

SLOHS EXPRESSIONS

JUNE 2026 | SENIOR FEATURE | SAN LUIS OBISPO HIGH SCHOOL | 1499 SAN LUIS DRIVE | SLO, CA 93401



Four years worth of memories with friends. It's a bittersweet ending as the Class of 2026 prepares to graduate. Graphic courtesy of senior Aidan Field.

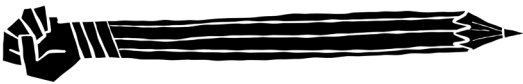
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Read more articles at slohsexpressions.com where articles are released daily!

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Don’t Skip! Why Attending Senior Events is Worth It

REPORTER TYLER GERBEL

It’s that time of year when San Luis Obispo High School seniors are offered many events to celebrate their graduation and transition into the real world. Prom, Senior Picnic, the 50-Day Dinner, Senior Showcase, and Grad Night are all iconic events that are a traditional part of the American high school experience.

Attendance at these events is already high, with many seniors ready to celebrate the end of their high school career. However, there are some who don’t wish to attend. Of course there’s nothing wrong with that, but seniors should at least try it out. These events are a great way to socialize with other students, or even just with your friends, and there’s often fun activities to do as well.

“It’s worth it because especially as the last year, a lot of these events are put on specifically to make people feel more accomplished and as part of a unit, especially as a class,” said ASB president Zoe Fujii.

Some of the events may not seem like much, but seniors will never know until they check it out.

“All of them do end up being really fun, even if they seem tedious or just like a long extended event, especially things like the 50 day dinner. That doesn’t seem like the most fun thing, but when you go, it’s actually cool to see everyone there and it’s fun to be

a part of something larger,” said Fujii.

Despite the appeal these events may have for some, others still remain unconvinced. The events aren’t for everybody, especially if someone isn’t interested in large social gatherings. Another restriction that comes with some of these events is the price, not everyone has the money to pay for tickets. Prom and Grad Night both cost money to attend, and why would some seniors pay if they don’t feel like going in the first place?

“It’s not anything that interests me personally, and then on top of that, I have to pay for it. I’d rather do smaller stuff with just friends rather than with a massive group of people,” said senior Mateus Iscold.

“It’s more money than just the tickets, because it’s also more money for a suit.”

The school does offer discounted ticket prices for those in financial need, and not every event costs money to attend in the first place, but the additional cost of things like formal clothing and accessories does add up. However, if seniors are on the fence about going to a paid senior event, and they can afford it, go. Money can be earned back, and the memories and experiences seniors will get from the event will likely be worth it. If they didn’t enjoy it, then they’ll know for sure.

Aside from Prom and Grad Night, most of the senior events are free. Events such as the Senior Re-

cognition Assembly and the Senior Showcase are for celebrating seniors for their talents and accomplishments. Not only do seniors get to hang out with their friends, but they get to see all of the great things that their classmates have achieved and will achieve in their future.

“As adults and teachers we’re all aware of just how quickly four years goes by, and we want to really celebrate the accomplishments of the students, the work they’ve put in, the friendships they’ve made, the connections they’ve made with people while they’ve been here. I think that’s important to acknowledge, for sure.” said digital media teacher Zach Roper.

The Senior Picnic is a great way for seniors to socialize and celebrate the end of high school with their friends. Plus, it’s free food.

“I really enjoyed my senior year,” said digital media teacher Zach Roper. “And so I think I was really aware of kind of soaking up every moment of that time and trying to enjoy all the events that the school put on for us, just because I knew I’m not going to see these people, most likely, as often as I [did back then.]”

Attend the events, seniors will never get another chance. It’s tradition, a great way to celebrate, and seniors won’t regret it!

High Expectations: Are AP Classes Optional Anymore?

REPORTER SAWYER CRAM

San Luis Obispo High School and the broader high school curriculum have been subject to additional courses being added to their AP rosters. With the continuously expanding choices of AP classes, SLOHS students are constantly surrounded by a high school environment that encourages participation in college level courses as the key to success.

California has historically had a higher amount of participation in AP tests when compared to the nationwide average. On average, at least thirty percent of California high school students take at least one AP exam in their high school career.

“I think that social pressures have made people think that they need AP classes. Expectations have gone way up in the past few years for students, with students being pushed by their friends and teachers to take harder and harder classes with the promise that it will help them in the future. I personally know a few friends who were in some classes that they had very little business in, and instead of getting an A+ in a regular class, they barely squeaked by with a C+ in an AP class. I don’t think that makes any sense. You’re not dumb if you don’t take AP classes,” said senior Finn Selman.

Underlying societal expectations along with inadvertent peer pressure can lead to many students taking harder classes than they originally believed were fit for them. While choosing to enroll in AP and honors classes can lead to a better looking college resume, it can just as easily harm it. Even though California ranks among the top states in AP class participation, its state testing results are placed close to the bottom. The decision to take an AP or honors class is starting to become less of a choice for many students, intentionally or not. Adding on to this, AP classes have increasingly started to become the bare minimum when it comes to applying to prestigious colleges.

“Colleges are increasingly looking at the courses you take and less at GPA. For ‘good’ colleges, a 4.0 unweighted GPA is merely the ticket to being considered. What colleges care a lot about is the difficulty of courses. The more APs, the better, especially APs that replace generally required courses for graduation (AP Literature instead of normal English, etc.). Every person’s individual application will be different, but generally, AP’s are a major part of college applications. Additionally, with many colleges no longer using SAT or ACT scores in their

applications, such as the UCs and CSUs, AP test scores are more widely considered part of a student’s application and have, in some ways, “replaced” the SAT/ACT for some schools. Of course, this is all going to vary for each student, but more AP’s will always be good, especially AP’s specific to your major,” said senior Canyon Davis.

The removal of SAT and ACT scores in the UC’s and CSU’s has put increased stress on the importance of AP classes in college admissions. Without access to SAT colleges focus much more on students’ performance in AP classes. The decision to stop looking at the SAT was made due to the fact that the SAT can be considered discriminatory towards lower income students who have a fraction of the test prep and tutoring capabilities of higher income students. However, AP tests are similarly discriminatory in the exact ways that the SAT was considered to be. Ultimately, the removal of the SAT has done nothing but put increased pressure on students to enroll in the AP and honors classes that have now become a deciding factor in college admissions.

“I definitely feel like taking AP classes has become more of a default option. With tons of highly qualified college applicants, it feels like course rigor is an expectation not a flex, and students need to make themselves stand out in other ways which can be difficult with many colleges not accepting SAT scores. While that can be frustrating for those of us trying to make ourselves stand out academically, I’d argue that more people taking AP classes is a good thing. Because of all the AP and dual enrollment credit I got at SLOHS I’ll be able to get a lot of GE’s out of the way next year, allowing me to declare a couple of minors, take fun classes I wouldn’t otherwise take, and still graduate in four years,” said senior Wesley Bisheff.

It’s important to not just focus on the negatives that AP and honors classes present us with. Even though AP tests are more prominent in high school than they have ever been, they are also easier than ever. Over the past few years, the College Board has redesigned numerous AP tests in ways that have inadvertently ended up making them easier for many students. Additionally, the jump to digital AP testing has made the tests more straightforward and quick to complete when compared to their previous counterparts.

The rise of AP classes is not a brand new challenge for high school students but instead the current vessel of what AP used to be.

Sources: collegeboard.org, nationsreportcard.gov

“Taking AP classes has become more of a default option.”

Pass or Fail: The Art of High School Procrastination

HEALTH & SPORTS CO-EDITOR KANDON SULLIVAN

For many San Luis Obispo High School seniors, procrastination has become a major part of their high school experiences. Seniors have procrastinated little things such as homework to senior events, to even college applications. Many of these students know the deadline weeks before and just put it off until later. What starts as “I’ll do it later” soon turns into stress and F’s.

Procrastination may feel harmless at the moment, but for high school seniors who are balancing the last few weeks of their childhoods, it’s doing more harm than good. Putting off important tasks just creates unnecessary stress and lower quality of work. These habits can carry into college which is not good. Procrastination builds up over time and is overall a self-inflicted problem that makes the last years of school even more stressful than they are.

“I think procrastination affects high school because the more you put off the more that piles up,

the work doesn’t just magically disappear. Procrastination is making your future self work harder. I don’t think that there is any instance where procrastination works. I think I could’ve done a much better job at not procrastinating in high school, but I was always able to make up for my mistakes, just not ideal what so ever and made my life much harder throughout school,” said senior Joe Isaman.

Although procrastination can seem mainly school based, it tends to affect even adults that fell into those habits as a teen. It can cause high stress levels and a bad relationship with doing work.

“Procrastination can affect your work ethic in your future. I think for school work, procrastination is bad because without procrastination your work would have been a lot stronger,” said senior Jacob Gill.

However, some people believe procrastination can be a good thing. According to Harvard, The procrastinators’ ideas were rated as 28 percent more

creative. Although creativity is good, procrastination overall leads to bad habits and in some cases no product. However, some believe that procrastination can be a good thing.

“Procrastination is just prioritizing the things you want to do in life. At the end of the day I got into the college I wanted, so I have no regrets,” said senior Calvin Nemetz.

Procrastination takes over high schoolers like a plague, and as students become more distracted, their grades become worse. Building time management skills can save a student’s workload—the last thing anyone wants is to be dealing with a massive workload during finals. Students need to do their work now to save them from bad grades later. Learning how to get things done early can set students up for success and help SLOHS students for years after.

Source: apa.org

What is the Value of the Art Pathway to SLOHS Seniors?

REPORTER EIRAM BUSSELL

Some students may see art class as the place you end up when your schedule has an empty spot. Others may see it as a chance to express their creativity, or develop artistic skills. Some may even use it to prepare for a future career. At San Luis Obispo High School, the art pathway offers students opportunities that can extend far beyond high school, though the impact often depends on how much effort students are willing to put into it.

According to The Princeton Review, school art programs help students strengthen creativity, problem solving abilities, and resilience; all valuable skills for careers both inside and outside the arts. However, simply completing the art pathway at SLOHS does not automatically guarantee success in the art world. The program’s long term benefits vary depending on each student’s goals and dedication. For many students, the art pathway has been highly rewarding. Anju Nakai, a student currently enrolled in AP Studio art, said the program has helped her explore meaningful projects and has helped expand her perspective on art. Her portfolio pieces grapples with the complicated question of how people can coexist with AI. Another AP student, Bridger Jensen explained that AP Studio “has been great for getting ready for the college experience”. When asked whether he regretted spending time completing the art pathway, he said he actually “regret(s) not doing it sooner”.

Still, not every student who enters the program has the same experience or outcome. In AP art (the

final stage of the art pathway), students are expected to complete a portfolio-- a highly curated collection of artwork often used for college applications or industry opportunities. According to Micheal Norton, the VAPA instructional leader, only about seventy five to eighty percent of students even complete their AP portfolio each year. Due to not all students choosing to finish the pathway or pursue a career in art afterward, it can be difficult to measure the program’s impact after graduation.

However, for students interested in pursuing creative careers, the program can provide an excellent foundation. Anju said she hopes to attend art school and eventually work in 3D design after returning to Japan. Bridger mentioned how he would love to “work as a concept artist for video games or movies”. Their experiences reflect how the art program can help students begin building high quality portfolios and career goals while still in high school

Mr. Norton also emphasized the importance of student portfolios after graduation. According to him, many students use their portfolios to apply to art colleges, while others use them as a building point to pursue freelance work, animation, or other creative careers. Some former students have even gone on to animate at Disney, while others have created successful independent projects and businesses. When asked whether a strong portfolio helps get into said competitive fields, Norton responded, “Absolutely”.

Despite these opportunities, some students may remain uncertain about whether the art pathway is worth the time and commitment. AP art requires

long hours, independent creation, and lots of self motivation, which may not be for everyone. Some people may argue that young aspiring artists should focus more on traditional studies. Others may say that they should put their effort into avenues that are more specialized or that have clearer pipelines. But even so, supporters of studio-intensive art programs such as the one at SLOHS believe that skills learned through art extend far beyond draftsman skills. Communication, time management, and problem solving are useful whatever you do. Let alone the developing phenomena of ‘learning to be creative to be creative’, due to the rapid rise of generative AI.

The pathway is not about making professional artists, but about learning to think creatively and express ideas in meaningful ways. It’s about showing through your portfolio that you have the ability to hone in on something; It’s about reflecting your perseverance and story. It is just that in doing such, a professional-level portfolio, or future career may reveal itself in the process.

Ultimately, the value of the art program at San Luis Obispo High depends on what students choose to make of it. For some, it becomes the first steps towards a professional creative career. For others, it is simply an opportunity to grow as an artist and individual. Either way, the program continues to provide students with experiences and skills that last long after graduation.

Source: princetonreview.com

What Songs Got SLOHS Seniors Through High School?

REPORTER SAWYER CRAM

As San Luis Obispo High School seniors prepare for the summer before college, what songs would they consider to sum up their journey through high school? With the complete adoption of music streaming services such as Spotify, students have been free to easily explore countless genres of music throughout their time at SLOHS. Consequently, this easy access to music is guaranteed to have left lasting impressions on seniors that are sure to stay with them even after graduation.

“For a song of the summer I would recommend ‘Brazil’ by Declan McKenna,” said senior Tyler Gerbel.

Declan McKenna released his debut single “Brazil” in 2015 at the age of 16. The song is a protest against the 2014 FIFA world cup held in Brazil and criticized FIFA and the Brazilian government for prioritizing soccer over poverty and social issues. The modern relevance of many of the song’s messages along with McKenna’s young age when he wrote the song make it a worthy candidate for senior song of the summer.

“B.O.R. (Birth of Rap)’ by Lil B has been my favorite song throughout high school. This song resonates with me because it flows, but also has lyrics that speak the truth. I don’t think this song will be the song of the summer, but that’s okay because I don’t want people to overplay it,” said senior Emanuel

Jorgensen.

“B.O.R. (Birth of Rap)” was originally released in late 2009 as a part of Lil B’s solo mixtape “6 Kiss”. The song covers Lil B’s personal growth along highlighting the confidence and raw talent that he possesses. Additionally, the song features an amazing sample from “Just For Now” by Imogen Heap that has been used by other notable rappers such as Asap Rocky. While “B.O.R. (Birth of Rap)” might not be fit for senior song of the summer, its ethereal beat and inspiring lyrics make it a fitting song to travel with you throughout your high school journey.

“The song of the summer is definitely the new malcom Todd song [“I Saw Your Face”] because it’s hype. everyone loves Malcom, that guy rocks,” said senior Finnley Zimmerman.

“I Saw Your Face” by Malcolm Todd was released in late April of this year. The song explores the pain of unrequited love and the struggles of moving past a relationship. The song’s theme of the difficulty that comes with knowing that you need to move on can be applied to many seniors’ upcoming transition from high school to a college environment.

Ultimately, even though “Brazil” and “I Saw Your Face” are both amazing contenders for senior song of the summer, the true senior song of the summer has always been the friends we made along the way.

HIGH SCHOOL Tips and Tricks!

★★★★★

Would not recommend.

-Anonymous Senior



Comic by Emily Lopez

1

Be involved in school activities.



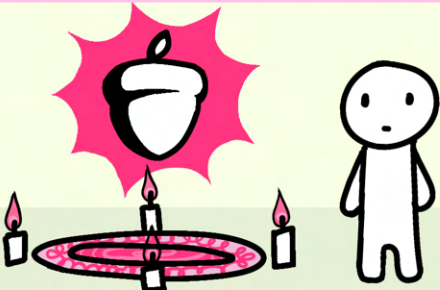
2

Remember to wear deodorant!



3

Sell your soul to CollegeBoard.



4

Hoard apple crisps.

You never know when you might need them.



5

Graduate!



can you leave now.



All high schoolers should definately follow these five steps! Comic courtesy of Opinion and Arts & Entertainment editor Emily Lopez.

SLOHS Senior Athletes Going Onto The Next Level:

REPORTER RUBY BLACKBURN, REPORTER BEAU CREW AND HEALTH & SPORTS CO-EDITOR KANDON SULLIVAN

Ali Abercromby



Abercromby is committed to UC Irvine for D1 Track and Field after four years of involvement with Tiger athletics. She was awarded as one of three 2026 San Luis Obispo High School Black and Gold athlete scholars. She committed to UC Irvine because it is a great school where she can continue to flourish, as well as it being close to home.

“My favorite memory from track was winning CIF my freshman year, it was super crazy and special to me,” said Abercromby.

Ruby Blackburn



Blackburn is committed to Northwest Nazarene University for D2 Stunt. Blackburn contributed to the Varsity Cheer and Stunt programs all four years. She wanted to thank all of her coaches and family for the encouragement they gave her through the past few years. She committed because of the community within the school and the team. Her athletic goals are to gain more advanced skills in Stunt and be placed in a lot of routines.

“My favorite memory from Stunt was winning CIF my senior year,” said Blackburn.

Hayden Brandow



Brandow is committed to Cal Poly, SLO for D1 Track and Field High Jump. Brandow committed because it fit his major well and because of the school’s athletic reputation. This year, Brandow contributed to both our basketball and track and field teams. His future goals are reaching the seven foot height in high jump and winning the Big West Championship.

“The highlight of my high school sports career was improving from 28th to 8th place in a state meet,” said Brandow.

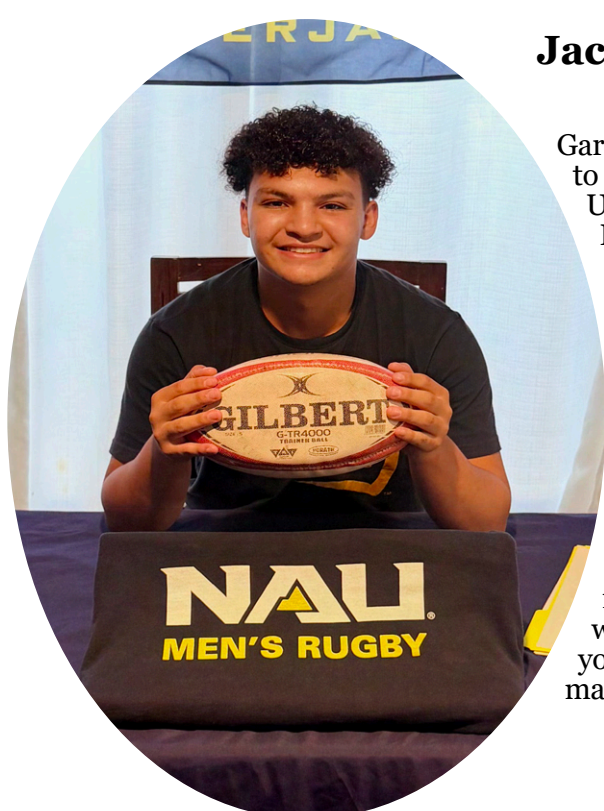
Aidan Dellinger



Dellinger is committed to UC Santa Cruz for D3 Soccer. He contributed to SLOHS Varsity football and soccer teams. Playing soccer in college has always been a goal of his since he was little. His goal is to continue improving in soccer throughout college.

“My favorite memory from soccer was the unique experience I got from traveling with the team,” said Dellinger.

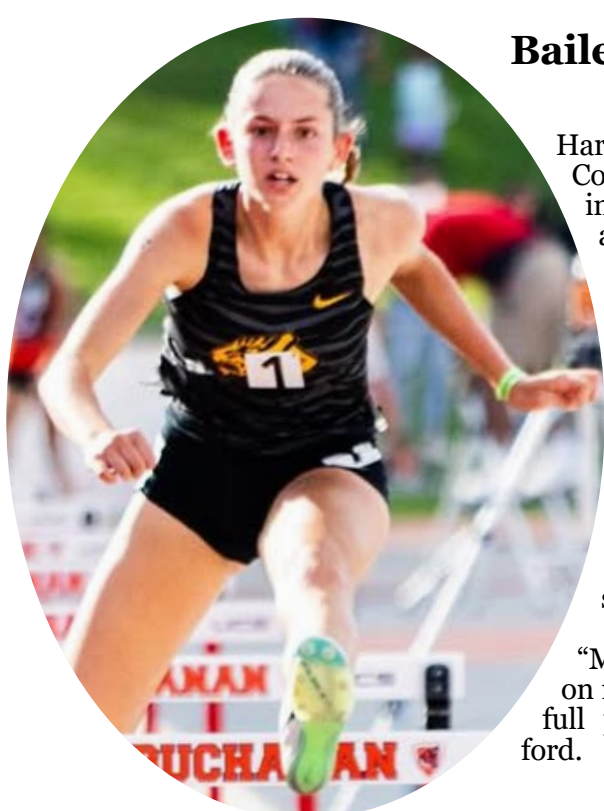
Jacob Garcia



Garcia is committed to Northern Arizona University for Rugby. He contributed to both SLOHS Football and Track and Field teams, while playing rugby outside of school. His athletic goals are to succeed at playing all four years of college.

“My favorite memory from football was destroying Arroyo Grande my freshman year,” said Garcia.

Bailey Hartford



Hartford is committed to Concordia University, in Irvine for D2 Track and Field. Hartford was awarded 2026 San Luis Obispo High School Athlete of the year. She contributed to three sports at SLOHS, Volleyball, Basketball, and Track and field. She committed there because of the close community at the school.

“My goals are to improve on my skills and reach my full potential,” said Hartford.

Twelve Students Commit to College Athletics

Kalayah Oliver



Olivera committed to Cal Poly, SLO, for D1 Track and Field, she committed for both the great academics and exceptional athletic program. This year she contributed to the Soccer and Track and Field programs, being an asset on each team. Her future goal is to excel and progress in long jump and high jump while maintaining a positive attitude, and continuing to grow as an athlete.

“My favorite memory from high school track and field is winning CIF my freshman year,” said Olivera.

Johnny Olmos



Olmos is committed to Cuesta College for Wrestling. He is going to complete this year at Cuesta in hopes that Cal Poly will recognize him and he can join their team. His goal is to eventually compete at the D1 level. He wants to thank his family for their support over the last couple of years of his wrestling journey.

“My favorite memory from my high school experience was during a huge tournament I lost a match but I ended up coming back to win seven matches in a row. It was mentally hard, but my team supported me,” said Olmos.

Sofia Roderiguez Pierson



Pierson committed to CSU Los Angeles for Golf. She started playing golf from a young age and has loved it ever since. This year, she contributed to the Girls Golf team winning their league title and shot a school best of 64! Her athletic goal for her college career is to win the NCAA championship with her team.

“My favorite memory from high school golf was winning league finals my senior year,” said Pierson.

Michael Shepherd



Shepherd committed to Sacramento State University for D1 men's Golf. His contribution to the Boys Golf team this year, helped place the team both second in league and second in D1 CIF. Shepherd's future athletic goals for college are to win a championship and start his freshman year off well.

“My favorite memory from golf was bonding with my teammates while staying in the hotels, sometimes we would putt down the hallway,” said Shepherd.

Jaden Taylor



Taylor committed to Lewis and Clark College for NAIA Baseball. Taylor contributed to the Boys Baseball team and their league title this year. He committed because of their high level baseball team and his passion for the game. Taylor's goals for next season are to bring his baseball skills to a new level and to compete in big games.

“My favorite memory from baseball was bonding with the team, as well as traveling to different tournaments and games,” said Taylor.

Brady Theule



Theule committed to Master's University for Men's Volleyball. Theule contributed to the Boys Volleyball team and their first league title since 2022! He committed because of their high level volleyball program and the school's coaching staff. His goal is to win a national championship with the university.

“My favorite high school sports memory is winning the first state championship for volleyball my sophomore year,” said Theule.

Sacramento State University
Michael Shepard

Stewart Caldwell
Kai Priola
Ella Ranta
Layla Rosenthal



SENIOR MAP (SELF REPORTED)

University of Washington
Zoe Fujii

Lewis & Clark College
Jaden Taylor

Oregon State University
Noah Soderin

University of Oregon
Jack McGhee
Gus Moody

Boise State University
Piper Gennarelli

Northwest Nazarene University
Ruby Blackburn

Brigham Young University, Idaho
Emily Bernal

Utah State Univerity
Nathan Vander Kam

Brigham Young University, Provo
Kaila Ashby
Kailani Brewer
Fiori Turner

University of Arizona
Joe Isaman
Clayton Ross

UND Mesa
Caden Kirschner

Northern Arizona University
Thora Adams
Jacob Garcia
Sydney Rodriguez

California Polytechnic University
Habiba Abo Ismail
Nico Aebischer
Pressly Akey
Zyanna Ayala
Mateo Barba
Molly Berkeland
Madeleine Bessems
Wes Bischoff
Greyson Bramble
Hayden Brandow
Jimmy Bye
Audrina Camacho
Yolotzin Camarena
Diana Castaneda Alvarez
Rowen Chapman
Marcos Chavez Michel
Alex Corbo
Brandon Cortez
Lucas de la Fuente
Andrew de la Motte
Cali Doan
Landon Drenckpohl
Jack Dunning
Henry Esola
Reese Evanoff
Colbin Garrison
Tyler Gerbel
Maggie Groshart
Ezra Hales
Jade Harkins
Amaya Henderson
Frankie James
Kylie Kasel
Cameron Kienow
Henry Knight

Scotland
University of Edinburgh
Graham Teitge

Italy
University of Venice
Elisa Coatti

France
ESCP Business School, Paris
Vittorio Studacher

Western Washington University
Luca Petterson

Montana State University
Ava Rhodes

University of Wyoming
Kaitlyn Kelly

Purdue University
Stevie Bates
Julia Lau

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
David Bellardo

Harvard University
Mila Shih

Auburn University
Evan Allwein

Eckard College
David Noland

University of Mississippi
Jacob Gill

Colorado State University
Kelton Fernandes
Reid Hacker
Colton Strand

University of Colorado, Boulder
Mason Lebed

Cuesta College
Winter Abolymov
Litzy Acosta Dominguez
Allison Aguilar Flores
Kamila Amador Gallegos
Koa Avery
Emiliano Avila
Yeison Ba Matul
Ethan Baxter
Natalie Beauvais
Sedona Bitler
Joshua Bremer
Daisy Brito Amador
Luke Brogno Robinson
Viggo Brown
Nikita Browne
Yoselin Cardenas
Connor Carver
Didier Cerron
Edgar Cisneros Alba
Chris Clanin
Carter Davis
Madilyn Deaton
Manuel Del Real
Nicolas Del Real
Robinho Delgado Martinez
Jack Edwards
Charly Elston
Christian Escalera
Jimena Escoto
Kris Esguerra Zuniga
Brandon Espinosa Lopez
Luca Fissell
Desteni Flores Martinez
Janette Flores Martinez
Troy Foote
Axayacatl Gamino
Brian Garcia
Michiah Garduno
Claire George
Ricardo Gonzalez Martinon
Ethan Haendler
Taffy Hancock
Chloe Hanshaw
Alanah Hastings

Military
Air Force
Jackson Garrett
Army
Billy Radke
Coast Guard
Evan Priola
Marines
Clinton Martinez

Gap Year in California
Angel Cortez
Sadie Fischer

Trade School
Cosmetology School
Emma White
Institute of Beauty Culture
Ashley Garcia

Work
Salomon Bravo
Raf Chavez
Eric Escalera Hernandez
Angel Gomez
Rize MacGorrino
Logan Missler

*Mashio and Nakai will study for the Japanese College Entrance Exam

Out-Of-State Schools: What’s the Appeal of Leaving?

PEOPLE & CULTURE EDITOR AVA RHODES

Although a large majority of San Luis Obispo High School graduates attend California universities, some choose to leave the state for a variety of reasons. As of May 8, over thirty members of the Class of 2026 had committed to out-of-state schools.

Expressions interviewed three seniors, committed to University of Hawai’i at Mānoa, Boise State University, and Northern Arizona University respectively, to learn what influenced their decision to leave California.

Expressions: Did you consider any schools in California during the application and decision process?

Senior Kiera Simms: Yes, I considered San Diego State but I didn’t get in for the major I wanted.

Senior Piper Gennarelli: Funny story, I tried to apply to Cal Poly but ended up accidentally applying to a different school! However, my top two choices were Arizona State and Boise State so I wasn’t too upset anyways.

Senior Sydney Rodriguez: I did consider schools in California during the application and decision process. Northern Arizona University was the only out-of-state school I applied to.

Expressions: Why did you ultimately choose to go out-of-state?

Simms: I felt the need to try something new and experience a different life for college.

Gennarelli: I love meeting new people and having new experiences, so I always knew I wanted to go out of state to really get the college experience and live on my own.

Rodriguez: I chose to go out-of-state because of the major, the campus was beautiful, and for the amazing hands-on opportunities they have within my major.

Expressions: What is your major, and did it affect your college decision?

Simms: I am majoring in Nursing so I had to take into account which schools offered nursing as well as ones with good nursing programs.

Gennarelli: I’m a business administration major, and I was leaning heavily towards Arizona State because of their great business program, but ultimately chose Boise!

Rodriguez: I am planning to major in exercise physiology. It kind of did affect my college decision because all the other colleges I applied to were for Business and NAU was the only school I applied for Exercise Physiology.

Expressions: What are you most looking forward to about living somewhere different?

Simms: Meeting new people and experiencing new cultures, I am also so excited to spend time on Hawai’i’s beaches and hiking its many mountains.

Gennarelli: I cannot wait to explore Boise, and meet all the people there. I’m already friends with a few people going in, and can’t wait to go out and meet more. Moving to SLO was fun but I’m ready for a new journey now!

Rodriguez: I am looking forward to exploring new places and meeting a lot of different people.

Expressions: Do you think you’ll come back to SLO after graduation?

Simms: Probably, I love SLO and I have only lived here for three years so I feel like I owe it to myself to give this beautiful area a chance!

Gennarelli: After graduation I’m not sure where I’ll end up! However, I’m looking up to the future, and I’m excited to see where I end up.

Rodriguez: I think I will come back to SLO after graduation, but probably only to visit family and friends.

Seniors going out-of-state are in for many new adventures, and we wish them luck!

Graduation is Near and Seniors Have Checked Out

REPORTER MAKAYLIN MOLINAR

As graduation gets closer, many San Luis Obispo High School seniors at school are beginning to feel the symptoms of “senior slump” referred to as senioritis, including a loss of motivation and focus that often appears in the last couple months of your final school year. Excitement that graduating seniors feel turns into a loss of energy to do work and difficulty staying engaged in the school work.

“I used to be able to sign myself out but they recently gave me an attendance contract so now I have to be present,” senior Oliver Zeeb.

The long school year is coming to an end. College applications are submitted and most students are committed. Assignments may feel less important, and students often struggle to balance school responsibilities with jobs, social events, and sports. The participation in class starts to lower and assignments

begin to be slacked on. Skipping work altogether is even worse.

“The last months of school get really boring and my classes are done. It feels like I don’t need to be here anymore, I’m just ready to get out,” senior Jonah Appleby.

With the ability to sign themselves in and out of school when they turn eighteen with a paper that their parents sign, it is easier for students to skip class or leave campus early. During the 2023-2024 school year 40 to 50 percent of seniors were chronically absent in the school year. Chronic absenteeism means you’re missing more than ten percent of the school year whether absences are excused or unexcused. Missing school regularly can negatively impact your grades and classroom performance.

“With it being AP tests already and most sports seasons coming to an end, everything is dying out

and attendance feels optional and we are all ready to graduate, senioritis is really hitting hard,” said senior Mackensie Moore.

Many students focus more on making memories with their friends rather than being present in school. With the senior activities like the sunrise and sunset and picnic/dinner the center of attention is the high school experience coming to an end and keeping the memories coming before all the friends separate.

Despite this, teachers and staff encourage students to stay committed until the end of the school year. Attendance is still important for graduating. Building this habit now of skipping will be carried on later in life. Senioritis can be avoided and overcome. It shouldn’t define the final year of high school, and you can still enjoy your last months while staying focused on your future goals.

Why do SLOHS Seniors Choose to Take Gap Years?

REPORTER LORELEI HUTCHINSON

Some seniors at San Luis Obispo High School choose to take a gap year to experience new opportunities outside of college. *Expressions* gained insight on three seniors’ worries and excitements as they move into this new adventure.

Expressions: What inspired you to take a gap year?

Senior Sadie Fischer: After working with the dogs in my animal science classes, I realized I wanted to go into a dog focused career. Taking this gap year would help me focus on the areas I want to specialize in, such as dog training and pet sitting.

Senior Oliver Zeeb: I really wanted to see the world and help others! Traveling is a big passion of mine and I wanted to spend time in new places.

Senior Kanna Mashio: I decided to take a gap year because I want to attend a Japanese college, and the entrance exams start in October.

Expressions: What are your plans once your gap year is over?

Fischer: Once my gap year is over I plan to start a professional dog training course. This course will help me build the high level skills and knowledge needed to become a successful trainer.

Zeeb: My plan is to head back to college after my gap year.

Expressions: What do you plan on doing during your gap year?

Fischer: My plan is to start working to earn money to pay for the dog training course. While working, I want to continue gaining more customer service skills and experience with dogs through pet sitting, dog walking. Alongside that I will also be coaching the SLOHS frosh cheer team.

Zeeb: I plan on heading to Nepal for six weeks working with a non-profit and then spending time all across Europe like Paris and Switzerland! After I’m done I come back to SLO and will be working as a real estate agent with a modern broker, a real estate company.

Mashio: My plan is to prepare for the entrance exams during my gap year and then attend the Japanese college that I get into.

Expressions: Are you excited for anything specific going into your gap year?

Fischer: I’m very excited to finally start on the path that I have been dreaming of. Working with dogs is something I really love and I am looking forward to turning my passion into a career where I can help both animals and their owners.

Zeeb: I’m really excited to work at an elephant sanctuary in Nepal and also spend time with orphans there! Just connecting with people in general!

Mashio: I’m excited to start a new journey in a new environment.

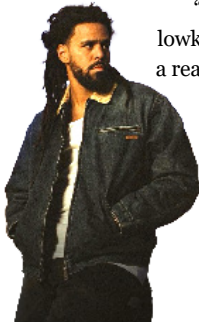
Gap years are an opportunity to take a year off and find one’s calling through experiences. Knowing when something is right for you can be difficult without fully experiencing opportunities, so Tigers should consider gap years as an option.



Senior Oliver Zeeb, who is headed to Nepal to work with a nonprofit, and then to Europe. Photo courtesy of sophomore Lorelei Hutchinson.

SLOHS Graduates Share Four Years of School Culture

“What’s your favorite album that’s come out during your time at SLOHS?”



“The Fall Off’ by Jay Cole. It’s lowkey his magnum opus. It’s just a really good project. Production’s really good, beat selection’s really good.” - **Zee Malama**

“Chromakopia’ by Tyler the Creator” - **Darla Martinez**

“What’s the best video game to play in class?”

“I used to play ‘Bloxel’ until they blocked it” - **Habiba Abo Ismail**



“I feel like I played some Cool Math Games, but it turned out that it was run by a cartel or something.” - **Sophia Bates**

“Spelunky” - **Gabe Jantos**

“What’s your favorite school dance?”



“Prom last year. That was a good one.” - **Darla Martinez**

“Freshman year homecoming” - **Evan Priola**

“I liked prom last year. The venue was really nice” - **Sophia Bates**

“What teacher has the best style?”



“Mr. Cameron. Have you seen his Hawaiian shirts? Oh yeah.” - **Bob Meyers**

“Ms. Avery.” - **Evan Priola**

“Mr. Ross.” - **Owen Rippens**

“Ms. Enzerink” - **Mateus Iscold**

“What song will take you back to high school when you’re old?”



“What’s that one Taylor Swift song?” - **Sophia Bates**

“Sweater Weather’ by The Neighborhood. That song was really popular my Freshman year. It takes me back.” - **Juan Carlos Martinon**

“It’s gotta be ‘Digital Love’ by Daft Punk. That one just has a way of bringing me back, no matter where I’m from or what time I’m in.” - **Owen Rippens**

“Favorite movie that’s come out during your time at SLOHS?”



“The Minecraft Movie” - **Bob Meyers**

“I watched ‘Sinners’ for the first time about like three weeks ago, that was really good.” - **Zee Malama**

“Iron Lung’ ... I really enjoy sci-fi, so it was just really fun to watch.” - **Ella Blair**

“Best music you’ve seen on campus?”



“Mason Horstman, man. Ultraviolets.” - **Darla Martinez**

“Probably Ultraviolets.” - **Carter Davis**

“The Ultraviolets. They do a good job.” - **Oliver Zeeb**

“Ultraviolets” - **Mason Lebed**

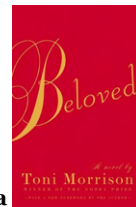
“Favorite required reading book?”



“Nickel Boys’ ... The brotherhood in the story reminds me a lot of Tiger culture.” - **Oliver Zeeb**

“The Lord of the Flies” - **Sydney Rodriguez**

“Definitely ‘Beloved’, it was just a really good examination of how the U.S. morally fails as an institution at times. It’s fantastic.” - **Zee Malama**



“Best off campus lunch spot?”

“7-Eleven, just because they like everything there.” - **Ella Blair**

“Cal Fresh or Taqueria Santa Cruz.” - **Mason Lebed**



“Best student rapper?”



“I don’t know, Lil’ Melee?” - **Noah Soderin**

“Jacob Gill. That guy’s got some bars.” - **Oliver Zeeb**

“Best/worst cafeteria meal?”

“I eat a lot of apples.” - **Carter Davis**



“Best, by far, the pulled pork sandwiches. Those things are so gas.” - **Justin Toews**

“Any time I eat the Mac and Cheese I get sick.” - **Habiba Abo Ismail**



“Favorite meme from your time at SLOHS?”

“It’s still massive. The low taper fade.” - **Oliver Zeeb**



“I’m gonna have to slide it over to the Tik Tok rizz party.” - **Justin Toews**

“Anderdingus” - **Carter Davis**

“Best class proj-

“After the Calc BC test, we got to make movies ... Ours was called Hyperbola Potter and it was a Harry Potter movie but with math characters, and there was very little calculus in it.” - **Sophia**



“In metal shop I made basically a little pit bike. That was pretty sweet.” - **Noah Soderin**

“AP World History end of the year project ... I made presentation on the worst people in world history, and made a bracket out of it.” - **Mason Lebed**

Graduating seniors have now experienced four years of San Luis Obispo High School’s unique culture. From food and music to literature and TV, seniors have experienced and contributed to almost half a decade of school culture on and off campus. Expressions randomly selected a cohort of graduating seniors to share their wealth of SLOHS cultural knowledge.

Collage courtesy of reporters Tyler Gerbel and Wesley Bisheff.



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How Do Seniors' Future Majors Compare To National Averages?

REPORTER MILLA WATTS

Luckily for San Luis Obispo High School's seniors this year, they will be graduating, entering college in a couple of months, and joining the adult world. In college students must choose majors to study for the next few years, with some students also choosing a college minor. But what do this year's SLOHS seniors want to be taking in college?

The top categorized major choices at SLOHS 2026 according to a SLOHSexpressions survey include: STEM (31.7 percent), Health and Medicine (20.6 percent), Business and Communication (11.9 percent), Visual and Performing arts (7.1 percent), and Social Sciences (7.1 percent).

"I think I'm going to major in Culinary because I've taken the classes here and I really enjoy the class and the profession itself and would like to continue doing that," said senior Julien Sheetz.

As of 2026 the top five most popular major choices in the U.S. are Business, Healthcare, Social Sciences, Engineering, and Bio Sciences in that order. Business majors have been proven to be very valuable in the long run as it helps get high paying salaries that are usually above \$60,000 yearly, due to its likeness among employers as it builds skillsets that serve fondness in those fields of work. Medical degrees have also been well received with a twelve percent increase in employment this year, out-pacing other fields and predicted to remain growing to 2030.

"I think it's good to major in fields that are contributing to society heavily as of now but people should really go for something they have passion for and think they can do. I also think college is a time to discover yourself and your interests," said senior Mila Shih.

But not all majors are doing as great, some majors have been seeing either a decline in interest or in employment interest. The number one decreasing major by interest is Theological majors for not receiving

good pay after college and not commonly employed for their field. Performing arts, Liberal arts, Education, and Social Services are other majors that aren't as lucky in the job market after college, due to lacking skillsets employers look for and no available jobs in that field.

"[The job market is stingy about certain majors] because there's a lot of talented and skilled people wanting these jobs but aren't being hired due to there not being enough spaces for them, those jobs are really great for ambitious people but it's just not possible for everyone to get an opportunity," said senior Jude Biggers.

Though the U.S. 2026 job market has been challenging in general, including new graduates out of college. As of 2026 the unemployment rate between 22 to 27 year olds has risen 5.6 percent from last year.

This is a result of employers being finicky with their options and AI taking jobs. AI has been blamed for taking entry jobs in the last year, with data showing AI has taken at least thirty percent of entry-level jobs. AI becomes more equipped every year and is able to do better as more people use it constantly. College students have admitted to using ChatGPT to pass college with 36 percent of them using it daily.

College itself is a big change for seniors, having to pick a major with the thought of 'this is what I'll be doing for life' is very stressful to decide. Whether students go based on salary and success in the job market or based on passion and what they really love, it is followed by a path of stressful decisions.

Seniors should remember that nothing is set in stone and that the major they end up choosing doesn't mean that is the only career you can pursue after college.

Sources: *research.com, poetsandquantsforundergrads.com, admissionsight.com, www.entrepreneur.com, www.cnn.com*

Community College: Last Resort or Genius Hack?

REPORTER ARCHER ACKERMAN

With the school year coming to an end, San Luis Obispo High School seniors are getting ready to graduate, moving on to a new chapter in their lives. While people are taking many different routes, most seniors will choose to go to college and pursue higher education after their graduation. While many will go straight to a four year university, others will choose to go to a community college, which generally provide two year programs and allow for transfer to a four year college to complete their degree. Four year colleges are considered the more conventional route, but is community college a better option for students?

"Tuition can be very expensive, and I personally feel that a community college is a great way to start the next chapter of life with less concern of financial problems. Many students also aren't completely sure about what they want to do, and may discover that they would prefer to do something different than their original plan," said senior Leila Milton, who will be attending West Valley College.

Attending a four year university can be very expensive, especially without scholarships or financial aid. These institutions often put people into debt for a good part of their lives, however community college is usually much cheaper or even free for students to attend.

"It's free, or a lot less expensive. It's also a lot smaller, which isn't necessarily an advantage. For me, I'm going out of state and I get to experience a new life and new environment, which I think is an advantage regardless of whether it's community college or a four year," said senior Owen Meadows, who will attend

Chandler Gilbert Community College in Arizona.

Many students want to attend college because of outside pressures, they may end up jumping around and switching majors, trying to find what they really want to do. That could be a lot more expensive at a four year university, whereas community college allows a lot more flexibility because classes are less expensive.

"I feel like community college is open to any student, if they have learning disabilities, and if they don't have a clear focus in life, and are still trying to figure out their goals and what they want to do," said senior Nakita Brown, who will be attending Cuesta College.

Community colleges can be better for people who struggle more with learning because they have smaller classes and school which could allow more accommodations.

The small school community college may work better for some people, smaller classes might be a better environment depending on learning style. Community college can also allow someone to experience the world without spending a ton of money on your education. Students can still go to school and get a degree without spending tens of thousands of dollars on tuition.

While community colleges and universities both have their ups and downs, what is best for you really depends on your personal situation.

While some people may argue for one or another, it can't be said that one is truly better in every situation. In the end, the most important thing is that you follow the path that is right for you rather than following others, because you are the one who needs to look out for yourself.



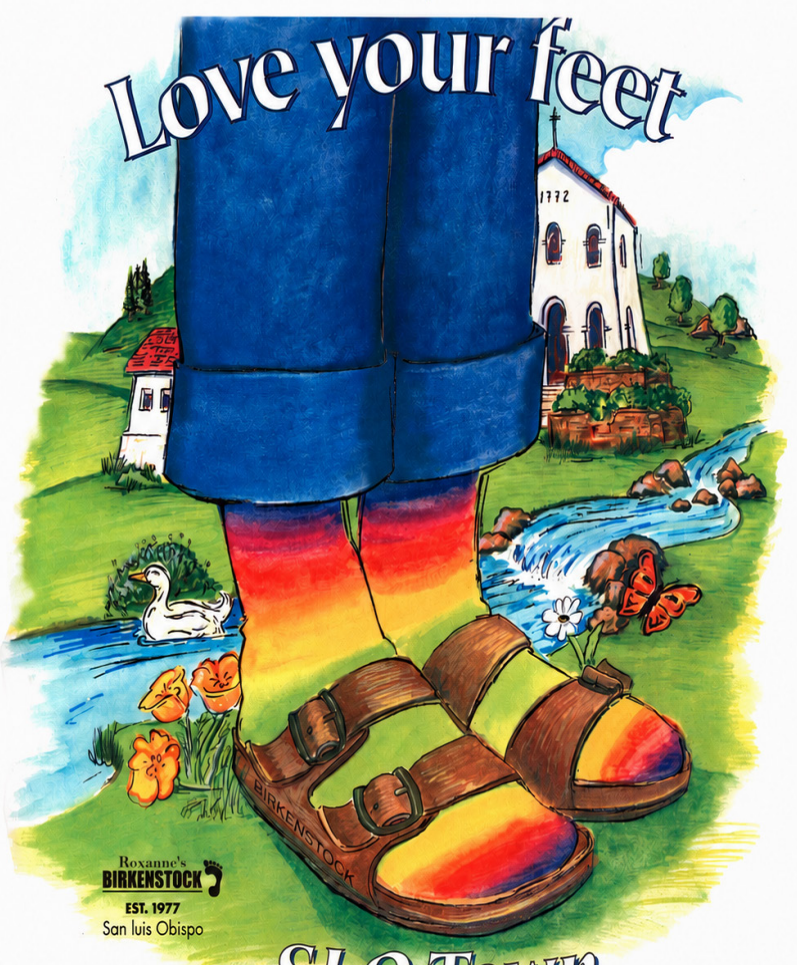
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Senior Zoe Fujii Ends Her Term as SLOHS’ ASB President



Senior Zoe Fujii leaves SLOHS for the next chapter of life. Photo courtesy of Fujii.

HEALTH & SPORTS CO-EDITOR SOPHIA CHAVES

The spirit of the student body at San Luis Obispo High School keeps students going, and the ASB class of the 2025-2026 school year has been one to remember. The ASB class flawlessly plans dances, lunchtime activities, and pep rallies, but there’s one leader that brings all the spirit: senior Zoe Fujii.

Expressions: What inspired you to run for ASB President?

Senior and ASB President Zoe Fujii: I’ve genuinely always loved being involved in the school and being a part of ASB...Even if I didn’t get president, I was just happy to be a part of it and illicit change at SLOHS and for ASB.

Expressions: What is the most rewarding part of serving in ASB?

Fujii: The most rewarding part has to be just every cumulative event that we have done as a class, and at the end of it, being able to look at the class and see the accomplishment.

Expressions: Looking back, is there anything you would’ve done differently as president?

Fujii: I wish we had stuck with lunchtime events more clearly, and I wish, just as a class, we had put more press out there. I feel like in ASB, we do have just a lot of free time focused on planning, and I wish I had utilized that more, working towards other smaller events.

Expressions: Was there ever a moment where you doubted yourself as a leader? How did you move past it?

Fujii: Yes, absolutely. In everything I’ve done as president, I’ve also asked whether I am the right person for the job and whether I’m doing it to the best of my ability. In general, I will be the first to admit that there have been times when, as president, I have just flat out failed. I’ve missed school board meetings, I have messed up a practiced speech, I have been quick to make decisions about ASB and about my role in the class, but I’m happy I messed up so much. I feel like

in order to move past any of them, I had to actually go through every failure. In this past school year, I have genuinely learned so much from myself and others, and I feel like the way I was able to actually get past it was to understand that I can always derive something from every experience.

Expressions: What part of leaving this role is hardest for you?

Fujii: I think about the loss of the people around me and the comfort of my position in the class. It goes without saying that I will miss this class. I cried at our last rally practice and at our last rally. I don’t even want to think about my last day in this class, but it has been so enjoyable because of the incredible people who show up and work so hard in ASB every day. Also, like I said before, the comfort of the role. Every other year before this I was a class officer, and I was so adapted to that role, being challenged in this way was one of the best parts of my senior year, and it isn’t just leaving this role, but the loss of the class as a whole that will be the hardest for me.

Expressions: What moment from this year do you think you’ll carry with you long after graduation?

Fujii: Our very last rally was by far the best rally I have ever been a part of, and I am just so glad to leave on such a wonderful note. It just meant so much to me because this year in ASB, we had a lot of underclassmen, a lot of younger people, and new people to ASB, and this was the only rally where I feel like we immediately nailed it and knew what needed to happen, and just seeing that growth is so cool.

Expressions: In what ways do you think the school still needs to grow?

Fujii: I think that we need to curate a kinder community. I do already think that we are in a good place with how everyone is treated, but I want there to be full accessibility to any and all groups of people to encourage just better socialization and more interconnection for our entire community. I do understand, though it is difficult with such a large school that only keeps growing. I also wish more people went to school-sanctioned events that aren’t just sports games, like band competitions, choir concerts, and art shows, these are all things that really do thrive, and we have such amazing people at this school that we just don’t give enough recognition to.

Expressions: If you had one final message to students, what would it be?

Fujii: Please don’t be afraid to be kind, talk to everyone, actually be authentic, and make friends with everyone. People are really amazing if you give them the chance.

Expressions: At the end of your high school career, what are you most proud of, not as president, but as a person?

Fujii: I’m proud of the person I’ve become. I feel like I have finally hit a point where I am happy with my personality and feel like I can talk to anyone, and I have taught myself to feel no embarrassment. I am also just proud of the connections I’ve built, the people who I feel like I’ve been able to build bridges with are groups that I have been in school with for years and years, and I have been able to gain best friends and close people that I absolutely love to surround myself with. I also feel like I have enough knowledge to have insight into my mistakes and to be able to be retrospective, but I still have so much to learn and do, and being in this place is one of the most liberating feelings I have ever felt.

Fujii has been a memorable president and student, her time on campus was spent as a beacon of positivity and kindness. As she closes out her presidency, and her high school career, it’s important to recognize the hard work she did for SLOHS.

The Class of 2026 Voted on Expressions’ Superlatives!

REPORTER MILLA WATTS



“Biggest Flirt” - William Radke



“Best Victorian Child” - Charly Elston



“Looks Most Like a Beagle” - Mason Horstman



“Most Likely to Move to the Middle of Nowhere and Never Be Seen Again” - Owen Meadows



“Worst Person to Be Stranded on a Deserted Island With” - Taryn Weller



“Best Duo” - Grant Laity and Bob Meyers



“Best Tall Person” - Nico Aebischer
“Best Short Person” - Wesley Bisheff



“Two Unrelated People That People Think Are the Same Person” - Lincoln Pires and Mr. Rubio

Expressions is Saying Goodbye to Five Senior Editors



Newspaper has been a large part of my life for four years, having developed into a mildly concerning obsession (as many of my friends can probably tell you). I've taken eleven trimesters of the class and from the very beginning, *Expressions* has been a wonderfully chaotic journey. Writing for the newspaper has given me a lot of freedom to express my random interests and share my opinions, *Expressions* basically serving as my digital diary. I want to say thank you to everyone who I've interviewed, all of our readers, the upperclassmen who gave me the confidence to be an editor, and all of my friends who've supported this crazy passion. Being in the class has allowed me to grow my writing skills both as a reporter and an editor, while also learning about so many aspects of the student body. It's sad to leave this chapter behind but I know there's an amazing group of underclassmen ready to continue the *Expressions* legacy. I'll be attending USC for Political Science in the fall, but *Expressions* has showed me the power of the press and I hope to continue making an impact with journalism. - Yours, Vyolet Burrus

I joined Newspaper fall trimester of my freshman year because I was vaguely interested in politics and journalism and partially because my dad forced me. I kinda hated it, but at the same time that was a really moody time for me and I hated everything. Over time I warmed up to the class and I began to love writing about anything I wanted. I became friends with really fun and interesting people through *Expressions*. I became an editor, I hopped around different pages, but my true love has been the website. It has been incredibly fulfilling getting through countless challenges, making an impact, and nerding out about the weirdest things. I'd strongly encourage any student who has any passion for literally anything to join *Expressions*. Once you get past growing pains and Nairne's RFK Jr. vibes, this class can become a canvas for all your passions if you give it time and effort. I'm going to UC Irvine next year for Mechanical Engineering, however the central lesson that *Expressions* and this school has taught me will stay with me forever, invest yourself in things that help you change and make change. - Aidan Field, running away



What a time it has been! No matter what kind of day you're having, being in newspaper ensures that some part of it will be interesting. Joining *Expressions*, I didn't really know what to expect, but I knew that I loved writing and that Vyolet wanted me to be there. While there were times that were difficult, newspaper taught me many things, not only about interviews and reporting, but about leadership, collaboration, and flexibility. Next year, I plan to attend the University of San Francisco for chemistry, but writing will always be a backdrop to my life, and I will certainly miss Newspaper, and the friends and memories I made there. - Roslyn Risner signing off

I joined *Expressions* junior year after hearing Vyolet talk about the class constantly for nearly three years. It was out of my comfort zone, but it has ended up being one of my most entertaining classes. I've gained so many opportunities to meet new people and be creative. I've especially enjoyed writing articles on the music and performing arts scene, a topic that's very important to me. I've loved doing page design for our print editions, which I'll miss the most. Next year I'm heading to Montana State, where I'm majoring in Early Childhood Education and minoring in Music. I can't wait for the next chapter, but I will miss spending time with my friends at *Expressions* and the work I've done in the class. - Ava Rhodes

Like many students in newspaper, I was thrown into this class against my will. However, unlike most, I came back almost two years later (peer pressure and lack of space in the class I actually wanted can be really convincing)! While I've only been in newspaper once before, I still valued my time in this class writing silly and/or informative articles and formatting pages for print. Getting out of my comfort zone has always been difficult for me, so being an editor was just one experience throughout my senior year that contributed to my confidence. Shoutout to all my friends (you know who you are), I'm going to miss you guys no matter how far you go! Goodbye! - Emily Lopez

Expressions will also mourn the loss of Bob Meyers and Lucia McCarthy Zirion, who failed to submit editor bios on time, but were great editors nonetheless.



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