

THE TORCH

Student-Led Newsletter: Where Tomorrow's Leaders Speak Today



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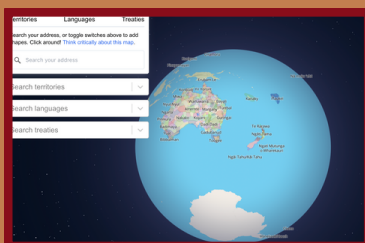
Indigenous Peoples Heritage Month

By Ashley Sanchez

November is Indigenous Peoples Month, a time to recognize and honor the histories, cultures, and contributions of Indigenous communities across the United States. Originally established as Native American Heritage Month in 1990, this month-long observance was an expansion of the original Native American Heritage Week, first declared in 1986. Indigenous Peoples Month not only celebrates the unique heritage of Indigenous communities but also acknowledges the resilience and strength they have shown in the face of centuries of challenges, including colonization, displacement, and cultural suppression.

Throughout November, schools, museums, cultural institutions, and government organizations host events, workshops, and educational programs to raise awareness of Indigenous issues, highlight notable achievements, and share cultural traditions. Indigenous voices, art, and stories are shared to provide a better understanding of the different identities and rich legacies of Indigenous peoples.

Indigenous Peoples Month also serves as a call for more awareness of modern challenges faced by Indigenous communities, including land rights, environmental justice, health inequality, and cultural preservation. By learning about Indigenous people we honor their contributions and support efforts toward equity. Indigenous Peoples Month is a reminder that understanding and celebrating Indigenous cultures and histories is an important part of the nation's collective story.



Click the image above to map
Indigenous territories,
treaties, and languages, @
NATIVE-LAND.CA

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JOURNALISM STUDENT REPORTERS:

Roman De Avila
Jared Gallaga
Evelyn Rivera
Ashley Sanchez
Elijah Shillingford

EDITOR:
Ashley Sanchez

NOTABLE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

BY ASHLEY SANCHEZ



Sharice Davids

An American politician, attorney, and former mixed martial artist serving as the U.S. representative from Kansas's 3rd congressional district since 2019. She was one of the first Native women to be openly LGBTQ+ and be elected into Congress.



John Harrington

He is the first Native American to fly to space. On his mission he wanted to do something to honor his heritage, so he took a braid of sweet grass, carried with him six eagle feathers, two arrowheads, and a Chickasaw Flag.



Temryss Lane

From the Golden Eagle Clan of Lummi Nation, Temryss is the Director of the Indian Country Team at Pyramid Communications, a public relations and strategic communications firm that supports tribes and tribal organizations in telling their stories and generating visibility for Indigenous leadership.



Winona LaDuke

She is the founder and Executive Director of Honor the Earth which is an organization focusing on environmental advocacy that played a role and supported the Dakota Access Pipeline Protest.

GENTRIFICATION IN LATINO COMMUNITIES

By: Jared Gallaga

Gentrification is when a low-income neighborhood changes as wealthier people move in, leading to shifts in the area's economic and racial makeup.

Gentrification can happen when a city experiences job growth or more investment, causing a population boom. A crowded housing market is often an early sign of gentrification, with more middle- and upper-class people moving in. Gentrification brings both benefits and drawbacks. On the plus side, it can raise property values and bring new businesses and jobs to a neighborhood. However, it can also have negative effects, like pushing out lower-income communities due to rising living costs.

Mexico City is facing a wave of gentrification by Americans leaving the US to live in Mexico; its population grew by 3%, or about 600,000 people, between 2019 and 2023, according to The World Population Review. The issue with this is that Americans are driving the prices of living in Mexico City up, and many Mexicans cannot afford all the changes of life. One theory of why so many Americans are moving is because of the affordable cost of living there while working from home for an American-based company. In other words, they are being paid American money, but paying Mexico's cheaper prices to live.

Even though the new economic growth would appear to be good for Mexico City, many challenges are caused by gentrification. For example, the displacement of local communities, and new social and financial barriers for the previous long-time residents. This hurts the neighborhood's community and identity. Local businesses are often run by residents, which helps create a stronger, more sustainable community that keeps its history and culture alive.

However, even if people continue to move to Mexico City, the real spirit of Mexico City is all about resistance. The city is what it is today because people have defended their heritage and traditions for a very long time.

THE OCCUPATION OF ALCATRAZ

By Elijah Shillingford

Alcatraz is a small island offshore from San Francisco. Throughout history it has been used as a fort during the American Civil War, a military prison, and a maximum security federal penitentiary. When it was a prison, prohibition-era gangsters like Al “Scarface” Capone and George “Machine Gun” Kelly, were incarcerated there. Alcatraz was shut down in 1963 because it was too expensive to continue operating. The prison was essentially abandoned with no solid plan for its future.

In 1969, after being closed for six years, a group of Indigenous Americans called Indians of All Tribes, consisting of many UC Berkeley students, took boats to Alcatraz Island early in the morning with plans to occupy the island; they argued that, based on the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie, any unused federal land should be returned to Native Americans. During this time, the U.S. government was carrying out termination policies that removed the official status of over 100 tribes, cutting off support and taking away millions of acres of Native land. The occupation would become one of the greatest acts of political resistance in American Indian history and culminated the occupation of other unused federal lands. The media at the time was using poor journalistic practices to diminish the protest, but the protestors countered the media by releasing their own news via radio.

After the 89-day occupation of Alcatraz, the official government policy of termination of Indian tribes was ended and of policy, Indian self-determination became the official US government policy. The legacy of the Occupation of Alcatraz focused the nation’s attention on the injustices endured by native peoples and ushered in new federal policies and proposals supporting tribal self-rule.

Learn more about The Occupation of Alcatraz by clicking the image below.



D.A.C.A & WHAT'S TO COME

By Evelyn Rivera

The term DACA stands for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. It is an exercise of government power and provides temporary relief from deportation and work authorization to undocumented immigrants who were under 31 years of age as of June 15, 2012. DACA was created on June 15, 2012, by then-Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano.

A foreign national applying for the Dream Act may be denied if they have been convicted of a crime. Those who have a felony conviction on their record, a significant misdemeanor conviction, or 3 or more misdemeanor convictions are not eligible for the Dream Act.

DACA and the Dream Act have impacted society by improving educational attainment and academic performance for undocumented children. There are approximately 530,000 young undocumented immigrants currently being protected under the program. On May 3, 2024 Joe Biden extended the eligibility for Affordable Care Act (ACA) coverage to DACA recipients.

In 2017, President Trump tried to end DACA, calling it unconstitutional and suggesting Congress should create a lasting solution. This led to years of court battles, with lower courts stopping his efforts and the Supreme Court ruling in 2020 that his attempt to end DACA was unlawful. However, the issue wasn't fully resolved, leaving DACA open to more legal challenges.

Given President-Elect, Donald Trump's, past actions, many worry that in his next term as President, he may again try to end or change DACA. If the program were to end the current recipients will no longer be able to renew their DACA status and the new applications will be put on pause. It would put all the recipients at risk of being deported and stripping them of their abilities to legally work in the United States.

While no one can say for sure what will happen, major changes could be coming. Many news outlets recommend DACA recipients reach out to an immigration attorney to answer any questions they might have about the future of their DACA status.

PEARL HARBOR: THE COST OF WAR

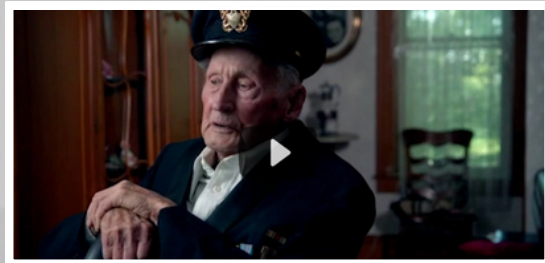
By Roman De Avila

Just before 8am on Sunday, December 7th, 1941, due to Japan's confusion and frustration with America's aid for China in the 2nd Sino-Japanese War, and the sanctions against Japan. Japan's Navy Air Services sent a military strike to Honolulu, Hawaii, the home of a U.S. Naval base, that killed a total of 2,403. Less than 48 hours after this strike, President Franklin D. Roosevelt asked Congress to declare war on Japan.

All of this sprouted from Japan's increasingly aggressive actions against China. The Japanese government believed the only way to fix its struggling economy was to expand its neighbor's territory and take over its import market. They declared war on China in 1937, and American officials responded to this with economic sanctions and trade embargoes. They said that Japan would have to stop its expansionism without access to money and goods. That completely backfired because it only made the Japanese government more determined to stand their ground and fight. America and Japan wouldn't budge in their negotiations which inevitably led to warfare.

It's really important to understand and expose yourself to the outcomes of war. They achieve nothing to unite, but they also do nothing to strengthen countries. History has proven it only destroys innocent people and families who most of the time don't support their government's foreign affairs. Especially given our current military advances in nuclear sciences, the world can't afford war. We don't have the leadership to defend ourselves properly and effectively come 2025. Modern-day war should scare you and it should not be considered.

Click the image to see a Navy Medic Recount the Attack on Pearl Harbor.



WHY THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE IS FAILING AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

By Roman De Avila

The Electoral College was written in the Constitution to give state senators and representatives the ultimate decision on who is elected for president instead of the citizens who submit their vote. They do this through the 548 electoral votes spread across all 50 states. The larger the state's population is, the more electoral votes the state is given; for example, places like California have 54 electoral votes, but places like Montana only have 4 electoral votes. In my opinion, it's an unfair representation of America's "Voice". It makes people second guess if their vote matters because it doesn't decide anything.

One problem that the Electoral College presents is in non-competitive states. An example would be a lifelong Democrat in Texas or a loyal Republican in California, every election they pretty much have to hope their candidate has enough supporters in each state because of their political powerlessness. Eliminating this system would empower every citizen to make a difference and have their voice heard in future elections.

Most of the arguments to keep the Electoral College aren't necessarily always rooted in truth. One of them is that the Electoral College increases the legitimacy and certainty of elections by showing the margin of victory, therefore diminishing the need for recounts and providing an election. Still, that argument doesn't make sense to me because, if anything, it takes away the legitimacy of the election by taking away the voice of the people. Yes, we do elect the representatives that make these decisions but do not agree with everything that politician believes, there's a good chance we don't vote for the same candidate. Another argument is that the Electoral College discourages voter fraud because the system isolates the impact of stolen votes, which also falls flat on its face because there's no real way to stop voter fraud completely.

The problem is demonstrated fairly easily if we look at the past six elections. Two out of the six Presidents who won the Presidential Election did not win the popular vote. It's strictly a problem with "Amending the Constitution". It's very annoying to me how people abide by the Constitution so heavily because the Constitution (written September 17, 1787) wasn't written for everybody, specifically not for people of color and women. When it was written, equality and freedom were not given to everyone in this country; we are a completely different nation than where we began. If we need a piece of paper to protect EVERYONE'S liberties, why don't we write a more modernized version that aligns with our modern beliefs as a country?

To me, it is clear that the negatives outweigh the positives in the Electoral College system. No matter how much we are told to vote and that our vote matters, we all know who makes the final decision. Imagine the drive an American would have to vote knowing that it makes the decision. Switching to the Popular Vote would actually force the candidates to fight for the opinion of Americans. With the Electoral College system, candidates spend a lot of time in states where the majority of votes have not been consistent to one party or the other, instead of campaigning to all of America. Switching to the popular vote system will ensure the voice of the people.

Thanksgiving Recipes

By Evelyn Rivera

Click any
image to find
the recipe!

Thanksgiving is a time for gathering with loved ones and sharing delicious food. Below are some Thanksgiving recipes, blending classic dishes with modern flavors to inspire your holiday feast. These recipes are sure to make your celebration memorable.



Chef John Perfect Mashed Potatoes

This recipe gives you a proper delicious technique to make the perfect mashed potatoes. It's a good buttery, fluffy, and lump-free side dish that is great comfort food.



River Road Spinach Madeline

The Spinach Madeline remains as an all time favorite side dish. It is a thick and creamy dish with a hint of jalapeno heat .



Apple Cheddar Twist

These apple cheddar twist are always around for apple season and the filing tastes just like apple pie and cheddar.



Thanksgiving Leftover Casserole

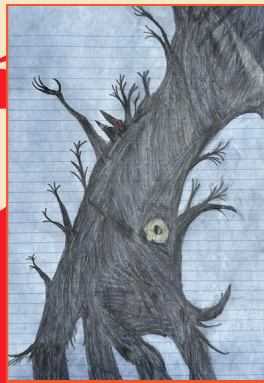
The Thanksgiving leftover casserole is a layered dish made with leftover stuffing, turkey, veggies, and cheesy smashed potatoes.

STUDENT ART SPOTLIGHT

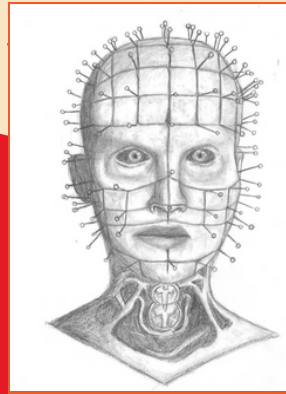
This page celebrates the creativity and talent of student artists, showcasing their unique expressions and perspectives.



Title: Halloween
Student: Lillyanna Perez-Ramos
Grade: 11
Medium: markers on recycled sketch paper



Title: No Title
Student: Ethan Travis
Grade: 11
Medium: Pencil on Paper



Title: Pinhead
Student: Elisa Febo
Grade: 12
Assignment: Blending/Shading Technique



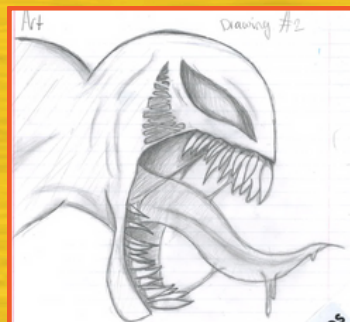
Title: The Feeling Unknown
Student: Armando Febo
Grade: 12
Assignment: Blending/Shading Technique



Title: No Title
Student: Sarai Alvarez
Grade: 12
Assignment: Blending/Shading Technique



Title: No Title
Student: Destiny Rodriguez
Grade: 12
Assignment: Surrealist Painting



Title: No Title
Student: Aurora Lopez Robles
Grade: 12
Assignment: Blending/Shading Technique



Title: Coraline
Student: Niyah Briggs
Grade: 12
Assignment: Blending/Shading Technique

Credit Crushers

By Evelyn Rivera

Term 2

Adam Lanham

Adam Maciel

Aldrich John Candasa

Alvaro Zavala

Andres Nunez Melendrez

Angel Solis Rodriguez

Anthony Collins

Ara Reza

Rarely Guzman Cruz

Arturo Sandoval

Brian Ascencio Carillo

Crystal Ochoa Gonzalez

Crystian Martinez Gonzalez

Daniel Vazquez

Denis Guzman Deleon

Dominique King

Edgar Mundo Zepeda

Elias Zuniga

Emma-Marie McCall

Gianni Basler

Giovanni Gianquento

Gonzalo Villasenor

Gudiano

Hana Gad

Isaac Tellez Valente

Jason Guzman

Jason Avila Lopez

Jaylen Dunkley- Wagner

Jazmin Ayala

Jeremy Nunez Ruiz

Jeronimo Choc

Jesus Orozco Torres

Jezzibelle Morel

Jonathan Jaimes Queibras

Jordan Ennik

Jose Xol Cac

Josiah Thompson

Julian De Jesus Espejo

Ceron

Kaitlyn Delgado

Katia Juarez

Kayla Hegarty

Kaylee Gavin

Keiri Lovos Recinos

Leslie Sanchez Sanchez

Levee Fries

Luis Barrera Villalobos

Maia Olvera

Manuel Camey Gil

Marcela Jose Menjivar

Marcello Canas

Mario Burton

Niyah Braggs

Omar Perez Ruiz JR

Pavel Olivo Plascencia

Ronnie Crawford

Rosa Ceja Martinez

Santino Esquivel

Sarai Alvarez

Sergio Max Tiul

Sofia Martinez

Stafford Williams

Tiffany Guevara

Va'lajiah Harris

William Munoz Lara

Yisel Zepeda Hernandez

Zachary Merritt

Zamara Burton

Happy Birthday

By Evelyn Rivera

November

Evan Gibney 11/02

Yencys Torres Quintanilla 11/02

Ms. Bjordnal 11/03

Anthony Castillo Briseno 11/09

Mr. Gillete 11/10

Jose Balanzar Ojeda 11/11

Franklin Castillo 11/12

Ms. Kurk 11/14

Angel Solis Rodriguez 11/18

Angel Solis Rodriguez 11/20

Guilherme Pedroza 11/20

Carlos Sandoval Covarrubias 11/20

Mr. Schwartz 11/22

Toni Snyder 11/25

Emigdio Moran Villa 11/25

Marco Torres 11/27

Ms. Armijo 11/27

Jasmine Luney 11/30



December

Edwin Cibrian Andrade 12/01

Christopher Cristofoni 12/04

Yisel Zepeda Hernandez 12/05

Keiri Lovos Recinos 12/06

Jennifer De Anda 12/07

Leonel Luna Silva 12/09

Antonio Philips 12/09

Nayeli Orozco Ochoa 12/10

Maryjane Sanguinetti 12/11

Sarah Leon Castillo 12/13

Maia Olvera 12/15

Leila Vega 12/15

Kelly Walker-Moore 12/15

Elisa Febo 12/16

Evelyn Rivera Acuna 12/16

Brian Ascencio Carillo 12/16

Breanna Alvarez 12/18

Christian Canova 12/18

Andres Nunez Melendrez 12/18

Yocelin Herrera 12/19

Yarizet Cano Torres 12/20

Omar Perez Ruiz JR. 12/21

Vivian Cruz Martinez 12/22

Kevin Swayne 12/22

Elmer Ba Maquin 12/22

David Rodriguez 12/23

Va'laijah Harris 12/23

Bradley Torres 12/23

Mr. Isaiah 12/26

Alexander Vasquez Hernandez 12/26

Levee Fries 12/28

Jorge Mendoza barajas 12/29

Milder Salgado Argenal 12/29

Jocelynn Meza Salas 12/30