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Well wishes from the community.

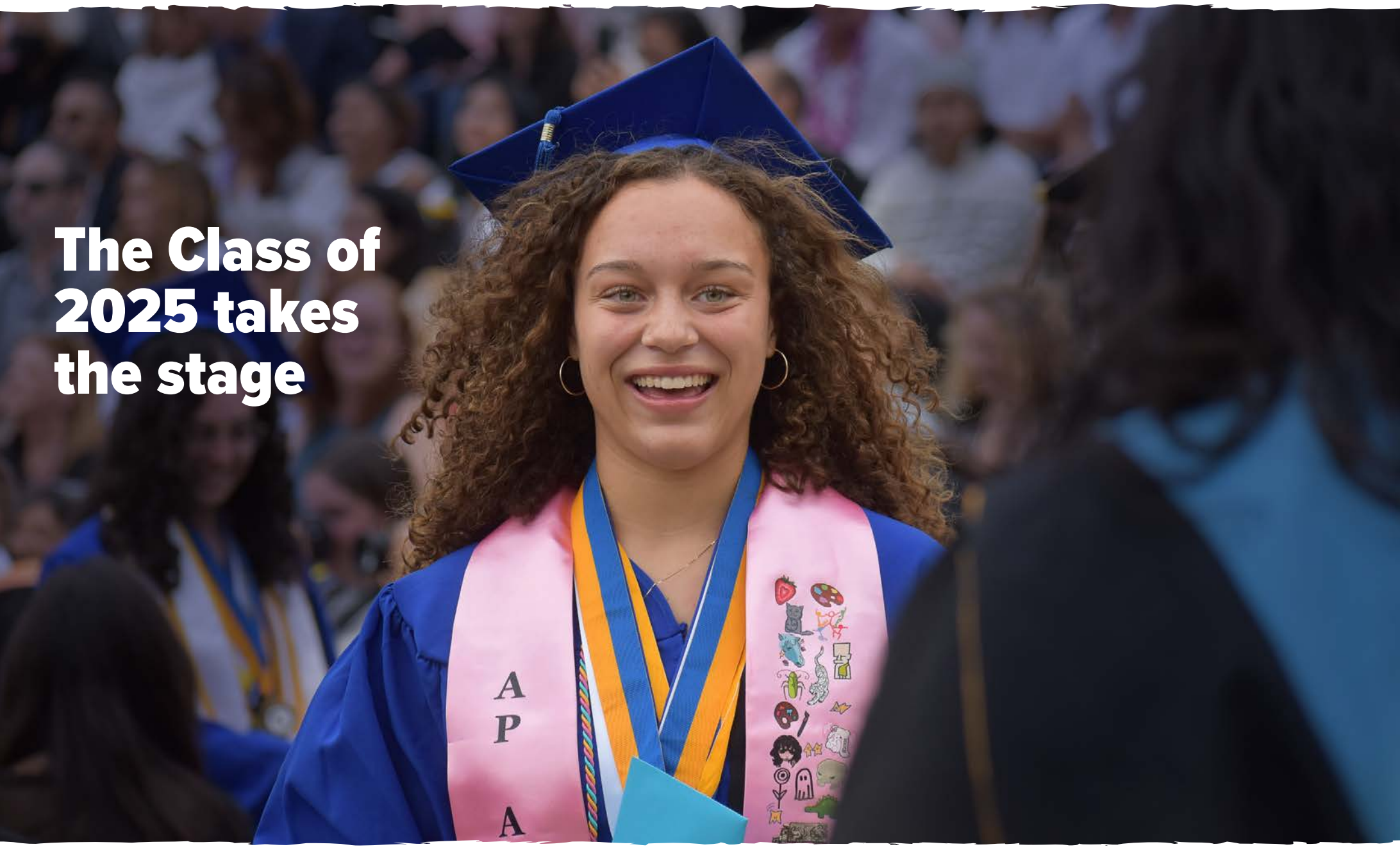
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Santa Monica Daily Press

Volume 23 Issue 144 THE GRADUATION EDITION 6/13 - 6/15 smdp.com



The Class of 2025 takes the stage



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Dr. Antonio Shelton and the Board of Education

Congratulate and Celebrate

THE 2025 GRADUATING CLASS OF

Santa Monica High School, Malibu High School and Olympic High School

We are proud of your accomplishments and wish you all the best in your future!

SMMUSD

SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

www.smmusd.org

CONGRATULATIONS FROM SMMUSD

SMMUSD SUPERINTENDENT DR. ANTONIO SHELTON AND BOARD OF EDUCATION MESSAGE TO THE CLASS OF 2025

Dear Samohi, Malibu High and Olympic High 2025 Graduates,

Congratulations to the Class of 2025!

You have reached a significant milestone, and you did not arrive here by chance. Through unexpected challenges and moments of uncertainty, you stayed committed, leaned on each other, and showed remarkable resilience. You adapted, you grew, and you persevered. That strength will stay with you for life.



Together, we have witnessed your journey as you navigated a high school experience shaped by rapid change, global events, local disasters and personal growth. It has been a privilege to watch your development both inside and outside the classroom. You have demonstrated a strong sense of purpose, curiosity to explore the world around you, and a growing confidence in your ability to shape the future.

Throughout your time at SMMUSD, you reminded us of the power of connection, the importance of showing up for one another, and what it truly means to belong to a community that cares. Your leadership, creativity and compassion left a lasting mark on your schools and the people around you.

As you take your next steps, whether you are enrolling at Santa Monica College or a university, entering a certificate program, starting a career or pursuing another path, know that you leave here with the knowledge, skills and values needed to make a difference. We are confident that each of you will carry forward a commitment to belonging, a passion for learning, and the courage to lead with integrity.

We believe in you. We celebrate you. And we are excited to see the positive change you will bring to the world. Always remember, you matter, your voice matters, and the world is better because you are in it.

On behalf of the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District, we wish you continued success, good health and a future filled with purpose.

Sincerely, Antonio Shelton, Ed.D., Superintendent and Board of Education



DR. DOUGLAS MEZA, ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT, HUMAN RESOURCES

I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the remarkable Class of 2025. Today marks the culmination of years of hard work, dedication, and perseverance—a true celebration of your growth, resilience, and accomplishments.

You have navigated unique challenges and emerged stronger, more compassionate, and better prepared to shape the world around you. Whether your next steps take you to college, career, service, or creative endeavors, I am confident you will continue to represent Samohi with pride and purpose.

As you turn the page to this exciting new chapter, remember: your voice matters, your dreams are valid, and your journey is just beginning. We are incredibly proud of you and look forward to all that you will achieve.

Congratulations, Class of 2025!



DR. STACY WILLIAMSON, ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT, EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

Congratulations, Class of 2025! As you approach the finish line of your high school journey, take a moment to recognize how far you've come. Your dedication, growth, and resilience have brought you to this exciting chapter, and we know the best is yet to come. Keep building on the values, friendships, and lessons that have shaped you and let them guide you as you step into new challenges and new beginnings. Believe in your voice, trust your path, and pursue your dreams. We are so proud of all you've accomplished and can't wait to see the future you will create. Here's to your continued success and all the amazing things ahead!

CONGRATULATIONS FROM SMMUSD



DR. MARK KELLY, SMMUSD DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT

Congratulations to the Class of 2025. Each of you arrive at your graduation day having traveled your own journey. Graduation is the celebration of your accomplishment and begins the next part of your journey where you have the opportunity to self-determine what is best for you next. The world needs you as leaders and hope that you will engage with your communities and reflect the values, beliefs and experiences you gained in our schools. I wish you all the best and success as you begin your next journey.



DR. STEVE RICHARDSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Congratulations Graduating Class of 2025!! We are so proud of you. It has taken 2340 days and over 13 years to get here. Along the way you have displayed resilience, determination and the unique gifts you possess. Wherever this next chapter takes you, show up with courage, compassion and authenticity. Know that we will always stand behind you.



ALICIA MIGNANO, SMMUSD SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER / MIEMBRO DE LA JUNTA ESCOLAR DEL SMMUSD

Congrats, SMMUSD grads! Your hard work and dedication got you here. Best of luck and happiness in whatever comes next. ¡Felicitaciones, graduados de SMMUSD! Su esfuerzo y dedicación los llevaron hasta aquí. Les deseamos mucha suerte y felicidad en lo que venga.



DR. RICHARD TAHVILDARAN-JESSWEIN, PROFESSOR POLITICAL SCIENCE, SANTA MONICA COLLEGE

Dear Graduates, On behalf of the Board of Education, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Class of 2025. Your dedication, resilience, and hard work have led you to this remarkable achievement. As you step into the next chapter of your lives, remember that the skills and knowledge you've gained here will serve as the foundation for your future success. We are incredibly proud of each of you and excited to see the incredible things you will accomplish. Congratulations, graduates, and best wishes for a bright and prosperous future!



ISAAC BURGESS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MALIBU PATHWAY & SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Class of 2025! I commend you on reaching this important milestone in your life. As you celebrate, remember to thank your family, teachers, administration, support staff and friends for their continued support along this journey. Wherever your path leads post secondary school, let it be guided by positivity as you contribute to the society we all live in. Don't lose sight of your passion and I wish you continued success in your future endeavors.



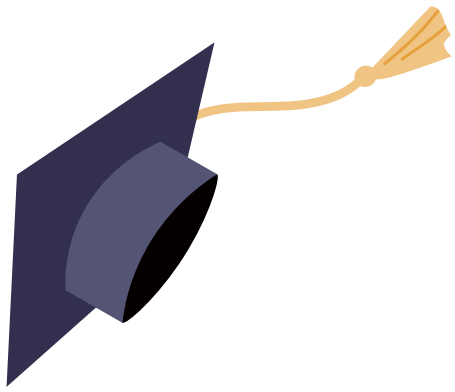
MARIA LEON-VAZQUEZ, SMMUSD SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

Congrats Class of 2025! Felicidades Clase de 2025! You finished your first stop of your journey of life! Hoping you all had a great ride at SMMUSD and that the education received will get you to your next stop of your journey! Don't forget to have FUN and enjoy Life! Terminaron su primera etapa en su jornada de la vida! Espero que tuvieron un gran viaje en SMMUSD y que la educación recibida les llevara a la siguiente etapa de su jornada. No olviden divertirse y disfrutar de la vida!



JEN SMITH, SMMUSD SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT

Congratulations! You have done a remarkable job getting through some very tough times and made it - such a good thing to remember when things get hard, and stuff happens. You have traversed this long educational journey and have gotten to this amazing milestone. Be proud of your accomplishment as you look to the future. Remember your empathy, your kindness, your worthiness and that you are deeply loved. Have compassion and keep discovering yourself and the world around you. And, make a difference, big or small, it all adds up.





MELODY CANADY, SMMUSD ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT, BUSINESS & FISCAL

Congratulations Class of 2025! Each of you are a shining star in your own way. You have such a bright and beautiful future ahead of you. Take this time to shine brighter than ever and enjoy all the wonderful things awaiting you. Your successes remind me of why I became an educator. Thank you for being you.



LAURIE LIEBERMAN, SMMUSD SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

What a milestone! Congratulations and my best wishes as you navigate the next steps and your promising futures! Allow yourself to explore, look for what you love doing, and don't limit yourself. Work hard but don't make yourself crazy. Be kind and caring. Find joy in life and in learning. Remember to reach out to others when you need a helping hand. And always know that your SMMUSD family is here for you. Cheers!



JON KEAN, SMMUSD SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

Graduates! If I could give you one piece of advice it would to celebrate all success. So celebrate this moment and experience the joy. Wait. If I could give you two pieces of advice it would still be to celebrate all success but it would also be to seek out and find joy in every day especially with family and friends. No. Wait. If I could give you three pieces of advice it would be: celebrate success as one, find joy as two, and then treasure time with family and friends. At the end of the day these are the connections you will need to celebrate success and find joy. Congratulations and come back and visit us. We will always be your "home".



STACY ROUSE, SMMUSD SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

Class of 2025! So proud of you and your accomplishments and your growth while in school. Whatever your next steps are, your family, friends, and school community are with you and behind you

CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

The road to graduation can be long – but all that work has paid off and will continue to do so. Whether you're heading off to college, to trade school, to work, or any other pathway, this is your chance to shape your own future and follow your own dreams. Wherever you go, whatever you choose to do, know that California is rooting for you. Congratulations, Class of 2025.

Gavin Newsom
Governor of California



CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE CALIFORNIA SENATE

Dear Fellow Viking,

Congratulations to the 2025 Graduating Class of Santa Monica High School!

As you embark on the next stage of your life, each of you with your own unique challenges and opportunities, I hope that you take a few moments to reflect on the journey that led you here. You have grown up amidst unprecedented circumstances (from the impact of new technologies to a global pandemic), overcome many obstacles, and challenged yourself to grow as an individual.

Suffice to say, your friends and family, teachers and mentors, and all of us in local and state leadership could not be more proud of you for your successes.

This is an important milestone; one of many that I hope you will mark throughout your life. Whether you go on to become a filmmaker, an engineer, a banker, teacher, athlete, or public servant – remember to trust yourself and the hard work you've put in to get there. I know the Class of 2025 will go on to contribute to a better world for your family and community. Regardless of the path you take, you will always be a Viking—remember our wonderful community that raised you and consider ways to give back.

Congratulations!!



Ben Allen
Senator, 24th District

CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

Dear Fellow Vikings Class of 2025 ,

As a proud SAMO grad from Class of 97, a mother of two Vikings and the Mayor of Santa Monica; I am filled with emotion and pride as you all embark on this next adventure in your lives !

The world is a vast and exciting place, filled with opportunities just waiting for you to explore. I encourage you to remain curious, courageous and adventurous. You will face challenges and setbacks, but never forget that you have the strength to start over and reinvent yourself as many times as necessary. Anything is possible when you approach life with resilience and an open heart ...

I also want to leave you with a couple simple yet powerful thoughts:

Always take the stairs in life. While the elevator may offer a quicker, easier route, it is the challenges and obstacles we face that truly build our character, strength, and wisdom. Embrace the ups and downs; they are essential to your growth. Always speak up! Speak up about injustices; not just the ones that affect you or the ones on social media, stand up for others who don't have a voice. Be an advocate for others, a leader of change and support others in the journey to raise awareness and change even when it's not popular.

Lastly remember that no matter where life leads you, Santa Monica will always be that place you grew up, that comfy coastline hug, the place you can be yourself and somewhere you can always call home.

Congratulations Vikings class of 2025! I believe in you and look forward to seeing how you shape the world.



Lana Negrete

Santa Monica Mayor

CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

To the Class of 2025:

Congratulations—you did it! All your hard work, perseverance, and passion have brought you to this powerful milestone. Today is not just a celebration of what you've accomplished, but a launchpad into the next bold chapter of your life.

As you look around on graduation day, take time to savor these moments—the friendships you've built, the memories you've made, and the community you've helped shape. Be proud of how far you've come, and never be afraid to keep showing up as your true self. The world needs your courage, your creativity, and the unique gifts only you can offer.

At times like this, well-intentioned people will proudly refer to you as our future. But I want you to know, you matter right now in this County. Your experience, your perspectives, your needs, and vision matter now.

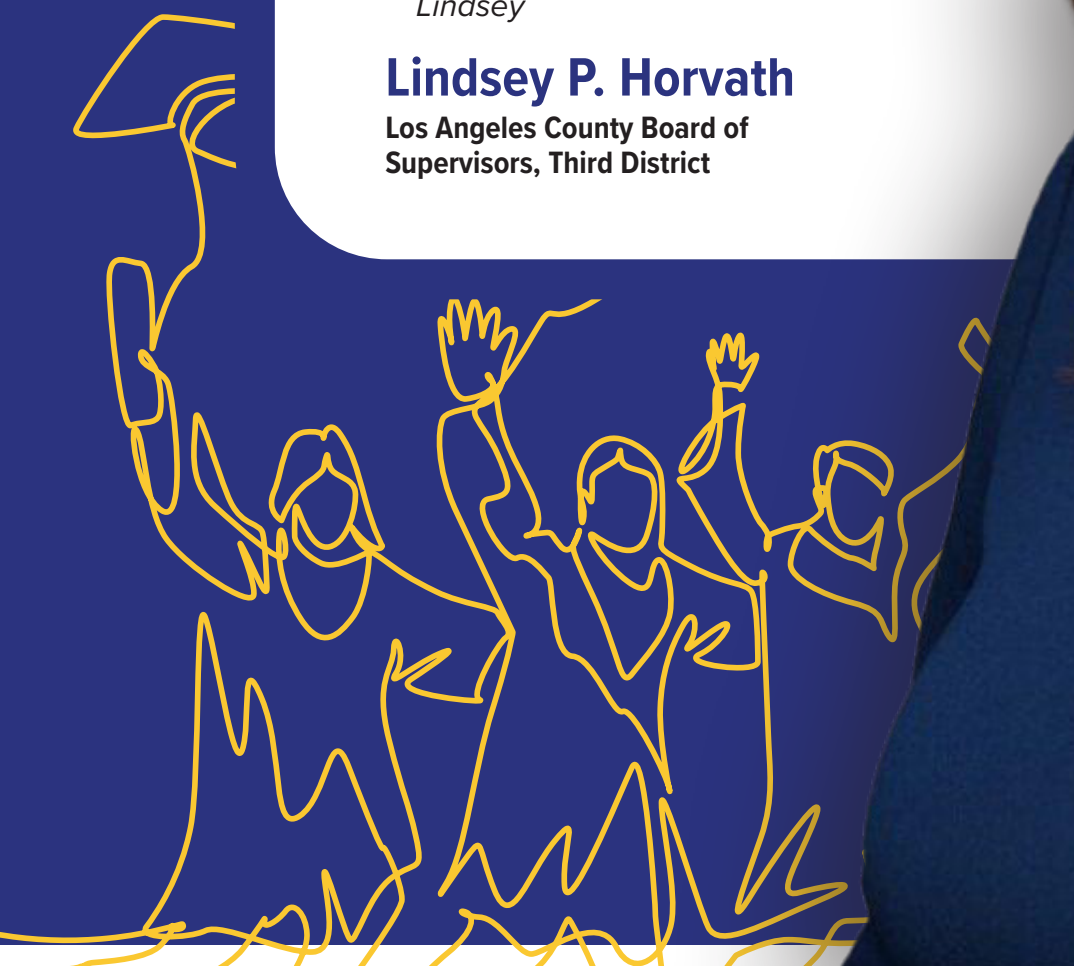
Know that your leaders in Santa Monica and Los Angeles County are here to listen, to support you, and to stand beside you. In a world where it can be easy to lose hope, your generation inspires me every day. You lead with heart. You care deeply—for our planet, for each other, and for justice.

Thank you for your fearlessness. Thank you for your leadership. And thank you for stepping into the future with vision, strength, and purpose.

With all my best wishes,
Lindsey

Lindsey P. Horvath
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, Third District





CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE CALIFORNIA ASSEMBLY

As you walk across the stage, receive your diploma, and become a graduate of Santa Monica High School, one journey will come to an end, and another will begin. For the past four years, you have pushed through obstacles small and large, grown intellectually and emotionally, and, I hope, made lasting friends and memories.

As your representative in the California State Assembly, I can assure you that our community is deeply proud of you and your accomplishments. Now, as you prepare for life's next chapter, I hope you will channel the tenacity and determination you have displayed over the last four years into a willingness to take intelligent risks and push yourself to contribute to a better world for your family and community, as well as yourself.

I know that the world that you are graduating into is profoundly uncertain: communities around the world, including here in the United States, are under threat, our economy is being reshaped through artificial intelligence, and at times, our democracy appears to be in peril. Yet I am confident in your ability to rise to meet these challenges.

I'm sure you learned about "The Greatest Generation"—a generation of Americans who faced social injustice, the economic uncertainty of the Great Depression, the threat of fascism, and the service and sacrifice required by the Second World War. They responded to these challenges with determination, resilience, and a commitment to building a better America and a better world. You have that same extraordinary power to shape the future, and as you look toward the next decade and the next century, I hope you never forget the strength that can be built through both individual and collective action.

Wherever you go and whatever you do, remember to have confidence in yourself and a belief in the value of your authentic self. Regardless of the path you take, I know that our future will be brighter under the light the incredible Class of 2025.

As you go forward and make your mark on the world, I hope you warmly remember the formative years you spent at Santa Monica High School—and the dedication of your parents, teachers, and administrators who have made your experience possible—and know that you'll always be a VIKING! Congratulations on this momentous step!

RICK CHAVEZ ZBUR
Assemblymember, Fifty-First District



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The Santa Monica Daily Press publishes Monday - Saturday with a circulation of 8,200 on weekdays and 8,000 on the weekend. The Daily Press is adjudicated as a newspaper of general circulation in the County of Los Angeles and covers news relevant to the City of Santa Monica. The Daily Press is a member of the California Newspaper Publisher's Association, the National Newspaper Association and the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce. The paper you're reading this on is composed of 100% post consumer content and the ink used to print these words is soy based. We are proud recipients of multiple honors for outstanding news coverage from the California Newspaper Publishers Association as well as a Santa Monica Sustainable Quality Award.

PUBLISHED BY NEWLON ROUGE, LLC

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Santa Monica Daily Press

CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE CITY OF SANTA MONICA

ELLIS RASKIN, COUNCILMEMBER

I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Class of 2025! Over the past few years, I have heard many of you speak at City Hall to stand up for justice and democracy. Your leadership and commitment to these values has been truly inspiring, and I look forward to seeing what you accomplish in the years ahead. I have no doubt that you will leave a lasting impact that will make our world a brighter place.

CAROLINE TOROSIS, COUNCILMEMBER

Congratulations to the outstanding Santa Monica High School Class of 2025! As you step into this next chapter—whether it's college, career, or carving your own path—carry with you the values that define our Santa Monica community: compassion, courage, creativity, and a deep commitment to justice. You represent the very best of who we are, and I know you'll make waves wherever you go. Go show the world what it means to be a Viking!

DAN HALL, COUNCILMEMBER

Samohi Class of 2025—This is your moment. You've pushed through challenges, risen with hope, and now stand at the edge of what's possible. Your graduation is more than a celebration—it's a sacred shift from potential to purpose. The world needs your courage, your compassion, and your conviction. Build bridges, not walls. Serve boldly. Love deeply. Live with grit and purpose. Carry your diploma not as a trophy, but as a tool—to create justice, open doors, and lead with fortitude. Don't chase success—create significance. The question isn't "What will you do?"—it's "Who will you lift?" Wherever life takes you, know that your Santa Monica community is behind you, cheering you on. Congratulations—we can't wait to see what you do next!

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CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

You may be one of an exceptional group of over 50,000 people throughout the world. If you graduated from Santa Monica High School, the answer is a resounding YES! Whether you just completed your graduation ceremony at Samohi with the Class of 2025, or you are one of our grads from the 1940's who still communicate with us, you are special. Thousands of you are members of the Samohi Alumni Association, and if you are not a member, you should join our ranks, to open that communication with other Samohi grads.

Among Samohi's alumni from classes dating back to the first graduates of 1891, are famous luminaries from many walks of life, including astronauts, award winning actors, directors and producers, a Nobel Prize winner, a mountain climber, an advisor to President Barack Obama, poets, musicians, artists, heralded athletes, writers, and journalists. Our alumni have also earned praise as beloved local business leaders, teachers, plumbers, electricians, architects, prominent politicians, pioneers of advancements that will profoundly affect your lifetime, and more. Each Viking has contributed to making our world brighter in some way.

The Samohi Alumni Association began in the fall of 1988, with the production of the first edition of the Viking News by co-founders Linda Gray '64 and Rena McKinzie '91. The SAA, incorporated in 1991, serves the alumni and current students through its tax-exempt corporation. The mission of the SAA is to connect our thousands of alumni with our current students and bond past with the present, all leading to great futures. The SAA is committed to the values Samohi represents - Sincerity, Maturity, Honor, and Service (SMHS.)

The SAA provides information to alumni and current students through sponsorship of school related activities, its website www.samohialumni.org, Facebook at www.facebook.com/samohialumni/, and The Viking News, distributed several times a year to members by email and mail. We award scholarships and financial aid to current students at Santa Monica's only public high school, sponsor campus preservation and beautification projects, and honor Samohi Hall of Fame, Distinguished Alumni and Spirit of Samohi awardees. Our Board of Directors is drawn from Samohi's over 50,000 living graduates, and we welcome all alumni interested in serving our school's proud heritage to become members and board members. To join or for more information, email samohialumni@gmail.com.



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2025

SANTA MONICA HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

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2025 CIF D2 Girls Swimming Champs!!





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SANTA MONICA HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS SWIM TEAM CAPTURES HISTORIC CIF TITLE

The Santa Monica High School girls swim team capped off a banner 2024-25 season by capturing their first-ever CIF Southern Section Division 2 championship, a historic achievement that marked a dramatic turnaround from the previous year's 19th-place finish.

The Lady Vikings dominated the CIF-SS Division 2 Swimming & Diving Championships held May 7-9, 2025 at Mt. San Antonio College, amassing 236 points to finish 32.5 points ahead of runner-up La Cañada. The victory represented a stunning 174-point improvement from their 62-point total just one year earlier.

Santa Monica compiled an impressive 6-1 dual meet record during the regular season, with their only loss coming in a tight 87-83 defeat to perennial power Mira Costa. The Vikings earned their first-ever victory over Redondo Union, a milestone win that signaled the program's ascent.

The team's success was powered by freshman sensation Gabriella "Gabi" Brito, who won two individual CIF championships in the 200-yard Individual Medley (1:56.70) and 100-yard Butterfly (52.50). Her butterfly time broke the Division 2 meet record previously set in 2017.

Senior captain Daniela Petran provided veteran leadership while claiming the CIF title in the 100-yard Breaststroke with a time of 1:03.65, the only swimmer to break 1:04 in the event. Petran, who also finished fourth in the 100 Freestyle, set multiple school records throughout her final campaign while helping lead three record-breaking relay teams. The graduating captain qualified for the CIF State meet in the 100 Breaststroke, where she finished in the top 12 statewide.

Senior Serena Wu, also serving as team captain, anchored the CIF-winning 200 Medley Relay with a 25.1 freestyle split. Wu provided leadership throughout the season while contributing to the program's championship relay squads.

At the Bay League Championships in late April, Santa Monica finished third overall behind league powers Mira Costa and one other rival. The Vikings set new school records in all three relay events during the season — the 200-yard Medley Relay, 200-yard Freestyle Relay, and 400-yard Freestyle Relay.

Several Santa Monica swimmers advanced to the CIF State Championships at Clovis West High School.

The championship marked the culmination of steady improvement for the program, which had placed eighth at CIF in 2021 before working its way up through increasingly competitive Bay League competition.



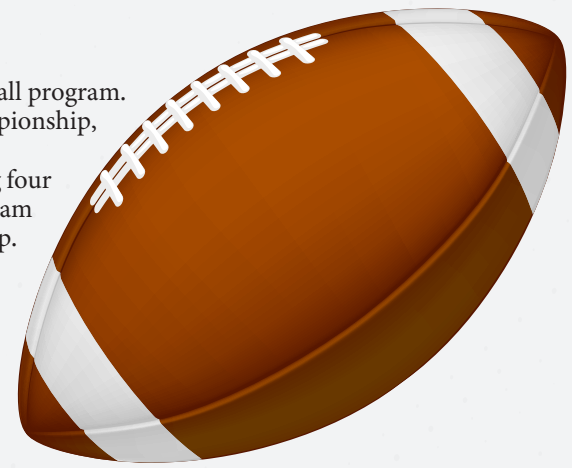
SAMOHI SENIORS LEAVE CHAMPIONSHIP LEGACY

CLASS OF 2025 CAPS HISTORIC YEAR FOR SANTA MONICA HIGH ATHLETICS

The final buzzer had sounded, the last race had been run, and the championship banners were raised high in the Santa Monica High School gymnasium. As the Class of 2025 walked across the graduation stage this spring, they left behind something extraordinary: one of the most successful athletic years in Samohi history.

From the artificial turf of the football field to the crystal-blue waters of the pool, from the hardwood courts to the cross-country trails winding through the Santa Monica Mountains, Viking athletes dominated their competition throughout the 2024-25 school year. The numbers tell only part of the story—multiple CIF championships, league titles across nearly every sport, and a remarkable 12 seniors signing National Letters of Intent to compete collegiately. But behind those statistics lies a deeper narrative of dedication, breakthrough performances, and a senior class that refused to settle for anything less than excellence.

FLAG FOOTBALL MAKES HISTORY



Perhaps no story better encapsulates Samohi's championship season than the meteoric rise of the girls flag football program. In just its second year of existence, the Lady Vikings captured the 2024 CIF Southern Section Division 4 Championship, defeating Fullerton High School 28-6 in a title game that wasn't as close as the score suggested.

Senior quarterback Anica Mindes orchestrated the championship performance with surgical precision, throwing four touchdown passes in the final—two to junior Chloe Sanders. The victory capped a remarkable turnaround for a team that started the season 2-6 before catching fire and riding an 11-game winning streak all the way to the championship. Along the way, they knocked off established programs like Cabrillo, Estancia, Windward, and Schurr.

The championship run earned Mindes the Division 4 Player of the Year honor, while head coach Ramsey Lambert was named Coach of the Year for CIF-SS Division 4. For a program still finding its identity, the title represented both validation and a glimpse of the future. Seniors Jayla Johnson-Lake and Kyla Cotton, each contributing an interception and touchdown reception in the final, helped establish a winning culture that should serve the program well for years to come.

SOCCER'S CINDERELLA RUN



While flag football was writing its fairy tale ending, the boys soccer team was crafting its own improbable story. The Vikings entered the season with modest expectations but quickly proved they belonged among California's elite programs.

A perfect 9-0 league record earned Santa Monica the Ocean League title and tournament championship, but more importantly, it secured them a berth in the prestigious CIF-SS Open Division playoffs—a bracket reserved for the state's most elite programs. There, facing competition that included nationally-ranked powerhouses, the Vikings refused to be intimidated.

Their quarterfinal matchup against Crossroads became an instant classic, a dramatic two-leg affair that Santa Monica won 3-2 on aggregate. That victory set up a semifinal showdown with JSerra, the nation's top-ranked team. In a performance that epitomized their season-long resilience, the Vikings battled the heavily favored Lions to a scoreless draw in the first leg before taking a stunning 2-1 lead in the second leg behind goals from junior Khaelon Zeitlin and senior Orlando Popkin.

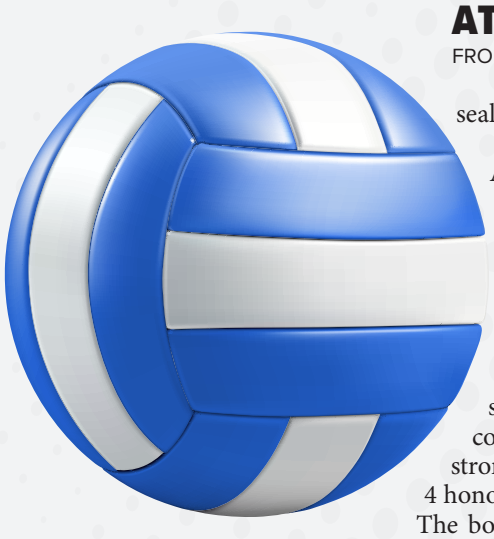
Though JSerra eventually prevailed with a golden goal in double overtime, the Vikings' semifinal appearance stands as one of the deepest playoff runs in school history. Senior co-captains Gabriel Sherman and Asa Colwell, along with Popkin and goalkeeper Pedro Duarte Silva, anchored a squad that proved it could compete with anyone in the nation. Their All-CIF Open Division selections serve as lasting recognition of their extraordinary achievement.

WATER POLO'S HEART-BREAKING EXCELLENCE

The boys water polo team's season ended in heartbreak, but their journey to the CIF-SS Division 3 semifinals showcased the same competitive spirit that defined Samohi athletics all year long. After dominating the Pioneer League to claim the championship, the Vikings made a thrilling playoff run that included impressive victories over Santa Ynez and Redondo Union.

Their semifinal against Los Osos became one of the season's most excruciating defeats. With seconds remaining and trailing by one, Santa Monica appeared to score a tying goal that would have forced overtime. Instead, the goal was nullified by a two-meter violation,

SEE **ATHLETIC** PAGE 15



ATHLETIC

FROM PAGE 14

sealing a crushing 7-6 defeat to a Los Osos team that would go on to win the division championship.

Senior captain Ronan Maynes and sophomore Ethan Fitzgerald earned spots on the Division 3 All-CIF team, recognition for their outstanding performances in a season built on strong defense and clutch scoring. The narrow loss stung, but it also demonstrated how far the program had come.

VOLLEYBALL DOMINANCE ACROSS SEASONS

Both volleyball programs enjoyed banner years, with the girls achieving a breakthrough fall season and the boys dominating spring competition. The Lady Vikings finished as Ocean League co-champions and advanced to the CIF-SS Division 4 quarterfinals, marking one of Santa Monica's strongest volleyball performances in recent years. Senior setter Jane Robinson earned All-CIF Division 4 honors for her leadership on the court and steady play throughout the postseason run.

The boys volleyball team took their success a step further, posting a perfect 6-0 league record to claim the Bay League championship. Their 26-11 overall record earned them a CIF-SS Division 3 playoff berth, where they won two matches—including a commanding 3-0 first-round sweep—to reach the quarterfinals. Senior Colin Hughes, who would go on to sign with Stevens Institute of Technology, provided the leadership and balanced offense that made the Vikings a formidable opponent all season long.

BASEBALL AND TENNIS CONTINUE TRADITIONS



Santa Monica's baseball team upheld the program's winning tradition by capturing the Ocean League championship and entering the postseason as the league's top seed. Behind the stellar play of senior pitcher/infielder Blue Hunter and senior catcher Isaac "Ike" Liberman, the Vikings posted an impressive 20-6 regular-season record.

Though their playoff run ended with a first-round loss to Murrieta Mesa in the CIF-SS Division 4 bracket, the league title represented a significant accomplishment. Both Hunter and Liberman parlayed their high school success into college opportunities, signing to continue their baseball careers at the next level.

The boys tennis team continued Samohi's tradition of excellence on the courts, going undefeated (6-0) in league play to claim another championship. Their 11-3 overall record earned them a CIF-SS Division 2 playoff berth, where they advanced to the quarterfinals before falling to Long Beach Wilson in a competitive match. Senior Vincent Chen's individual success included reaching the CIF Individual Sectionals round of 16, while Ellis Wang provided steady leadership throughout the season.

CROSS-COUNTRY'S PERFECT STORM

Perhaps no achievement better exemplified the depth of Samohi's athletic success than the cross-country teams' historic accomplishment. For the first time in school history, both the boys and girls teams won Ocean League titles and qualified for the CIF-SS Finals in the same year.



At the league finals, Santa Monica achieved something rarely seen in high school sports: perfect scores. The girls swept positions 1-7, while the boys claimed spots 1-6, leaving their competitors scrambling for the remaining places. While neither team advanced from the section finals to state as a unit, senior Phoebe Benun continued her individual excellence by qualifying for the CIF State Championships in Fresno for the second consecutive year.

Benun's journey embodied the persistence that defined the entire athletic program. After placing 20th in the Division I state race as a junior, she returned as a senior with even greater determination, ultimately finishing 33rd in California's Division I final. Her two-time league champion status and consecutive state berths cement her legacy as one of Samohi's premier distance runners.

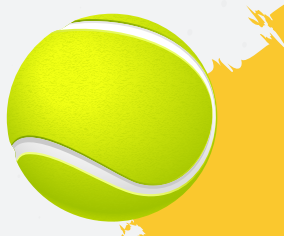
INDIVIDUAL EXCELLENCE ACROSS THE BOARD

Beyond team success, Santa Monica athletes excelled individually across multiple sports. The track and field program produced numerous school records, led by senior Daniela Petran's remarkable versatility. Competing in both swimming and track, Petran set new Santa Monica High records in the 200m freestyle (1:52.3), 100m freestyle (52.4), and 100m breaststroke (1:05.6), showcasing her exceptional range as a multi-sport athlete.

The Vikings crowned multiple event champions at the Bay League finals and qualified a dozen athletes for CIF-SS preliminaries across various disciplines.

The swimming program continued its resurgence with outstanding performances at the 2025 Bay League Championships. The girls placed third overall while the boys finished fifth, with numerous podium finishes highlighting the program's growing depth.

Petran's excellence continued in the pool, where she won the 100-yard Breaststroke league title and placed second in the 200 Free. An impressive 19 Samohi swimmers qualified for the CIF-SS Division II Championships, with the girls 4×50 freestyle relay advancing to the finals and finishing in the top nine.



SEE **SPORT** PAGE 19

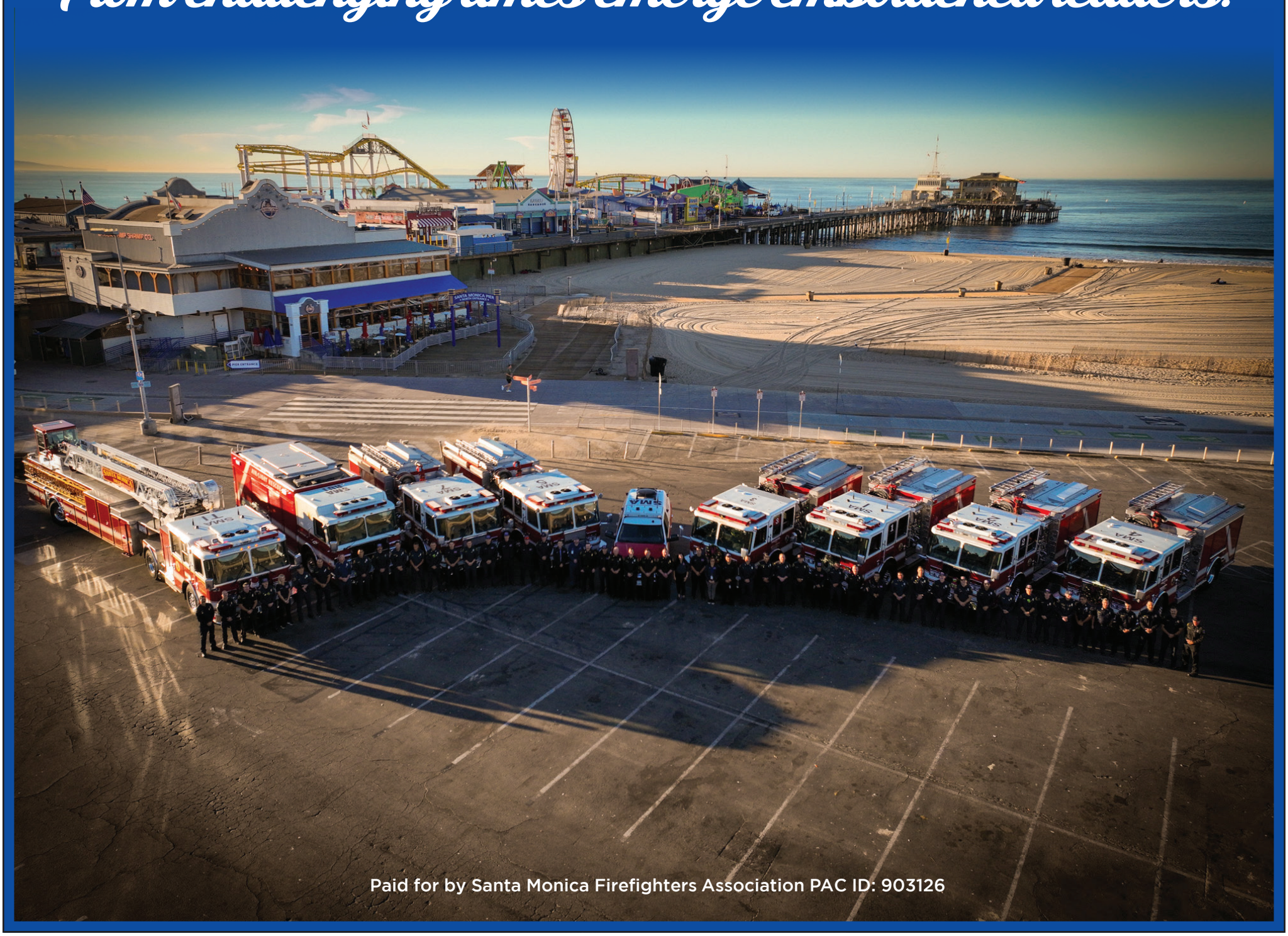
SANTA MONICA
LOCAL 1109
FIREFIGHTERS

The Santa Monica Firefighters Local 1109 want to congratulate the

Samohi Class of 2025

★ ★ **on a job well done.** ★ ★

From challenging times emerge emboldened leaders.



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ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE TAKES CENTER STAGE

SANTA MONICA HIGH'S CLASS OF 2025 ACHIEVES UNPRECEDENTED SUCCESS

Santa Monica High School's Class of 2025 has concluded their academic journey with a remarkable display of scholarly achievement that underscores the institution's reputation as one of California's premier public high schools. From National Merit recognition to Ivy League acceptances, this graduating class has set new benchmarks for academic excellence while demonstrating the diverse pathways to success that define the modern American educational experience.

NATIONAL MERIT PROGRAM DOMINANCE

The foundation of this year's academic success story begins with an extraordinary showing in the National Merit Scholarship Program. Seven Santa Monica High School seniors earned the prestigious designation of National Merit Semifinalist, placing them among the top one percent of PSAT/NMSQT test-takers nationwide. The accomplished group includes Phoebe Benun, Naomi Gage, Connor Lee, Isabella Moses, and Henry Sullivan, along with two other standout students.

All seven semifinalists successfully advanced to finalist standing, with several securing National Merit Scholarships by spring 2025. At least one Samohi finalist earned the coveted $2,500 National Merit Scholarship award as a California state designee, while others received college-sponsored Merit scholarships to their chosen universities. This level of National Merit success continues Santa Monica High's strong tradition in the program and reflects the school's commitment to academic rigor.

Beyond the semifinalists, an additional 32 Samohi seniors earned recognition as National Merit Commended Students, ranking them in the top four percent nationally. The Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District formally recognized these outstanding students at a Board of Education meeting in fall 2024, celebrating their exceptional academic achievements.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT EXCELLENCE

The Class of 2025's commitment to academic challenge extended well beyond standardized testing. Dozens of students earned AP Scholar designations for outstanding performance on Advanced Placement examinations, typically requiring scores of 3 or higher on multiple AP exams. Many seniors achieved the highest possible score of 5 on rigorous examinations ranging from AP Calculus and AP Physics to AP Literature.

Santa Monica High School consistently demonstrates exceptional AP performance, with over 80 percent of exam takers scoring 3 or above in the previous academic year—far exceeding national averages. The school's AP program has produced remarkable achievements, including perfect scores by SMMUSD students in recent years, a rare feat accomplished by only a few hundred students globally.

COMPETITIVE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

The academic prowess of the Class of 2025 extended far beyond traditional testing into the realm of competitive academics, where students demonstrated their knowledge and skills in high-pressure contest environments.

The SaMoTech Robotics Team, featuring several Samohi seniors, continued its meteoric rise in the FIRST Tech Challenge. In only its second year as an independent community team, SaMoTech advanced through Southern California Regional qualifiers and reached the Regional Semifinals, narrowly missing advancement to the state and world championships after a double tiebreaker loss. The team's robot and coding performance ranked in the top 0.5 percent worldwide, placing 27th among more than 6,500 teams globally.



Samohi's Science Olympiad team competed in the Los Angeles County Regional tournament, with several seniors earning regional medals in events like Chemistry Lab and Codebusters. The school's Ocean Sciences Bowl and Science Bowl teams, featuring Class of 2025 students, performed admirably in regional competitions, with one squad reaching the quarterfinals of the National Science Bowl Los Angeles regional competition.

DEBATE AND MODEL UNITED NATIONS SUCCESS

The school's Speech and Debate program showcased the communication skills and intellectual agility of its students. Several Class of 2025 captains led the team through a successful season in Southern California's competitive debate circuit, with Samohi debaters regularly advancing to elimination rounds at local invitationals.

Two seniors qualified for the California High School Speech Association State Championship in Spring 2025, competing in Original Oratory and Lincoln-Douglas Debate. While they did not place in the finals, their qualification alone represents a significant achievement in this highly competitive field. The team also earned multiple sweepstakes awards within their local Western Bay Forensics League.

Samohi's Model United Nations program brought home several prestigious awards during the academic year. At the Marymount High School MUN Conference in March 2024, Bibi Peterson won Best Delegate and Sienna Shah earned an Outstanding Delegate award, with Kara Best receiving an Honorable Mention. These awards recognize students' skills in diplomacy, public speaking, and global issue comprehension.

Building on this momentum, fall 2024 saw Class of 2025 MUN leaders guide Samohi to additional honors at UCLA's BruinMUN conference, where two seniors received Outstanding Delegate recognition.

MATHEMATICS AND ACADEMIC DECATHLON ACHIEVEMENT

Santa Monica High's Mathletes participated in several mathematics contests, performing strongly in the Western Division Math League. Several seniors qualified for the prestigious AIME (American Invitational Math Exam), with one student recognized as a top scorer in the region, though no Samohi student reached the national Olympiad level this year.

The Academic Decathlon team, comprising nine students including three seniors, competed in the Los Angeles County Decathlon. They achieved top-10 finishes in various subject events, with one senior winning a bronze medal in the Art category. While the team placed in the middle of overall L.A. County rankings, their performance demonstrated impressive all-around academic strength across ten diverse subjects ranging from economics to literature.

COMMUNITY RECOGNITION AND PRESTIGIOUS AWARDS

Two Class of 2025 students received significant community recognition through the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Westside Coalition Awards.

SEE ACADEMIC PAGE 21

YEAR IN REVIEW
SAMOHI VISUAL ARTS

The 2024-2025 school year has been pivotal and different in many ways for the students, especially those whose electives have been moved into the new classrooms of the Exploration building. The building now hosts a multitude of subjects, including many visual arts programs.

The removal of the History building for the renovations displaced a few classrooms that had to relocate to temporary studios while the new building was being made, which applied to the AP Art program. At the beginning of the school year, when the building was opened, teachers were put back into permanent classrooms.

"It's much bigger than any classroom I've ever had. I think it's four times bigger than the room I worked in for 33 years," said Amy Bouse, AP Art teacher. "We have wonderful natural light, we have air conditioning that works. We have great storage for supplies for students... and we have this wonderful outdoor area that's been really thoughtfully put together."

The engineering program also flourished with the spaciousness of the new building that allowed for more experimentation, decoration, and teaching space. Students in the Automotive Technology class also had a new space to work.

Being in a more intimate elective like Art usually comes along with more student input. Bouse mentioned that part of the process of moving into a new environment was planning the usage of space with her students.



"We had to figure out all new routines. Where are we going to have a critique? What part of the room? If we're going to do multiple critiques at the same time, how is that going to work? How are we going to get all the routines in place so that it's comfortable and we don't have to overthink the discussions? Those were all things that we had to figure out by trial and error," said Bouse.

The buildings weren't the only thing that changed the experience for seniors, especially in AP Art. Teachers in creative positions have to create environments for students to feel more open to express themselves in their art.

"Ms. Bouse was my teacher my freshman year. I was in her painting class, and, I don't know, the idea of being able to be in an art class where you could virtually make whatever you wanted was very appealing to me, because she offers a lot of good materials that we get to use," said Kayman Mangan, a senior in the program. "I submitted for the AP exam last year. And it was a good experience, like learning how to build a portfolio and stuff, especially with a cohesive team."

For students like Mangan, the freedom to explore their own ideas with high-quality materials made a lasting impact, especially as they advanced into higher levels of the program. That sense of creative independence is something the department works hard to preserve, even as the curriculum or approach adapts each year to meet new standards and expectations.

"I'm always evolving. I don't think I've ever done anything exactly the same since I started here in 1997. I mean, you learn from what you do, what works, what doesn't work. The College Board is increasingly concerned about AI that is not a factor if you're making analog work, but if you're making digital work, it's more of a concern."




David R. Olan
Partner


Garrett Brief
Senior Attorney


Sharon Olan
Director of Operations

The Olan Law Team Congratulates the Samohi Class of 2025!

Your graduation is a testament to your dedication and hard work. May you continue to strive for excellence and achieve your dreams.

www.olanlaw.com 212 Marine Street, Suite 302 Santa Monica, CA 90405 (310) 566-0010

SPORT

FROM PAGE 15

BEYOND THE SCHOOL WALLS

Several seniors extended their athletic excellence beyond the traditional high school framework. Maren Bruce and Shannon Stuart excelled in rowing through the Marina Aquatic Center junior crew, helping their 8+ boat earn a regional championship podium finish. Their performances attracted attention from top universities, with Bruce signing with Harvard University and Stuart committing to Cal State Sacramento.



Club soccer provided additional opportunities for growth, with Gabriel Sherman starring for his club team in the Southern California Developmental League and participating in U.S. Youth Soccer National Championships showcases. Orlando Popkin gained valuable experience training with the LA Galaxy academy and competing in international tournaments.

Perhaps most remarkably, freshman Gooden-Brito qualified for the U.S. Olympic Trials in swimming at just 14 years old, becoming the youngest swimmer at the trials and reflecting the growing strength of Santa Monica's aquatics program.

A LEGACY OF EXCELLENCE

As the Class of 2025 moves on to their next challenges—12 of them to compete at the collegiate level—they leave behind a standard of excellence that will inspire future Vikings for years to come. From Anica Mindes' championship leadership in flag football to Phoebe Benun's distance running dominance, from the soccer team's improbable semifinal run to the perfect scores achieved by cross-country, this senior class demonstrated that success comes to those willing to work for it.

The numbers are impressive: multiple CIF championships, countless league titles, dozens of All-CIF selections, and school records that will stand for years. But the true measure of this class lies not in statistics but in the culture they've established—one that says being a Viking means never settling for less than your best.

As new banners were raised in the gymnasium and Signing Day celebrated the next chapter for 12 college-bound athletes, one thing became clear: the 2024-25 school year will be remembered as a golden era for Santa Monica High School athletics, with the Class of 2025 at its shining center.



FREE MUSIC MENTORSHIP!

Band Mentorship Program (BMP) is 2-year old Santa Monica-based initiative pairing advanced high school musicians with middle school students to encourage practice, improve technical skills, and foster friendships.

Website:
https://roenperalta.wixsite.com/band-mentorship-prog
Contact:
roenperalta@gmail.com
naterchin@gmail.com



Roen Peralta '25 Founder (right)
Nathaniel Chin '26 President (left)

Classifieds

DBA

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NUMBER: ORIGINAL FILING This statement was filed with the County Clerk of LOS ANGELES on 05/28/25 2025108762 The following person(s) is (are) doing business 1. RAPP SALOON COMMUNITY MARKET. 2. RAPP SALOON MARKET 3.HIGHLAND PARK POP UP 4. RAPP SALOON POP UP 30306 Barcelona Rd. Castaic, CA 91384 Los Angeles Articles of Incorporation or Organization Number (if applicable): Ai #ON. The full name of the registrant(s) is/are MOSAIO CREATIVE PRODUCTIONS LLC 30306 Barcelona Rd. Castaic, CA 91384 If corporation or LLC- Print State of CA This is Business is Conducted: A Limited Liability Company . The date registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on 05/2025 . Registrant / Corp/LLC MOSAIO CREATIVE PRODUCTIONS LLC Title: Manager MONIQUE GAGNIER ROBINSON . This statement was filed with the County Clerk of LOS ANGELES County on 05/28/2025NOTICE: THIS FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT EXPIRES FIVE YEARS FROM THE DATE IT WAS FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE County CLERK. A NEW FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT MUST BE FILED PRIOR TO THAT DATE. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name statement in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see Section 14411 et seq. ,Business and Professions Code).

HOURS MONDAY - FRIDAY 9:00am - 5:00pm **LOCATION** 1640 5th Street, Suite 218, Santa Monica, CA 90401

City of Santa Monica

CITY OF SANTA MONICA NOTICE

INVITING APPLICATIONS FOR ANNUAL APPOINTMENTS TO CITY BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

The Santa Monica City Council is now accepting applications for annual appointments of members to the following City Boards and Commissions:

Board/Commission	No. of Appointments	Term End Date	Special Requirements
Santa Monica Travel & Tourism, Inc.	2	6/30/2029	-
Transit Security Advisory Committee	1	6/30/2029	Law enforcement experience

Applications due by noon, Tuesday, July 1, 2025.
Appointments to be made by the City Council on Tuesday, July 8, 2025.

No Santa Monica City Employee may serve as a member of any Board or Commission.

The State Political Reform Act requires certain officeholders to disclose their interest and income that may be materially affected by their official action. The applicant appointed to serve in this position will be required to file a Statement of Economic Interest (Form 700) upon assuming office, and annually thereafter. In addition, this position will be required to complete two hours of Ethics Training (AB1234) biennially, as well as attend other city sponsored trainings deemed necessary by the city.

Applications are available on-line at: www.smgov.net/boards
All current applications on file will be considered.

Disability-related assistance and alternate formats of this document are available upon request by calling (310) 458-8211.

YEAR IN REVIEW
SAMOHI PERFORMING ARTS

The Samohi Performing Arts program has been a large force in the school's history since its foundation. The program has developed and changed over the years, and Samohi has even introduced an Acting class recently, led by Kate Barraza. The school has had important accomplishments this year in the Performing Arts program.

There are four choir concerts per school year, seasonals and the pop concert. The school also participates in Stairway to the Stars at the beginning of the year. The Samohi choir took home the win on their trip to San Francisco to compete in the WorldStrides National Youth Choir competition. They closed off the year with a concert on June 2.

The band at Samohi consists of Concert, Jazz, and Marching Band. Marching Band performs at school sports games as well as individual performances and competitions. The school had 15 band performances overall this year.

Overall, there were nine orchestra concerts across all orchestras this past year, not including their performance at graduation. The Samohi orchestra performed at the Walt Disney Concert Hall this year. Theater wise, the recurring productions every year include the fall play, Café Samo, the spring musical, and Public Domain.

Café Samo and Public Domain are both Performing Arts sponsored events, and they feature arrays of student work–either covers of songs or originals. Public Domain also includes acting/scene work as well as song performances, and these scripts can be reinterpretations or student-written. Public Domain is a student-run program, so all acts are selected by students, directed by students and performed by students.

Barraza chooses the fall play every year, which was The Outsiders this theater season. The Outsiders is based on the coming-of-age book by S. E. Hinton that covers topics dealing with gang violence. Ponyboy, the main character, was played by Titus Auger and Jolie Jurenka. The show went well, and she commented on how the emotional or violent scenes provided students with the opportunity to grow their skills.

"I just think Santa Monica High School students are pretty mature and interested like they want to be pushed. In my experience, they want to be pushed a little bit. They don't want to do a lot of basic stuff. They want to, they want to tackle bigger issues, and they want opportunities to kind of prove themselves, is what I found," said Barraza.

The spring musical was Chicago, a largely satirical musical about murderesses who "dance" their ways out of the death sentence. Velma Kelly was played by Chloe Senior and Celine Hutchinson, and Roxie Hart was played by Juliet Rojas and Leah Boumel. The musical requires a lot of intentional costume design and choreography, and Barraza expressed her pride in her students for tackling all of it.

The theater program went through a difficult change this year, as the Running With Speakers program–a class that taught students how to professionally manage sound mixing and tech–was cut from the program by the administration. Some students who had been professionally trained were still in the theater program, but are leaving this year.

"The person who was running it is no longer doing that position anymore, and so the students weren't trained as technicians. So everything that they did, they had to learn themselves. They had to figure it out themselves and make it happen," said Barraza. "I mean, I think we made it through because we still had some students who were previously trained by the tech program that was at the school ... There were some seniors who had been trained by people previously. But, yeah, I mean, it was different."

The year was very successful for the Performing Arts program at Samohi. With many different accomplishments, challenges, and changes, seniors are satisfied looking back on the year and forward to their futures, whether they pursue music as a career or as a hobby.

"What I'm looking forward to is to take what I enjoy most about my life right now, and put it in a different setting, and grow in multiple departments, in a new environment with new people, and kind of see how my experiences academically and artistically shift when I'm in a different environment," said Isabella Salem, a senior in the theater program.



ACADEMIC

FROM PAGE 17

Joshua Lesley earned the Lillie Bell Blakley Award, while Ananda Searcy received the Santa Monica/Westside Legacy Fund for Women and Girls Award. These honors, presented at the January 20, 2025 Martin Luther King Day celebration, recognize students for academic achievement, leadership, and embodying principles of nonviolence.

Lesley's award acknowledged his perseverance and service, including his roles as Black Student Union Parliamentarian and Youth Council Vice President. Searcy's recognition honored her empowerment of young women through BSU activities, sports team management, and her academic focus on psychology. Both students were among only six honorees county-wide, underscoring the exceptional nature of their accomplishments.

SCHOLARSHIP SUCCESS AND FINANCIAL RECOGNITION

The Class of 2025 Senior Scholarship and Honors Night in May 2025 celebrated a wide array of scholarships earned by Samohi students. Following the previous year's pattern of over $125,000 in scholarship funds awarded, the 2025 class secured similar recognition through scholarships sponsored by the Santa Monica-Malibu Education Foundation, Samohi Alumni Association, local service organizations, and memorial awards.

Notable competitive national recognition included one student reaching semifinalist status in the Coca-Cola Scholars Program, an honor for approximately 1,600 students nationwide recognizing leadership and service. Another senior was selected as a candidate for the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program, placing among California's top academic performers.

COLLEGE DESTINATIONS AND FUTURE PATHWAYS

The college destinations of the Class of 2025 reflect both their academic caliber and the diversity of their interests and goals. Several students earned admission to Ivy League institutions, with Phoebe Benun announcing her commitment to Yale University, where she will compete in cross-country and track while pursuing her academic interests.

At least one senior gained admission to Harvard College, another was accepted to Stanford University, and others received acceptances to Cornell and the University of Pennsylvania. These Ivy League and elite university admissions continue Santa Monica High's tradition of sending graduates to the nation's most selective institutions.

The University of California system welcomed a substantial contingent of Samohi graduates, with at least a dozen students enrolling at UC Berkeley's College of Letters & Science and many others choosing UCLA's highly competitive programs in biology, psychology, and film. Over 100 Santa Monica seniors—roughly 20 percent of the class—will attend one of the nine UC undergraduate campuses, often in honors programs.

David Ervin will pursue aerospace engineering at the University of Michigan's College of Engineering, while other students earned admission to elite institutions including MIT, University of Chicago, Northwestern, Duke, Georgetown, and Johns Hopkins. The class also boasts representation at elite liberal arts colleges such as Williams, Amherst, Pomona, and Claremont McKenna.

Ananda Searcy will attend Cottey College in Missouri, a women's college where she plans to major in psychology while participating in flag football. Her path exemplifies the diverse opportunities available to accomplished students.

Community college pathways also feature prominently in the class's post-graduation plans. Joshua Lesley will attend Santa Monica College with a scholarship, planning to transfer to UCLA or USC after two years through SMC's renowned Scholars honors transfer program.

A LEGACY OF EXCELLENCE

The achievements of Santa Monica High School's Class of 2025 represent more than individual accomplishments—they reflect a comprehensive educational environment that nurtures academic excellence, competitive spirit, and diverse pathways to success. From National Merit recognition to community college transfer programs, from Ivy League admissions to local scholarship awards, this graduating class embodies the full spectrum of American educational achievement.

Their success in standardized testing, competitive academics, debate, Model UN, mathematics, and countless other pursuits demonstrates the breadth and depth of opportunities available at Santa Monica High School. As these students transition to their next chapters—whether at Yale, Harvard, Stanford, UC campuses, or community colleges—they carry with them the foundation of academic excellence and community engagement that has defined their high school experience.

The Class of 2025's remarkable achievements set a high standard for future Samohi students while affirming the school's position among California's premier public high schools. Their diverse paths forward reflect not only their individual talents and ambitions but also the comprehensive educational environment that has prepared them for success in whatever endeavors they choose to pursue.

City of Santa Monica

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF THE PROPOSED 2025-29 CONSOLIDATED PLAN AND THE 2025-26 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN FOR USE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) AND HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP ACT (HOME) FUNDS

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides annual CDBG and HOME entitlement funds to the City of Santa Monica. As a recipient of these federal funds, HUD requires the City to develop a five-year Consolidated Plan along with Annual Action Plans for housing and community development which identify high priority needs and the associated goals, strategies, and resources anticipated over a five-year period.

Notice is hereby given that the City of Santa Monica has developed the 2025-29 Consolidated Plan and the 2025-26 Annual Action Plan. The Action Plan identifies the City's specific projects and activities for one-year use of a projected $1,164,932 in CDBG funds and $542,428 in HOME funds to address the high-priority needs specified in the Consolidated Plan.

The 2025-29 Consolidated Plan and 2025-26 Annual Action Plan are now available to the public for a 30-day review period beginning May 23, 2025. The proposed plans can be viewed at www.santamonica.gov/community-development-block-grant-and-home-investment-partnership-programs.

Hard copies are available upon request through the Housing and Human Services Department at hhs@santamonica.gov or by phone at (310) 458-8310. Written comments must be submitted by June 23, 2025 by email to hhs@santamonica.gov or by mail to: Housing and Human Services Department, 1685 Main Street, MS22, Santa Monica, CA 90401. All comments received will be incorporated into the final draft of the plan, due to HUD by July 12, 2025. The City Council is scheduled to consider approval of the proposed plan on June 24, 2025.

ESPAÑOL Esto es un aviso público para invitar a cualquier parte interesada a participar en el repaso del Plan Consolidado de Cinco Años de los Años Fiscales 2025-29 y del Plan de Acción Anual del Año Fiscal 2025-26. Si necesita más información, por favor llame a Lupe Madrid en el Departamento de Vivienda y Servicios Humanos al número (310) 458-8310.

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- SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTURE
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- UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA (7)
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OREGON

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WASHINGTON

- UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON - SEATTLE (4)

NEVADA

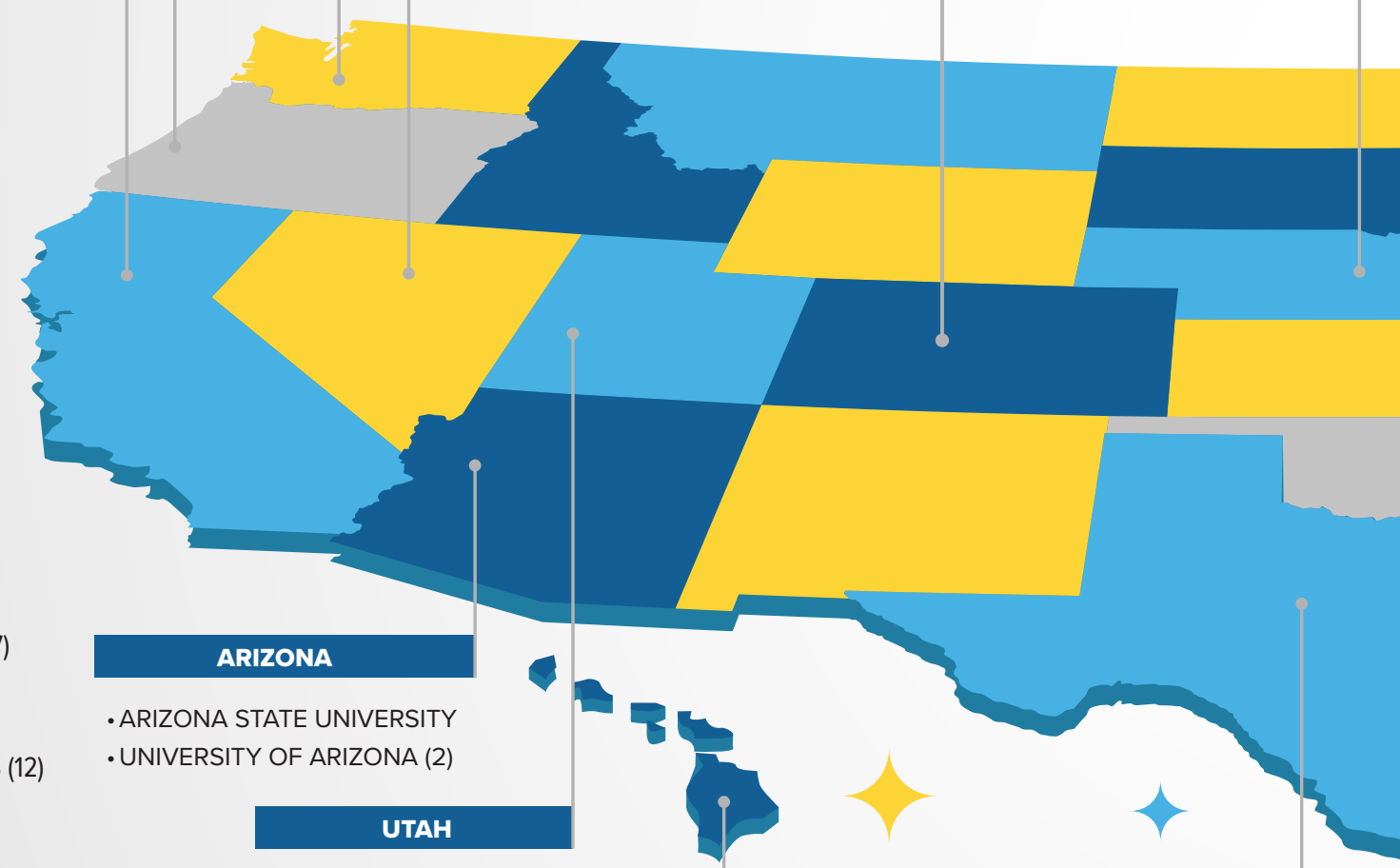
- UNIVERSITY OF LAS VEGAS - NEVADA

COLORADO

- UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER (10)
- COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY - FORT COLLINS

KANSAS

- McPHERSON COLLEGE



ARIZONA

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- UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA (2)

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- CANISIUS UNIVERSITY
- FORDHAM UNIVERSITY
- NEW YORK UNIVERSITY (3)
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- PARSONS SCHOOL OF DESIGN
- PRATT INSTITUTE
- SCHOOL OF VISUAL ARTS
- SKIDMORE COLLEGE (2)
- SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY (2)
- THE NEW SCHOOL

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- COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO
- DEPAUL UNIVERSITY
- UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS - URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

WISCONSIN

- UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - MADISON
- CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY WISCONSIN

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- PURDUE UNIVERSITY

MICHIGAN

- UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN (2)

OHIO

- OBERLIN COLLEGE
- OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

MASSACHUSETTS

- AMHERST COLLEGE
- BERKELEE SCHOOL OF MUSIC (2)
- BOSTON CONSERVATORY AT BERKLEE
- BOSTON UNIVERSITY (3)
- EMERSON COLLEGE (3)
- HARVARD UNIVERSITY
- MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
- NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY (3)
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- TUFTS UNIVERSITY
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GEORGIA

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FLORIDA

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TENNESSEE

- VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY
- BELMONT UNIVERSITY

LOUISIANA

- LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY EUNICE
- TULANE UNIVERSITY (2)

ALABAMA

- LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY EUNICE
- TULANE UNIVERSITY (2)

OTHER

- POST-GRAD YEAR (6)
- JOINING THE WORKFORCE (5)
- MILITARY: AIR FORCE

INFO COMPILED BY THE SAMOHI AND EMI YAMASHIRO-HERGERT

HISTORY OF SAMOHI

The storied history of Samohi began in the 19th century, continuing to thrive well into the 21st century thanks to constant renovations and additions.

Before Samohi proper, there was the Sixth Street School built on town lots between Oregon Avenue (now Santa Monica Blvd.) and Arizona Avenue, which opened in September of 1876. Serving as the only public school in the Santa Monica area, students traveled on means such as horseback to attend classes. Under the leadership of then-principal W.W. Seaman, the first students received diplomas at Santa Monica High School in 1887, however, the first class to traditionally graduate with a four-year course of study (known as "The Immortal Five") was in 1894.

In 1897, the first school bond issue approved a $15,000 building program for Lincoln High School, between Arizona and 11th St., which opened in the spring of 1898, the same year the Sixth Street building stopped occupation by high school classes. The site was eventually occupied by Madison School until the late 1900s. In December of 1910, a resolution was adopted by the Board of Education declaring an election for a $200,000 bond issue, establishing a high school on Prospect Hill between 4th and 6th Streets and between Michigan and Fremont Avenue (now Pico Blvd). Prospect Hill was selected as the Samohi site for its topographic features and midpoint location between invested parties.

On April 11, 1912, a gala ceremony solidified the new cornerstone of Santa Monica education, with three buildings erected at the beginning. The formal dedication of the new school took place on February 23, 1913, and Frank W. Thomas was elected as the first Samohi principal with an enrollment of 450 students and staff of 23 teachers. The following year, more than a dozen teachers were added to staff to meet the needs of increased enrollment, while the school's first gymnasiums were built.

The following decade saw the addition of the Memorial Open Air Theatre in 1921, a dedication of Samohi students who took part in World War I, as well as the addition of the Library Building (now English Building) in 1924. The 1930s saw a devastating earthquake in the area in 1933, requiring extensive campus remodeling and modernizing that forced students to attend classes in tents. Renovations were completed in 1938 alongside construction of a 1,400-seat auditorium, Barnum Hall, named for W.F. Barnum who served as Samohi principal from 1914 to 1943.

In 1952, Santa Monica City College left its location adjacent to Samohi, leaving an opportunity for Samohi to acquire the campus. The school's Science and Technology Buildings were built on the former college site. The next major construction projects were completed in 1969, those being an Olympic-sized natatorium and an enlargement of the Greek Theatre to a seating capacity of 3,558. The beginning of the 1970s saw the completion of the new Language and Library Building.

Things were relatively silent on the construction front until 1993, when $20 million in Proposition ES funding came to Samohi, going toward making buildings accessible under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Construction efforts with the funding included building new science labs, renovating the Technology building, enlarging English classrooms and the first phase of Barnum Hall restoration. Another $20 million of construction efforts came in 2001 from Proposition X, completing projects like expansion of Language and Music buildings, finishing Barnum Hall restoration, updating the student cafeteria and adding up-to-date landscaping to the Science Quad.

The City of Santa Monica and the City of Malibu voted to approve a bond measure in 2007 aiming to prepare Samohi for the century to come, with the measure helping to build a synthetic football and soccer field as well as provide renovation to Sealy Field. In 2015, the school introduced the 68,000 square-foot Innovation Building to campus, boasting 21 classrooms and 15 science labs with state-of-the-art equipment.

Samohi's recent additions include the Discovery Building, opened in August 2021 with 42 classrooms for classes in English, mathematics, science, language and life skills. The area also includes an outdoor rooftop classroom, student cafeteria and Olympic-sized swimming pool.

Additions to the Samohi campus this year are the Exploration Building and Gold Gym, which broke ground in January of 2022. Both projects were opened to students this year. The school currently holds over 2,800 students and is taught by a diverse staff in a variety of school houses and subject matter.



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SAT, SEPT 27	ART WALK
FRI, OCT 31	HALLOWEEN HOP
SAT, NOV 29	ORANGE BALLOON SALE
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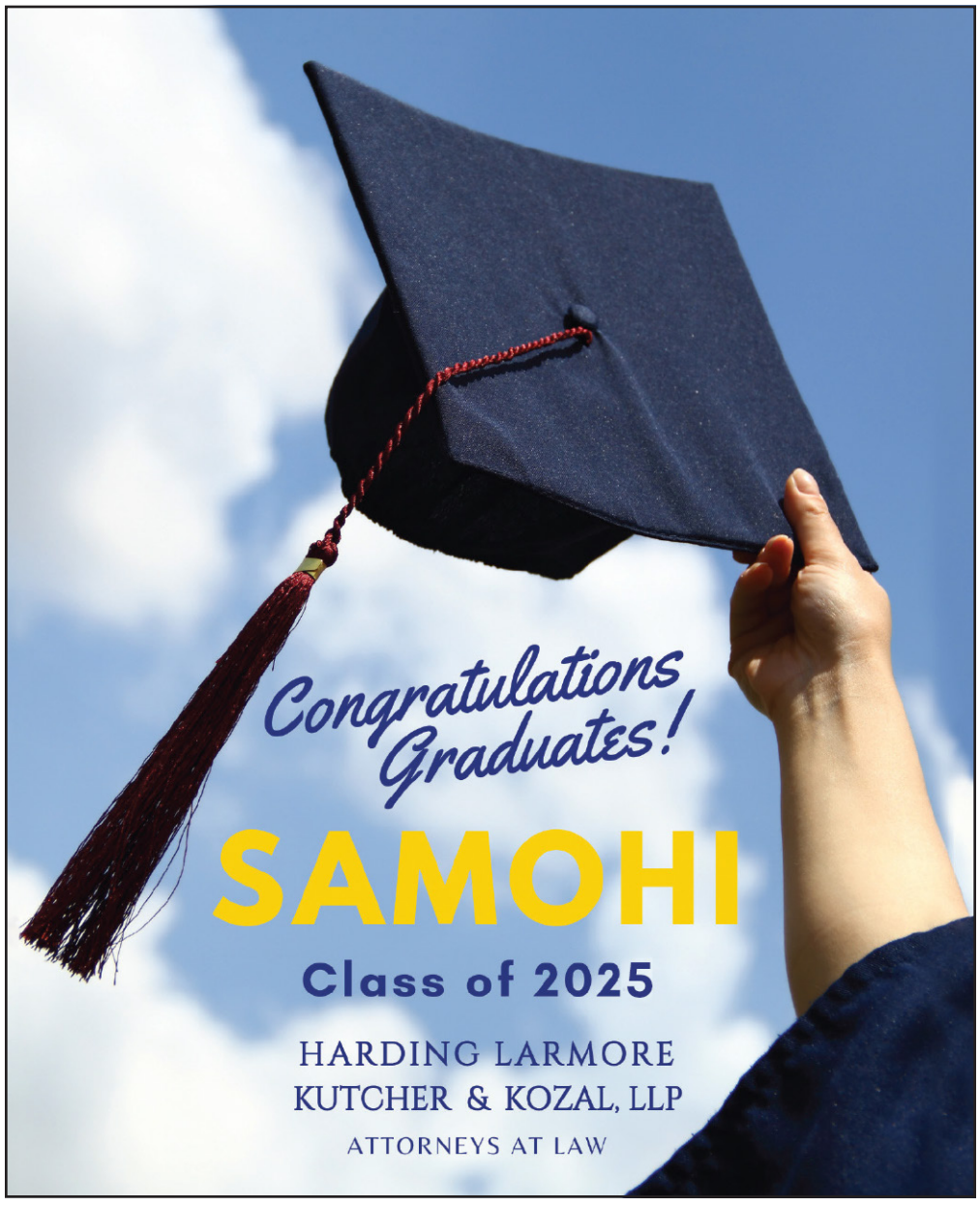
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Evan Harris Abramson
Esther Eleanor Acosta
Bowie Nelson Adams
Aurora Lian Shin-Hei Ahloo *
Asher Ryan Albizu
Anneth Ofocho Alemu
Ryan Adnan Aljojo
Miles Molina Allen
Maya Behin Allshouse *
Maya Reese Alpert *
Naomi Sage Altman *●◆
Gael Marlon Alvarado
Jayden Robert Alvarado-Dove
Ulara Mei Amano
Natalie Kassandra Amaro *§
Deborah Abigail Amezquita
Shane Daniel Anaya
Abel Antal
Maedy Antonio Aguilar
Bianca Lopez Antonio
Ava Natalia Armendariz *●§∞
Brendan Roberto-Alanis Aronin *§
Simon Quinn Ashford *●
Ahmet Ataman
Olivia Eva-Ann Atig
Titus James Auger
Benjamin Ramos Axelrad *



Desiree Maria Ayala
Sabrina Vianey Ayala
Ali M. Badr
Sawyer Marie Badt
Daniel Joseph Baiza
Maia Addison Baker
Mylie Baker
Noelle Bethany Bambic
Brenton Hans Banister
Ry Urabe Bardacke *●§
Liam Barndt
Riquelme Alexander Barranco
Leyla Savannah Barrera Prado
Nora Lee Basmajian ●
Alex Robert Behm III
Irene Ladonnia Beltran
Isaiah Anthony Benavidez-Leyva
Shiraz Benisty
Kai Bennett Φ
Nylah Wizdom Latrice Bennett ●
Camille Grace Benoit
Phoebe Rose Benun *●
Candan James Berberoglu
Max Prince Bernstein
Owen Dashiell Bersch
Sienna Mei Bevan □◊
Charles John Blanchard *●
Hudson Meyer Blankner Φ
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Isaac Bourdeau
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Aiden Benjamin Brockway
Collin Ross Brode
Calvin Rochon Brodkin
Dylan Jake Brown
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Nicholas Post Brownrigg
Maren Mullaney Bruce
Rhian Margaret Bruce
Elliotte June Buhl Φ
Sabrina Livingston Burling *
Anjalie Elise Butte *§
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Bryan Eduardo Cabrera-Galindo
Christian Campos Robles
Katy Tatiana Cañas Cruz
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Lily Jade Canny
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Mateo J. Canu
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Natalie Crisabel Castellanos§
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Isabelle Bailey Channick
Vincent Cheng ●□◊
Filipp Chernenkov *
Luca Luis Chiappe
Holly Louise Childs *□◆
Riley Claire Christensen
Declan Loren Clark*
Ethan Dylan Cohn
Jackson Arthur Colby ●
Victor Enrique Collazo
Lucas Miguel Colombel
Ryan August Colvin
Asa James Colwell Φ
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Giovanni C. Crabtree
Ava Marie Crampton
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Marianna Crucitti
Hailey Michelle Cruz *§
Ithzay Astrid Valeriano Cruz ●∞
Stephanie Cruz *●§
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Brandon Jonathan De Leon
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Brady John Detamore
Roxana Diaz Garcilazo
Blythe Morrison Domingue Φ
Demiana Magdi Dous
Charles William Downey
Blake Jordan Drabkin
Pedro Carapinha Duarte Silva ●
Ryle Parker Duvernay
Zelda Billington Ehasz
Téadora Luiza Eisenberg
Fred Ekberg
Leilah Elise Elie ●
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Mani Falatjanaki
Benjamin Haggerty Falk
Barsoum Aiman Farag
Rayan Farzanefar
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Ryan Jacob Feldman
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Carlos Benjamin Fernandez-Vasquez ∞
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Malia Pearl Fowler
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Teralani Ann Galván §
Mirracle Gabriella Gans
Damary Camila Garcia
Grace Ellen Garcia *
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Robert Jerimiah Howard



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Sophia Elaine Huether □◆
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Gavin James Kirtley
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Joel Koye Forquet
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Noah Alexander Kratz
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Natan Krylov
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Manuel Jake Lares
Roz Ava Larsen ●□◆
Aaron David Lazarof
Aerin Monica Lee ●
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Sofia Harper Rose Lemle
Lupita Jacqueline Leon *
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Luke James LeSueur
Mariah MacKenzie Lucille Lewis
Isaac Mason Liberman
Sage Emerson Lima Φ
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Himanshi Machhaal
Eva Camille Machtinger *
Charles Kenneth MacLeod
Raden Richard Madley
Joshua Chen Mahmoudiani
Leo Chan Maida
Jordan Abraham Makhani *◆
Kayman Riley Mangan
Theodora June Maratos
Luca Matisse Yarow Marchis ●□◊
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Matthew Xavier Mariscal
Chase Martinez
Cinthia Joanna Martinez *
Melina Michelle Martinez
Emily Martinez Santiago *§
Felipe Martini *§
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Rene Andres Mayorga III
Ava Marie McCarthy
Isabella Apollonia McCoy
Harrison Shea McGuire□
Nyah Jade McIntyre ●
Alfie Joseph McLoughlin *●
Lily Rose McMahon *●
Jaclyn Anne McNally
Isabella Cecilia Medina
Isla Maeve Meehan Smith*
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Abigail Rende Metz *●□
Jocelyn Mexicano Lara
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Eike Louise Miller-Gomez ●
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Sophie Kay O'Brien *●□◆
Daniel Jameson O'Bryan
Sadie Elizabeth O'Connell *Φ
Emely Ojeda
Cyd Plum Okum *
Elle Rose Oliva
Tatiana Wendy Olivera
Jackson Elias O'Neal *
Lucien Kai de Stefano O'Neil
Sydney Lin Ong
Dania Orduna §
Kevin Ortiz Diaz
Vincent Cruz Outland
Jacob Albert Ovadia ◊
John Kaleb Rocco Owens
Kylie Mitsue Ozaki
Sierra Rose Pacifici *●§□◆
Olivia Padilla
Luca Alessandro Panozzo-Solanot
Eric Silva Papazian *
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Ruby Amelia Parr
Sadie Hieu Pearlman ●
Roen Olivia Peralta
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Alma Fiorella Perez Nuñez
Aidan Shai Perlitz
Maliha Jawhara Perry *
Steven P. Petramale
Daniela Mary Petran ●
Alexander Petrovski
Arlo Manglaras Petty
Chau Thanh Pham
Tan Co Pham
Isaac Octavio Pina
Sofia Elizabeth Piturro
Milo Chieno Polesky
Greger Efim Polinovsky
Orlando Jim Popkin ◆
Mischa Bella Posin
Miles Julius Price
Dalia Liat Puchalt
Gabriela Puszkar
Madison Brooke Quick
Stella Alexys Quiros●
Celeste L. Radusky*●§
Eliana L. Radusky *§
Jesus Ramirez
Nephtaly Hilario Ramos Lopez
Brian Ramos Sanchez
Andrew Rangel
Mark Anthony Raymundo*§∞
Deacon James Recsnik ●
Zoie Leah Revzen
Lola Kai Reyes●
Samuel Jesse Reynoso *●
Christopher Jinyun Rhee*
Teagan Gail RichmondΦ
Adessa Rigg
Eli Jacob Rishe ●Φ
Osbaldo Rivera Garcia *●
Ian Ferrari Roberts
Myah Marie Robertson
Aniyah Jana'e Robinson
Jane Dagny Robinson
Emily Catlin Rodriguez *§
Sofia Paz Rodriguez
Maxine Hope Rogers
Tessa Rose Rogers
Juliett Mitova Rojas ●
Ava Simone Roker *
Finlay Marlo Ross *§
Portia Kylie Rossi
Sophie Bella Roth
Remy Thomas Rousselle *
Andy Eli Rowles
Samuel Duane Rubin ●
Anja Karina Rydman Santos
Toby Grey Safchik Φ
Miyuki Saita*●Φ

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Ayarell Alely Sanhueza Sandoval
Jonathan Gabriel Santiago
Kathryn Isabella Santiago *●§□◆
Genesis Andrea Santiago Chavez *●
Ashley Belen Santiago Garcia *●
Carla Isabella Santini
Andrea Nicole Capiral Santos
Uzay Alp Saracoglu
Rihana Giselle Sargent
Brady Bjornsen Satinover
Holden Rusk Savage *●§□◆
Sevan Sawadogo
Holland Stella Scarff
Hailey Teagan Schreier
Riley Morgan Schreier
Oona Rose Schulweis ●
Kalan Hickmon Schwartz
Tola Eliora Schwarz ●□
Ananda Danae Searcy
Xavier Miles Seldon ●
Chloe Belle Senior ●
Selam Aliya Serapiglia
Anna Mariya Sergeev *
Sebastian Diego Serna
Melanie Marian Serrano-Ramirez *●§



Fatima-Numa Shabih ●Φ
Amirsam Shahhosseini
Tarek Shaker
Zayin Hannah Aaliyah Shakur
Owen Marley Shank
Feebee Mercedes Shaw *●
Joshua Matthew Shaw ●□◊
Gabriel Jacob Sherman§
Yuki Shibuya ●
Emilia Drew Sievers
Sadie Rui Kawanishi Sills ●
Natalie Angelina Silva
Sophia Mercedes Silva
Adam Elliot Silverman
James Django Wolf Simon *
Giovanni Constantino Sines *§
Sabine Constantino Sines *●§
Salomon Ariel Singer-Portnoy *§
Madeline Clara Sirotnik
Ellie Amanda Skalaski ●◊
Tess Monet Sloan ●
Anya Sofia Smith
Eleanor Beverly Gephart Smith *●◊
Jaylen Nicholas Smith
Mason Charles Smith
Miles Arthur Smith
Harper Ava Snyder
Amir Fahd Soliman
Ethan Jacob Sollano

◊ Potential Sealbearer § Immersion Medallion Φ Project Based Learning Graduate ∞ Young Collegian





Santa Monica High School 2025 Graduating Class

Isabella Lara Somaini
Libero Colombo Somaini
Zachary Soto
Morris Christian Spaltenstein ◊
Kinkade Elliott Spencer
Ethan Joao Stephan
Drew William Stern□
Mason Eliot Stevens
Alasdair Van Wickle Stevning Φ
Scarlet Gianna Stewart
Wybie Ivy Stokes
Felicity Katherine Stone *Φ
Audrey Liliana Strauss
Alma Mae Street *§
Gia Alexandria Strong-Fajardo
Shannon Marie Stuart
Ethan Suh *
Henry Hanlin Sullivan
Walden Blue Sullivan ●
Marco Domenico Sung
Dimitri Raul Swingler
Nika Roya Tabib
Yada Taepanicharoen
Michael Meelad Taghizadeh □
Maya Eleni Tal
Jasmine Elisabeth Talledo
Jiehuai Tan
Taylor Rose Tandy ●
Isabella Mee-Hye Tarin



Kieran Andre Dion Tatiboit
Angelina Rose Tawfeek ●
Dylan James Tebbutt
Luke Gregory Terlizzi ●
Indigo Oceana Terry
Rediet Aklilu Tezera
Archer Douglas Thaler *
Sasha Rose Thomas
Christopher Justin Thompkins
Avelaine Rose Thompson *●□
James William Tigrak
Levi Morton Title
Rayah Svetly Todorov
Cleo Claire Topp
Seyedeh Sarvin Torab
Pauline Torres Villavicencio *●
Siena Lolita Tovar Burke *●§
Suzu Toyotake
Olivia Li Tran *●
Samuel Alexander Trejo
Drake Jameson Troglin
Tengis Tseden-ish
Della Efua Turner §
Luna Louise Turner ●
April Marie Ulloa
Emily Magdalene Umana *§
Joshua Anthony Usher
Lola Simone Valdivia-Kusch
Mateo Valecillos *

● Centennial Recognition Medallion □ Potential National Honor Society ◆ Sealbearer * Biliteracy State Seal

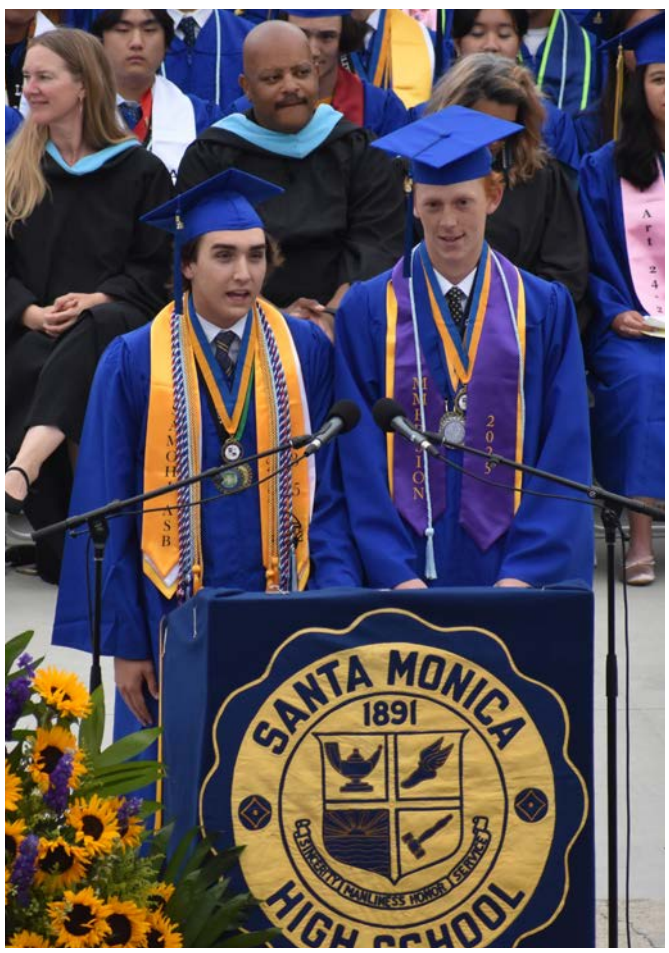


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Emily Josephine Vallejo
Francesca Autumn van Keeken
Teagan Matthew van Vuuren
Noah Kinsley Vance
David James Vasquez
Emily Marie Vasquez *
Kaela Desaree Vasquez
Oscar Sidney Vaughan-Verk
Calvin Peter Vebber
Stella Engracia Vegezzi
Audry Sophia Ventura Vargas
Zoe Sahyira Ventura Vargas
Said Arturo Villafana
Estevan Natividad Villaseñor
Phoenix Gabriel Vinar ◊
Kenneth Vital
Drew Sofia Vallejo Vudmaska ◊
Hayden George Vukadinovich
Kenneth Angulo Walden §
Maxwell Rubens WalkerΦ
Zaire Ibn Walker
Edward Robert Wallace
Chloe Lily Warner ●
Kheian Quitos Washington
Jordan Tiger Waters
Eames Straub Weeks Manjarres ●
Alexandra Jane Weinberger *§



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Emily Ann Whaley
Ellis Lee Wheeler
Hudson Stewart White
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Ricardo Frank Wilkinson-Moreno
Brigid Niamh Williams
Martin Sheldon Williams
Lucas Austin Willinger
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Steele Taylor Winterer
Jordan McKenzie Wise
Anthony James Wolf
Jaxon Julius Wolf
Eliduwan Yudè Woods
Alexander Wray
Serena Wu ●
Emi Yamashiro-Hergert*●
Lucas Aria Yarmand
Talia Pari Cherie Yermian
Ezekiel Y. Yun ●
Diana Gražina Žemaitis*
Rodolfo Daniel Zepeda
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SENIOR SPOTLIGHTS

DIVERSE PATHS TO SUCCESS FOR THE CLASS OF 2025

SENIOR KAYMAN MANGAN USES ART AS A TOOL FOR ACTIVISM

Samohi senior Kayman Mangan has carved a distinctive path combining creative expression with political activism. Her artistic journey began during the pandemic when she started drawing daily, eventually discovering painting and developing her unique style through the AP Art program under teacher Amy Bouse's guidance.

Mangan describes her medium as multimedia, incorporating various materials to explore themes of human intimacy and universal feelings. "Everybody, as human beings, we have the same feelings," she explains, emphasizing how she communicates relatable experiences through personalized art.

Her activism extends beyond individual expression through Pair Los Angeles, an organization she runs with friends that hosts art shows and concerts, directing all profits toward helping the unhoused community with food, water, and clothing. The experience of watching local artists come together for social causes proved deeply inspiring.

The Feminist Art Lab program through the Feminist Front further radicalized her approach, where she created projects focused on abolition, prison labor, and exploitation within the prison system. This experience helped integrate more radical viewpoints into her artistic practice.

Mangan was instrumental in organizing Samohi's February walkout protesting the Trump administration, which evolved from a political discussion club into a full demonstration. She believes strongly in direct action over performative activism, criticizing those who limit their engagement to social media posts.

"I think that everybody should be out on the streets protesting," Mangan states. "Every day there's something new that I learn about that just makes my heart sink." She views protests and demonstrations as essential components of her activism journey, emphasizing the importance of reducing apathy and educating people about critical issues.

For Mangan, art and activism are inseparable—her creative work serves as both personal expression and social commentary, while her organizing efforts create spaces for community engagement and political resistance. She remains committed to advocating for her beliefs through multiple channels of creative and political action.



PHOEBE BENUN GRADUATES AFTER MAKING TRACK HISTORY

Phoebe Benun leaves Samohi having shattered four school track records, a remarkable achievement for someone who only discovered her passion for running during freshman year. Growing up in an athletic family with two older brothers, Benun initially followed their path of playing soccer while casually participating in track.

Her breakthrough came freshman year when she helped set a new record for the 4x1600 Mt. SAC relay race. This early success sparked a growing love for running that eventually outweighed her childhood commitment to soccer. "I always planned on ending soccer after junior year to focus on academics," Benun recalls, "but when I realized how much I really loved running, I decided to give it more of a shot."

By senior year, Benun held records in the 1600, the mile, the 4x800 relay, and the 4x1600 relay. Her decision to drop both club and school soccer after sophomore year allowed her to focus entirely on track, increasing her weekly mileage from 25 to 45 miles and approaching practice with greater intentionality.

"My freshman year, I had no idea what I was doing," she admits. "Now I try to really learn from my coaches so that when I'm not with them, I can still decide for myself what I need to be doing." Coaches Harley Richards and Paul Lupi played crucial roles in developing this independent mindset.

As team captain during her senior season, Benun took pride in leading and uniting her teammates. The demanding schedule taught her exceptional time management skills, as she learned to balance academic pressures with athletic commitments. "I feel like I'm always thinking about running," she says, describing how the sport connected all aspects of her life.

Benun will continue her track career at Yale University, where she's excited to join new communities and meet people from diverse backgrounds. Her journey from casual participant to record-breaking captain demonstrates how discovering genuine passion can transform both athletic performance and personal growth.

LEO MAIDA FOLLOWS PATH IN AUTO RESTORATION

Leo Maida has charted an unconventional course toward his passion for automotive restoration, leading him to McPherson College in Kansas—the only institution in the nation offering a bachelor's degree in this specialized field. His journey began with aspirations of car design but evolved after discovering the TV show "Graveyard Cars," which documents the rehabilitation of deteriorating vehicles.

"That kind of spurred the idea like, Oh, my God, I could do that," Maida explains. "I was so determined to restore old cars that whether I went to college or not, I was determined to do that." Initially viewing restoration as a career path that didn't require college education, Maida's perspective changed when his brother discovered McPherson's unique program.

The program perfectly suits Maida's background, as it targets students without previous hands-on car experience. Having originally focused on design, he admits he "didn't want to get dirty with cars—didn't want to work on them." Now he embraces both the technical and artistic aspects of automotive restoration.

Maida maintains his design passion through building and designing plastic scale model cars during his free time. This hobby combines artistic elements with technical precision, requiring careful preparation, proper painting techniques, and detailed finishing. He regularly participates in local model contests and shows with his father and brother, displaying their creations for judging and potential awards.

Samohi teachers have consistently supported his unique career goals. AP English teacher Amy Chapman notes, "Leo Maida has one of the most unique focuses that I've heard of. He's super bright and really into car restoration." Maida appreciates the school's educational diversity, praising the opportunity to take varied classes in subjects that genuinely interest him.

Reflecting on his high school experience, Maida encourages underclassmen to fully explore Samohi's offerings, admitting he didn't take full advantage of available programs. His path demonstrates how following genuine passion, even in unconventional directions, can lead to specialized educational and career opportunities.

FINLAY ROSS PURSUES GLOBAL HUMANITARIANISM THROUGH POLITICAL EXPERIENCE



Finlay Ross has built an impressive political resume during high school, but she's using this foundation to pursue humanitarian work rather than traditional government roles. Her experience includes serving on Ted Lieu's Youth Advisory Council and successfully establishing Santa Monica's Youth Advisory Council through collaboration with former Mayor Brock and current Mayor Negrete.

The Youth Advisory Council project emerged from Ross's research revealing that neighboring cities had similar councils while Santa Monica lacked one. "It was kind of a very obvious problem that seemed like a space that needed to be filled," she explains. After months of development work with her team and mayoral meetings, the project gained approval in 2025 following the city election transition.

Ross's humanitarian perspective stems from her father's work as a documentary filmmaker covering international tragedies, including border issues and Haiti's earthquake recovery. "Being exposed to that at a really young age was kind of eye opening," she reflects. "I realized the world was not perfect, that we all aren't treated equally, and that somebody needs to take steps to solve that."

At Vanderbilt University, Ross will major in Political Science while minoring in Medicine, Health and Society—a social studies approach to medicine, health, and equity. Her goal involves working internationally and independently of governments, either through NGOs or her own initiatives, focusing on building educational and healthcare foundations in developing countries.

Her government experience has actually discouraged her from pursuing policy-making careers. "The problem with our government is that people in power are so focused on being right, that they're not focused on getting it right," Ross observes. She criticizes the stubborn attachment to opinions that prevents collaboration and meaningful change.

Instead, Ross envisions working with people "willing to understand where they're wrong and work toward learning what's right." Her unique combination of political experience and humanitarian vision positions her to address global issues through innovative, independent approaches rather than traditional governmental channels.

ISABELLA SALEM TAKES LEADERSHIP ROLE IN THEATER PRODUCTIONS



In just two years, Isabella Salem has risen from ensemble member to associate choreographer for Samohi Theater, leveraging her lifelong dance background to become instrumental in major productions. Her rapid ascent demonstrates both her exceptional talent and leadership capabilities in the performing arts.

Salem began dancing at age five and plans to double-major in dance at UC Santa Barbara while pursuing professional dance opportunities. Her theater involvement started junior year when her choir teacher assumed leadership of the musical theater program, providing Salem an opportunity to combine her two primary passions: dance and choir.

As dance captain for 2024's "Phantom of the Opera," Salem led rehearsals, created instructional videos, assisted cast members with routines, and wrote choreography. The transition from student to teacher required significant adaptation. "When you're in a classroom as a student, there are more things to observe and try to lay low," she explains, "but when I was put in charge, I had to apply observations from dance class to my own teaching style."

Her responsibilities expanded significantly in her senior year as associate choreographer for "Chicago." Salem wrote four dances for the production and participated in one-on-one meetings with the director, gaining deeper insight into the behind-the-scenes coordination required for successful productions.

"This year, I was definitely more involved with the program hands-on versus just an ensemble member," Salem notes. "Getting to see all the pieces that need to fit together to put on a production is pretty cool." The experience taught her about the complex logistics of theatrical production while allowing her to develop her choreographic skills.

Salem particularly values the community aspect of theater, describing character development and rehearsal time as bonding experiences that created lasting friendships across grade levels. Her success in combining dance expertise with leadership skills has made her an integral part of Samohi Theater's creative team, preparing her well for future endeavors in professional dance and choreography.

MAREN BRUCE REACHES ROWING NATIONALS TWICE



Maren Bruce's rowing journey began during the COVID-19 pandemic in seventh grade and culminated in two consecutive appearances at Youth Rowing Nationals, earning her admission to Harvard University where she'll major in Government and Public Health while joining their rowing team.

Bruce initially played soccer following her family's athletic tradition, but lockdown restrictions made continued practice impossible. She switched to rowing with a club that offered singles rowing, allowing individual practice during pandemic restrictions. The transition proved transformative—she never returned to soccer despite loving its community aspect and her family's involvement in the sport.

"It just wasn't my sport. It never really spoke to me," Bruce explains about soccer. "When I started rowing, I found that I enjoyed it so much more." Her athletic household, with both parents as triathletes, provided a foundation for pursuing sports as vehicles for self-discovery and personal expression.

Rowing taught Bruce valuable life skills beyond physical discipline. The sport's emphasis on teamwork and constant awareness created a tight-knit community that provided essential support systems. "It's one of those niche sports," she notes. "It's a small community already, and everyone I've met rowing are the nicest, most generous, hardworking people."

The physical and mental demands of rowing developed Bruce's resilience and perseverance. She learned to overcome setbacks, illness, and mental challenges that could derail athletic performance. "I really learned how to overcome sickness and other things that affect you," she reflects. "Learning how to be resilient and understanding that it's how I react, not necessarily what happens to me."

Bruce's rowing success demonstrates how pandemic-driven changes can lead to unexpected opportunities. Her discovery of genuine passion for a new sport, combined with the discipline and community it provided, created a foundation for both athletic achievement and personal growth that will continue at Harvard.

Congratulations, Class of 2025



From your first day of Kindergarten to graduation day, we've been proud to be part of your journey.

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PROJECT BASED LEARNING CLASS OF 2025









The stole ceremony for this year's PBL class was an unforgettable emotionally charged celebration filled with joy, pride, and reflection. Teachers shared heartfelt memories, painting vivid portraits of growth, perseverance, and unique contributions to the community. Students were seen, honored, and celebrated—both as individuals and as a powerful collective.

The student tribute to advisor, Bailey Field, was a beautiful testament to the relationships built and the impact made. The love and gratitude in the room were undeniable.

The Class of 2025 will not be forgotten and have left a legacy that will inspire future PBL students.

SAMOHI CELEBRATES STUDENT SUCCESS THROUGH EQUITY-FOCUSED PROGRAMS

Two groundbreaking events at Santa Monica High School highlighted the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District's commitment to supporting diverse students through targeted educational initiatives.

The district's Equity Plan took center stage Jan. 28 when Santa Monica High hosted its first-ever College Expo featuring Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Hispanic-Serving Institutions. The transformative event, held in collaboration with the National College Resource Foundation, connected students directly with higher education opportunities many had never considered.

The results were immediate and impressive. Thirty-five colleges and universities participated, with admissions officers providing on-site decision-making that led to 76 students receiving immediate college acceptances — some to multiple schools. The event generated $1.67 million in scholarship awards in a single day.

The expo featured targeted workshops including "How to Find Money for College," "411 for the Student-Athlete: Preparing for Life After Sports," and "Why Attend an HBCU/ Top STEM Programs." The programming specifically addressed the needs of first-generation college students, many of whom had never envisioned themselves on a college campus.

Four months later, the school continued its equity efforts with Legado Latino, a celebration held May 23 that honored Latino students' cultural heritage and achievements. The event recognized acts of kindness and service while celebrating academic and leadership accomplishments within the Latino student community.

The celebration was founded and advised by Dr. Guadalupe Mireles-Toumayan, whose vision created a space for Latino voices to be heard and respected within the school community.

Both initiatives reflect the district's broader commitment to educational equity and cultural representation. The College Expo addressed systemic barriers to higher education access, while Legado Latino provided cultural affirmation for students who often feel overlooked.

The programs demonstrate how targeted outreach and cultural recognition can create meaningful opportunities for student success.





CONGRATULATIONS
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CLASS OF 2025

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