cool. Middle school basketball, compared to high school basketball, was very different because of the coaching, the camaraderie, and the intensity.

**Senior Caesar Holifield:** As a freshman, I did yoga cycling with Mr. Lee and he made it fun. I was the only freshman in that class, and I met a lot of seniors, and they were super nice, so it was a cool way to talk to new people.

**Senior Tate Isaacs:** I was involved in FFA (Future Farmers of America), and that was super fun. Being the only freshman in that class was cool because I got to meet really cool seniors and see where they were going.

**Expressions:** What was your favorite memory from senior year? Why?

**Villareal:** When I went to Big Falls with all my friends. It's out by Lopez Lake, and you have to go through the windy roads in the back area and go deeper and deeper into Lopez. You finally get to this little resting spot, and there's this 60 foot drop, and we all just jumped from there and went out and had a day there.

**Holifield:** I would say DJ-ing for winter formal was super fun for me. I had a great time picking all the songs and seeing that everyone liked it and everyone was getting into it.

**Isaacs:** I think some of my favorite experiences this year have been in the EMT (Emergency Medical Technicians) class I'm taking at Cuesta. I got to work in the emergency room and on some ambulances and firetrucks, so that was pretty cool. Also, taking all shop classes this trimester has been super dope.

**Expressions:** What was your favorite memory from all of high school? Why?

**Villareal:** During a basketball tournament, my entire basketball team went to Boomers. We spent like five hours there, and we all played miniature golf and raced go karts. It was fun just messing around with my team.

**Holifield:** Doing the rallies was awesome. I loved hyping people up and having fun.

**Isaacs:** Mountain bike club did a trip up to Santa Cruz, and I've been on some fun backpacking and camping trips. I went on an Outward Bound trip, and it was a two week mountaineering and backpacking trip, and I met a bunch of people from all over the US, and we got to do rock climbing and mountaineering.

**Expressions:** How do you think you have changed from freshman year?

**Villareal:** Drastically. I was definitely an [a-----] my freshman and sophomore year. It's definitely important to kind of just push aside your differences from everybody. I want to be more outgoing and more friendly to more people. At first, I was still trying to figure out who I was and what I wanted to do, but I became a nicer, more outgoing person.

**Holifield:** I always feel like I'm a totally different person every year or even every few months, but I think confidence is definitely the biggest one. As a freshman, I was super insecure about stuff, just wanting to fit in and get along with people, but now I can just speak my mind and not worry about it and be confident dressing in a certain way. I'm able to reach out to anyone and not feel put off and worried about it.

**Isaacs:** I think I've gotten a lot more aware of what the world is "really like," which is kind of unfortunate in some senses. I thought I would mature a lot from freshman to senior year, but it just kinda stayed the same. I hate to say it, but I think I've gotten a little more pessimistic and cynical, but such is life.

**Expressions:** What lessons have you learned?

**Villareal:** Be nicer to people, because high school is kind of rough for everybody. Just be a little more outgoing and get a little out of your comfort zone. Try to join a new group or experiment with sports. When I went into high school, I was strictly into baseball, and my mom kind of forced me to try basketball, but I ended up loving it.

**Holifield:** Don't worry or stress too much about how people think about you, and just do what you know is right. Don't worry about where you're going to or where you're gonna end up after high school because it'll figure itself out and come to you in time. In high school, just go out and do what you love and get involved in stuff.

**Isaacs:** There's no shortcut in life. The standard way is pretty much, unfortunately, the best way in most circumstances. There's no "get rich quick."

Seniors say goodbye, reflecting on the best parts of high school and their growth.

## How Seniors Got Into Prestigious Universities

NEWS CO-EDITOR WESLEY BARTLETT

Many of San Luis Obispo High School's seniors are heading off to college, and some seniors have shared their stories regarding their admittance to prestigious colleges.

**Expressions:** What college are you planning on going to?

**Senior Natalia Grondin:** I'm going to Berkeley, unless I get off a waitlist at a certain school.

**Senior Phoebe Browning:** Yale.

**Expressions:** Did you always plan on going to a prestigious college?

**Grondin:** Yes, my dream was Harvard since middle school. I was seeking a competitive campus because college is such a window of opportunity that when you're pushed, and around the right people, you can accomplish astonishing things.

**Browning:** I definitely always thought it would be cool, especially when I was younger. Once I got to high school, though, I tried my best not to fixate on it too much, until my senior year.

**Expressions:** What do you think the biggest factor was in you making it into these colleges?

**Grondin:** I think a big factor was the clubs and unique experiences, such as GleanSLO, Youth Board, FFA regional and state achievements, and then community participation. Another thing was taking a lot of Advanced Placement (AP) classes and summer courses. One huge thing that I didn't do because of personal Covid-19 restrictions but want to emphasize is taking the standardized tests. While Ivy's and other schools say it isn't necessary to turn in test scores, it lowers your chances at getting in or at least separates people with the same grades/extracurriculars.

**Browning:** Obviously I wasn't in the room at the time, so this is all just conjecture. If I had to guess, I think I got in because I happened to be a really good match for Yale specifically, which I showed through my essays. I wanted a mid-size liberal arts school with strong programs in both STEM and humanities that had lots of opportunities for local political/community involvement. It seems like once you meet a certain benchmark of grades, test scores, et cetera, it comes down to fit, unless you're like some child prodigy or an olympic athlete or something.

**Expressions:** Was getting into college worth all the effort that you put into high school, across your four years here?

**Grondin:** In my opinion, the college I chose was not necessarily worth all the work I put in, but nonetheless, it made me into a more responsible and unique individual and has built up my work ethic a ton.

**Browning:** Honestly, I don't feel like I had to sacrifice too much because I took classes/did activities that I genuinely enjoyed. I made a concerted effort to avoid purely resume-fluffing stuff, so I felt like I had plenty of free time. I do regret how I handled the actual application process this year, though. I sort

of let it become all-consuming, so I was pretty miserable for a couple months, which I would not recommend.

**Expressions:** Are there any other tips you'd like to share with people who might be aspiring to get into the same college as you?

**Grondin:** Always say yes to random situations, you never know what might come from them. It sounds cheesy but they're either good for development or make a good essay. That's how I ended up writing about teaching highschoolers English in the Czech Republic!

Browning's final statement rings true for all SLOHS students planning to go to college. "I hope that next year's seniors look for schools based on fit, not just the prestige, and keep their emotions in check during the application process. Maybe that's not the advice people are looking for, but it's the advice that I really wish I had listened to."



PEOPLE &amp; CULTURE EDITOR: TALIA DOANE &amp; TARYN LONSBROUGH &amp; ALMA TINOCO

# As SLOHS Says Goodbye To Seniors, Senior Siblings Prepare to Say Goodbye Too

REPORTER LILY SCURIRIA

There are many San Luis Obispo High School seniors that have younger siblings. While graduating from high school is a huge change for seniors themselves, it makes an equally big impact on their siblings as well.

SLOHS *Expressions* asked the siblings of Gavin McDiarmid, Owen Spargo, and Riley Wilkerson to write a letter saying goodbye and sharing their favorite memories and thoughts on their siblings graduating.

Dear Gavin McDiarmid,

You will be graduating this year and going to Cal Poly in the fall. What I know for sure is that you have made a lasting impression on many of the underclassmen, as well as many students in track. Many of my friends know you for being in ASB and track, and I know your coaches and teachers will miss you.

Although I will be very sad when you leave, I know that because you are so close by, you will see us frequently to fix technology in the house, since mom and I are not very knowledgeable with that kind of thing. You have given me so much advice, such as how to get into ASB myself, harassing me to start drivers-ed, and helping me improve in track.

You have made a lasting impression on everyone at SLOHS because of the events you made happen, like rallies and dances. You taught me to spend time and focus on the social aspect of high school and the things that make it fun. I remember on your birthday, when you told me it would be embarrassing to get people to sing for you and my friends and I got all of the track team to sing happy birthday with over one hundred and fifty students. The look on your face was priceless.

I hope you can look back and be proud of everything you accomplished in your high school years.

Love,  
Bronwyn

Dear Owen Spargo,

I can't believe it's finally happening. I know I joke a lot about not being able to wait until you go to college, but now that mom, dad, and I are biting our nails and counting down the days until you leave, I'm starting to realize how different my life will be. As my best friend of, well, my whole life, I must say that you've taught me so many lessons that have shaped me into the person I am today.

I learned that Monopoly is a game that will always end in tears because you hide your money in your pocket while I falsely think I'm winning. I learned (the hard way) that it's probably not a good idea to freefall from the bed without properly landing— even if you do it first. But most importantly, I learned that I should always keep my head up, no matter what obstacles I face.

It's getting more and more difficult to accept that I won't be able to see my best friend nearly as frequently as I do now. And as you start your new life across the country at Cornell, I'll also be starting new in some ways. If I'm being honest, it's going to be weird around the house for the first few months, but I wouldn't want it any other way in the end because I know that you're where you want to be.

Being able to grow up with you means so much to me and I couldn't be more proud of you for getting to where you are now. I have no doubt that you'll be able to make friends and pursue whatever career you choose. I love you so much and I miss you already.

Your favorite sister,  
Erika

Dear Riley Wilkerson,

I am both excited and sad about you graduating. Sad I won't see you on campus anymore after three years, but so excited for you and what you're going to do. Now there will be one less girl in the house so that leaves me and our little sister.

During high school, you showed me, not so much told me, what kindness looks like. I always hear from both students and teachers, "Oh you're Riley's sister. I love her, she's so amazing." If I learned anything from you, it would be to just be myself and not fake who I am to fit in, cause no one remembers those kinds of people. They remember people who made them laugh or feel good about themselves, just like you did.

There are so many stories and memories I could share, but some things I will miss the most will be just walking on campus and "the look" we gave each other, getting called up for rallies and forced to participate, and us both having Wood 1 this trimester.

I am so proud of you for always following through and never giving up. You worked so hard these past four years to represent SLOHS girls varsity soccer and lead them to win CIF. Now, you will move on to your next journey playing for Cal Poly's soccer team. So freaking proud of you that words can't describe it. I know you are going to do very big things, and I will be there for every step of it. I will miss having you around, but don't be surprised if one day you find me organizing your dorm.

I love you,  
Macey

## College? No. SLOHS Seniors Have Better Things To Do

CO-PEOPLE &amp; CULTURE EDITOR: ALMA TINOCO

San Luis Obispo High School's class of 2022 is preparing to enter a new chapter of their lives and pursue further educational opportunities. That isn't the case for every graduate. A handful of seniors have decided to pursue a different path than those instantly headed to college.

In October of 2021, 61.8 percent of highschool graduates enrolled into colleges. The remainder take a different route such as a gap year, military, or the workforce. *Expressions* interviewed seniors who are taking a change of direction as the rest of the flock heads to college.

**Expressions:** What are you planning to do once you graduate?

**Senior Evan Sosa-Hammond:** I'm working.

**Senior Weston Jenkins:** I'm going to the Air Force academy.

**Senior Aidan Cheetah:** I'm planning to be a wedding photographer.

**Senior Joseph Morrow:** I'm planning on just going into the work field, the automotive scene.

**Expressions:** Why are you choosing to go into that field?

**Sosa-Hammond:** I wanted to take a break before college because I'm tired of school right now and I'd rather have a break before continuing straight into more school.

**Jenkins:** The biggest [reason] is an inclination towards service to the country, probably my primary motivation.

**Cheetah:** My mom works as a wedding photographer and I don't really see myself doing a desk job. I'm more of a creatively involved person. I'd much rather do something that's creative, something that has a positive impact on other people. That's where the weddings came from, because you're capturing someone's special moment so they can cherish that memory forever through a photo.

**Morrow:** It's what I love to do and I enjoy it.

**Expressions:** Do you plan to go to college at some point in the future?

**Sosa-Hammond:** I want to go to college for environmental studies and do work in national parks, like a park ranger.

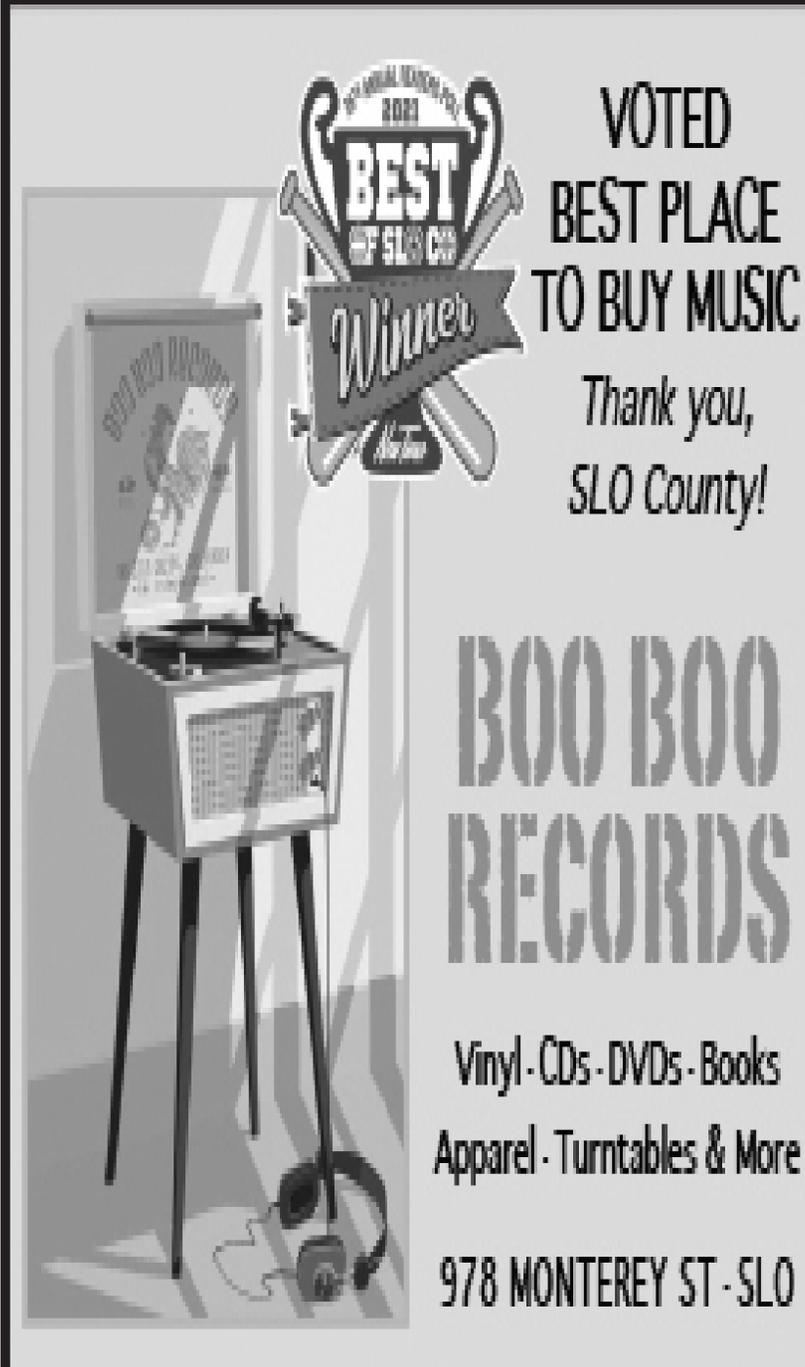
**Jenkins:** I'll be at the Air Force academy for four years, get my degree there, and then after that I'd like to fly for the Air Force.

**Cheetah:** I might. I don't have any plans for college right now.

**Morrow:** Not really, it's not for me.

Not every senior has the same path, and not everyone will take the same actions to achieve their goal. *Expressions* wishes graduates good luck in the future.

Source: bls.gov



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## PEOPLE &amp; CULTURE

## SLOHS to LAMS: Nathan Meinert Moves Schools

REPORTER OLIVIA CUSICK

San Luis Obispo High School assistant principal Nathan Meinert is becoming Laguna Middle School's new principal. *Expressions* wanted to reflect on his time here.

**Expressions:** When did you start working at SLOHS? What was your favorite experience?

**Assistant Principal Nathan Meinert:** I started working at SLOHS during my sophomore year of college at Cal Poly as a tutor. I began teaching at SLOHS as a math teacher in August 2012. I have been an assistant principal at SLOHS for three years. It is so difficult to choose a favorite single experience, as there have been so many great times with students and staff. If I had to pick, few highlights would include the staff vs varsity boys basketball game, coaching powderpuff, and countless laughs and interactions with staff and students as we navigated high school together.

**Expressions:** How did you get to work at LAMS? Where is Calandro off to?

**Meinert:** Calandro has the opportunity next year to make a move to support students in a new role in the Student Services Department at the District Office. I was selected as the new principal at Laguna Middle School after I applied for the position and went through two rounds of interviews. I am excited at the opportunity to develop relationships with and work alongside the staff, students, and community of Laguna Middle School as the new principal!

**Expressions:** How do you feel about Bernardo Salcido filling your role?

**Meinert:** I am happy for Mr. Salcido to join the amazing team at SLOHS!

**Expressions:** Do you have a final message to send to SLOHS?

**Meinert:** Thank you! I feel so blessed to have had the opportunity to be a part of this wonderful school and to have learned so much as an educator here!

Meinerts work at SLOHS is not soon to be forgotten, and make sure to wish him the best of luck at LAMS.

## AP Lit to Aviation: Weaver's Steps After SLOHS

REPORTER JO CALL

As the academic year comes to a close, San Luis Obispo High School will begin to say goodbye to some of its staff members. Included among that number this year is English teacher Elizabeth Weaver. Weaver has primarily taught Advanced Placement (AP) English Literature at SLOHS in her two years on staff. *Expressions* sat down with Weaver to get a better understanding of what this shift will mean for her, what her plans are after her leave and what she wants her students to have learned from her.

"I'm very excited to be working in a lot of ways for my dreams and for myself. One of the best things about teaching is working for other people's dreams and other people's goals, [...] but for me it'll be to make my dreams come true," said Weaver.

In leaving SLOHS, she will be paving the way for a career in aviation, as students may have previously seen on Tiger News Network (TNN). This hobby has been a passion of hers since she was young, but only recently has it begun to solidify as a career option.

"It was a series of opportunities that sort of came together, very sort of 'Kismet, universe pushing me in a direction', kind of... opportunities just fell in line in a lot of different ways that I had just never thought about. So something that was sort of a part-time hobby, i.e. something I might do as retirement became a shifting career, quite legitimately," said Weaver.

While Weaver heads for the clouds, she also holds a spot for her students. When it comes to what Weaver wants to impart to her students, she cares more about their mindset than anything.

"The study of human complexities is worthwhile and taking a moment to read a good book, and asking yourself how it relates to you and how it helps you to see the world in a different way, is worth your time. No matter how artsy or sciency you are, [...] a really good book can really help you understand people better," said Weaver.

*Expressions* wishes Weaver well on her future ventures, and hopes that she will find all that she's looking for

## A Class of her Own: the Tenure of Reinacher

REPORTER REN CHAN

As the school year finishes, Nina Reinacher's San Luis Obispo High School teaching career will come to an end. Reinacher has taught guitar for 20 years and is the type of teacher whose legacy far exceeds her actual time in the classroom. *Expressions* had the honor to sit down with Reinacher to discuss her teaching career up to this point and how she would look back on it.

"I started teaching for San Luis Coastal School District as an elementary music and band teacher. Two years later, due to budget cuts in the elementary music program, I lost my job. There was a need for a guitar teacher at SLO High and someone recommended me. I had not taught high school before. I tried it and loved it. Students learned fast and enjoyed learning to play guitar," said Reinacher.

Reinacher has been a huge part of the music department at SLOHS and the only guitar teacher students on campus have known. She has taught guitar I, II, and III for all grade levels, working with kids of all backgrounds and musical experience alike. A guitar division of the high school music department adds a more "normal" option opposed to the deep end known as "band."

It has enabled many students to dip their toes into the concepts of music theory to learn or even learn about composing music.

"I am aware that when you perform, you can feel very vulnerable. We need to share music. If you get up and play for others, you are giving a gift, a part of yourself. I encourage the classroom community to be supportive of that process. I will miss the students, they teach me new songs and other new things every day. I will miss watching them grow as musicians. I will miss the community in my classroom and at [SLOHS]. This is a great school with wonderful students and staff and I feel very fortunate to have worked here for all these years. It will always be a part of me," said Reinacher.

Reinacher managed to maintain a welcoming and friendly learning environment for her students. Current senior Marina Warren recalls. "She never pushes you to perform but she is always supportive of how you choose to go about performances".

Many students will testify on behalf of Reinacher's kind teaching method, and many will wish her a happy retirement.

**Expressions:** What are you planning to do once you retire?

**LeSage:** Travel, [my husband and I are] going to Portugal first.

**Expressions:** How do you feel you contributed to San Luis Obispo High School?

**Sawyer:** My biggest hope is that I contributed by always being a welcoming and kind person on campus who people felt like they could come to and not only get help with library materials and resources, but just to be a caring and supportive adult on campus.

**LeSage:** I'm not sure.

**Sawyer:** I can tell you that [LeSage] is super organized and she ensured that our library ran smoothly at times. I will be lost without her.

With losing two beloved staff members, the personnel of SLOHS must bond together to remember their fond memories of these helpful and caring librarians.

## Saying A Farewell To Marci Beddall

HEALTH &amp; SPORTS CO-EDITOR TARYN LONSBROUGH

San Luis Obispo High School has encountered various teachers, administrators, and staff members that will leave a lasting impact on this campus. Arguably one of the most inspirational figures is educator, coach, and Athletic Director, Marci Beddall.

Before moving to SLOHS, Beddall started her teaching career at Buchanan High School in Clovis, California. Most recently, she was chosen to be the SLOHS Athletic Director as of 2020. Throughout her multiple roles here on campus, Beddall was able to meet new people and make a plethora of memories to carry with her into the future.

"What I will miss most is definitely the students. Honestly, I've had such great experiences with students. I have made great friends here with students, staff, and everyone that I hope will go beyond my time here at SLOHS," said Beddall.

Several people on campus will miss Beddall's continuous and positive influence that she has on those around her, especially those that she coached alongside.

"I will miss her strong female leadership. She is an inspiration to so many young women and is a true example of what a strong independent female. I will miss her immense

support of her coaches, and dedication to SLOHS athletics; she was present at every game or competition, setting and cleaning up. She was often up at 4:00 a.m. or not home until after dark, most nights. I will miss her creativity as she brought a lot of new ideas to SLOHS athletics, her patience and positivity during the hardest of times with all of the COVID-19 protocols, and her organization and communication. Lastly, I will miss her friendly and funny personality," said girls volleyball coach and physical education teacher Kennedy Meaney.

It is no doubt that the dedication that Beddall has committed to SLOHS has been nothing less than the drive that she instills in her athletes and students.

"If I had to describe Ms. Beddall in one word, it would be 'empowering,'" said senior Alex Melton, who is one of Beddall's teaching assistants.

Bedall's uplifting spirit will still stay in San Luis Obispo County, as she will continue on to work as a CTE [career technical education] Tosa.

Bedall has left her impression on those she interacted with. SLOHS students and staff wish the best of luck to Ms. Beddall, and appreciate her kindness and generosity over the past seven years!

## SLOHS Loses its Librarians

REPORTER REED KIMBALL

The librarians of San Luis Obispo High School will be leaving at the end of this year. With two of the hardest working women on campus leaving, Jennifer Sawyer and Alayn LeSage, *Expressions* believes it is crucial that we remember them for all of their past accomplishments as well as to what's to come along in the future. We had the honor of getting the opportunity to ask a few crucial questions.

**Expressions:** Why are you leaving SLOHS?

**Librarian Jennifer Sawyer:** I'm transferring to Sinsheimer Elementary School.

**Librarian Alayn LeSage:** I'm retiring.

**Expressions:** What are you planning to do at Sinsheimer Elementary?

**Sawyer:** I'm going to be the library tech there. So I'm just transferring to a different level, basically doing the same job at a different level.

## Other Staff Members Leaving:

Math teacher Clayton Miller

ASB Clerk Katie Hoium

Science teacher Brendan McLoone

Special Education teacher Lucinda Brown

# Senior Editors Say Goodbye To *Expressions*

## Editor-in-Chief of Copy & News Editor: Owen Spargo

Hey y'all,

Thank you to all of you from everyone we interviewed to all of our readers and those who helped us keep this school informed; *Expressions* would not be the same without you. Seniors: it's been such an amazing experience getting to know the diverse individuals at our school. Each of you has an interesting story to tell and hearing them has been my favorite part of being in newspaper. Underclassmen: we want to hear your stories! Join newspaper! Being a journalist has helped me grow my confidence and ability as a writer and I know that I will continue to use these skills in my future no matter what path I choose.

Bye Tigers,

Your Favorite Editor-in-Chief  
Owen Spargo

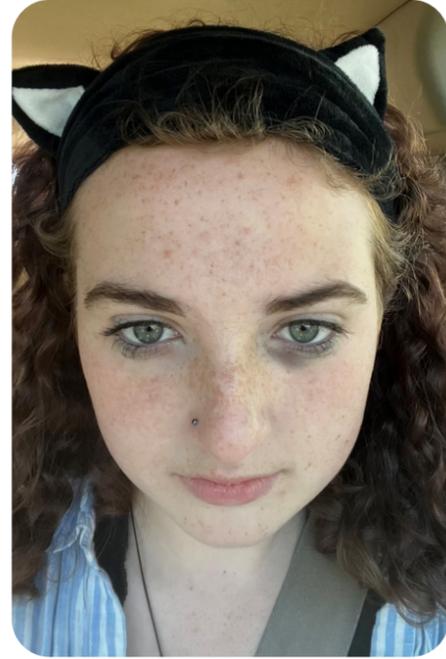


## Editor-in-Chief of Design & Arts & Entertainment Editor: Sofi Shaw

Howdy!

I joined *Expressions* on a whim in the middle of my junior year. Boy, am I glad I did. Through this class, I have met some of my best friends. I've also been able to write about my silly little music obsessions which have evolved into a monthly column. Speaking of which, I really hope someone carries it on next year. (It could be you!) Next year I am attending UC San Diego as a history major. I want to join any journalism organizations I can in college and potentially start a radio show through KSDT (the UCSD radio station). If you are a strongly opinionated person on any topic, I implore you to join this class. You won't regret it.

Yours, Sof



## Health & Sports Editor: Sonia McSwain

Hi to everyone I know, don't know too well, or don't know at all!

Thank you for taking the time to read our newspaper and for allowing us to have a platform to express ourselves. I went into the publishing world through my time as the year book editor in chief, and I'm so happy to have found my way back to the wonderful family that is the newspaper class. My piece of advice for everyone is to be unapologetically yourself, and to not be afraid to speak up for what you believe in. High school is a unique, manic, and rare experience we only get to go through once, so don't live for others, live life for yourself. Slay!

SONIA MCSWAIN



## People & Culture Co-Editor: Talia Doane

Hi all!

Thank you to everyone who's read and supported our student run newspaper. Being in newspaper since my sophomore year has taught me how to use my voice, express my opinion, and has led to my gaining of new perspectives on various different issues and topics. Journalism has shaped me as a student and as a person. It's led me to meet and reconnect with people who have changed my life. To any future upper or underclassmen, don't be afraid to try something new. Step out of your comfort zone! Do something you've always wanted to do! High school is terrifying, but it's a once in a lifetime experience. Do what makes you happy, and don't be scared. xoxo, Talia



## People & Culture Co-Editor: Taryn Lonsbrough

Hey!

I've been in newspaper all four years of high school, and an editor since my sophomore year. I've dedicated a lot of my time to newspaper because it is vital to have an outlet of expression, especially during high school. This class has allowed me to become more confident in my own forms of expression, and I am grateful for all the memories I have made. My advice would be to put yourself out there, even if you are scared because you will always keep wondering "what if" you had done that one thing. Being true to yourself and your passions will be much more memorable than just being like everyone else.

Bye y'all!



## Graphics Editor: Linnaea Marks

Hello readers!

Thanks for being curious and checking out the newspaper. I've had so much fun creating graphics and writing stuff for y'all to read. I started newspaper as a junior over quarantine. It was such a great outlet for my energy, and I would recommend it to anyone interested in journalism, writing, or even art. My advice to any student would be to try new things; high school is an opportunity to find out what you love to do, so do everything!

