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East Palo Alto Today

Providing news that is relevant, informative and critical



East Palo Alto and Belle Haven

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East Palo Alto is getting its own water supply

By Henrietta J. Burroughs
East Palo Alto Today

It has been months in the making, but now, the East Palo Alto City Council adopted a resolution that the city should move ahead with the intent to draft a

ground water management plan.

The plan would enable the city to manage the water resources within the city's limits. The council approved the resolution unanimously at its meeting on October 21. In explaining the need for a ground water management

plan, City Engineer Kamal Fallaha said that the city is dependent on the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) and the Hetch Hetchy reservoir for water. East Palo Alto currently has only a four-hour emergency water supply and lacks water storage capabili-

ties. Fallaha said that East Palo Alto needs to have "water security," with its own sources of water that it can manage and sustain.

During the public hearing on the ground water management plan, council members were told that having such a plan would

allow the city to activate the Gloria Way Well, since the State of California requires the city to have a ground water management plan in place before the well can be activated.

Gloria Way Well, located on continued on page 10

CA Legislative Black Caucus meets in East Palo Alto



Photo by East Palo Alto Today

This photo shows members of the California Legislative Black Caucus at a hearing in East Palo Alto on September 30, 2014. The caucus met at the Costano School and the 49ers Academy on Fordham Street. The hearing was held to look into the impact "Math Misplacement" has on students of color and the effect this misplacement has on the achievement gap. In this photo, the Hon. Holly J. Mitchell, Sen. 26th District, refers to a document as she addresses the audience.

By Henrietta J. Burroughs
East Palo Alto Today

Why is it that a disproportionate number of minority and disadvantaged students,

who pass Algebra 1 in the eighth grade are forced to repeat the subject again in the ninth grade when they get to high school? This is a question that is at the heart of a report issued by the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and

funded by the Silicon Valley Community Foundation in Mountain View.

This question is also at the heart of a series of townhall hearings being held by the California Legislative Black Caucus and it brought the cau-

cus to East Palo Alto on Tuesday, September 30, 2014 to meet with interested community members, city officials, foundation representatives and school officials in a two hour meeting, which was held at Costano School and the

49ers Academy on Fordham Street.

The delegation included one state senator, Sen. Holly J. Mitchell, who represents the 26th California State District which includes Culver City and continued on page 12

Race matters: New poll finds police overstep power

By Corine Forward and
Cohen Price
East Palo Alto Today

Walking down the street on a chilly winter night of last fall, clenching the straps of his basketball bag, wearing a grey hoodie, baggy shorts and Jordans, junior Vincent Padilla's hair began to stand up on the back of his neck as a police car rolled up behind him.

Here we go, another cop thinking I'm doing something wrong, Vincent thought to himself. The officer from the San Mateo police department stepped out of his car to ask Vincent, why he was out walking and where he was headed.

"Walking back from practice, sir," Vincent recalls

telling the officer.

Vincent stared blankly into the cold blue eyes of the white officer. Seemingly sizing him up, the officer turned around and retreated back to his car telling Vincent to hurry home.

"It made me mad because he only stopped and judged me based on my appearance," said Vincent, who is Hispanic. "This has happened way too many times than it should have."

Vincent is one of dozens of Eastsiders who have been stopped by police for what they consider "no good reason." An Eastside Panther poll of ninth through 12th grade students drew

208 responses – more than three-quarters of the high school population – representing the racial breakdown of the school. It found that 24% had been stopped by police at least once, and half of those had been stopped two times or more.

Racial profiling, the use of one's race or ethnicity by law enforcement as a reason to stop or arrest an individual, has become a growing concern in society after incidents like the Ferguson shooting on Aug. 9. In that event, Michael "Big Mike" Brown, 18, unarmed and black, was shot and killed by a white officer in the suburbs of Ferguson, Miss. The community

erupted in angry protest, leading to riots, curfews and crackdowns.

The Eastside Panther surveyed 208 Eastside students about racial profiling in mid-September, asking whether they have been stopped by police, know someone who has been stopped, and whether racial profiling is a personal concern for them.

Among the roughly one-quarter of respondents who had been stopped, some trends emerged regarding race and gender. Across the races and ethnicities, boys reported being stopped more than girls. Of the African-American students who responded, 35 percent had been stopped at least once, while 19 percent of the Hispanic/Latino respon-

dents had been stopped at least once. Among the small sample of mixed-race or other race respondents, 25 percent said they had been stopped at least once. These statistics show that African-American boys experienced being stopped for "no good reason"

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35%
of African-American respondents have been stopped by police at least once for "no good reason."

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City has new interim city manager

The East Palo Alto City Council gave its unanimous approval to the appointment of Carlos Martinez as East Palo Alto's interim city manager. The motion was made by Councilmember Donna Rutherford and seconded by Councilmember Ruben Abrica.

Under the terms of his agreement with the city, Martinez tenure starts with his appointment by the council on October 8 and remains in effect until the City Council's appointment of a permanent city manager, unless the council decides to terminate him from his interim position before a permanent replacement is appointment.

Martinez' hourly rate was



Policy & Action Ordinances Report
Appointment of Interim City Manager
Carlos Martinez

set at \$80.6795 and it was agreed that he would continue to receive the same benefits as he received in his regular position as Management Analyst-CIP in the Community and Economic Development Department

As the interim city manager, he has a car allowance of \$250 a month. When his interim appointment ends, Mar-

tinez will be paid for any vacation time earned at his newly established hourly rate and he will be given the right to return to his previous position as Management Analyst-CIP under the same salary, benefits, terms and conditions under which he was employed.

This is the second time that Martinez was under consideration to be East Palo Alto's interim city manager. In 2012, he and former police chief Ron Davis both applied for the position and Davis was selected.

Davis returned to his position as police chief when the city council chose the former city manager, Magda Gonzalez, whose contract the council de-

cidated in August not to renew. Gonzalez left the city shortly afterwards to become the city manager of Half Moon Bay.

After his appointment, Martinez told council members that he was honored and humbled by his appointment. Both the appointment and his response brought applause from many of those who attended the meeting.

New Interim police chief

At its council meeting on September 16, the East Palo Alto City Council appointed Mark Raffaelli as East Palo Alto's new interim police chief.

Raffaelli, who was the interim captain for the East Palo Alto Police Department prior to his appointment, served as the chief of police of South San Francisco for 15 years before retiring.

During its meeting on October 23, the council voted to

correct his hourly rate to make it \$87.9090 a reduction from the original rate of \$89.2826.

Raffaelli is East Palo Alto's fourth interim police chief since Ron Davis retired as the city's police chief.

Raffaelli follows Steve Belcher, who followed Lee Violette, who followed Frederico Rocha.

City manager will continue to select East Palo Alto's police chief

After a spirited debate that involved passionate arguments from residents and a presentation by the city attorney that reviewed various municipal ordinance enacted over the years, the city council decided unanimously with four yes votes to allow the city manager to continue to select the city's police chief.

Council member Abrica was

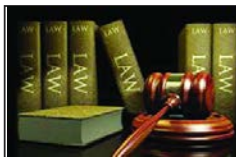
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Wins for undocumented youth

By Katherine Gin
East Palo Alto Today

In September of this year, multiple victories were won by undocumented young people pursuing higher education, career and professional goals! Despite the federal gridlock on immigration reform, California and prominent national educational institutions are leading the way by proactively recognizing the contributions of undocumented young people.

One of the most exciting recent developments in California is the passage of SB



1159. Sponsored by Senator Lara (D-Bell Gardens), this bill removes barriers for undocumented young people as they seek career and professional licenses. Until now, many talented and trained individuals have been barred from practicing in their profession and participating in the economy

because they lack a social security number.

SB 1159 removes this barrier and allows an applicant to provide, and a licensing board to accept, an individual taxpayer identification number (ITIN) in lieu of a social security number in the application for a professional license; it ensures that otherwise eligible individuals are not denied based solely on their immigration status.

SB 1159 will help undocumented young people like Luz Sandoval, one of E4FC's current Outreach Ambassadors. Luz

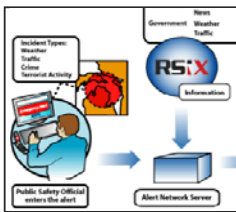
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SMC Alert and vulnerable populations assistance is available

By Brent Butler and
Ryan Zollicoffer
East Palo Alto Today

Sign up for SMC ALERT, which is a free alert notification system used to immediately contact you during urgent or emergency situations with useful information and updates by sending text messages to your: (1) email accounts (home, work, school, etc.); (2) cell phones, pagers or (3) Smartphones/handheld devices. You can register online by going to: <https://www.smcalert.info/> Please note that your carrier may charge you a fee to receive alerts on your wireless device. All you have to do is sign up for a SMC Alert account.

SMC Alert warns you in an emergency situation by an alert sent by text messages on your cell phone or mobile device. Read these messages promptly and follow the instructions. Additional instructions may follow throughout the emergency situation so keep your phone near you. Alert types may include life



safety, fire, weather, accidents involving utilities or roadways, team activation notifications, or disaster notification such as a terrorist attack.

A few examples of the types of messages that can be sent through SMC Alert are in emergency situations to notify employees, and/or citizens of the location of the nearest emergency shelter, available bed space, hours of operation during a crisis, evacuation routes during an emergency, and special teams within the community, based upon an event.

Occasionally, precautionary warnings regarding severe weather, and change in the Homeland Security Advisory System terror.

Vulnerable populations assis-

tance may be available, if you or a loved one is unable to walk, and may need evacuation assistance. Please let us know if advance.

The City recommends that you contact 1-800-675-8437 (TIES) or go to: <http://www.smchealth.org/TIES>, which is keeping a database of vulnerable populations, which typically include the elderly and the disabled, who will need assistance. By Brent A. Butler, Planning and Housing Manager, and Ryan Zollicoffer, Menlo Park Fire Protection District Emergency Coordination.

Brent Butler is the planning and housing manager for the City of East Palo Alto and Ryan Zollicoffer is the Menlo Park Fire Protection District's disaster response coordinator.

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From the Editor's Desk

What is your vision for East Palo Alto?

With the November elections this year, East Palo Alto residents have an opportunity, as with all elections, to select candidates who will make a difference in the future direction of their city.

There are three candidates running for the East Palo Alto City Council and five candidates running for the Ravenswood City School District.

The city faces a critical juncture. It is operating with an interim city manager and an interim police chief. It still has one of the highest foreclosure rates in the Bay Area, the highest unemployment rate, one of the highest school dropout rates and the lowest per capital income in the county.

But, as with any challenge, one can see the problems and feel overwhelmed or one can see the opportunities and double one's efforts to succeed.

Even with its low numbers on quality of life indicators, many residents are proud to live in East Palo Alto.

At a September meeting, designed to uncover how East Palo Alto residents saw their city and what they wanted in their next city manager, the residents who attended the meeting expressed their pride in their city. They described a city that was unique in the Bay Area and one that had many positive attributes and possibilities.

While many residents express high hopes for its future, East Palo Alto is at a crossroad. If the city is to fulfill the promise that those who fought for its cityhood envisioned and if it is to fully realize the possibilities before it, then East Palo Alto residents will have to be very clear about their present and future vision for their city.

If it is to continue as one of the most ethnically diverse cities in the Bay Area, offer affordable housing for those who need it the most, and raise its ranking on quality of life indicators, then East Palo Alto's residents need to realize what is at stake and encourage their officials to take action.

Given California's drought and the need for the city to develop independent sources of

water to supply the water needs of its residents and to attract needed development which will help with the city's tax base, there are critical decisions that must be made.

This October city officials made big strides in approving resolutions that would allow the city to take steps to develop and use internal sources of water for the city. The city staff needs to be commended for its efforts.

This is the type of direct action that needs to be taken to meet other challenges that the city faces.

Needless to say, challenges will always be there. They are an integral part of life, whether we like it or not. What matters is how we deal with the challenges that life throws our way. Will we use them as opportunities to grow or as reasons to give up in despair.

The East Palo Alto community will soon have a new city manager and a new police chief to put their stamp on the direction of the city.

Now is the time for the residents to come out and let their officials and the city staff know the direction in which they want the city to go.

This November, there will be new opportunities for community residents to meet to engage in the visioning process and share their dreams for their city.

There is a call to participate in "Vista 2035" to update the General Plan for the city. The new General Plan visioning meetings will discuss a range of topics that impact the quality of life in the city, including health, priorities for development, the top issues facing the city and the kind of policies and programs that residents would like to see.

There will be two meetings in November, one in December and one in January.

You can find out more at <http://vista2035epa.org>.

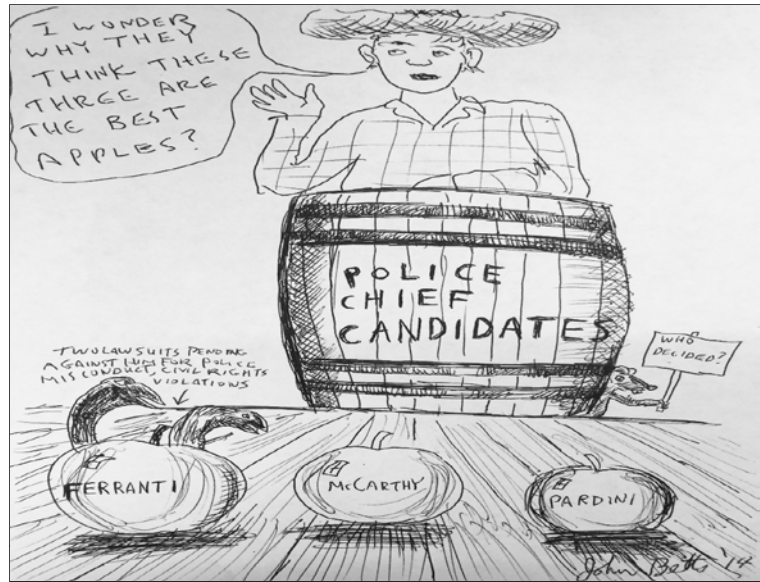
What do you want the city to look like? Share your ideas now. Don't wait! It's been said that those who fail to plan, plan to fail.

So, now is the time to plan for success, to plan the city's future. Now is the time for you to share your vision for East Palo Alto.



Henrietta J. Burroughs

Police chief candidates: How were they chosen?



Letters in East Palo Alto Today

Foreclosures in East Palo Alto

Dear Editor:

It is my understanding that in recent years at least 1,400 homes have gone all the way to the trustee's sale at the Marshall Street entrance of the San Mateo County Government building in Redwood City.

According to the recent census, there are about 3,400 owner-occupied homes in East Palo Alto. There are many homes that have passed out of their owner's hands due to short sales. The one-third figure on that basis seems appropriate.

There appears to be good evidence that additional (mostly Latino) homeowners will continue to lose their homes, especially because of job losses. That was a major issue with the Latino homeowners who sought relief over the issue of second units that were non compliant.

William Webster
East Palo Alto

In support of open space

Dear Editor:

This November voters in San Jose, Milpitas, Campbell, Santa Clara, Morgan Hill and the unincorporated parts of Santa Clara County have a chance to vote yes on Measure Q to permanently protect open space right here in our area. Measure Q will also ensure that more land is open to the public, protect our clean water and provide better access for natural areas and environmental education in our cities.

For example Sierra Vista Open Space Preserve receives tens of thousands of visitors annually. Recently completed new public access points - including free parking - means that many more people can enjoy the sweeping views that stretch all the way from the Bay to downtown San Jose. Measure Q will open more areas like this one so local families can enjoy the unique natural beauty of our area.

Additionally, Santa Clara County's local water sources provide an essential part of our community's water supply. People, plants and wildlife depend on

clean water. Protected land around ponds and creeks helps prevent toxins and pollution from entering our water system. These protections are especially important as we rely more on groundwater in current drought conditions. Measure Q will protect more land around our essential water sources and provide safe clean water for our community. Please join me in voting Yes on Q on November 4th.

Kathy Sutherland
President
San Jose Parks Foundation

Moms want police reform nationwide

Dear Editor:

Mothers should never have to fear that our children could come to harm at the hands of those charged with protecting them. Yet everyday, we hear more and more painful stories of families losing their loved ones.

The reality is that 18-year-old Michael Brown's death is just one chapter in the ongoing and growing narrative of lives cut down by those entrusted with protecting and serving.

Join us in calling on the executive branch of the federal government to take comprehensive steps to protect civil and human rights for everyone!

All over the country, there have been a slew of unarmed African American and Latino youth and community members killed by police, including:

[1] Eric Garner, husband and father, who was choked to death in New York.

[2] John Crawford, who was shot to death when he picked up a toy gun that was for sale in an Ohio Walmart.

[3] Seventeen-year-old unarmed Jesús Huerta was shot to death while handcuffed in the back of a police car.

[4] Eighteen-year-old unarmed Ramarley Graham who was shot

to death in Bronx, NY.

Even though the US Department of Justice announced that it will launch a federal investigation into the Ferguson Police department as well as an investigation into the 2012 New York Police Department shooting of [5] Ramarley Graham.

[6] Our work isn't over. Racial profiling and police brutality is a problem that is national in scope.

Studies show that, even though White Americans outnumber Black Americans five-fold, [7] Black people are three times more likely than White people to be killed when they encounter the police in the US, and [8] Black teenagers are far likelier to be killed by police than White teenagers. Enough is enough.

At the national level, we need higher standards of policing, strengthened accountability mechanisms, and critical reforms to end: Biased racial profiling, police brutality, and militarized policing targeting African American and Latino youth, families, and communities throughout our country.

"Tell the executive branch of the federal government that enough is enough, and it's time to take comprehensive steps to protect civil and human rights for everyone! http://action.momsrising.org/sign/federal_policing_reforms/?t=13&akid=5872.959471. Nvegfy.

Racially-motivated police violence has no place in law enforcement. Yet the St. Louis Post Dispatch's editorial board found that all too often racial profiling is done by Missouri law enforcement and the stats are getting worse over time. Here's what the St. Louis Post Dispatch's editorial board wrote:

"Last year, for the 11th time in the 14 years that data has been collected, the disparity index that measures potential racial profiling by law enforcement in the

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Opinion

The ideas expressed on this page are solely the views of the individual authors, who do not represent East Palo Alto Today's board or staff

Racial profiling tears society down, one death at a time

By Corine Forward
East Palo Alto Today

Oscar Grant, Trayvon Martin, and just last month, Michael "Big Mike" Brown. All unarmed. All gunned down by police. When will this stop?

In the weeks since African-American Big Mike was fatally shot six times by a white officer in the suburbs of Ferguson, Missouri, I have grown increasingly alarmed, reflecting on numerous incidents in which unarmed minorities have been shot down, apparently because of their skin color.

The incident that hit home for me was the shooting of Oscar Grant in the Fruitvale Bart Station in my hometown, Oakland. I remember the day clearly. It's Jan. 1, 2009. Waking up to a new year, I turn on the TV only to be bombarded

with news reports of an unarmed man, shot in the back, lying face down at the Bart Station. A cop mistook his own gun for a taser. Minutes later, my dad comes in asking if they released the name of the victim. My heart dropped. Another one of our brothers gone. We learned that the victim was Oscar Grant, someone our friends knew well.

Following this incident, Oakland increased its police training and tried to answer the citizens' accusations of police brutality and racial profiling. But these problems are bigger than Oakland, bigger than the Bay Area. This outrage happens all across America.

The Ferguson shooting is the most recent example, and an especially troubling one. Why couldn't the officer call for



Corine Forward

backup if he thought Brown posed a threat? Too often, police act before they think and end up making poor decisions.

Don't get me wrong here, if a random citizen pulls a gun on a cop, I don't expect the officer to stop, recall his list of procedures, and start rattling off what he should or shouldn't do. In that case, he should go with his instinct.

But that is not always the situation. When does the ap-

propriate instinct for self-preservation become an excuse for being way too trigger-happy?

What really got me thinking about this issue was the fact that in the county where Brown was shot, 94% of law enforcement is white, while 67% of the town's population is African-American. Really? How can our law enforcement truly support us and keep us safe when they don't even look like us?

Similar statistics prevail in many cities in the Bay Area as well, according to a report in the San Jose Mercury News. Of course, more training and better communication will help, but an important step to solving these problems is to build police forces that represent their respective communities. This increases

community trust, feelings of safety, and involvement from citizens, instead of making them feel targeted and picked on everywhere they go.

I know I am not the only one who has walked the streets of my own town, seen a white or Asian cop, and automatically felt defensive. It feels like he or she is watching my every move, ensuring I don't steal anything or shoot someone. Sure, I am probably reading way too much into the moment, but that's the way it feels. Can you blame me?

Racial profiling is tearing our society apart. So to the 5-0, can we get on this please?

Corine Forward is a senior at Eastside College Preparatory School. This article originally appeared in The Eastside Panther on Sept. 30.

Strengthening Apple's core in the push for corporate diversity

By Rev. Jesse Jackson
East Palo Alto Today

In a highly choreographed, tightly organized presentation, Apple rolled out the new iPhone 6 and iPhone 6 Plus. With the spotlights on and a global audience, Apple paraded a line up of six white men to present its new products. Even the entertainment – U2 – was all white.

What's wrong with this picture? Women, American Americans and people of color are major consumers of Apple products: the iPhone, iTunes music, iPod music players, iPads and more. Apple had a huge opportunity to demonstrate to millions around the world that it is committed to be as diverse as its customers are. It clearly didn't



Rev. Jesse Jackson

even think about it.

After an appeal by the Rainbow Push Coalition, an increasing number of Silicon Valley firms have agreed to publish their diversity data. Last month, Apple joined in. Data shows that most companies have just 1-2% Black and 2-4% Latinos in their tech workforce. Apple's numbers are not as dismal as the rest of the industry. Yet CEO Tim Cook announced: "As

CEO, I'm not satisfied with the numbers on this page. They're not new to us, and we've been working hard to improve them."

<http://www.ibtimes.com/apple-reveals-workforce-much-its-silicon-valley-peers-mostly-male-white-1656484>

As Apple and other companies who have published their information are quick to note, there is much work to be done. At its best, technology can be a tremendously positive change agent for the world; at its worst, it can repeat old patterns that exclude people of color and women from opportunity and advancement. Silicon Valley and the tech industry must transform itself to resemble the America it depends upon for talent and customers.

African Americans and peo-

ple of color "over-index" as users and consumers, but "under-index" in their representation and inclusion in the boardrooms, and executive suites, the workforce and as business partners.

Diversity and inclusion are good for business. African Americans, Latinos, and women represent money, market, talent and location. Inclusion is the key to growth, and when there is growth everybody wins.

Technology companies that are serious about moving the needle must put a real plan in place: set goals, targets and timetables regarding diversity and inclusion on their Boards, their c-suite leadership and their general employee base. They should partner with African

Americans, Latinos and people of color and women in mutually beneficial, reciprocal, fair trade. This includes not only the technical workforce, but the areas of financial and professional services, marketing and advertising, and procurement. Treat inclusion and diversity just as you would any serious, business line of a company, and measure it. Then create a plan to meet real goals.

Rainbow PUSH will be issuing a Technology Diversity and Inclusion report card, and will convene a public forum this fall to engage companies and communities to identify strategies and solutions to move the needle and truly "change the face of technology."

The federal Employment continued on page 10

Math and science - not just for rocket science

By Dick Resch
East Palo Alto Today

Looking to get rich? Try welding. For the third consecutive year, positions in the skilled trades are the hardest to fill, according to a Manpower Group survey of American employers. This shortage is why a master welder can earn a six-figure salary -- without a college degree.

There aren't enough skilled tradesmen because our nation's schools aren't producing graduates with the math and science knowledge needed to fill these skilled jobs.

That has to change. Educators must rethink the way they teach math and science -- especially to students who may not go to college. The best way to reach

these kids is to scrap the age-old lecture and empower them to learn by doing.

International rankings reveal the depths of America's underachievement. Among 34 developed nations, the United States ranks 27th in math and 20th in science. More than one-quarter of U.S. students lack even basic proficiency in math. That's 13 percent higher than the global average.

This poor performance is concerning, as these students risk economic marginalization.

A million people drop out of high school each year. Most don't participate in the labor force. Those that do face an unemployment rate 50 percent higher than their graduating peers.

That low-performing quarter of students also includes many



Dick Resch

who complete high school yet still lack the math skills needed for most entry-level manufacturing jobs -- let alone the skilled-trade positions that could vault them into the middle class.

Philadelphia Federal Reserve President Charles Plosser said earlier this year, "We are seeing a mismatch of skills in the workforce and the jobs that are being created."

To fill these jobs -- and pro-

vide livelihoods for millions -- we must keep students who struggle with math in school and find ways to boost their achievement.

According to the National Training Laboratories, the traditional lecture format yields only a 5 percent learning retention rate. Allowing students to practice by doing, in contrast, results in a whopping 75 percent retention rate.

The way forward is clear: Embrace technology, collaboration, and hands-on learning.

Already, colleges are adopting this approach. The University of Pennsylvania has built a new classroom with customized, powered round tables so students can collaborate using all manner of technology. It plans to add three to four more such classrooms over the next year.

MIT's Technology-Enabled Active Learning (TEAL) Project merges lecture, simulation, collaborative learning, and hands-on experiments in one classroom. Failure rates for freshmen in a TEAL physics course were one-third those in the traditional setting. Average gains in understanding were more than double. Gains were highest among students at the bottom of the achievement ladder.

Engaged learning models are trickling down into elementary and secondary schools, too. In Philadelphia, several schools are using the Full Option Science System, a hands-on, activity-based approach that empowers students to investigate, experiment, and collaborate to discover the material in each lesson.

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Lifecycles

Mortgage Meltdown: The Musical starts with local talent

By Tracie Moore
East Palo Alto Today

East Palo Alto has been hit hard by the housing crisis. Like many other low-income communities, especially those with large percentages of Black and Hispanic residents, the area was targeted for sub-prime loans that were rigged to fail, allowing lenders to seize the homes and sell them long before the loans could be paid off.

Housing advocate William Byron Webster estimates that at least one-third of the city's



Photo courtesy of Mortgage Meltdown: The Musical
This photo shows one of the scenes from the musical.

homeowners have lost their homes through foreclosures and short sales resulting from predatory loans and widespread job layoffs, and more

are in danger of foreclosure. Local playwright and composer Eve Sutton is producing MORTGAGE MELTDOWN: THE MUSICAL (www.mortmelt.com) to tell the story with

humor and insight from several perspectives: Families facing foreclosure, relatives of those families, investors, bank employees, and the bank CEOs ("Banksters") who reap millions from these deals.

"This is a community effort, funded by ordinary people," she explains. "Most donations are between \$20 and \$100. Everyone understands that we need to tell the truth. We cannot allow the production to be censored by banks, directly or indirectly."

Funding and a venue are still being sought for a full staging of the show, but excerpts are being filmed using talent

from East Palo Alto and neighboring areas for public access television and online viewing.

The scene "Lehman Collapsed!" features William Byron Webster and volunteers from the Midpeninsula Media Center in Palo Alto.

Another scene, filmed at House of Bigger Girls, stars East Palo Alto resident Phill Bossett as a homeowner facing foreclosure, and Earl Rhue (who is also one of the singers on the soundtrack) as the Housing Counselor who explains credit default swaps in rhyme.

Reaction to the songs and continued on page 8

When living on empty

By Heliena Walton
East Palo Alto Today

The other day I was driving a loaner vehicle to San Juan

Bautista, which is located 30 minutes from San Jose. As I was driving, the vehicle started to slow down and it eventually stopped. I was puzzled to say the least. For starters, I had just fueled the car the day before and was informed

that the vehicle had a faulty gas gauge. This information was troublesome, as it would render me virtually blind when it came to deciding to refuel. The attendant at the gas station suggested I log my miles while traveling. Accordingly, I employed this idea.

Subsequently, when I stopped, I checked the mileage, which was now my temporary fuel gauge, and the mileage indicated that I should still have fuel. I was not considering that when a vehicle is weighted down, it requires more gas. I called Triple A and to my dismay, it was, in fact, the gas. I was running on empty "fumes," if you will and I was none the wiser. Sometimes, you get to the point where you're unsuspecting you're in need of refueling, because you're running on fumes.

I know the concept of refueling may seem difficult considering that society dictates a continuous movement. So, we condition ourselves into believing we have mastered the art of navigating life's journey in overload. Let's forget over-worked and burdened. Let's talk about downright depleted.

In today's fast paced culture, we are constantly moving

from one thing to the next with not as much as a moment to take a deep breath or downtime to refresh ourselves to keep the cycle moving in a forward motion.

It's difficult to balance life's challenges when you have all the puzzle pieces in place, so it's conceivable that it would be next to impossible, if you're missing pieces. So,

what do you do when you have lost your footing, when you find yourself homeless, lost, lonely and confused, or perhaps without a car or even a safe place to lay your head? How do you find solace in the midst of chaos?

I would like to take you on a mental journey. Stroll with me in the shoes of a homeless client for just a moment. How would you navigate through his day? For purposes of this story, please meet Jeff Bungalow.

"Hi, my name is Jeff. I'm delighted to meet you. I'm

years old, and I work full-time at Memorial Hospital. Unfortunately, I lost my housing and have been on the streets, sleeping on park benches, bus stops and wherever I can close my eyes. I often find the longest bus routes to ride. This gives me the opportunity to sleep only enough so I'm functional at work the next day.

I'm grateful I can still maintain my employment. I take naps in the break room. This gives me my midday boost so desperately needed. I can be found on my days off at the library or the local McDonald's utilizing the Wi-Fi. My spirits are low, and I'm at this moment taking this journey one day at a time.

I often feel like I'm a zombie, only going through the motions. I keep my appearance up, so the individuals I come in contact with are unaware I'm homeless. This fact brings me relief as there is a negative stigma attached to the homeless. I personally thank you for walking on this journey with me. I hope I could shed some light on my

continued on page 8



Heliena Walton

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E.P.A: My City Lives - a rap song

By Freddie Lopez
East Palo Alto
Today



Freddie Lopez

Hook:
EPA is the place
Where I grew and
where I played
And I hope one day
That my kids can do
the same.
See I love it so much.
But its going all away
So I fight and I fight
and I fight and I pray.
Hoping one day
We can all do the
same
And if it all feels in
vain,
Just remember:

You're the heart of
the city
Heaaaaart of the city
You're the heart of
the city
Heaaaaaaart of the
city.

Verse:
From the Native
American people
the Ohlone
To the Village
of Nairobi
To the restless souls
of all my homies
This is not a song,
it's a ceremony.
For the people of
East Palo Alto
And please don't for-
get the East
Cause we are, a
whole 'nother beast
Not that big, but its
alright

Cause we got a lot of
bite
And we never hold
back
Not everything that
shines
in the streets of my
city is broken glass.
We're stars
with color
and culture
and a whole lotta
heart
fused with our music.
Just listen,
to the cars and the
homes and the
churches.

Yeah,
We got a lot spirit
And we got a lot of
soul.
We got a lot pride
And we gotta let it
show.
Our demographic
equals

Beautiful humble
peoples.
En lo que a ti te falta
Nosotros somos
ricos
Comidas culturales
Por las calles traen
Aires calientitos
A clima es el mejor
Conocemos lo
bonito
Y tambien la vio-
lensa
Pero no se compara
para nada con nues-
tra potencia

Hook:
EPA is the place
Where I grew and
where I played
And I hope one day
That my kids can do
the same.
See I love it so much
But its going all away.
So I fight and I fight
and I fight and I pray
Hoping one day

We can all do the
same
And if it all feels in
vain,
Just remember:

You're the heart of
the city
Heaaaaart of the city
You're the heart of
the city
Heaaaaaaart of the
city

Verse:
This aint just a cere-
mony nah,
It's a wake up call for
yall
My people of East
Palo Alto
Cause people from
over the bridge
Is buying us out of
our home
Killing our hope
Steady reversing the
oath
We made in '83

To become inde-
pendent and free
And run our own po-
licy
And own our own
property.
See most of the peo-
ple here
Are refugees of
racism and poverty.

And now
The same ol' thinking
that labeled us
ignorant, immigrant,
primitive, limited,
savage and evil
Is stealing our land
And making it legal.

Na!
That ain't cool to me,
Its way too much im-
punity
How they can settle
here
But we can hardly
live

In upper-class com-
munities.
It's the same damn
future.
Sigüemos en la
lucha
Metiendose los ricos
Apenas nos ayuda
Se salen con la suya
Nos miran como ba-
sura
Empesando con las
mentes
De nuestras creat-
uras
Nos quieren sacar
de nuestro ogar
como le siguen ha-
ciendo en West
Park/Woodland Park

Hook:
EPA is the place
Where I grew and
where I played
And I hope one day
That my kids can do
the same.
See I love it so much

continued on page 10

When living continued from 7

situation." Under these conditions, if you were in Jeff's shoes, how would you keep yourself-motivated and focused, when your resources, money or incentive is on "E," and you're living on empty? Let's take a moment and think about what it would be like to sleep in your car when the shelters are full. When can you find the time or place to replenish, something, which would allow you an opportunity to balance your life's pains, hurts and calamities? Have you ever been reliant on a gym membership to stay fresh and clean to remain employed? Keep in mind, this is not always an affordable option for most clients.

This is just a bird's eye view into the life challenges that some of my clients face. We have a range of brothers and sisters in our community dealing with homelessness. I introduce the words "brothers and sisters" to indicate a sense of relationship beyond "that person" to invoke a state of moral and civic responsibility.

We are dealing with someone's relatives. It is important to embrace the fact that we are not

only interconnected, but interdependent, and everyone represents the puzzle that fastens this picture called "community." There is an adage that brings reference to the statement no matter what part you represent, if there is a piece missing from our "community," there's a noticeable difference. How do you view our community? Have you been present in the community picture? Is your part represented?

Do you remember when the concept, "It takes a village to raise a child?" dominated our view on social issues? I would like to re-engage that philosophy to say, "It takes a community" to strengthen individuals who create our unvoiced. The birth of this theory can help us promote the value of engaging our "township" to support our "community." If we employ this type of thinking about one, another and our community, we could facilitate the rebirth of the 'village' idea. In this way, we could redefine our sense of social responsibility to implore an urban



accountability to each other. As we redefine our sense of obligation towards each other, we will generate a fresh awareness that will enable us to construct a revitalized reality that could give us modern insights into the issue of homelessness.

Accepting, this concept of "community" would require a paradigm shift on our part, as the stakeholders in the community. Additionally, we are challenged by the concept of change and confronted by the task of revisiting our own moral compass. It's no longer "me, myself and I," but it's "we and us" as a community. It takes "UNITY" which can be loosely interpreted as "U and I" to make it happen. Without the realization of this new understanding, we can't change the environment in which we reside.

It is true that many people fall into homelessness after they are released from jail, the foster-care system and other state-run institutions...At the same time, others come to homelessness from mental health programs and other medical care facilities. Now, we must factor into the homeless equation

our working class sector.

As a community, we can work to create a clear path to housing from our current institutions. I work at a community-based organization called Project WeHOPE, which stands for "We help other people excel." At our agency, we have implemented a comprehensive, systematic approach to address the different facets of homelessness. While this is important, it is equally significant to have representatives and input from all the groups affected by the homeless issue: government officials, business leaders, community activists, and the like. These groups represent our "community" in which we engage the notion of "community."

It's important to emphasize as a contributing member in the community that we, too, must be a part of the solution, or we are automatically a part of the problem."

Likewise, it is refreshing to know that Project WeHOPE is a solution driven organization that has designed a system to address the multifaceted issues facing our homeless.

We try to do our part to bridge the gap between life's issues and a person's inadequacies, while helping clients put in perspective their own ability to arm

themselves with the necessary tools that will empower them to become self-motivated and take control of their lives.

It is inspirational to know that we offer clients approaches that they can use as a catalyst for change. For example, through our selective programming, participants will learn new process performance strategies to regain self-sufficiency while being productive contributors in our community.

I get satisfaction in knowing that I work for an organization that is not only multi-cultural, client-centric and nonjudgmental, but it also meets individuals and their needs as they arrive.

Project WeHOPE has been tasked with the responsibility of creating an environment that facilitates growth for our participants, which brings me to this end: The individuals we touch need a chance to reset or reboot.

They warrant the opportunity of seeing a light while in the tunnel and having a place where they can take solace, knowing they have a chance to renew.

Despite their current living conditions, they can learn to change their circumstances and move from barely surviving and living on empty to thriving.

Mortgage Meltdown

views has been positive. Al Young, former Poet Laureate of California and current Bay Area resident, commented, "Poetry and drama serve MORTGAGE MELTDOWN: The Musical beautifully."

Production assistant Helen Hymes joined the project in August. She and Oleta Proctor volunteered as actors for scenes filmed at Collective Roots in September.

"This is a fantastic opportu-



Photo of Mortgage Meltdown: The Musical This photo comes from Act 4, Scene 9 of the Mortgage Meltdown Musical. It features Earl Rhue and Phillip Bossett.

nity," said Hymes. "I'm learning about video production, and about the mortgage meltdown." Michael Uhila, a television

continued from page 7

producer who grew up in East Palo Alto, volunteered as an actor for the scene "Bankspeak" and was equally enthusiastic.

"Now I understand what some of my neighbors are going through," he said.

"This project has been an inspiration to me."

To volunteer, donate, find videos and songs, or use the related curriculum, see <http://www.mortmelt.com>

Study: cont. from page 2

information and support about ICT careers, hands-on learning experiences in both educational and workplace settings, and leverage collective resources to help them attain post-secondary credentials to advance in ICT."

The ICT Study included recommendations for a Call to Action. Chief among them are:

- Crafting coherent ICT pathways, from K-12 to college, that scaffold achievement and learning over time
- Investing in professional

development and continued learning by supporting teachers and practitioners on the ground to transform ICT education.

•Committing to a heightened level of collaboration beyond the norm, including strengthening partnerships with the goal of expanding the roles of stakeholders to help change the ICT pathway system. LICl, along with partner Career Ladders Project, have committed to taking the first step in this process. A complete copy of the report can be found here: www.latinoinclusion.org

Race matters

continued from page 1

more than any other students.

Sophomore Isaiah East is one example.

As he sat in the passenger seat of his cousin's car riding down Main Street in Oakland about two years ago, his body suddenly stiffened as his cousin pulled over to the repetitive flashing colors of red, white and blue that gleamed through the rear view mirror.

A white police officer approached the driver's window and asked the driver, "Why were you using your phone?" Isaiah said he felt confused because not only was his cousin not using his phone while driving, but his cousin's phone wasn't even in the car.

Isaiah looked around aimlessly wishing to be anywhere but there. His cousin explained but the officer ignored ordered him out of the car anyway and frisked him. Watching as the officer pawed through his cousin's pockets, all Isaiah could think was, "This is happening too often and we need to find some way to stop all this," he recalled.

Whether they have been stopped themselves or not, 75

percent of the students who took the survey know at least one person who has been stopped for "no good reason," and 53 percent said they worry about racial profiling.

"Racial profiling can lead to racial minorities feeling stereotyped, and once people feel stereotype-threatened against the police, they can never feel safe in society," said senior Keanu Thompson. "Racial profiling is very apparent in cities like EPA and Oakland and it's sad. Just think about it, a black kid is more likely to get stopped for simply walking down the street than a white kid anyway."

Junior Simone Noble, an African-American student who has been stopped by a police officer three times and also knows about four or five people who have been stopped, recounts her father's last encounter with the police.

"My dad was driving in San Jose one day when a cop pulled him over claiming his backlights were out. My dad tapped the backlights to show the officer that they were working but the cop

didn't care. He kept telling him that he had to check the car for drugs. My dad knows that this cop didn't have a warrant so he tried to reach for his phone to call for help. The cops began yelling at him, telling him to stop but my dad kept telling them, 'I'm only getting my phone.' All of a sudden two cops start pepper-spraying him! They dragged him out of the car and just started beating on him and he even spent a night in jail," Simone recounted.

Simone remembers seeing her dad's bruises: A swollen eye, a ripped shirt, cuts on his face.

"All I could do was cry, like, 'Why him? Why us?'"

Despite this incident, Simone knows that not all police officers are like that.

"My family hates cops, they're the F-the-police type, but me, I know police are supposed to keep the community safe and many do," Simone said.

Jaya Subramanian, Global Studies and Macroeconomics teacher, agrees that racial profiling is a big issue in today's society but

sees broader implications.

"Beyond racial profiling being a social issue, it brings to light socioeconomic status," Jaya said. "When people in power like law enforcement see these communities in poverty, they can take more advantage."

Jaya said that Californians need to be more aware in order to address issues like racial profiling.

"California is complacent as a state," she said.

"We look at current events like Ferguson and think, 'Oh, that's in Missouri, that has nothing to do with us.' But we cannot afford to be myopic in the understanding of this issue in order to fix it."

Former veteran reporter Sean Webby has explored these issues from different vantage points. At the San Jose Mercury News, he reported and wrote about police and crime for many years. Now, as public communications officer at the Santa Clara County District Attorney's office, he helps communicate with the press and the community.

Webby said that disparities in training and expectations, as

well as poor communication underlie the disparities in how different police departments handle such situations.

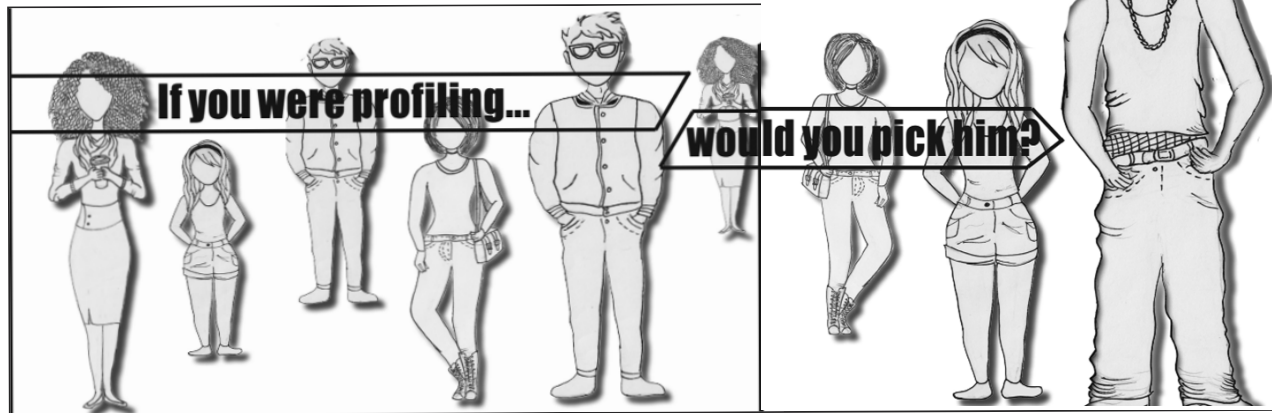
"It's a big dangerous game of miscommunication and it's playing itself out in sometimes terrible ways in cities like Ferguson," he said. "Officers are under-resourced, they are overworked, spread out, trying to do all this work in an incredibly stressful job. So they try to see as much as possible to be more efficient, and that leads to mistakes."

But, he added, a police officer must have a defensible public safety reason for stopping someone. "Profiling is not 'probable cause,'" he said. "You can't fish when you're a cop."

Corine Forward and Cohen Price are seniors at Eastside College Preparatory School. This article originally appeared in *The Eastside Panther* on Sept. 30. Illustrations by Joanna Aleman.

75%
knew at least one person who has been stopped by police for "no good reason"

19%
of Hispanic/Latino respondents have been stopped at least once for "no good reason"



Recruitment

continued from page 2

next city manager because it allows council members to set forth their requirements for the position, and it will also allow potential candidates for the

position "to screen themselves in or out" based on the information the brochure provides.

According to the information in the brochure, candi-

dates will have until Sunday, November 23, 2014 to apply for the city manager position.

On December 2, the council will adopt a resolution to form a

community review panel

Both the council and the review panel will review the candidates, in separate sessions, on Friday, January 16, 2015. If

everything goes according to the current schedule, East Palo Alto will have a new city manager by February 2015.

Residents choose

continued from page 2

For example, William Webster said that the new city manager needed to have a proven track record of accomplishment in another community.

He also stressed that the candidate, who is chosen, should respect the community, not be condescending or patronizing to people and be devoid of conflicts of interest, such as having relatives who might have real estate investments in the city.

Melvin Gaines said that the city manager should have humility and patience and engage all of the residents.

Jim Woods stated that the next



Photo by H.J. Burroughs

This photo shows some of the residents who participated in the community forum held on October 4 to discuss the desired attributes of East Palo Alto next city manager.

city manager should have an open door policy, be transparent, talk to people and work with the entire city and staff.

Elizabeth Jackson thinks the next city manager should respect

the city's core values, be engaged in the community and learn the city's history.

Sharifa Wilson would like for the city manager to be results driven and a consensus builder,

who gets things done that reflect the interests of the community.

Others said that they wanted a manager who had a certain strength of character, had people skills and the ability to communi-

cate with people, was trained in conflict resolution, could attract resources to the city, and wasn't wishy-washy.

Some even shared that it was okay to use the job as a stepping-stone as long as the person chosen contributed positively to the city.

This article appeared on the EPA Today website with the title, East Palo Alto residents decide on desired attributes of their next city manager at:

http://www.epatoday.org/news/2014/october_2014/east_palo_alto_residents_decide_on_desired_attributes_of_their_next_city_manager_2152.html.

Community Calendar

East Palo Alto City Council meetings. First and third Tuesdays of the month. Meetings usually start at 7:30 p.m. in the Municipal Building at 2415 University Avenue, East Palo Alto.

Updating East Palo Alto's General Plan - Saturday, November 8, 2014, 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
The City of East Palo Alto in-

vites you to "Help Shape the Future of East Palo Alto." This first in a series of four meetings will be held in three concurrent neighborhood workshops, specific to your neighborhood. You can attend in one of three locations: Location 1: Ravenswood Family Health Center Annex, 1842 Bay Road. Location 2: East Palo Alto Senior Center, 560 Bell Street and Location 3: East Palo Alto Education Cen-

ter, 763 Green Street. For more information contact: Anne Cook, Gen. Plan Proj. Mgr. at 650-853-3142.

See more community calendar events at the website for the East Palo Alto Today newspaper at www.epatoday.org/events.php

Talking with Henrietta

Crime and Punishment: How Will You Vote?



Photo courtesy of Talking with Henrietta

From left Stacey McGruder, show host Henrietta J. Burroughs and Raj Jayadev are shown on the set of the Talking with Henrietta television show after their discussion on Proposition 47, a ballot measure on the November 2014 California State Ballot.

For more information about this show, go to www.epatoday.org/tv.html#prop47.

San Jose Earthquakes support breast cancer awareness

By Roberto Guterrez Perez, East Palo Alto Today



This photo taken on Saturday, October 4, 2014 shows the San Jose Earthquakes with pink ribbons on their apparel, showing their support to promote breast cancer awareness. The team later played a home game in Levi Stadium against the Portland Timbers.

During the game, Portland's Gastón Fernández worked with defender Liam Ridgwell to get the ball past SJ keeper Jon Busch.

It was a move that ended the game with Portland having a 2 to 1 lead.

Strengthening

continued from page 5

Opportunity Commission and Office of Contract Compliance should be proactively investigating to ensure that the technology companies are in compliance with all equal opportunity and affirmative rules. Diversity and inclusion

should not be a default position. As the optics of Apple's all-white male production last week, it takes action to break old patterns and reaching out to open closed doors. And the time for action has come.

EPA: My City

But its going all away.
So I fight and I fight
and I fight and I pray
Hoping one day
We can all do the same.
And if it all feels in vain,
Just remember:
You're the heart of the city
Heaaaaart of the city.
You're the heart of the city.
Heaaaaaart of the city.

Freddy Lopez is 25 years old. He graduated from UC Riverside a year ago with a major in ethnic studies and a minor in creative Writing and theatre.



Photo by H.J. Burroughs

Some of the students artists and musicians who participate in the Music, Mural and Arts program are shown in this photo with several East Palo Alto City Council members after they participated in the opening activities for the new children's playground in Bell Street Park.

He is currently working in East Palo Alto with Live In Peace as an Artist in Residence and as a program coordinator.

Being the artist that he is, Lopez said that "the Chorus/Hook portion of the song might change."

East Palo Alto

continued from page 2

Gloria Way, just off Bay Road, supplied the city with water prior to 1999.

The council heard a report at its October 7 meeting by Anona Dutton from Erler & Kalinowski, Inc., a consulting firm retained to carry out the drilling, construction and testing of a "test well" at the Pad D site near Home Depot on Clark and East Bayshore. The report recommended that the city proceed in establishing a well at Pad D.

The East Palo Alto Council members unanimously agreed to accept the findings of the report. Their decision lays the groundwork for the construction of a new municipal well near Home Depot and marks the first step in the construction of what Dutton called, "a critical and high profile project for the city." The firm assured the council that the water coming from the site would be

safe and clean and would meet the water quality standards required, without the need for an additional water filtration system.

At the hearing on the ground water management plan, Fallaha referred to the council's vote approving the test well and told the council that the ground water management plan would give the city the ability to have a plan in place to monitor its wells for water level, water quality and subsidence, a state in which the natural land surface is lowered when too much water is being pumped from the ground. Land subsidence could allow for salt intrusion into the fresh water supply.

Dr Iris Priestaf, who is the president of Todd Groundwater, is leading the city's efforts with the ground water management plan. Fallaha described her as an expert on the subject. She joined Fallaha in telling the council that

the plan, when completed: would establish a state-accepted groundwater management program that can be used to pursue funding for groundwater-related projects and programs; would support city development and management of groundwater supplies; would allow the city to engage stakeholders, and it would be a step towards more regional cooperation and planning. In short, Fallaha said, "It would be a plan to benefit everyone."

Now that the resolution of the city's intention to draft a ground-water management plan was approved, Carlos Martinez, the interim city manager, will schedule a second hearing, once the plan has been prepared.

If the planning process goes as scheduled, a second hearing will take place in April 2015 and three public workshops will be held to encourage the participation of city residents.

Letters

state got worse. Black Missourians were 66 percent more likely in 2013 to be stopped by police, and blacks and Hispanics were both more likely to be searched, even though the likelihood of finding contraband was higher among whites. In Ferguson, the city where Michael died, the police in 2013 pulled over blacks at a 37 percent higher rate than whites compared to their relative populations. Black drivers were twice as likely to be searched and twice as likely to be arrested compared to white drivers." [9]

Racial profiling and excessive use of force by the police in Missouri, and in other communities across the nation, must end and perpetrators must be held accountable.

Join us in making this Ferguson moment a movement! Call on the federal government to set a

continued from page 4
higher standard of policing, strengthen accountability mechanisms, and secure critical reforms to end police brutality, biased racial profiling, and militarized policing targeting youth and communities of color across our nation. http://action.momsrising.org/sign/federal_policing_reforms/?t=15&a&id=5872.959471.Nvegfy/

Local police departments have all too often been ineffective in investigating themselves. It is time for fair, outside, independent, federal investigation and prosecution of police misconduct. The more pressure we mount, the more voices we share, the stronger the call for justice. Every day there is another death. Last night in St. Louis, an 18 year old was shot multiple times by an off duty police officer. [10] We must end this now. -Monifa, Kristin, Gloria, Donna, dream, Anita, Karen and the entire MomsRising.org team

continued from page 3

absent from the meeting because his trip back to California was delayed by the hurricane in San Cabo, Mexico.

EPA City Council recognizes outstanding community members and programs

At its October 21, 2014 council meeting, the East Palo Alto City Council honored Millicent Grant with a proclamation that acknowledged her selection as the 'Humanitarian Recipient of the 40th Bethune-Height Recognition Program,' which is a national award.



Millicent Grant

The city proclamation stated that Grant served 21 years as a volunteer board member of the East Palo Alto Senior Center before being appointed as the center's executive director.

She was recognized "for her dedicated community service and volunteerism that has impacted the lives of Seniors, Women and Families."

At the same meeting, the council heard a special presentation by **Sonya Clark-Herrera**, the executive director of the Mural, Music and Arts program and commended Herrera and the program for its 23 years of service to the East Palo Alto community.

At its September 16, 2014 meeting the council proclaimed

September as Adult Literacy Awareness Month and in the process recognized the Adult Literacy Program and the 27 years of service the program has given to the community. A proclamation was given to **Nathalie Jackson**, on behalf of the program and mention was made of **Joan Sykes Miessi**, currently a board member on the East Palo Alto Sanitary District, who led the project in East Palo Alto for a number of years. **Ebonni Black** was also acknowledged for the contributions she is making with the Saturday Sto-

rytime reading sessions in the East Palo Alto Library.

Council members adjoined their October 21 meeting in memory of **Carrie Parker** and **Edmund Harris**, two residents, who died this October, who made outstanding contributions to the community.

FPPC fines East Palo Alto City Council member

After examining the evidence it received, the California Fair Political Practices Commission voted 4 to 1 on October 16 to fine East Palo Alto Council member Larry Moody \$3,000 for his participation in voting for a grant award to an agency that employed one of his family members.

The commissioners concluded that Moody "participated in making and made a governmental decision in which he had a financial interest, by proposing an amendment to, and voting to approve...the award of a \$77,000 grant to New Creation Home Ministries and Able Works," where his wife is a parenting class coordinator.



The vote that got Moody in trouble with the FPPC came during an East Palo Alto City Council discussion on November 6, 2013 regarding Measure C awards to local nonprofit agencies. The commission stated that Moody should have recused himself from voting on the item.

Moody could have been fined a maximum of \$5,000. Fines are determined by such factors as past violations, the complexity of the case, the cooperation of those involved and the potential or real harm to the public.

Moody chose not to comment on his fine, but he did tell EPA Today, "I have received support and compassion from many in the community. I have apologized from the council seat and to the public. It's time to focus on the issues of the city." Moody's case can be

seen online on the FPPC's website at www.fppc.ca.gov/agenda.php?id=531

Vacancy on Rent-Stabilization Board

The council rejected former rent board member, Chris Peters' appeal to maintain his seat on the city's Rent-Stabilization Board.

The board argued that he should have been dismissed because of what the board considered and inordinate number of unexcused absences. Peter's argued that, as an employee of Equity Residential, the largest holder of rental apartments in the city, he had secluded himself because his presence at the meetings would have represented a conflict of interest.

But several of his fellow board members asked the council not to reinstate him since he did not attend the meetings at all and his absence showed a lack of interest in the other issues before the board.

In voting to deny his reinstatement, the council agreed that he could reapply for his seat, along with other interested applicants.

Wins for undocumented youth



Luz Santos

says, "Without a social security number and without a change in federal policy, I won't be able to pursue a career in accounting even if I gain the education and skills necessary to succeed."

It will also help Oscar, one of E4FC's current New American Scholars. Oscar graduated from UC Berkeley and is now pursuing a dual master's degree in Public Administration and Urban and Regional Planning at San Jose State University. "My future is uncertain because I aged out of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program (DACA) and cannot obtain work authorization," says Oscar. "This career license bill is a great leap forward that will allow many people in my situation to give back to the state of California and this nation."

SB 1159 reinforces California's commitment to investing in the education of all Californians regardless of immigration status. This victory is a testament to the power

and leadership of undocumented young people whose stories inspired SB 1159.

We want to thank our extraordinary Policy & Communications Manager, Jazmin Segura, our entire Policy Team, and our E4FC family members for sharing with Governor Brown their struggles and dreams to achieve their career and professional goals, and for being at the center of moving forward SB 1159.

We also commend Senator Lara for being a champion of undocumented young people, and our partners (Pre-Health Dreamers, ACLU of California, CIPC, MALDEF and CHIRLA) for helping pass this unprecedented victory.

Last week the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) made two significant announcements that will make medical school education more accessible for undocumented young people across the country. The AAMC released a list of medical schools that will consider Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) applicants and also announced that it will expand its Fee Assistance Program (FAP) to DACA recipients. Beginning in January 2015, qualifying DACA beneficiaries will be eligible for reduced medical school application

fees!

These efforts have been made possible, in large part, because of the tireless work of Pre-Health Dreamers. A project of E4FC, Pre-Health Dreamers represents a nationwide community of over 350 undocumented individuals pursuing careers in health and science.

Over the past two years, PHD has advocated for more inclusive policies for undocumented students in health professions schools and served as a resource of unprecedented knowledge to health-related institutions including the AAMC.

"We are honored to work with brave and resilient pre-health students who pursue their dreams in spite of the significant barriers they face," says Denisse Rojas, Project Director of Pre-Health Dreamers. "Institutions are now beginning to recognize that undocumented students add a

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unique and important perspective to a medical education."

E4FC is thrilled to be part of these state and national efforts to empower undocumented young people to achieve their academic and career goals. Join us as we continue to advocate for broader

policies that enable undocumented young people and their families to achieve full inclusion in U.S. society!

Katharine Gin is the co-founder and executive director of Educators for Fair Consideration (E4FC).

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Math

Students at FOSS schools have scored higher on standardized tests. The longer they're in the program, the greater the gains in achievement.

Administrators across the country are enlisting the firm I lead, KI, to help them transform their traditional classrooms into technology-enhanced learning environments, where students work in small groups while instruc-

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tors rove about, offering individualized help and coaching.

To refill the ranks of the middle class with good-paying manufacturing jobs, we must address our nation's math and science achievement gap. The instructional status quo isn't working. There's ample evidence that a more active, engaged approach will.

CA Legislative Black Caucus

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parts of the city and county of Los Angeles, and seven California state assemblymembers.

The assemblymembers included Rep. Steven Bradford, Rep. Isadore Hall, III, Rep. Cheryl Brown, Rep. Christopher Holden, Rep. Reginald Byron Jones-Sawyer, Sr., Rep. Sebastian Ridley-Thomas and Rep. Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D.

The assemblymembers came from Southern California and represented parts of Los Angeles and other southern California cities such as San Bernardino, Pasadena, Compton and San Diego.

The hearing was led by Sen. Mitchell, who in her opening remarks, told the audience that the idea for the hearing started during a meeting that she had with Dr. Emmett Carson, the Pres. and founding CEO of the Silicon Valley Community Foundation over coffee.

She then introduced Carson, who highlighted the extent of the problem and discussed why the issue is "so critically important."



Photo by Vic Valbuena Barend
Dr. Emmett Carson

Explaining the problem

Carson explained how so many minority and disadvantaged students, who not only pass eighth grade math, but also actually excel in the subject, are forced, for no logical reason, to repeat the subject, when they should be starting to take geometry.

Carson said that for our entire history as a country, we have believed that if you give something your all, if you give it your best, then you will be treated fairly and you will get what you deserve.

But, he told the audience that this is not happening in the case of 60% of the minority and low-income youth, who had actually passed algebra in the 8th grade, and were asked to repeat the same algebra coursework in the 9th grade.

Carson said, "If you have to repeat your 8th grade math course in 9th grade, then you are derailed. You are off track for meeting those requirements to get to college.

You are not just off track, your family's future, your lifetime earnings, everything about you changes, because of the decision that happened to you in 8th grade with that 9th grade placement," he said.

It gets even worse, because studies show that the young person who has this experience is demotivated, since they've done everything right.

"They've gone through a year of getting repeated pass-



Photos by H.J. Burroughs

This photo shows some of the audience members who attended the hearing on the Math Misplacement of Minority and Low-income students, which was held on September 30, 2014 in East Palo Alto.

ing grades that said you are performing well. They got report cards that said, 'You are making the grade.' They got standardized test results back that said you are proficient at what you're doing. Keep it up."

The misplacement is arbitrary

Carson said that the students who are held back then show up in ninth grade and are told that they have to run the race again. It's just that arbitrary."

Teacher discretion should be used to push students forward... to push them over the line. Discretion should never be used to hold you back when objective data says you earned it."

The report by the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights shows that this misplacement does not happen to all kids. It affects black and brown kids.

"Not only does repeating the subject hold them back, unnecessarily, but it derails their chance of going to college and it has devastating consequences for them in future years, Carson told the group.

Of 54 school districts that were approached about this misplacement of minority and low-income students, 22 school districts agreed to put together policies that would correct the situation. Eighteen school districts refused to make any changes in their current policies.

The Silicon Valley Community Foundation, then, approached the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights and asked about the legality of the policies that allowed students to be so misplaced.

Carson asked his listeners, "How can you not put together a policy of accountability and transparency for the parents?"

A violation of the law

Lawyers told foundation officials that the policies allowing students to be held back not only violated federal law, but they also violated state law.

During the hearing the

California Legislative Black Caucus heard testimony from several speakers, who shared their experiences and several panels that examined the problem in more detail and provided various remedies.

One of the speakers was Song Hoon Lee, a biochemist, who is the managing director of Development City Year San Jose/Silicon Valley. In sharing how misplacement had personally happened to him and how he didn't know it, Lee told how he had taken algebra in summer enrichment programs and completed it in the eighth grade.

But, then as a high school student, he had to take it again and missed an opportunity to progress in math with his college peers, since he was not able to take other college preparatory math classes while he was repeating algebra. Lee compensated by enrolling in a college statistics course, which allowed him to catch up with his college classmates.

Oren Sellstrom, the Legal Director of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area (LCCR) spoke after Lee.

A speaker biography, circulated at the hearing, described Sellstrom as "the principal author of a 2013 report that highlights how school districts hold back minority school children from advancing in math classes.

The report, which also outlines the basis for legal liability for such misplacement is titled, Held Back: Addressing Misplacement of 9th Grade Students in Bay Area School Math Classes."

Sellstrom reinforced Carson's earlier remarks, when Carson said that some of the teachers bring inherent biases, where they don't believe in the capacity or the ability of some of their students. Sellstrom said that some of these biases are often unconscious, hardwired and triggered by racial differences.

Sellstrom gave a legal perspective and discussed

how discrimination can be determined by looking at the intent of an action or policy or it can be determined by the "disparate impact" that results from policies, which cannot be legally justified that negatively affects one group more than others.

Sellstrom said that the Lawyers Committee is now looking at the placement policies of individual school districts in San Mateo County and in Santa Clara County.

Rev. Marlyn Bussey, the pastor of the St. James A.M.E. Zion Church in San Mateo, shared some of the experiences she had as an educator and counselor in the Sequoia Union High School District, where she observed the misplacement of minority students when she was there in 1989.

What she saw and the current data on the misplacement of minority and low income youth inspired her to start a math intensive, tutorial program, in which, she said, the students excel.



Oren Sellstrom

It's an issue of bias

Assemblymember Shirley Weber said, "The reality is that our kids are just as good. It's just not being recognized. It's an issue of bias... How do we deal with this monster, knowing that at one point, our kids will never be good enough for some people?"

"Trying to tell our students to fight this monster can be overwhelming for them. We can empower our communities to do just so much. We must deal with institutions,"

she said.

After hearing from Anne D. Campbell, the superintendent of schools for the San Mateo County Office of Education; Bernie Vidales, the superintendent of the Jefferson School District and Dr. Morgan Marchbanks, the principal of the East Palo Alto Academy High School, caucus members shared their observations and experiences.

Sen. Mitchell, who has a bachelor's degree from the University of California, Riverside told the group that she had personally experienced the trauma of having been held back, since she had to repeat algebra twice. She knew the pain that it caused students.

Assemblymember Sawyer said that he was concerned about first graders being put out of school and tracked and the fact that there are more police on school campuses than school counselors.

Need teacher activists

Sawyer said that we need to get a group of teacher activists who will say that there is a need to change the paradigm of how we teach.

He asked, "How do we build a cadre of professionals who will change things?"

Dr. Marchbanks said, "High expectations are everything." She said she wanted parents to be irate when a teacher tells them that their child will be placed in a lower performing class. Marchbanks praised some of the state legislation the caucus had proposed that would make sure education policies are applied equally to all children.

Weber said, "We have to fight those who get in the way of children succeeding. If black and brown children don't succeed, then California will not succeed. This is really about the future of California.

This is the first step

Mitchell said that dealing with issues like math misplacement is part of the caucus' platform and she invited the audience to go online and follow the work of the caucus.

"This is the first step," she said. This is the beginning of the dialogue. It is not the end. This is not the last time you will hear from us."



Photo by H.J. Burroughs
In this photo, East Palo Alto's Vice Mayor, Lisa Yarbrough-Gauthier, is shown standing on the first row second from the right, with the seven members of the California Legislative Black Caucus.