

## Special Election Issue

Election articles throughout this issue

*Celebrating  
East Palo Alto Today's  
10 Year Anniversary!*

Join us in planning the celebration page 19



East Palo Alto Today's interns cover the news page 14

# East Palo Alto Today

Providing news that is relevant, informative and critical



www.epatoday.org

East Palo Alto and Belle Haven

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## EPA Council responds to eviction complaints

By Elizabeth Real

Displacement is a big issue in East Palo Alto and many city residents say they're being driven to homelessness. Many of these residents complained to the East Palo Alto City Council at several council meetings that they are being given 10-day eviction notices, which they say are unfair and unwarranted.

In justifying the eviction notices, members of the city's code enforcement staff emphasized that illegal garage conversions and second units can be extremely dangerous. But, residents at the council meetings asked: What are the families living in them supposed to do if they simply cannot afford to live elsewhere? Do they risk living in these units or do they risk living on the streets? Why aren't home owners given enough time to try to le-

galize their second units before eviction notices are handed out?

East Palo Alto residents and community leaders have been urging the East Palo Alto City Council to respond to these questions and to find a solution to the rising number of families that are facing displacement in the city because of the city's code enforcement activities.

After listening to a heated discussion on this issue at its October 18 city council meeting, the East Palo Alto City Council approved a motion to implement a task force that would help legalize second units and would also review ways to reduce displacement and extend 10-day evictions to 30 days. The council's approval of the motion also came after it had heard the presentation of a Community

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Photo courtesy of Jennifer Martinez

Residents filled the room at the East Palo Alto City Council meeting on September 27, when this photo was taken, and at the last city council meeting on October 18 to discuss the topic of garage conversions and city eviction policies.

## Looking at the November 2016 election



Public domain photo

By Gabriel Sanchez

With the November election just around the corner, many new propositions and candidates are being put up for election both nationally and locally. These important choices will decide which direction our nation goes in.

### CITY AND COUNTY

The city of East Palo Alto has approved three new

measures for the November ballot at the July 19 city council meeting.

The first of these proposed ordinances is a rent stabilization measure to help add on to the previous 2010 Rent Stabilization and Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance the bill would clarify and simplify some of the ways that the rent stabilization board operates so as to better meet

city's objectives.

Second, is a proposal to create a business license tax of one-and-a-half percent on gross receipts on owners of five or more residential units. This measure aims to aid the rent control act in helping to reduce the rapidly increasing rent prices in East Palo Alto while also creating revenue to help the city in its efforts to keep rent prices low in East

Palo Alto.

Finally, there is the measure to increase sales tax one-half cent; this ordinance aims to raise more revenue for the city to help pay for infrastructure and public safety needs.

There is also a county-wide sales tax increase on the ballot as well. The measure would extend the one-half-cent sales tax already in place in the county for an extra twenty years past its set end date in 2023.

The city will also be three city council seats up for election. Those whose seats are up for election are Larry Moody, Lisa Gauthier, and Carlos Romero. Duane Goff, Larry Moody, Lisa Gauthier, and Carlos Romero have filed the necessary paperwork and will be running for these three open positions. The required paperwork was August 12. However, the filing period for write-in candidates started on September and will run through October

### STATE

At the state level, Califor-

nia currently has 17 propositions on the ballot. These measures range from an increase on the cigarette tax, all the way to prison reform.

One of these measures is proposition 58 which repeals a previous law prohibiting bilingual education in public schools. Another, proposition 62, would abolish the death

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# Community investigates post-foreclosure evictions

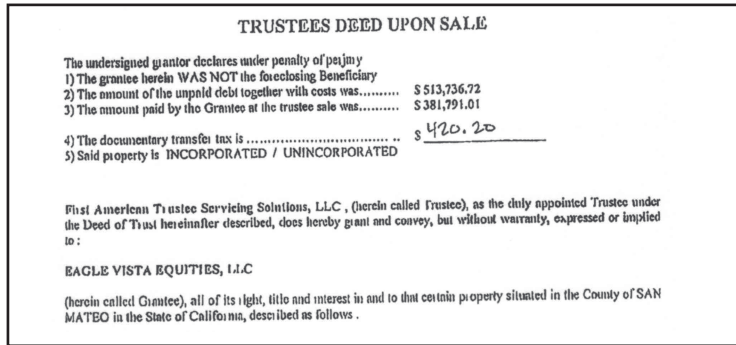
By Midge Dorn

## San Mateo Superior Court Responds to Complaints

In 2011, the television program "60 Minutes" showed robo-signers creating thousands of fake foreclosure documents so criminals could profit from selling houses illegally. A 2012 audit of San Francisco's foreclosures during 2009-2011 reported that 84-99% were based on fraudulent documents, similar to audits in hard-hit areas of Florida and Seattle. California's Homeowner Bill of Rights ([www.calhbor.org](http://www.calhbor.org)) took effect January 1, 2013, expanding the homeowner's protections in California's foreclosure laws (Civil Code sections 2920-2944).

But laws mean nothing if they are not enforced. Why are local homeowners and renters still being evicted after a home is sold using fraudulent documents in San Mateo County?

Volunteer investigators have spent a year meeting with elected officials, interviewing homeowners and attorneys, checking property records, and observing court hearings. They have exchanged letters



Example of Fraudulent Foreclosure: First American claimed to be the trustee named on the Deed of Trust, shown above, when it sold the house to Eagle Vista Equities. But the Deed of Trust, shown to the left, actually names Fidelity National as Trustee. - Source: San Mateo County Property Records

with San Mateo Superior Court's Presiding Judge, Jack Grandsaert, and Assistant Presiding Judge, Susan Irene Etezadi, and had a meeting with those judges in June.

In August, pushing for better court procedures, the volunteers delivered a strongly worded three-page letter along with several supporting documents to the San Mateo Superior Court's administration office.

They expect good news very soon. Court Executive Officer Rodina M. Catalano is giving serious consideration to their findings.

Catalano's brief reply of August 27 reads, "I am in receipt of your letter dated August 17, 2016 regarding concerns about the San Mateo Superior Court's handling of post-fore-

closure evictions. I have shared your letter and related attachments with Presiding Judge Grandsaert and Assistant Presiding Judge Etezadi for review. Please be advised that the court will provide a response in September, after we've had an opportunity to thoroughly review the information you have provided."

Her letter is copied to David Cairns, Senior Supervising Court Attorney for a staff of court attorneys who advise the judges on matters of law.

### Eviction After Foreclosure

La Honda volunteer James Adams wants to save others from the trauma he endured. "I got a knock on my door, back in 2010," he recalls bitterly. "I was unprepared for the sheer number of lies and



The above graphic taken from the deed of trust that is shown on the left, actually has the name of Fidelity National as the trustee.

deceptions by my mortgage holder. They told me everything was worked out, but no, they sold my house. Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto helped me when nobody else would. They negotiated more time before I had to move out, and more cash for keys, but they could not save my property."

"Post-foreclosure evictions require special court procedures," explains investigator William Byron Webster, who has served on East Palo Alto's Rent Stabilization Board for more than 20 years. "In a normal Unlawful Detainer case, a landlord evicts a tenant for breaking the rules of a rental contract. In a post-foreclosure eviction, someone pays someone at a foreclosure auction, then uses Unlawful Detainer to evict the homeowner or the renters. There is no rental contract, and no title search. These days, most foreclosures involve fraudulent paperwork, so we don't know who really

owns the house."

### Failure to Examine Documents

Every home loan in California has a Borrower, a Lender, and a separate third party (named by the Lender on the Deed of Trust) called a Trustee, who may become authorized to sell the house if the Borrower fails to pay the Lender.

But property recorders have to accept any document that meets basic format requirements, even if the information is false. In the early 2000's, criminals began forging documents with the names of fake trustees, and those fake trustees started selling properties illegally.

One Bay Area attorney reflected on years of frustration with judges making false assumptions, depriving homeowners of their property. "It's not enough to say, 'You missed a payment,' or 'You

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# Building New Opportunities

Rendering by Stereograph Inc



**Q4 2016**

**New Office/Retail Development Brings Jobs to East Palo Alto Today and in the Future**

*"There's a reason 95% of our business comes from repeat customers – people trust us."*

— Gary Filizetti, President, Devcon

Visible from Highway 101, a new, four-story, 214,052-square-foot, Class A development – including 1,500 square feet of street-level retail space – is going up at the corner of University Avenue and Donohoe Street. The project, developed by The Sobrato Organization and designed by Korth Sunseri Hagey Architects, will provide hundreds of jobs both during and after construction.

With a structure of post-tensioned concrete and exterior of brick and glass, the center of the building will open up with a four-story atrium to provide casual meeting space, which combines with an open floor plan and large exterior windows to offer expansive natural daylight and views.



**Today**

Photo by Sharpshots Aerial Photography

The two-level skybridge connecting to the adjacent six-level, 193,000-square-foot parking garage features a 5,500-square-foot roof deck for casual indoor/outdoor work and recreation.

Qualified union construction workers from East Palo Alto are encouraged to inquire about employment at the Devcon jobsite office at 2111 University Avenue.

Devcon is proud to work with long-time partners to create a stunning addition to the University Avenue gateway into East Palo Alto.



**DEVCON CONSTRUCTION INC.**  
690 Gibraltar Drive  
Milpitas, California 95035  
408/942-8200  
[www.devcon-const.com](http://www.devcon-const.com)



# Community News Briefs

## East Palo Alto might be getting its own domestic violence program

Those who have fallen victims to domestic violence in East Palo Alto might soon be able to get the help they need without having to seek programs outside of the city.

If approved, measure C funds will be used to establish a new program that will aide domestic violence victims. Council member Ruben Abrica has been working the San Mateo County, the police department, and Communities Overcoming Relationship Abuse (CORA) to determine the needs of the city. East Palo Alto does not currently have its own program for addressing domestic violence cases and according to Abrica, the number of calls regarding this issue has increased in the past two years. He also stated that the police department receives approximately ten calls per day. "It struck me as a lot," he expressed. Abrica hopes that the program will address the cases that have fallen through the cracks as well as focus on prevention.

Further details on the potential program were to be dis-

cussed during the October 18 city council meeting, but the discussion was rescheduled for the next meeting.

- Elizabeth Real

## Featured in the City Manager's Report Flu Shot

It's not too early to get a flu shot. You can protect yourself and help prevent further spread of the flu by getting vaccinated. Older adults, pregnant women, young adults, children, and people with other underlying health conditions are most at risk of getting the flu, but everyone six months and older should get vaccinated.

It takes two weeks after being immunized to be fully protected. The vaccine only keeps you fully protected for about one year, so it's important to get vaccinated every year. You can get flu shots at: your doctor's office, retail pharmacies and stores (call first to check vaccine availability)

At the following free, local clinics, insurance, ID or an appointment are not required: Ravenswood Family Health Center (closed Nov. 24, 26)



1885 Bay Rd.

Ages 2 years and older. Call (650)330 East Palo Alto Library (Stanford Flu Crew) 2415 University Ave., Community Room

Ages 2 and older

### East Palo Alto Shuttle Route

Have you heard? The EPA Free Caltrain Shuttle service ended on September 30. The Shuttle has been replaced with SamTrans bus service with fewer gaps in service. Bus maps can be viewed at: [www.samtrans.com/schedulesandmaps/timetables](http://www.samtrans.com/schedulesandmaps/timetables). For adults, fares are \$2.25 one way or \$5.50 per day. For children and students, fares are \$1.10 one way or \$2.75 per day. Discounts are available.

For questions please contact

Michelle Daher at [mdaher@cityofepa.org](mailto:mdaher@cityofepa.org) or at (650) 853-3185.

## Target coming to East Palo Alto

Congratulations to City staff for successfully re-

cruiting Target. Now it's official: Target recently announced that it will be opening a flexible format store in the Ravenswood Shopping Center (1775 East Bayshore Road) to replace the recent closure of Sports Authority.

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## DREW CENTER PHARMACY

**2111 University Avenue, Suite B**  
(650) 321-1449, Fax 321-5977  
**Help Drew - Help You!**



Health Plan San Mateo Medi-Cal Plan-Prescriptions Accepted



**Medi-Cal**  
**Healthy Families**  
**Health Work**  
**CareAdvantage**  
**San Mateo Mental Health**  
**Express Scripts**  
**Medicare D Plans**

Bring in your new RXS, empty bottles for refills or any other information and we can transfer or call your MD  
Public Fax Center, Utility Payment Center  
Gift Stop & Jewelry

OPEN MONDAY THRU FRIDAY  
10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

# Justice, Oppportunity, Prosperity for **EPA**

## Vote Yes on J, O, P

*Let's keep East Palo Alto safe and affordable.  
Protect tenants and homeowners. Help uplift us all.*

### Join these community leaders/organizations supporting J, O, P:

**Council Members-** Donna Rutherford • Ruben Abrica • Lisa Gauthier • Carlos Romero, **Rent Bd Members-** Sonja Spencer • Maureen Larsson • William Webster • Patricia Garcia • Shryee D. Randolph • Midge Dorn, **Former EPA Mayors-** Pat Foster • Sharifa Wilson • Duane Bay, **Community Members-** Father Lawrence Goodie • Pastor Paul Bains • Stewart Hyland • Kyra Brown • Justin Phipps • Goro Mitchell • Daniel Saver • Doroteo Garcia • Dyanne Ladine • Cruz Hyland • Bernardo Huerta • Barbara Noparstak • Javanni Munguia-Brown • Tameeka Bennett • Bob Allen • Court Skinner • Laura Rubio • Heather Starnes • Olatunde Sobomehin • Richard Tatum • Mike Francois • Renee Glover, **Non-Profits-** Community Legal Services of East Palo Alto • El Comité de Vecinos del Lado del Oeste • East Palo Alto Council of Tenants • YUCA • Faith in Action • Housing Leadership Council of San Mateo • Tenants Together • San Mateo County Central Labor Council • Bay Rising

## The best is last! Go to the END of the Ballot and vote YES on J, O, P!

# YES on Measures J, O, P, Nov. 8

Paid for by Residents for an Affordable and Just EPA for Measures J, O, P  
visit [www.EPAforJOP.com](http://www.EPAforJOP.com) or [www.facebook.com/EPAforJOP](http://www.facebook.com/EPAforJOP)

# East Palo Alto residents have three city measures on the ballot

By Maureen Larsson

Earlier this summer, the East Palo Alto City Council agreed to place three City measures on the November 8, 2016 ballot. If passed, these measures, P, O and J, will increase city revenue and streamline and improve the current Rent Stabilization Ordinance.

Measures P and O are revenue-generating initiatives and seek to increase funding for critical City services, including addressing affordable housing, homelessness, preventing housing displacement, and assistance to those who have lost their homes. The much-needed revenue from the measures is estimated to be \$2,400,000 annually.

Measure P is the East Palo Alto Neighborhood Safety and Vital City Services Measure. It would provide a locally-controlled source of funding to address community priorities such as reducing crime, road maintenance and basic infrastructure needs by creating a half-cent local sales tax which visitors who are shopping or staying in East Palo Alto will also pay. It does not apply to prescription drugs or food purchased as groceries.

The projected earnings are \$1,800,000 annually, with the bulk of that coming from nonresident visitors shopping in our city at stores like IKEA and Home Depot.

Services impacted include neighborhood law enforcement programs, investigation of both violent crimes and property crimes,

**Justice, Oppportunity, Prosperity for **EPA****

**Vote Yes on  J,  O,  P**

*Let's keep East Palo Alto safe and affordable.  
Protect tenants and homeowners. Help uplift us all.*

improved traffic flow and signal timing, drinking water and storm drain infrastructure, and our street maintenance and pot

Funding from Measure P will move us toward comprehensive public safety and preserve our quality of life in East Palo Alto.

Measure O is the East Palo Alto Residential Rental Business License Tax Measure. It would help provide a locally-controlled source of funding to address community priorities such as affordable housing, displacement and homelessness via a one

and one half-cent tax on the gross receipts of large landlords.

The measure prohibits landlords from passing the cost along to rent controlled tenants.

The city estimates this revenue to be \$600,000.00 annually. Measure O was carefully crafted to encourage new housing by exempting newly built units for the first 10 years after they are built. The measure would not apply to "mom and pop" landlords (those leasing fewer than five units), nonprofit operators of affordable housing,

Section 8 units, or below market rate units with deed restrictions. It also allows for hardship exemptions when there are extenuating circumstances for particular landlords.

The revenue generated from Measure O would contribute to the city's financial stability, maintain neighborhood law enforcement initiatives, increase affordable housing and protect local residents from displacement and homelessness.

Currently East Palo Alto's local funding for public safety services is scheduled to ex-

pire. Additional funds generated from Measure O would help replace this funding.

Measure J will streamline and clarify the East Palo Alto Rent Stabilization and Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance of 2010, while continuing to provide protections for residential tenants and limiting rent increases.

Measure J was placed on the ballot because tenants and landlords expressed difficulty understanding parts of the 2010 Rent Stabilization Ordinance.

The city commissioned an expert study on potential reforms to the Rent Stabilization Program that would refine and update the law as well as save taxpayer dollars. Measure J was developed with landlord and tenant input to continue current rent stabilization and assure landlords the right to a fair return.

For more information on Measures P, O and J, please visit <http://www.cityofepa.org/DocumentCenter/View/2870> and <https://www.facebook.com/EPAFORJOP/>



## City, County, State & U.S. Government Meetings & Contacts

### East Palo Alto City Council

The East Palo Alto City Council meets the first and third Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm in the Council Chambers, East Palo Alto City Hall, 2415 University Avenue; (650) 853-3100 or Fax: (650) 853-3115. Website: [www.ci.east-palo-alto.ca.us](http://www.ci.east-palo-alto.ca.us)

### East Palo Alto City Council Members

**Donna Rutherford Mayor**  
(650) 327-7926

**Larry Moody Vice Mayor**  
(650) 644-9110

**Ruben Abrica**  
(650) 380-4987

**Lisa Gauthier**  
(650) 387-4584

**Carlos Romero**  
[cromero@cityofepa.org](mailto:cromero@cityofepa.org)

### East Palo Alto Agencies, Boards, Commissions, Committees

**Planning Commission**  
Second and Fourth Monday

**Rent Stabilization Board**  
Second and Fourth Wednesday

**Public Works & Transportation Commission**  
Third Wednesday

**Youth Advisory Committee**  
First Thursday of each month

**Senior Advisory Committee**  
Meets first Wednesday of the even numbered months from 1:30p.m.-3:30p.m. - City Hall.

**East Palo Alto Sanitary District**  
The East Palo Alto Sanitary District office is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 12 noon and re-opens from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. for service. Regular Board Meetings are held

the first Thursday of every month at 7:00 pm.

### Menlo Park City Council

The Menlo Park City Council holds meetings every Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. at the City Council Chambers located at 801 Laurel Street. You can subscribe to receive the agendas and minutes by e-mail when they are published. For questions about an agenda, call the city clerk at 650.330.6620.

### Menlo Park City Council Members

**Richard Cline - Mayor**  
Cell: (650) 207-1677

**Kirsten Keith - Mayor Pro Tem**  
Cell: (650) 308-4618

**Catherine Carlton**  
Residence: 327-5332  
Cell: 575-4623

**Ray Mueller**  
(650) 776-8995

**Peter I. Ohtaki**  
(650) 328-0300

### Menlo Park Boards, Commissions, Committees

Arts Commission  
Bicycle Commission  
Environmental Quality Commission  
Finance and Audit Commission  
Housing Commission  
Las Pulgas Committee  
Library Commission  
Parks and Recreation Commission  
Planning Commission  
Transportation Commission

### San Mateo County Board of Supervisors

### Supervisor Warren Slocum Fourth District

The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors meets on March 3, 17, 31, & April 14, 28 2009 in the County of San Mateo Hall of Justice & Records 400 County Center, Redwood City, CA 94063. Roll call at 8 a.m. 9 a.m. Regular & Consent Agenda items. 650 691-2121

### State Officials

**Governor Edmund G. Brown**  
State Capitol Building  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Phone: 916-445-2841  
Fax: 916-445-4633  
Email: [governor@governor.ca.gov](mailto:governor@governor.ca.gov)

**Assembly Member Richard Gordon**  
District Address  
5050 El Camino Real Ste.117  
Los Altos, CA 94022  
650 691-2121

**State Senator Jerry Hill**  
District Address  
1528 South El Camino Real  
San Mateo, CA 94301  
(650) 212-3313

### U.S. Government

**U.S. Congresswoman Jackie Speier**  
San Mateo Office  
155 Bovet Rd, Suite 780  
San Mateo, CA 94402  
Phone: (650) 342-0300  
Phone: (415) 566-5257  
Fax: (650) 375-8270

# Council approves the city's general plan

By Kimberly Carlton

The East Palo Alto City Council approved East Palo Alto's General Plan at a special meeting held on October 4, 2016. Mayor Donna Rutherford along with Councilmembers Lisa Gauthier and Carlos Romero voted unanimously to adopt the updated General Plan with some final recommended changes.

Councilmembers Ruben Abrica and Larry Moody were absent from the meeting. Concurrently with the General Plan, the City Council also commissioned the creation of a Westside Area Plan to specifically address issues related to development there.



Photo courtesy of <http://vista2035epa.org/>

The discussion prior to the vote was led by Councilmember Romero and clearly demonstrated the concern of the Council to ensure that land use and development in East Palo Alto results in tangible benefits to the community.

The long-range plan is expected to guide growth in East Palo Alto over the next two decades. Anticipated

growth includes approximately 2500 new residential units, 335,000 square feet of new retail space, 2 million square feet of office space and 267,000 square feet of industrial space. The new plan attempts to balance this growth with constraints in resource availability related especially to water, preventing displacement of existing residents, and the need for af-

fordable housing and jobs in the community.

With the approval of its general plan, East Palo Alto has fulfilled an important State of California requirement, since a general plan is a policy document required by state law that provides long-range guidance for land use, development and other City issues such as affordable housing and employment.

The process leading to the city's approval of its general plan began in March 2013 when the City hired Raimi + Associates, an urban planning firm based in Berkeley, CA. The three and a half year-long process to develop the blueprint of the city's vision for its future included 33

community outreach meetings to ensure that residents had plenty of opportunity to get involved.

The community outreach meetings included nine each of the General Plan Advisory Committee and the Westside Area Plan Advisory Committee. Residents were invited to participate in workshops focused on housing, public health, transportation, land use and economic development.

For more information about the general planning process and to access detailed documents including the General Plan, Westside Area Plan, and Environmental Impact Report, please visit [www.vista2035epa.org](http://www.vista2035epa.org).

# County develops an affordable housing action plan

By Elizabeth Real

East Palo Alto is known to have affordable housing, yet the rise in housing prices has given many residents no choice, but to leave the city.

With the growing displacement of low-income residents because of the increasing cost of housing and the lack of affordable housing, the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors formed a task force of community leaders in 2015 to develop possible solutions to the housing shortage. Now, almost a year later, the task force proposed an action plan. It called the action plan the Home For All Initiative.

The initiative was presented

to the East Palo Alto City Council at its September 20 meeting and it received the council's unanimous approval. This approval came at a time when the council has been bombarded with complaints from city residents about the city's enforcement of its housing policies.

During the council's meeting on September 6, its first since its summer break, many frustrated residents spoke to the council, during the community forum session, to voice a variety of complaints, about what they considered unlawful home inspections, threats, discrimination, personal abuse and 10-day eviction notices that they were given to many residents by city workers en-

forcing the city's housing codes against garage conversions. Speakers said the eviction notices were causing broken families and homelessness.

During the September 20 meeting, residents again expressed their anger, frustration and sadness as they deeded by residents to the council.

Although solving the housing crisis will take time, council members expressed through their positive comments, the view that the Home for All Initiative is a step in the right direction.

For more information on the initiative see the Home for All Initiative website at <http://www.homeforallsmc.com/>

**EAST PALO ALTO CITY COUNCIL**  
**ELECT LARRY MOODY**  
 LEADERSHIP FOR TODAY'S EAST PALO ALTO

Warren Slocum, President of San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, District 4 Supervisor and Larry Moody

**"Councilman Larry Moody is dedicated to the residents of East Palo Alto, collaborates with leaders in the community and the county, and has a creative approach to public policy. I'm proud to support his candidacy for re-election to the East Palo Alto City Council."**

**Vote November 8th!!**

# Social services website launches in San Mateo County

By Natalia Carrasco

Orlando Pineda, an East Palo Alto resident and Eastside College Preparatory graduate, feels good everyday when he rides the train to his job at One Degree in San Francisco. A software engineer, he's directed his career helping others in need by developing innovative technologies that challenge poverty, because he believes poverty doesn't have to be a life sentence. Orlando's work now impacts his own community of East Palo Alto, because One Degree is now available in San Mateo County!

One Degree ([www.1deg.org](http://www.1deg.org)), a technology-driven nonprofit organization that makes it easy for low-income and at-risk people to access social services, launched in San Mateo County in August. Since One Degree is accessible on computers, tablets and smart-



Photo courtesy of the County of San Mateo Health System

Orlando Pineda shows a One Degree client some of the resources that are available through the program.

phones, anyone can research and review over 1,000 currently available opportunities within San Mateo County in English and Spanish. They can also manage, save and track their findings. Users can add ratings and reviews just like in Yelp -the restaurant and service search platform- and share their findings with friends and family by email and text message.

For the past six months, the One Degree team has been getting to know the East Palo Alto community by working with the Ravenswood Family Health Center, the San Mateo County Family Health Division and other community organizations. The team has attended health fairs, farmers markets and other neighborhood events to listen to resident's needs, understand the gaps in service areas, meet local social service agencies for the purpose of tailoring the One Degree free web platform to best serve families in East Palo Alto and throughout the county.

In East Palo Alto, where 45 percent of the city's 30,000 residents live below

the federal poverty line, many residents welcome One Degree as a much needed tool where they can easily find resources, such as affordable housing, employment opportunities, health clinics, child care and other vital services on one website. With its modern online search platform and robust eligibility engine, One Degree reduces the time it takes to research, find, and travel to multiple agencies to get the services residents need. Each program listed on One Degree has a clear "next step" for people to follow if they want to access it.

Rey Faustino, CEO and founder of One Degree, started the online service in 2012 to help families overcome poverty. As a Filipino immigrant, growing up in Los Angeles with limited means, Faustino wished his family had a way to access immigration and legal help, as well as after school care and

health services.

For Faustino, "One Degree empowers people to quickly and easily find the best and most relevant life-saving resources for them. It has been a demonstrated model in San Francisco, Alameda, and Contra Costa counties. Now over 91,000 households across San Mateo County will benefit from having 24-hour access to services in San Mateo County."

"I'm excited to see how people will use One Degree to discover organizations or resources that they are eligible for that they didn't even know existed. Not a lot of people know about some of the awesome organizations out there that provide resources to the community," said Pineda., who thinks struggling families in his community can find support

# Sharing a love for dance with others

By Justin Duan

Lauren McLaughlin is a rising senior attending Menlo-Atherton High School who is sharing her love for dance and years of experience with students from her local community. Her project, A Chance to Dance, serves kids ages 10-17, primarily from lower income backgrounds and the Ravenswood School District. Lauren has been leading dance projects and directly changing students' lives since 6th grade.



Photo courtesy of Justin Duan and HS Canvas in Mountain View

**Interview**

**Q:** Tell us a little bit about the history behind your dancing career and A Chance to Dance!

**A:** I have been dancing since I was three years old. Now, I'm the captain of my high school dance team as well as my competition team. From 6th to 10th grade, I started and ran my own dance business, which served about 6-7 girls between the ages of 5-12. I definitely enjoyed it, but as someone always looking for the next step and to expand my impact on my community, I wanted to do something more. I started thinking about

how I could use my passion for dance to help cultivate a similar passion in others. I love teaching, and I love dancing, so I quickly realized that I could combine the two by teaching free dance classes to kids who otherwise wouldn't have the chance to dance. Paying for classes, costumes, competitions, and equipment makes dance a very expensive sport, so many kids don't get to participate. However, I believe everyone should be given a chance to dance.

The purpose of A Chance to Dance is to provide free, regular, ongoing dance

classes for kids ages 10-17 from lower income families. Currently, there are three teachers, including myself. Each of us have over 10 years of dance experience.

**Q:** Wow, you started a business in 6th grade? How did you do that?

**A:** I've always naturally taken a leadership role in my activities and the role of a teacher/mentor in dance. My younger sister and I both dance, and I've been consistently helping her out since I started. Her friends and their moms would come up to me and say, "Hey Lauren, you should teach dance! You'd be

a great dance teacher!" I had helped teach summer camps and dance classes at my studio, so I thought about it. Starting and running your own business isn't that hard, right? Admittedly, it was much harder than I expected: I had to teach the class, track finances, coordinate costumes, plan the end-of-the-year show, and keep everything organized. It was quite a challenge, but it gave me valuable leadership experience that ultimately led to A Chance to Dance.

**Q:** How did you acquire funding for A Chance to Dance?

**A:** In October of my sophomore year, I came across the Tutor Corps' Susan Lindquist Community Service Grant. After I came up with the idea of A Chance to Dance, I applied for the grant, and won it! Then, I started a Kickstarter campaign, filmed a promotional video for it, and received enough money to start my project in January. All of this happened very fast, but it was so exciting.

**Q:** What's the mission of A Chance to Dance?

**A:** The program has three goals. The first is to engage

kids from lower income families who may not have many opportunities to play sports and exercise in rigorous physical activity. The second is to help them develop self-efficacy, which includes helping the kids set personal goals, and then assisting them in achieving those goals by the end of the year. The third is to provide them with positive role models, through the teachers becoming mentors for the students.

**Q:** Do you have your own role model who you look up to?

**A:** My role model would be my dance teacher Nona. One year, I had to interview her for a project, and I learned all about her story. Coming from a lower income background, she is someone who has paved her own path to her success today, and is a huge inspiration to me. Nona has been very supportive of me through this whole process, and also lets me use her dance studio for A Chance to Dance!

**Q:** What do you love most about running A Chance to Dance?

**A:** The program runs from September to the end-of-the-

continued on page 11

## NEW AFFORDABLE 1 & 2 BEDROOM APARTMENTS

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Applications Available online on 10/17/16 thru 11/4/16 at the Housing Authority of San Mateo

County's website at [www.smchousing.org](http://www.smchousing.org) under "Project-Based and Public Housing Wait Lists" (click dropdown and find "East Palo Alto: University Avenue")

Application assistance and applications available at: Bay Oaks Apts., 2400 Gloria Way, East Palo Alto, during the above dates, Monday through Friday, 8:30am to 5:00pm (closed between 12pm-1pm)

*NOTE: This Office will be closed on Tuesday, 10/25/16*

Completed applications must be **received** by the Housing Authority of the County of San Mateo

**by mail:** 264 Harbor Blvd., #A, Belmont, CA 94002 or **by fax:** (650) 802-3319

between 10/24/16 and 11/4/16. (Applications postmarked by 11/4/16 but received after 11/4/16 will be rejected.)

Accommodations for persons with disabilities must be requested in advance by emailing: [mtwwaitlist@smchousing.org](mailto:mtwwaitlist@smchousing.org)

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# Residents design a youth and community arts center



Photo, courtesy of the Ravenswood Family Health Center, shows the new kiosks that are available in its clinic.

## EPA Center Arts Staff

Over 35 community members gathered at the East Palo Alto YMCA this summer to help design a new arts and music center, which is slated to open at the corner of Bay and Pulgas in 2019. Representatives from community based organizations and the City of East Palo Alto worked alongside local artists, arts educators, students, activists and parents to refine the architectural design, as well as the programming and landscape design concepts for the building.

Over the past seven years, the project has involved hundreds of youth and adult leaders from East Palo Alto in envisioning, planning and now, designing the actual center, down to the nuts and bolts of everything from lighting to programming priorities.

The design of the building with community members is assisting in the realization of the Center's

mission to increase opportunities for youth to discover and amplify their talents, realize their potential, and impact their world through the arts. The new center intends to serve as a "community living room" and creative hub within East Palo Alto.

The updated design and programming priorities shared at the session reflected a direct response to community's input, which had been provided during the previous five community-based work sessions this year.

As one participant stated,

"I see our prior ideas and feedback in the current design." Other participants talked about the importance of sustainability, connecting arts curriculum to social justice issues, and finding ways for the center to collaborate in anti-displacement efforts, story telling, and cultural heritage and legacy through its arts-based mission.

The evening's agenda included presentations about the design status, programming updates from staff, and small group discussions with Hood Designs, wHY Architects, arts educators, and even the lighting designer from Atelier Ten.

The Youth Arts and Music Center project currently offers free instrumental music lessons for East Palo Alto teens and young adults, supports youth led and inter-generational bands, hosts open mic and performance opportunities with partner Live in Peace, Inc., as well as plans local festivals and art shows, and provides visual and performing arts workshops, classes and clubs at partner sites including Bayshore Christian Ministries, Building Futures Now, and East Palo Academy.

The next public workshop was scheduled to take place in October.



Photo EPA Center Arts Staff Participants select potential designs for the community music and arts center.

# Is East Palo Alto running out of water?

By Elizabeth Real



Photo courtesy of <http://www.photos-public-domain.com>

Some might remember that East Palo Alto was commended last year for decreasing its water usage during the drought that is affecting all of California. This year, the city on the move is facing a water problem: it simply doesn't have enough.

Many landowners and developers, in particular, are upset because their projects will come to a screeching halt due to the city's lack of water. The City has been attempting to solve its water issue and during the July 19, 2016 city council meeting, it was announced that the strategy in place consists of two components: 1. increase the city's ground water by drilling wells such as Gloria Way Well and

Pad D. 2. Secure a water transfer from Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency (BAWSCA) members who have extra or from the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC).

As the assistant city manager, Sean Charpentier, explained, the Gloria Way Well and Pad D well have both received general approval from the State and can now begin the permitting process. The goal is to produce water at a steady rate for everyday consumption.

Like most projects, however, drilling two wells and completing a water transfer will cost money and lots of it. Charpentier broke down the funding needs into three sections: 1. The city will need to hire a civil engineer who will oversee the ground water project. 2. Technical services will be needed to aid in the potential transfer in order to negotiate and understand the impact on BAWSCA as a whole and individual members. 3. Since a water transfer has not been done before, the city will need specialized legal sources to make sure the law is being followed. According to Charpentier, these services are estimated to cost \$570,000 for

two years.

Charpentier also pointed out that at this moment, it is unclear how long it will take to transfer water into East Palo Alto. It could be anywhere from 6 months to 6 years, he said. The uncertainty of the timeline greatly affects landowners and developers hoping to move forward with their projects. Therefore, according to city staff, it is in the City's best interest to approve a Water Supply Implementation Funding Agreement with the Sobrato Organization, 2020 Bay Rd., and the Primary School.

The three parties would pay on a pro rata basis. It is currently estimated that the sustained production of Gloria Way Well and Pad D will be approximately 700,000 gallons per day. Using this number, the pro rata share was calculated based on how much each project would use. As a whole, the three projects are estimated to use 300,000 gallons per day which would equal to 41% of the water from both wells.

Council member Carlos Romero questioned the fairness of this agreement. Although the city would receive the funding it needs to bring in

continued on page 16



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## RENAISSANCE & The City of East Palo Alto

Welcomes you to grow your business by participating in the Community Marketplace  
12/3/16 10am-4pm





Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center along with The City of East Palo Alto invite you to participate in it's first East Palo Alto Community Marketplace. Come grow your business and expand your market.

For More information or if you would like your business to Participate please contact Crystal Rasmussen  
crasmussen@rencenter.org or 650-321-2194 ext 1103





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# From the Editor's Desk

## Using our vote to shape the future we want

In this presidential election, as with any election, voters have a chance to play a role in shaping the future.

We, each, can play a role in shaping the future through our vote, only if we actually vote, of course.

Now some might sincerely believe that their vote doesn't count. But it certainly stands to reason that it will not count, if it's not cast.

Is the presidential election rigged? One presidential candidate would have us believe that it is. It's an argument that will be used if he loses. Of course, if he wins, then, he might, then, maintain that the election is fair.

The question of whether the presidential election is rigged or of whether it is being unduly influenced by hackers from another country should naturally concern us.

But, these questions and similar ones should not stop us from exercising our right to vote in this upcoming election or in any election.

Voting is a right that people died to give us -- something that we could always keep in mind when it comes to any election.

If voting were not important and if our vote didn't count, then there would not have been any logical reason, throughout this country's history, for people, who supported the prevailing system of segregation, to use dogs, the fear of lynching, literacy tests, poll taxes and other tactics to keep people, especially people of color, from voting.

These tactics were highlighted during the height of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960's and the movement led to stronger federal legislation that protected our right to vote.

There is a host of federal legislation that one can cite, which protects our voting rights. For example, the 24th Amendment to the Constitution, ratified in 1964, eliminated poll taxes. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 prohibited the use of voting practices and procedures to discriminate on the basis of race, color or membership in a language minority group. This act also required certain municipalities to provide election materials in languages other than English.

The 26th Amendment to the Constitution, ratified in 1971,

lowered the voting age for all elections to 18. The Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act of 1984 requires polling places to be accessible to people with disabilities.

It is all, too, obvious in today's political climate, that efforts are still being made to keep people, especially people of color, away from the polls.

With the dramatic demographic changes that are now underway in this country, which will lead those now classified as minorities to become the majority, there is fear that power in the U.S. will shift.

Many political observers think these fears are behind the current efforts by those, citing voter fraud, who are demanding the creation and use of voter ID cards that could disenfranchise millions of poor and elderly citizens who can now legitimately vote.

Since more minority groups are registered as Democrats rather than as Republicans, such fears can explain, why there is an on-going effort in some states, such as Florida, to strike many people with Latino surnames from voter registration rolls and to demand new voting requirements for others.

No right that I can think of is guaranteed forever. Rights must be continually guarded. All of the rights in the world are of no use if people don't use them, and rights not used might be easier to deny in the future.

We must not allow anyone, through any means, to deny us our legitimate and protected right to vote. There is too much at stake in this election, too much at stake for East Palo Alto, for the State of California and for our nation.

Much attention has been given to our country's presidential election. But, there are local and state ballot measures that will have a dramatic effect on daily life, too.

East Palo Alto has three ballot measures (J.O and P) that will have an enormous impact on the future course of the city. We have 17 state propositions to vote on that will also impact our daily lives.

We must not forfeit our right to cast our vote and play a role in shaping the future direction of our neighborhoods and our country. So, vote!!!! Don't let personal excuses stop you. You don't even have to wait until November 8 to vote in this election. Just do it!



Henrietta J. Burroughs



Photo by Sandra T. Webster

Brentwood Elementary students give their undivided attention to Steve Mesler, a Gold Medal Olympian in bobsledding and Lex Gillette, the track and field Silver Medal Paralympian, when the two of them visited their school on October 13, 2016. See the article about their visit on page 13 of this issue.

## Letters in East Palo Alto Today

### Will anyone remember?

Dear Editor

My Dad was in the Navy but worked 2-3 extra jobs after he and Mom battled the bank to "be allowed" to use his GI benefits to buy a home in red-lined East Palo Alto. Daddy modeled "blood, sweat & tears", working hard he made our home/yards/garden beautiful.

Then came 101 freeway that walled off our community. Then came free drugs/guns and violence, then closure of our high school.

Through it all my parents held on, urging me/others to buy homes, don't ever sell.

Today, there's a huge Facebook campus a 10 minute walk from where I grew up. Google's there too.

My high school is now Home Depot, IKEA, Nordstrom Rack, Starbucks and Mi Pueblo grocery store.

The house/their legacy on Westminster was sold. Tragedy.

Years from now will anyone remember that time when East Palo Alto was mostly Black?

**Ricki Stevenson**

Journalist and former East Palo Alto resident

### East Palo Alto - a place where people care

Dear Editor

Last Wednesday night I was really late to the dinner at St. Francis where I sing, and one of the men who set up the tables came out to my

car with a plate of food for me because they were closing the kitchen and he wanted to be sure I had something to eat.

It occurred to me, not for the first time, that East Palo Alto is a place where people care about each other, and isn't that something important, something worth preserving?

Helping each other is the foundation of every religion, every culture, the survival characteristic of the whole human species. Sure, Capitalism does some great things: Stanford and UC...Vaccines... but it can get out of hand and putting profits before people isn't always the most effective economic course in the long run.

Deviation from balanced city planning has brought, along with all that money, variable interest rates, foreclosures, and some 6,000 homeless next door in Santa Clara County--thousands of homeowners losing their homes in East Palo Alto.

But there's one East Palo Alto woman who's going to save her house, by sharing, if we will let her. We? Who else elects all those officials and the attorneys and code compliance monitors they hire? She's fighting off foreclosure by sharing her land with some other family and their trailer--shouldn't we give her a medal?

Indeed, shouldn't we follow her example? We could all put our little bits of money together to make a factory for little half-kitchens and self-

contained bathrooms, appliances, walls, rooves, floors and solar or other energy panels, all ready to wheel through the side setbacks to anybody's back yard, plug into the grid and the water circulation system, and provide housing for the workers or students or families.

They could sleep in a tent until we manufacture some tongue and groove wall panels to make on-the-spot houses, so folks wouldn't have to give up their jobs and their children's schools and East Palo Alto could continue to be a city of poor but proud homeowners who care about each other.

**Stephanie Munoz**  
Palo Alto, CA

### The RCSD Bd Election Editor's note:

One local East Palo Alto resident is writing a local city voters guide at the request of family and friends.

She is looking for your picks for the Ravenswood City School Board and your reasons for your choices.

If you would like to share your choices, please send your information to [epatoday@epatoday.org](mailto:epatoday@epatoday.org) and your information to the author of the voters guide will be shared.

## East Palo Alto Today

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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

## Focus On Your Vote

By Rayshaun Jordan

It is no secret that foreign countries have been spying on the United States for many many years, and have been unsuccessfully attempting to hack into government files, too. Espionage between countries is nothing new, and has been going on for ages.

But what makes the newly discovered hacks to the Democratic National Committee (DNC) and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) unique is the hackers decision to release the damaging information they have received while the United States is in the middle of trying to elect its next president.

Although, this is not the first time hackers have tried to influence presidential elections,

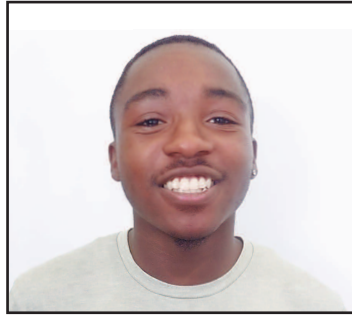
according to CNN, it is the first time that a major presidential candidate is alleged to have called upon a foreign country to conduct espionage against his political opponent.

The suspected Russian hackers have discovered through hacking the DNC's emails that the Democratic Party's former chairwoman, Debbie Wasserman Schultz, was very biased towards nominating Hillary Clinton as the party's nominee.

This led to her resignation as the party's chair, officially resigning July 28, the last day of the DNC Convention.

Additionally, by hacking the DCCC, the suspected Russian hackers gained information on donors to the committee by creating a website identical to the DCCC's official website.

The hackers redirected



Rayshaun Jordan

donors from the official website, to donate money on their website.

By doing this, the hackers were able to receive a lot of personal information on many donors such as; email addresses, phone numbers and credit card details.

Although Russia has denied having any involvement in the committee hacks and any involvement in the U.S. presidential election, the FBI has

discovered that the hacks had to be done by someone working in a foreign government or affiliated with a high ranking government official.

In other words, the hacks just couldn't be done by an ordinary criminal working alone.

In truth, whether Russia is involved in the hacking of the Democratic Party's committees or not, it is no secret that the United States election process is being critically watched and commented on all over the world.

Our next elected president will be the first president since President Nixon to potentially appoint four justices to the Supreme Court.

Our next elected president will also be responsible for either pushing our country forward and promoting peace, or

pushing our country backwards and promoting fear. It is important that we do not let anyone or anything infringe upon our right as Americans to vote for someone, who, we feel, will put our country in a better state of being.

With this spotlight on our election, let us be able to personally and honestly think about the person we will vote for as our next leader and the impact our vote will have not only on the United States but also with countries worldwide.

We should take our vote seriously and vote for the person who will bring about positive change and promote peace in our country.

Rayshaun Jordan was a 2016 summer intern with East Palo Alto Today.

## The death penalty: End it, don't try to 'mend' it

By Henry Organ

There are two initiatives on the November ballot pertaining to the death penalty. Briefly, one is to replace the death penalty with life without the possibility of parole, and is retroactive to those sentenced to death (Proposition 62). The other initiative seeks to "...mend, not end..." the death penalty (Proposition 66).

Governments should not be in the business of taking lives, but saving and enhancing them. There are modern-day measures available to protect the public from those found to be a future threat to life through nonlethal means.



Henry Organ

Retribution is not moral justification for taking life, even that of a confessed murderer. Vengeance is not a state's right or privilege.

The suggestion that the death penalty be perfected, made error-free, by legislative mending is mendacity. The suggestion that the ap-

peal process can be abbreviated without creating an imbalance on the scales of justice is lacking in honesty and jurisprudence. Why the rush to "final" judgment? And, the death penalty can never be included in the spectrum of justice; the two concepts are incompatible.

The state should accept the seasoned and reasoned conclusion of the late Justice Harry Blackmun: Stop "tinkering with the machinery of death." He had referred to the death penalty as an "experiment" that has failed. Why this thirst for accelerating final judgments, when there is no evidence that it is a deterrent, and thus is nothing more than plain retribu-

tion and vengeance?

Financial cost should never be at the crux of discussions, or votes, on the death penalty. No cost saving, not one dollar or trillions, is worth a single inmate's life, even if that inmate is factually not innocent. At its core, the death penalty is morally bankrupt, unconstitutional, and eternally flawed. It is always susceptible of taking an innocent life.

The California District Attorneys Association is an active participant in originating and lobbying for Proposition 66 to mend the death penalty. This is questionable and troublesome, ethically, given the basic mission of district attorney offices to en-

force law "enforcement," not law "formation," an important distinction. It is noted that the current president of the association is the district attorney of San Mateo County.

Vote yes on Proposition 62. Vote no on Proposition 66, please. End, don't try to mend, the death penalty.

Retired Stanford Development Officer Henry Organ has lived in Menlo Park for more than 40 years. He was a member of the San Mateo County 2010 Charter Committee.

[Editor's note - The above opinion piece was reprinted with the author's permission. It originally appeared in The Almanac.]

## Racism ends with the search for inner peace

By Michael Uhila

Black lives matter to me, because they're human just like me. It saddens me and the other monastics here at Gampo Abby to hear the news about all of the violence from police and civilians in America. Why? As the late Rodney King asked "Can't we all just get along"?

Theoretically, the US constitution is supposed to protect you and me. So why isn't it protecting a black man from getting bullets in his head from the law abiding officers? I got no answers for that but we are praying for peace. So where do you start? As Pema Chödrön teaches, "You start where you are."

When I worked in community organizations in East Palo



Michael Uhila

Alto one of the concerns was: How do we bond with the police department or even strike up a conversation with cops? Maybe a starting point is to talk about our favorite doughnuts and it might be frivolous, but it's a start. I remember the late David Lewis telling me, "In the past, I was working against the pigs and now I got to work with them."

Unfortunately he died from bullets, too.

At Gampo Abby, we might

be on an island, but we feel the suffering from every phone call we make and from every newspaper we get from the U.S. We're not separated from you. Even black monks get pulled over by cops like my friend Chönying, who is from West Virginia. He got pulled over in Nova Scotia and a monk named Tingzin was pulled over in New York. So, we aren't exempt.

In fact, we're right with you. In the late 60's and 70's the Black Panthers monitored the police in Oakland. So, then, if you did get stopped by the cops, you weren't harassed.

In 2016, the Black Panthers aren't around, but we all have cell phones and video cameras to capture a cop if he does go beyond his role to serve and protect. Laws pro-

tect the police and they protect criminals. Even John Gotti had a lawyer. So, what difference does it make? It comes down to skin color and how much money you got. When OJ Simpson was acquitted for murder, he had money to pay those lawyers. The verdict: not guilty. When you and I go to court, we can't afford a high-powered attorney, so we get the public pretender, a lawyer on the government pay role to pretend like he's on our side. But it's a farce.

I don't want to even step foot in a courtroom, so I'd rather be out here sharing peace than being judged by twelve. To prevent that from happening, try to be at peace with yourself.

Yes, racism exists. But do

you have your own racist attitude that you haven't worked out yet? Do you just hate whatever you don't understand? Yes, there are many injustices in the world, but what can you do in your neighborhood to bring peace? It doesn't have to be a big march to Washington D.C. It could be as simple as "Hey officer, take care of yourself." It could be the officer bringing cookies for autistic kids at Ravenswood clinic. It could be a conversation about race relations or climate change. Whatever it is, just start and go from there.

The process towards begins with you. Now that you know, what are you going to do about it?

# Lifecycles

## DACA is not enough

By Silvia Aguilar

Since Monday [September 26], I've been on leave from my job as a mechanical engineer at Lam Research. Not because there was something wrong with my job performance, but because my work authorization expired on Sunday. For over three years, I've been able to work in the engineering field due to DACA, but because of an administrative delay at USCIS my renewal wasn't processed on time and my employer has had no choice but to put me on unpaid personal leave.

For over two weeks my HR department has been scrambling to get ahold of USCIS to prevent a lapse in employment. In researching, emailing, and calling USCIS,



Silvia Aguilar

they've had a front row seat for the inefficient process that DACA recipients are up against.

"A consistent theme of inaccessibility and bureaucracy

has left us repeatedly frustrated in our determined effort to avoid the expiration of Silvia's work authorization," says David Urquhart, the Human Resource Manager at Lam Research. "We have experienced an absence of accountability to results against USCIS SLAs and, further, a lack of any meaningful escalation process. As a result, today, we have one fewer highly capable engineer solving our customers' most technically difficult challenges."

If my work authorization isn't renewed soon, I'm at risk of not being able to pay my rent, losing my health insurance, and not being able to complete my Master's of Science in Engineering Management at Santa Clara University. Since my DACA

renewal was a prerequisite for my California driver's license and that also expired on Monday, I've lost my driving privilege as well. Everything my family and I have worked so hard to achieve over the past 20 years is at stake.

While I'm grateful for the opportunities DACA has afforded me, it isn't enough. I want my ability to work to be based on how qualified I am at engineering design and how well I perform at the tasks my employer gives me -- not bureaucratic processes beyond my control. I don't want to have to worry that my right to live and work in this country might disappear at a moment's notice if a new president decides to end DACA.

In November, will you

stand up for immigrants like myself? Will you vote for elected officials who believe that I -- and so many other undocumented immigrants -- deserve a path towards permanent residency?

Will you vote for someone who wants me to go to back to work?

**Silvia Aguilar, joined** Educators for Fair Consideration in 2011 and is a 2012 New American Scholar

Silvia Aguilar's letter was submitted by Katharine Gin, from Educators for Fair Consideration (E4FC). According to its website, E4FC was founded in 2006 ... [and it] "empowers undocumented young people to achieve educational and career goals through personal, institutional and policy transformation."

## One big birthday!



Mrs. Alberta Lee

We're not waiting to give a shout out to Mrs. Alberta Lee, who will be celebrating her 102 years birthday on

December 23, 2016.

According to anyone's standards, celebrating 102 years is a real milestone and God's blessing for her.

For Sandra T. Webster, who knows her, Ms. Lee is an inspiration to family and friends.

Webster said that Mrs. Lee's daughter, Karen Lee-Williams, daily shares news with family and friends about Mrs. Lee's wisdom, her energy and how she spends her time.

## A salute to Chester Prince

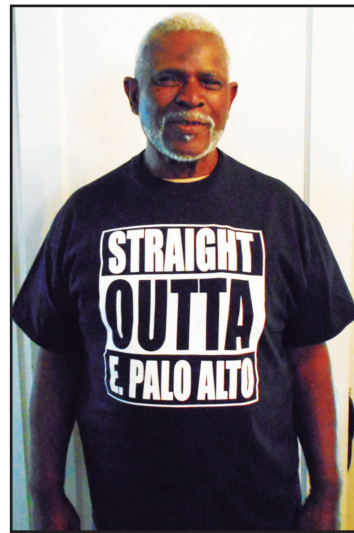
Longtime East Palo Alto resident, Chester Prince celebrated his birthday with many family members and friends this October.

The celebration was put on by Prince's daughter, Isis, and it was held from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, October 15 at the Muhammad Ali Cultural Center.

The center is located at 2528 Pulgas Avenue.

All who attended honored Prince with shared stories, music, dance and, of course, birthday wishes.

As you might guess, there was plenty of food to go around.



Chester Prince

Prince, who is known by his nieces and nephews as Uncle "Shongo," is proud of being an East Palo Alto resident and an ardent follower of black history.

As you can see, unlike those who come Straight Out of Compton, a term made popular by the film with this name, Uncle Shongo comes "Straight Outta East Palo Alto."

Oh, which birthday did he celebrate? You'll just have to ask him and if you missed his big celebration, you can still make a donation in his name to the Muhammad Ali Cultural Center.

## The college experience comes with mixed feelings

By Yajaira Vargas

The idea of going to college for a first-generation individual like myself might seem daunting and confusing at first. Especially, choosing classes, making friends, and becoming familiar with the different resources on campus may be a lot to handle.

Just a while ago, I attended a two-day orientation where I had the opportunity to meet my freshmen peers, attend a lecture, register for classes, and receive valuable information.

Before the program, I was nervous about how everything would turn out, but I brushed aside the negative feelings because I was called up to the registration table to receive my name tag and dorm key.

After, I left my bags in my room, I joined my group that I

was assigned for the next two days. While I did not know anyone in my group, participating in icebreakers helped built up conversations.

One of the most frequent questions all students may ask themselves is "How can I succeed in college?" If you're the first in your family to attend college, this question can often make you feel uneasy in comparison to others, because you are exposed to a new environment.

I had this feeling, but when I attended a mandatory lecture that required all students to read two articles beforehand those worries and



Yajaira Vargas

questions vanished.

The topic of the lecture was how having a growth mindset could positively impact a student's college experience than having a fixed mindset.

A concern many students can have is how to engage and participate in a big class-sized room. While the experiences in this situation may vary from school to school, I felt that it was easy to engage in the topic with approximately 400 students.

What truly triggered everyone in that room to become engaged in the topic and spark an interesting intellectual discussion was because the profes-

sor made us feel aware that all students at first don't feel comfortable sharing their thoughts because they are shy or they might feel that their responses don't have enough value.

Organizations and clubs are the perfect way to become socially involved with people who share similar interests and causes like you. This is why an exposition was set up for all new students to attend and sign-up to receive further information about the individual clubs.

I went up to the stands now knowing what to ask. Every time there was a student with a friendly face who would introduce himself or herself and tell me more about their club. In the end, there were so much going on that I knew that I would have many clubs and organizations to choose from.

When I reflect back to the

experiences I had at orientation I found that its purpose was to make each one of us feel a part of a community of intellectually curious thinkers - a community in which everyone strives for accountability, responsibility, excellence, and integrity.

Each college and university is unique in their own way but I strongly recommend recent high school graduates that will be attending college in the fall to take the opportunity to attend their school's orientation or events that are offered to become informed and acquainted with new people.

After orientation, I headed back home with a clearer idea of how college is going to be. The nerve provoking questions that I had lingered no more. I hope that my experience helps others have a positive transition to college as well.

# Lifecycles

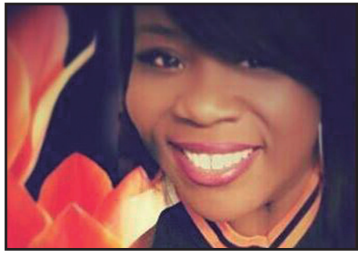
## Norma Hymes is committed to maintaining high business standards

**Crystal Rasmussen**

Norma Hymes' passion to run a sustainable business has a very personal story.

After her daughter, Alicia Patrice Fort (Alicia), passed away at the age of 25, Norma decided to keep Alicia's legacy alive by opening Alicia's Hair House.

As a hairdresser, Alicia believed in providing excellent service and using the highest quality products to secure client satisfaction.



**Norma Hymes**

Norma is committed to keeping her daughters' standards as she welcomes new customers and works on the business.

Norma came to Renaissance to launch and grow her

business by enrolling in our Business Preparation program, which is designed to test the feasibility of clients' businesses/ideas for business.

Participants are prepared to write business plans by learning the fundamentals of marketing, operations and finance.

Based on market analysis, operational plans and financial projections, they decide if their business or idea has potential for success.

In addition to Norma successfully graduating from the Business Preparation pro-

gram, she successfully enrolled in the Renaissance incubator program, which allows her to have a business space to meet and greet customers and grow her business.

Norma is also the winner of the 2015 Passion to Profit's Pitch Contest, which allowed entrepreneurs to market their small business.

The entrepreneurs were judged on whether their idea or project was worth investing in by explaining such things as the business structure, business products and business

strategy.

Currently Norma is fundraising to help her continue her daughter's legacy and to continue to grow the business.

Please help support a woman from your community who wants to give back and be a big part of the culture of who EPA truly is!

If you'd like to help Norma, contact Crystal Rasmussen at Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center at [crasmussen@renaissancecenter.org](mailto:crasmussen@renaissancecenter.org) or call 650-321-2193 ext. 1103

## Obituaries: Nola Hopkins and Alice Mae Clay: Celebrating lives well-lived



**Nola Hopkins**

Nola Hopkins, was a 98 years old resident of East Palo

Alto, CA for 65 years. She lived in the city from 1951 to 2016. She was born March 8, 1918 and she died peacefully in her home on August 18, 2016.

Nola will be greatly missed and she will continue to be loved by her loving daughter Ann Edmondson of East Palo Alto.

She also leaves a host of grandchildren, great grandchildren, great great grandchildren, great great great grandchildren, and other family members and friends.



**Alice Mae Clay**

ALICE MAE CLAY was born on September 11, 1939 in Grant, Oklahoma, to Charlie and Lewis Brown, becoming

the fourth oldest of thirteen siblings.

She was the mother of three: Brenda Jean Clay, Joyce Marie Clay, and Andrea La-Teasha Taylor, and the grandmother of two: Lawrence Charlot, Jr. and Darrell Lamar Ford Jr. She was also the great-grandmother of Lauren Charlot, Jaylin Charlot, Jordon Charlot, and Jason Charlot.

Alice moved to California in 1967, residing in East Palo Alto. Upon moving to the bay area Alice worked as a house-keeping aide for 27 years at Channing House, located in Palo Alto, California. Alice also worked private duty at night

and was also a caretaker on the weekends.

A woman with a heart of gold; she was known for her famous potato salad and infamous apple cake. A woman with a kind heart, that many friends and family admired. She was a listener, provider, role model, and always willing to help.

She enjoyed many things such as spending time with family, playing cards, playing bingo, Yahtzee, casinos, and loved listening to her blues.

Alice was such a beautiful and humble woman that

continued on page 16

## Sharing a love

year show in May. Usually the class starts off with about fifteen people, with eight or nine girls who attend every week and are clearly passionate about dancing. I run the program for those eight or nine girls, because I get to see them grow as both dancers and individuals with every class. It's so rewarding, for example, to see that one of my students got her splits down after a month of consistent work, or when one comes up to me at the end of the year and says, "I felt so uncomfortable in the beginning of the year, even dancing in front of my parents, but now I've danced in front of a whole crowd at the end-of-the-year show, and I thought it was fun."

Q: What kind of setbacks have you faced in your time working on A Chance to Dance?

A: A problem that we have faced, and still haven't quite solved yet, is that many students who really want to attend our classes can't attend due to their circumstances. For example, they might have other events on weekends, they might not be able to get rides to the classes, or their parents might not be motivated to support them. It's hard for these kids to consistently attend, mostly because they and their families aren't used to com-



Lauren McLaughlin stands with some of her students.

mitting to the regular practices and meetings of sports and clubs. That's why I believe it was a huge accomplishment to get those eight or nine kids to regularly attend nearly every class throughout the year. It helps them develop a habit of making commitments, which will greatly benefit them later in life.

Q: What's the next step for A Chance to Dance?

A: I'm part of a national organization called the Boys and Girls Club, and currently I'm talking to one of their directors, as we're both interested in integrating my program into the club. Currently, I am interning there to see how the organization works and interacting with the youth it serves to hopefully begin collaborating in the fall. Both of our programs have similar missions, so I'm excited to see where it goes!

Q: What advice would you give to high schoolers who are

starting a similar project or a project in general?

A: First of all, it helps a lot if you write out your plan beforehand, because it helps you become organized and gives you direction for your project. For me, applying for the grant was helpful, because the application required a very specific project overview and timeline. I worked on it for an entire month, but once I had everything written out, my entire plan was laid out in front of me, and I knew exactly how to start and which steps to take.

If your project requires funding, applying for different grants and starting a Kickstarter campaign are great ideas. They will also help you identify the potential problems and challenges of your project, and give you opportunities to brainstorm how to overcome them.

Lastly, make sure you're

starting your project for the right reasons. If you're working on something just so you can check that box off for your college application, then your project is not going to be as successful. The people you are working with and supporting you will know that you are not truly dedicated to it. It's important that what you're doing comes from your true passion. My passions are dance and teaching, and I took those two things and thought, "What can I do with the two things I love to help my community?"

That's the most important thing for me. I can come in saying that I'm going to change the lives of everyone in the class, but all I want is to impact one person.

continued from page 6

But my job's not done, it only makes me want to see what more I can do for the people around me.

My co-director and I are both on the same competitive dance team, so on some weekends, neither of us could teach because we were at competitions. We had to cancel class numerous times in the spring, which was confusing for the kids and their families.

We decided that we needed to bring on someone who wasn't on our dance team, so we brought on one of my friends, who is part of my school dance team and is free on the weekends to teach.

*Treasured Memories*

*Create a Memorable Legacy  
for your Family Member or Friend*



Creating a remembrance or memory page on the East Palo Alto Today website allows you, your friends and your family members to leave a memorable legacy in honor of a deceased friend or family member. To see the Treasured Memories section on the EPA Today website,

go online to:

[www.epatoday.org/treasured\\_memories/index.html](http://www.epatoday.org/treasured_memories/index.html)

# Shaping the future of the East Palo Alto Library

By Francisco Vargas

East Palo Altans are exploring ideas for their dream library at several community meetings.

Over 50 participants came together on October 11th to imagine their perfect library, fully equipped with all the features that would describe their ideal space.

Representatives from the architectural firm, Fog Studio, sparked people's imagination



Photo courtesy of Sereptha Strong

with a visual presentation featuring several library design possibilities. Various themes emerged on how the

library's space could improve – from a crafting station, makerspace, imagination playground to a teen lounge,

outdoor area, and community garden.

The East Palo Alto Library is for everyone in the community to explore and enjoy.

San Mateo County Libraries and the City of East Palo Alto are asking residents to add their voice to the conversation and share their support for new and existing library ideas.

The second community was held on Wednesday, November 2 at 6 p.m. in the

East Palo Alto Library.

This meeting was hosted in both English and Spanish. Free childcare and a meal was provided.

These conversations and the ideas local residents share are an integral part of the design process and will help San Mateo County Libraries and the City plan for future library services. Contact the East Palo Alto libraries with your ideas

## UNIVERSITY AVENUE SENIOR APARTMENTS LEASING SOON!



41 Affordable Rental Apartments for Seniors, located on University Avenue in East Palo Alto.

### INTEREST LIST

To be placed on the **University Avenue Apartments** Interest List to receive the marketing materials, when available, please:

- Call 1-855-278-7669 and follow the prompts.
- Leave your **name, address, phone number and the name of the community** for which you would like to have your name added to the interest list (in this case, University Avenue Apartments). *This is a message line only and return calls will not be made at this time.*
- You can also sign up for our interest list by submitting an online inquiry at <http://property.midpen-housing.org/LeasingNow> on the University Avenue Senior Housing Page.

### APPLICATION & LEASE-UP

Below is the tentative application and lease-up timeline:

- |                                       |                      |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| • Outreach & Marketing Begins         | August 2016          |
| • Applications Become Available       | October 2016         |
| • Application Period                  | October 2016         |
| • Lottery                             | November 2016        |
| • Intake Letters Mailed to Applicants | December 2016        |
| • Intake Eligibility & Approval       | January - March 2017 |
| • Move-In                             | April 2017           |

\*Above dates are subject to change.



# Prize-winning athletes visit Brentwood Elementary

By Sandra T. Webster

On Thursday, October 13, 2016, Lex Gillette, Steve Mesler, and Ian M. Donnelly met with Ms. Shelley, Ms. Hackett and Ms. Smith classrooms at Brentwood Elementary School in East Palo Alto. The three teachers submitted their application and they were selected by Classroom Champions.

Lex Gillette is a blind track & field Silver Medal Paralympian with Team USA. At eight years old he was blind. He graduated from East Carolina University and learned to speak fluent Spanish. Lex has been a Classroom Champion mentor for 3 years. He will video the monthly classroom lessons



Photos by Sandra T Webster  
Ian M. Donnelly, Steve Mesler and Lex Gillette stand in front of Brentwood Elementary School after their visit to the school.

for students. September/goal setting, October/fair play, November/community, December/continued community (local food banks), January/persevere, February/Friendship, March/leadership, April/healthy living, May/we are champions, June/continue we are champions.

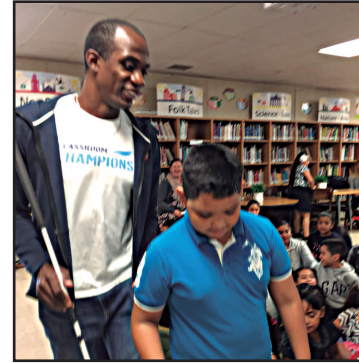
Steve Mesler is a Gold

Medal Olympian (bobsled). He is the president and CEO of Classroom Champions a non-profit organization founded in 2010. The goal of the

foundation is to give technical support and access to students for the school year. They have mentored in schools and classrooms across Canada, U.S., Caribbean and Latin American.

Ian M. Donnelly, is a Development Representative of Bak USA, a computer com-

pany in Buffalo, New York. The company donated 5 new Atlas 12 computers to Brentwood Elementary School. The Atlas 12 is the 2-in-1 laptop purpose-built for K-12 schools in partnership with Intel Education and Mi-



Lex Gillette is guided to the school's library in the "fair play" exercise.

crosoft. The company is a grassroots enterprise with global outreach goal to empower local communities, and activate social prosperity.

The Brentwood students had viewed Classroom Champion October/fair play video before the visit of Lex, Steve and Ian. Students' participation was impressive – the questions were focus on the subject of fair play and they were attentive and well behaved.

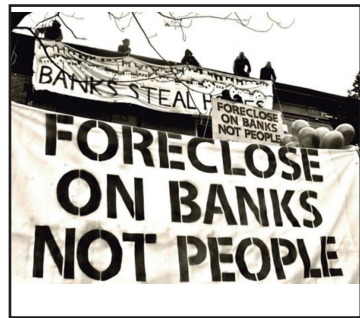
On hand Classroom Champion exercise for students was to assist Lex to navigate – walk unfamiliar territory – the library with four students. Goal to raise students' awareness of how "fair play" is demonstrated with other students.

## Community investigates

must have owed money to somebody, so it does not matter who sells your house.' First ask, 'Was the foreclosure conducted legally?' The burden of proof is on the new buyer to prove that the sale was legal."

Nina Wouk of Menlo Park agrees. "If the seller had no right to conduct the sale, then the house is stolen property. So the winning bidder has no right of possession as a landlord, and should not be evicting anyone from the house, or collecting rent."

Bernardo Huerta, a former Planning Commissioner for the City of East Palo Alto, was stunned to watch Unlawful Detainer hearings in which the judge never examined the documents to see whether the foreclosure had been conducted legally. "When I got my contractor's license, I



Courtesy-www.popularresistance.org

learned what to do if somebody does not pay me for my work. I might have to file a lawsuit and foreclose on the house to get my money. All the paperwork I file with the county recorder must be exactly correct. Registrars from the Contractors State License Board require more detailed information, and I would be in big trouble if I get something wrong. I could never get away with the sloppy paperwork that these lenders file when they sell

a house."  
**Hope for Integrity**

Mark Moulton realized that the court's displacement of residents worked against his decades of effort to provide San Mateo County with affordable housing. He served for ten years as Executive Director of Peninsula Habitat for Humanity, nine years on the Board of Directors of Housing Leadership Council San Mateo County, and was the Executive Director of that organization from 2011-2015.

He wrote to the judges in April, "I knew families that were forced out of their homes and I assumed the problems were caused by missed payments or misunderstandings with the loan servicer. What I did not understand until recently was that judges might have ig-

nored evidence that lenders forged documents in order to foreclose, without actually being legally authorized to do so."

His letter ends with a hope shared by every volunteer investigator, that all community institutions, especially the courts, will meet this challenge with integrity. "It's never too late to do the right thing."

**Sources:**

Rodina Catalano's letter  
60 Minutes exposed mortgage fraud and robo-signing in April, 2011  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IKwB1BaFu9Q>  
Audit of San Francisco fraudulent foreclosures, 2009-2011, released 2012; see page 1: [http://aequitasaudit.com/images/aequitas\\_sf\\_report.pdf](http://aequitasaudit.com/images/aequitas_sf_report.pdf)

continued from page 2

San Mateo County Clerk-Recorder links: <http://www.smcare.org/>

San Mateo County Guidelines for recording a document:

[http://www.smcare.org/recorder/recording\\_documents/record\\_document.asp](http://www.smcare.org/recorder/recording_documents/record_document.asp)

[more sources/resources are on pages 3-5 of the committee's preliminary report of July 17, 2016]

**Midge Dorn** is a member of the East Palo Alto Rent Stabilization Board.

She is looking for volunteers to assist with Eve Sutton's case. All interested, can contact her by email at [dorn-tax@pacbell.net](mailto:dorn-tax@pacbell.net). She requests that you use the word "Foreclosure" in the subject line.

She can also be contacted by phone at (650) 325-6802

## Community News Briefs

Approximately 50,000 square feet, this store would include health and beauty products, food (with fresh produce, grab and go sandwiches, salads and more), an assortment of baby and kids' products and apparel, men's and women's apparel, home items, electronics and stationery.

Additional services offered would include Target Mobile and Order Pick up.

Although opening dates are subject to change, Target is aiming to open in July 2017. We are looking forward to having Target do business in East Palo Alto. Stay tune

**New City Attorney, Rafael Alvarado started August 1, 2016**

In January 2016 former City Attorney Nagel resigned. The City Council retained executive search firm Ralph An-

derson and Associates of Rockland, CA. Senior consultant, Gary Peterson conducted the search which attracted seven applicants, five of which met the required minimum qualifications. After conducting a rigorous selection process, the City Council identified Rafael E. Alvarado Jr., as their preferred candidate.

Mr. Alvarado is an experienced and accomplished legal professional committed to public service and offers experience in the areas of land use and housing affordability to responsible development. He began his legal career here in the City of East Palo Alto as a summer intern. For the last ten years as Assistant City Attorney for the City of Hayward, he has been very active advising the City Council and Planning Commission. He is a graduate of

continued from page 3

Santa Clara University School of Law.

Mr. Alvarado was appointed at the regular Council meeting of June 21, 2016 .... and [started] as the City Attorney on August 1, 2016

## Social Services website

continued from page 5

through the platform.

"I really hope that One Degree helps connect the community with the champions they need to help them overcome whatever situation that they may be in," Pineda said.

Natalia Carrasco, the head of Community Growth

and Marketing at One Degree, will be training individuals and social work practitioners throughout San Mateo County over the next few months on the power of One Degree.

Many local organizations, including Catholic Charities, College Track and Ravenswood Family Health Center have already benefited from trainings for their staff this month.

Families and individuals will also have a chance to learn more about One Degree via community trainings, like the upcoming demos at the Catholic Charities Youth Club Parent Orientation nights.

For more information about One Degree, go to [www.1deg.org](http://www.1deg.org) or email Rey Faustino at [rey@1deg.org](mailto:rey@1deg.org)



**DAVENA GENTRY**  
(650) 814-3412  
[davena@serenogroup.com](mailto:davena@serenogroup.com)  
CJIRE # 00914155

**REAL ESTATE REDEFINED**  
Full Service, Full Time  
Serving the Community Since 1986

# East Palo Alto Today's interns cover the news



Photo - East Palo Alto Today

Front row - Rayshaun Jordan, Yajaira Vargas, (back row) Gabriel Sanchez, Maria Rodriguez and Karyna Pereda make funny comments during their group photo.

Two of the interns, Maria Rodriguez and Yajaira Vargas ended the summer as new college students: Rodriguez is now a first-year student at the University of California at Merced, where she plans to major in biological sciences. While Vargas is now attending the University of California Riverside this fall where she is studying Media and Cultural Studies.

Karyna Pereda attends East Palo Alto Academy and goes to College Track.

Rayshaun Jordan attends Eastside College Preparatory School, where he writes for his school newspaper. Gabriel

Sanchez attends Paly in Palo Alto and is one of the editors for Verde, his school's magazine.

When they joined the internship program this summer, each of the interns were assigned to write about each other. Karyna wrote about Maria. Here are a few excerpts from the profile that she wrote: "College Track recommended the [summer journalism] internship to Maria, and she saw it as an opportunity to gain work experience and even save some money for herself before going to college. Her major in college is Biological Sciences, which will require her to write a lot. Although Maria already has a passion for writing, she thought the internship would allow her to move out of her comfort zone and expand her abilities by writing in different formats. By doing



Photo courtesy of the City of East Palo Alto

The interns took a memorable picture with four East Palo Alto City Council members after introducing themselves to the council during an August city council meeting.

Five students joined East Palo Alto's 2016 Summer Journalism Internship Program.

They were Rayshaun Jordan, Gabriel Sanchez, Karyna Pereda, Maria Rodriguez, and Yajaira Vargas.

During their summer program, which extended from June to August, they made introductory remarks at the East Palo Alto City Council, visited Assembly member Rich Gordon in Sacramento, presented their views about news events on the Talking with Henrietta television show and wrote numerous articles about the East Palo Alto community.

Sanchez attends Paly in Palo Alto and is one of the editors for Verde, his school's magazine.

When they joined the internship program this summer, each of the interns were assigned to write about each other.

Karyna wrote about Maria. Here are a few ex-



East Palo Alto Today's summer interns enjoy a legislative lunch in Sacramento with Assembly member Rich Gordon.

this, she will feel more comfortable writing in college.

Maria not only wants to help herself with the internship, she also seeks to help others by writing articles that have to do with teens in her community, how growing up in East Palo Alto affects them and how they have the chance to become more in contact with their surroundings, so they can change for the best. With this, Maria wishes to finish the program successfully to be able to enter college with new knowledge she can put into practice."

More intern profiles will be featured in East Palo Alto Today's November issue. Look for them soon. In the meantime, you can read more of the intern's articles on this page and throughout this issue of East Palo Alto Today.

## Policing from the perspective of police officers

By Maria Rodriguez and Yajaira Vargas

Commander Jeff Liu, from the East Palo Alto Police Department, said that he became an officer because he wanted to help the people and make the community a safe place. Many think that the duty of a police officer is to look out for the safety of a community and its individuals so when someone or groups of people violate a law it is up to the police officers to stop them.

"The decision to arrest a person who committed a crime is determined by federal, state, and local laws. Police officers enforce those laws," said Liu.

The East Palo Alto Today newspaper sent questions to the police officers so they could

have a voice in expressing their thoughts and opinions about the Black Lives Matter Movement and questions that related to it.

So, what do police officers think about the Black Lives Mat-

ter Movement?

"For the people who demonstrate peacefully and do not disrupt the quality of life, safety, and property of the community I approve. For the people who commit crimes in the name of BLM, I disapprove," Luis said.

When Liu was asked if there was some way for the police to have prevented the events that happened in

Dallas, he said that the police officers weren't doing anything wrong but helping to make sure that peace was maintained.

Sergeant David Carson also responded to the questions and said he believed that the police have done their best to not engage in oppressive acts. In regards to race being a factor in police aggression he said he was uncertain but mentioned that building trust should be the way to clear up this type of issue.

"There also hasn't been this "Us versus Them" rhetoric from law enforcement professionals, all of which I believe is positive and just proves that law enforcement isn't officious, contemptuous or vindictive," Carson said.

Officer Andrea Dion said she believed that racism has also pre-

sented itself in the law enforcement field where she works.

"Since I have worked here, in the field, I have seen and heard racist comments and actions from every race about every race," Dion said.

Each of the officers that responded to the questions has served the EPA community for a long time and they feel that they have come to know the city and its residents really well.

Detective Williams, another member on the force, said, "A good cop is someone who conducts themselves with respect, integrity, and acts in the best interest of the community. A bad cop is someone who does not follow rules and code of ethics they swore an oath to [follow]."



Sgt. Jeff Lui stands in front of an East Palo Alto police van with EPA Today interns Yajaira Vargas and Maria Rodriguez after the two conducted the interview for their story.

## Body cameras expected for the East Palo Alto police

By Yajaira Vargas

At the July 5 East Palo Alto City Council meeting, Mayor Donna Rutherford presented to the council the San Mateo Grand Jury Report called "Body Cameras - The Reel Truth." In this report, research was done on the topic of body cameras being used by law enforcement agencies in San Mateo County.

Research and recommendations mentioned within the report answered the following question: "What is the status of the local law enforcement's use of officer body-worn cameras?"

Many in East Palo Alto believe that the implementation

of police body cameras would resolve many of the problems, which pertain to violence and crime as seen in the recent police involved shootings that led to protests all across the country. Some point to a 2014 shooting in Menlo Park, which raised concerns by the city's residents about safety in that community.

As described in the report, the lack of confidence of law enforcement by the citizens has raised issues involving distrust. Furthermore, the report states:

"The perception that law enforcement is not accountable to its citizens for its actions is a dangerous development and is troublesome for police

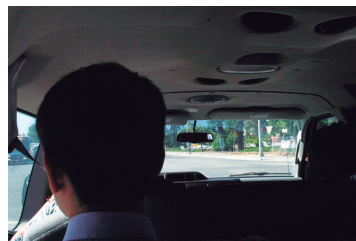


Photo - Maria Rodriguez Police officer cruises the streets.

professionals and concerned citizens alike.

Four recommendations followed this report, but only two were directed to the law enforcement agencies in the county, which included the East Palo Alto Police Department.

The recommendations made comply with the priorities that the East Palo Alto City Council members have made for their

city, namely: to enhance public safety and emergency preparedness, increase organizational effectiveness and efficiency, and create a healthy and safe community.

The first recommendation recommends that city councils, which have not yet discussed the adoption of body-worn cameras with their city police chiefs, should strive for a developed implementation plan by November 30, 2016. Currently, the East Palo Alto City Council, the city manager, and the chief of police have started to discuss the city's implementation plan and the city's Police Chief, Albert Pardini, has requested \$90,000 in funding for the fiscal

year of the 2017-2018. The funds would be used to buy the necessary equipment and pay for required training.

The second recommendation addresses the police departments of all cities within the county.

The East Palo Alto Police Department will begin working to implement a system during the 2017-2018 fiscal year of which begins on July 1, 2017. But funds won't be available until after the fiscal year begins. However, once funds do become available, it is expected that the city's police chief will be able to complete the work required to implement a body-worn system.

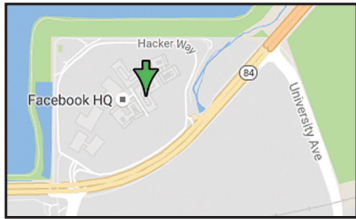
# A look at Facebook's impact on East Palo Alto

By **Rayshaun Jordan**  
and **Gabriel Sanchez**

Late in 2011, Facebook moved its headquarters from Palo Alto to Menlo Park at 1601 Willow Road. This move was significant because Facebook placed itself near the lower income communities of East Palo Alto and the Belle Haven community in Menlo Park. The residents of both communities have historically suffered from the pains of rising rent.

While Facebook can be seen as a company that should bring about positive change to the community, many feel that it needs to take responsibility for the rising cost of living that it, like many other Silicon Valley companies is causing.

Recently, the nearby City of Menlo Park received \$10.7 million in benefits from Face-



<https://www.google.com>

book after the city allowed the company to expand. Menlo Park used this money to build affordable housing units and to provide other amenities, like transportation and food services, for its citizens.

East Palo Alto, on the other hand received from Facebook: a youth summer internship program, a promise of cooperation with job training programs, a local community fund for nonprofits, and the promise of help with providing affordable housing in East Palo Alto.

These promises have been upheld by the social

media company, according to Facebook's Public Policy Manager, Juan Salazar, who stated that Facebook has been implementing efforts to make good on its promises over the last four years.

According to Salazar, Facebook sees itself as a good neighbor to East Palo Alto and it tries to uphold a high level of transparency. As evidence of its transparency, Facebook points to the open houses it holds where locals from the community can see what Facebook's recent developments look like.

Salazar also said that the company values maintaining a good line of communication with the community. Salazar stated that the open line of communication is important so that both the company and the city can address shared issues and concerns.

"We think that it's really

important making sure you have conversations," Salazar said.

Creating a dialogue with the city is not the only thing Facebook is doing. According to company representatives, the company has also provided assistance to the public transit systems of the area as well as funded pilot projects to help study how to alleviate the problems of gentrification.

According to Salazar, one of the biggest problems is the city's poor zoning and restricted amount of area for housing. In spite of these issues, Salazar stated that it is important to start building as soon as possible.

Facebook has also been assisting with the building of new housing units. Their recent donation of \$6.3 million dollars to help build low income housing and their plan to help build a new housing

structure with 1,500 homes below market value are some of their recent steps toward alleviating East problems.

Facebook has also helped to provide jobs to some East Palo Alto residents. Company representatives keep the city informed about job opportunities at their company and Facebook also holds a biannual job fair, several of which were held at the East Palo Alto City Hall.

Facebook reps also point to the Facebook Academy that has been running since 2012, which allows incoming eleventh graders to be interns at Facebook and to have the opportunity to gain experience working in the tech industry. Currently, more than 33% of the students enrolled in the academy are from East Palo Alto.

continued on page 16

## Controversial assembly bill passes in Sacramento

By **Karyna Pereda**

In spite of the protest a group of Asian-Americans held on the stairs of the State Capitol in Sacramento this summer, the CA State Legislature unanimously passed Assembly Bill 1726, which was proposed at the beginning of the year.

AB-1726 allows Asians and Pacific Islanders to be categorized into subgroups. It also requires health care and higher education institutions, such as universities, to use these sub categories for all Asian ethnic groups.



Photo by East Palo Alto Today of the California State Assembly

For example, instead of stating that one is Asian, one would have to choose between major Asian groups, such as, Indonesian, Malaysian, Pakistani, etc.. The same goes for Pacific Islanders, who would have the options of Fijian, Tongan, Samoan, etc.

Some of the people now affected by this new bill, disagreed with it because they think that separating Asians into sub-groups would create tension and create racial divisions among Asian themselves. In addition to these misgivings, some Asian-Americans fear that the data gathered by the bill would be used against them in the future.

On the other hand, Rob Bonta, the Assemblyman who introduced the bill, said that he had something else in mind when he proposed the bill.

As Bonta said in a recent

meeting in Oakland, "More data is better and accurate data is good data."

To be able to obtain better data, Bonta wants to disaggregate the current data and break it down into smaller groups. According to Bonta, this would provide more insights and not let anyone be left behind.

Some members of the Asian-Pacific Islander community do agree with the bill, because they belong to small ethnic groups that, they think, are rarely recognized. So, they view this bill as an opportunity to finally be recognized by society.

In contrast, many Chinese-Americans opposed the bill because they think it will make the already existing high expectations on Asian university applicants even greater.

Other members of the Asian-Pacific community opposed the bill because they said the creation of sub-groups would only apply among them and not to other racial groups.

In other words, neither Hispanics or African-Americans would go through this change of being into smaller categories.

## Examining a recent city budget report

By **Yajaira Vargas**

East Palo Alto's General Fund tax has reached new records high since the city was incorporated, according to Finance Director, Brenda Olwin.

On June 14, Olwin gave a slide presentation to the council members during the East Palo Alto City Council meeting. Despite this good piece of news, the city still faces economic challenges. These challenges include economic cycle risks, which have to do with the US recovering from the Great Recession, major capital trends, which relate to the completion of certain redevelopment capital projects, personnel trends, the rate of retention of city staff, and reserve risks, involving money saved up in case of a city emergency.

While the U.S. has made a slow economic recovery, any softening in the U.S. economy will impact the

economy in the Silicon Valley.

As such, housing affordability continues to be a crisis area, especially for the residents of East Palo Alto. Also, local issues such as tax trends, the putting on hold of project developments due to the lack of an adequate city water supply, high rent, traffic, and overcrowding have put pressures on the ability of the city to deliver needed services.

High rates of turnover, the rate at which city staff employees leave their position, have been occurring over the last two years. The city has been using its resources to recruit employees. Most recently, according to Olwin, the city's Human Resource Department did a good job in filling 15-22 positions.

Due to the Redevelopment Dissolution (RDA), the city's General Fund is now receiving around \$2M annually, which is about one third net distribution of funds that

would directly be deposited in to the City's Redevelopment Agency. As Olwin put it, there are negative effects in terms of this redevelopment funding because it hurts the community.

"While the General Fund is now receiving approximately \$2M more in annual property tax revenues as a result of the Redevelopment Dissolution citywide, we are losing funding available for redevelopment, affordable housing, and several capital infrastructure projects," said Brenda.

For example, the city has lost 48 million dollars due to planned funding of the Ravenswood infrastructure through the (RDA).

Furthermore, capital improvement projects that are in the pipeline need more resources to cover their costs and this is something that the city needs to find. While most of these projects are through the design stage, firmer num-

bers are needed to know what it will take to take their construction further, since there is the possibility that total budget costs can change.

General Reserves, which are retained earnings that would go to the city, have increased in the last 4-5 years due to the drop in RDA and high vacancy rates.

As a result, the resources utilized absorbed a loss on restricted funding, which will decline in matching fund requirements for capital projects.

These include such projects as pedestrian crossings on the 101 Highway, University Road crossing, and Bayshore.

There has also been a high risk of unmet matching money for funding for other major projects. However, these projects have already been implemented.

For the most part, there has been a slight increase in

the General Fund expenditures by about 80,000 dollars and most of the spending done was spent on repairing the roofs of the East Palo Alto Senior Center, park renovations, and other things that the city staff thought needed maintenance.

However, there is a great need to increase city staff, especially maintenance staff to look after parks, take care of trees, graffiti, and so much more. If there were more funds in the budget, then the city would also need to increase its technology and capital budgets to cover the city's needs.

In short, despite the recent high revenues in the General Fund the city has been forced to limit its resource budgeting which has resulted in certain city services, like maintenance, not expanding.

# EPA student spends summer in the Middle East

**Norma Rodriguez**

My name is Norma Rodriguez and I am a rising Junior at Williams College majoring in Arabic Studies and concentrating in Neuroscience and Latino Studies. I grew up in East Palo Alto and I am proud to call East Palo Alto my hometown. I attended my local elementary school Cesar Chavez until I was accepted into Castilleja School [in Palo Alto] for 6th grade.



Norma Rodriguez holds a sign that has her name written in Arabic

## A summer opportunity

This summer I was awarded the opportunity to study abroad in Madaba, Jordan to study Arabic through the Critical Language Scholarship Program. The purpose of this government-sponsored program is provide fully funded intensive language classes and cultural knowledge for college students. This is my second time studying abroad in the Middle East, after having spent time in Morocco the summer before my freshman year studying Arabic. I became interested in the Arabic language because many of my friends in high school spoke Arabic and often told me about their own Arab culture, which fascinated me.

When I first found out I had received the scholarship I was super excited to apply the language skills I had gained in class to real life situations. I was also very happy to learn that I had been placed in Madaba Jordan, one out of the 5 possible sites for Arabic learning. The other sites include Amman, Jordan, Irbid, Oman, Meknes, Morocco, and Tangier, Morocco.

## Feelings of safety

Because of the terrorist at-

tacks and because of 9/11, many people might be somewhat fearful of traveling to the Middle East. However, I have never felt unsafe in any Middle-eastern country. I think the benefit of learning Arabic greatly outweighs any safety issues in Jordan.

My family members expressed fears about my traveling to Jordan, however I assured them that I would be safe because this is government sponsored program.

Furthermore, although Jordan is surrounded by instability on many of its borders, its relationship with the United States and its monarchy ensure that Jordan is peaceful and stable. Therefore I knew that I would be safe during my time studying Arabic in Jordan.

## Learning Arabic

Arabic is a very hard language because most people do not actually speak Arabic, but a different dialect depending on the area they live in. Thus someone from Morocco speaks a vastly different dialect from someone in Jordan.

I had never studied any dialects in college, so I was ready to learn the Jordanian dialect in order to communicate

with people. Furthermore Madaba is also a unique place to study because about 30% of the population is Christian, making the social fabric of the city very different from other parts of the Middle East.

My trip to the Middle East began with a two day orientation in Washington DC, where I was finally able to meet my fellow classmates. Meeting my classmates reassured me that this experience would be engaging and fun. Each of my fellow classmates is impressive in their own right; they range from Phd students to sophomores in college. During the first day of orientation we had guest speakers such as Dr. Dan Davidson the President of American Councils for International Education and Even Ryan, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Both of these speakers emphasized the importance of interculturalism and awareness.

On the second day, as part of our orientation, we attended a panel that included previous CLS participants from Madaba who gave us advice and shared stories from their experience. This was very informative because I learned about a typical day during the program and how living in Jordan is like.

## Departing for Jordan

The next day we departed for Jordan from Dulles International Airport. However our flight was not direct, our first stop was Frankfurt, Germany where we had an eight hour layover after a nine hour flight. Some of us took advantage of this opportunity to explore Frankfurt and try Germany's famous pretzels. After the layover we finally departed to

Amman, Jordan on a four hour flight and arrived in Amman at around 2:30 AM. When we arrived in Jordan, I was ecstatic to see that all the signs were in Arabic and that I could actually understand them. I could feel the warm welcoming air of Jordan as soon as I stepped off the plane.

We spent the night in a hotel room since we arrived at a very early hour. The time difference between Madaba, Jordan and East Palo Alto is 10 hours. We all woke up in a frenzy excited to learn about our host families and roommates since our host families and roommates were not revealed to us until our on-site arrival.

Finally my host family came to pick us up and I found out that my roommate was Hanna, another student from Harvard University. We were both excited to have such a welcoming and caring family. They immediately were interested in getting to know us and asked us many questions about our family, our studies, and our interests.

My roommate and I were treated to a delicious Jordanian meal that consisted of many salads, falafel, and hummus. We went to sleep content, but very jet lagged in our new family home. My roommate and I stayed up late attempting to fall asleep partly due to jet lag and partly due to our excitement.

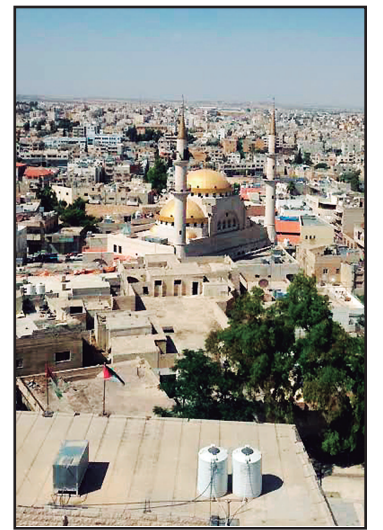
The next morning I was surprised to wake up to extremely warm weather even at 8 am. It was at least 85 degrees by 9 am and only continued to get warmer throughout the day. The weather in Madaba during the number stays at an average of 90 degrees, a

huge adjustment from the weather in East Palo Alto.

## A Biblical excursion

Later that day we were treated to a Biblical excursion of the city of Madaba. The city of Madaba dates back to the Middle Bronze age and is mentioned in the bible. Furthermore it is otherwise known as "The City of Mosaics." The city has many Byzantine and Umayyad mosaics dispersed throughout.

## Famous Map of Madaba



We visited the famous Map of Madaba, which is now preserved in the Greek Orthodox Basilica of Saint George, a short walk away from our school. Most of the shops were closed because of the holy month of Ramadan, however this did not detract from the magic of Madaba. I found it amazing that I would be studying in such an ancient city with great historical and biblical importance.

[Editor's note: This article is a reprint of the online one. Read the rest of Norma Rodriguez' story in the November 2016 edition of East Palo Alto

continued from page 7

## Running out of water

more water, "the folks that will be benefitting will be those people that are participating in that agreement," he said. He added that the agreement would be unfair to the smaller developers because they don't have as much money.

Council member Ruben

Abrica countered the argument by pointing out that the water is out there, but the issue boils down to lack of funding. He pointed out that transferring water meant buying water.

"This water issue has been particularly vexing and frustrat-

ing for landowners, developers, and staff," said Charpentier. In order to keep projects moving, the city will need water. In order to bring in more water, the city will need funding.

Mayor Donna Rutherford was understanding of both

sides of the argument. "I understand some folks have deep pockets and can make things happen really fast," she said. As far as the rest of the landowners and developers, the mayor asked, "How can we fast track them?"

"As soon as we get water,

we can say yes to them," said Carlos Martinez, city manager. Council member Abrica motioned to approve the agreement. The motion passed in a 4-1 vote with Romero voting against it.

## Facebook

When a Facebook representative was asked for an exact number of students enrolled from East Palo Alto he stated,

"We don't disclose the residency of our employees or interns. However, I can share that a large number of our Facebook Academy interns this year were from EPA."

Facebook said that it wants to have a very open relationship with the community and wants to create opportunities for students in East Palo Alto, who are planning to work in the tech industry. So far, Facebook has made major donations to such community organizations like,

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StreetCode Academy, which teaches East Palo Alto students how to write and design software. In addition to this, Facebook has donated money to the Ravenswood City School District, the East Palo Alto Center For Community Media and other local non-profit organizations through a local community fund it established in 2012.

The effect that Facebook has had on East Palo Alto has certainly been large and as the tech company continues to expand, so, apparently, will its impact on the city.

## Alice Mae Clay

would light up any room. She had an old soul and always shared her knowledge and wisdom with others.

Inspiring since birth, she was faced with an illness called Lymphedema, which she battled for over 15 years. During much of her illness, she was able to enjoy precious moments with family and friends.

In 2013, Alice was admitted into a skilled facility, as she was no longer able to reside at home. She was a fighter, a soldier, and refused to give up. Her spirit and courage touched many lives

throughout her battle with her illness.

Alice was called home on Sunday, September 18, 2016 at 3:51 am, due to kidney failure. She was a mother, one of the most beautiful, inspiring, loving, hardworking, and humblest woman you could ever have.

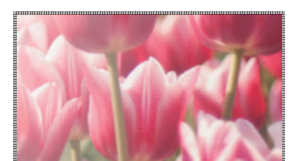
She is survived by her children, Brenda Jean Clay and Andrea La-Teasha Taylor; and her siblings: Ruth Calvin, Wanda Garland, Joann Brown, Judy McCloud, Charlene Brown, June Christian, Yvonne Creighton, Melanie Perkins,

continued from page 11

and Marlene Earle.

She also leaves a host of nieces, nephews, and cousins. Alice was preceded in death by her parents, Charlie V. Brown and Lewis Brown Sr.; sisters, Eartha Daniels, Betty Williams, and Sharon Brown; and brother, Lewis Brown Jr.

Alice will be remembered for her love, her beautiful spirit, and her heart of gold.





# Two Classes of 2016

Where did the graduating students go?

## Eastside Preparatory's Graduating Class

Article and layout by Yajaira Vargas

As Eastside celebrates its 20th anniversary, this year's senior graduating class headed off to college. Here is a list of the 54 graduating students and where they went to study:

Adam Morales- CSU East Bay  
 Addison Partida- Carleton College  
 Alondra Sanchez - UC Berkeley  
 Angelean Johnson - Baylor University  
 Antonio Guizar - UC Santa Cruz  
 Artie Kumar - UC Merced  
 Aujshanaya Greene- Sonoma State  
 Bryan Cornejo - UC Santa Cruz  
 Caleb Colin - UC Santa Cruz  
 Chelcy Toscano - CSU East Bay  
 Dania Stamper - CSU San Bernardino  
 Danielle Nunn - CSU East Bay  
 Darian Andrade - UC Santa

Cruz  
 Darquis Fisher - Sacramento State  
 Daryl Carr - Sacramento State  
 David Isidro - UC Santa Cruz  
 Deajanae Carter - UC Irvine  
 Destiny Rivers - CSU East Bay  
 Diamond Pearson - Loyola University, New Orleans  
 Dylan Berumen - UC Santa Cruz  
 Eddie Gage - UC Riverside  
 Elizabeth Perez- Gonzaga University  
 Francisco Ochoa- UC Merced  
 James Walton - University of Dayton  
 Jennifer Villegas - UC Santa Cruz  
 Jeryka Collins - CSU East Bay  
 Jose Rivera - Sacramento State  
 Josue Corado - UC Santa Cruz  
 Juan Mora - San Francisco State University  
 Julitza Manriquez - St. Olaf College  
 Karla Mendoza - UC Santa Barbara  
 Kevin Peralta - UC Riverside  
 Kyren Patrick - CSU East Bay  
 Lesley Godoy - CSU East Bay  
 Manase Tulikifanga - UC Merced  
 Maria Vargas - Sonoma State University  
 Maricruz Rojas - CSU East Bay



Photo Courtesy of Eastside Principal Chirs Bischof shakes senior Tiverio Madrigal's hand as he receives his diploma



Photo courtesy of Eastside College Preparatory

A map of the United States detailing where each Eastside graduate will be attending college at.

Marlene Santoyo - UC Riverside  
 Melissa Hernandez - Bennington College  
 Miguel Martinez - UC Santa Barbara  
 Nohely Peraza - Williams College  
 Oscar Robles - CSU Stanislaus  
 Pablo Mendoza - UC Santa Cruz  
 Simone Noble - CSU East Bay  
 Tahjee Ali - Virginia State University  
 Tatiana Guardado - UC Santa

Cruz  
 Taylor Longmire - Mount Holyoke College  
 Tiverio Madrigal - UC Merced  
 Vonisha Raines - CSU San Bernardino  
 William Perkins - Loyola University, New Orleans  
 Yajaira Vargas - UC Riverside  
 Yesenia Garnica - Santa Clara University  
 Yoselin Zavala - UC Riverside  
 Yvonne Hamel - Howard University



Photo Courtesy of Eastside College Preparatory Senior Nohely Peraza gives her graduation speeches.

## Congratulations to FCE's High School Graduates



Foundation for a College Education strives to create a community where higher education is attainable. This years graduating group is listed below:

Alexander Jimenez- Notre Dame de Namur University  
 Lesley Miranda- CSU Stanislaus  
 Diana Molina- San Francisco State University  
 Peter Valbuena- Whittier College  
 Susana Cacho- Williams College  
 Diana Rodriguez- San Fran-

cisco State University  
 Corina Torres- Azusa Pacific University  
 Leslie Frausto- San Francisco State University  
 Dalia Barrientos- University of San Francisco  
 Crystal Arias- San Francisco State University  
 Hazel Torres- CSU East Bay



Photo Courtesy of FCE Leslie Frausto, Everest Public High School. Leslie will attend San Francisco State University.



Photo Courtesy of FCE Susana Cacho, Palo Alto High School. Susana will attend Williams College.

# EPA Council responds

continued from page 1

White Paper that offered community solutions and a city staff presentation that was designed to justify the issuance of eviction notices.

The Community White Paper was presented before the city council by Stewart Hyland an action leader with the St. Francis of Assisi Faith in Action Bay Area and Jacqueline Ramirez from Project Sentinel and Faith in Action Bay Area.

As part of their short-term solution, the authors of the Community White Paper requested a two-year moratorium that would provide "immediate relief for affected families from 10-day displacement."

Ramirez explained that the moratorium also "stops orders for demolition and allows time for [neighborhood landlords] to cure imminent hazards and begin permitting process." The report claimed that terms such as "imminent hazard" is used often, but residents are not quite clear to what it's specifically referring.

According to Hyland and Ramirez, the long-term solution would provide amnesty and it would enable landlords to feel comfortable coming forward and reporting their second units.

"Neighborhood landlords are being penalized for trying to provide housing and families are being divided with some parents living in their cars on the street," the report stated.

During the public comment portion of the meeting, Ora Colbert Johnson, an audience member went over her allotted two-minute time to speak and began shouting, that the council didn't really care about the residents. Her comments inspired some in the audience to cheer and



Photo by Jennifer Martinez

St. Francis of Assisi's Pastor, Father Lawrence Goode, is shown holding a prayer meeting with community residents at the East Palo Alto City Hall prior to a September council meeting where the housing evictions were discussed.

sbecome disruptive.

In response to the outburst, Mayor Donna Rutherford said, "We understand that we have a housing crisis in Silicon Valley, which is magnified in East Palo Alto. Together we're working towards finding solutions to this regional issue to build more affordable housing. We also want to ensure that everyone has a safe and healthy place to live. The city is working forward, engaging our residents in a discussion to ensure that code enforcement efforts are part of the solution in creating safe and healthy housing opportunities and protecting our residents from fire and health hazards."

Rutherford said that she understood that this is an emotional issue for many, but urged the audience to be respectful towards one another and to follow the law.

In response to the concerns of the residents, Assistant City Manager, Sean Charpentier, and Chief Building Official, Chris Gale, provided an extensive presentation in which they outlined the code enforcement rules.

Charpentier began by highlighting that East Palo Alto does a lot more to pro-

vide affordable housing than any other city. He pointed out that "40% of the housing units in EPA are affordable." He called this statistic "remarkable" and "revolutionary."

Charpentier also explained that the city receives approximately three complaints each day dealing with "illegal structures, overcrowding, lack of parking on the streets, garbage and trash, and concerns about fire and safety access."

Although the White Paper requested a moratorium, Charpentier said that it was not possible to take this route, because the California State Code states that the building department of every city must enforce the California Building Standards Code (CBCS). In addition, he said, "section D specifies that a discontinued use or vacation of a dangerous or illegal structure is required" and "it must occur within 10 days."

Charpentier concluded by stating that "there is no amnesty for building code or planning violations."

In his presentation, Gale introduced the code enforcement team and stated each officer's name, years of experience, ethnicity, and the different languages each spoke.

He said that each officer handles an average of eighty cases. He also emphasized that the officers take several classes and extensive training to ensure that they are prepared for the position.

Gale showed a series of twenty-six photos depicting examples of safety hazards in various second units and garage conversions. The photos had red arrows that pointed to the safety and hazard violations that were cited.

Some of the safety concerns in the photos included exposed wires, lack of ventilation, mold and unsanitary conditions.

The photos were followed by references to several news articles about previous fire hazards and injuries that were caused by illegal constructions. Gale said that a few of these incidents happened in East Palo Alto and led to displaced families.

But, Gale added that all hope is not lost, since many of the homes can and have been salvaged as was shown during the presentation. He also said that during city inspections, residents are provided with contact information of shelters, legal services, and a list of vacant units that are leased below market rate.

Despite their efforts, Charpentier's and Gale's presentation received mostly negative feedback from audience members.

Many of the audience members criticized Gale's photos, stating that he only showed extreme cases and that most of the residents being impacted by evictions and fees are nowhere near as bad as the ones shown in the presentation.

Others stated that they didn't have a problem being told about the violations, since they seek safety as well, but they added that the aggressive way, in which they have been approached by officers, is simply unacceptable.

In addressing Gale directly, Council member Carlos Romero stated that giving displaced families legal references hasn't quite worked. Referring a family to a two-bedroom apartment that rents for \$2,000 is not a viable solution, when they only paid \$800 for a garage, Romero explained. "They simply can't afford it," Romero said.

Vice Mayor Larry Moody reminded everyone that most of the inspections taking place are due to complaints from the community. He said that code enforcement officers are not there to displace anyone, but that there is a group of people who are "sick and tired of folks violating the law."

"You'd be surprised how many people want us to enforce the law," said Mayor Rutherford, who added that she thinks the city and the residents can work something out.

At the end of the discussion, the council and some of the community members present seemed to agree that they are willing to work together to resolve the issue.

## Support the East Palo Alto Today newspaper

The East Palo Alto Today newspaper is published by the East Palo Alto Center for Community Media, a nonprofit agency that was formed in January 2003 to create media outlets in East Palo Alto and provide the type of positive, relevant information about the community that is not easily found elsewhere. If you like what you see in East Palo Alto Today, then we ask that you enable us to serve the community better. You can do this by completing the partnership card below and mailing it with your tax deductible donation which will go directly to the center's media efforts. You can read more about the East Palo Alto Center for Community Media online at [www.epamedia.org](http://www.epamedia.org). You can also donate to the center at the EPA Today and the EPA Media websites. Please contact us if you have any questions. We look forward to hearing from you.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, I am interested in becoming a partner with the East Palo Alto Center for Community Media. Please accept my tax-deductible do-

nation as a personal contribution \_\_\_\_\_ or as a contribution on behalf of my organization \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_ \$25 \_\_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_ \$250 \_\_\_\_ \$500 \_\_\_\_ \$1,000 \_\_\_\_ \$2,000

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\_\_\_\_ Please check back with me about becoming a donor.

\*The East Palo Alto Center for Community Media is a tax-exempt nonprofit corporation.

Mail to:

East Palo Alto Center for Community Media

P.O. Box 50274  
East Palo Alto, CA 94303

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[info@epamedia.org](mailto:info@epamedia.org)  
[www.epamedia.org](http://www.epamedia.org)

Please check the appropriate box: if you would like to  volunteer at the center, if you would like to  advertise in East Palo Alto Today, if you are interested in  writing an article, opinion piece or letter to the editor. Also let us know if your agency or business would like to be  a distribution site for East Palo Alto Today. Call (650)289-9699.

# Community Calendar

### Fourth Year Enrollment for Affordable Health Coverage Begins November 1

The deadline to renew or enroll in Covered California health insurance is January 31, 2017. To avoid any gaps in coverage or a tax penalty, you must enroll by December 15, 2016 so coverage will begin on January 1, 2017.

A list of enrollment locations

and times as well as the languages spoken at each center is available at [www.smcgov.org/healthcoverage](http://www.smcgov.org/healthcoverage). Local in-person enrollment assistance is available by calling (650) 616-2002 or 1 (800) 223-8383. San Mateo County residents can also enroll directly through Covered California's

website: [www.CoveredCA.com](http://www.CoveredCA.com).

### East Palo Alto City Council meeting- November 7, 2016

at 7:30 p.m. East Palo Alto City Hall, Municipal Building, 2415 University Avenue, East Palo Alto, CA See more information at <http://www.ci.east-palo-alto.ca.us/index.aspx>

### Veterans Day Celebration - November 11, 2016

Honoring all veterans who

served, PVI will offer free lunch to veterans plus one family member. Non-military guests are asked to pay \$10 for lunch. Friday, November 11th, 2016 11:30 a.m.—1:00 p.m. Program begins at 12:00 p.m. RSVP (650) 272-5045

Please come to Little House, The Roslyn G. Morris Activity Center 800 Middle Avenue, Menlo Park, CA 94025 (650) 326-2025 • [www.penvol.org](http://www.penvol.org)

**Create a Land Art Installation with Native Plants in Cooley Landing, East Palo Alto with Artist Linda Gass Saturdays Nov. 12 & 19, 2016 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.** FREE Family Friendly Activity Register at

See more community calendar events at the website for the East Palo Alto Today newspaper [www.epatoday.org](http://www.epatoday.org)

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/help-make-a-land-art-installation-with-native-plants-registration-28465316528>

### Project WeHOPE's Thanksgiving Banquet - November 22, 2016

November 22nd at 6:00 pm. More details to follow. Mark your calendar! Go online to <http://projectwehope.org/> for more information.



Photos by Roberto Gutierrez Perez

Santa Clara, CA -- Jameis Winston threw three touchdown passes and Jacquizz Rodgers ran for 154 yards to lead the Tampa Bay Buccaneers to a 34-17 victory over the San Francisco 49ers on Sunday, October 30, 2016.

## November election

penalty in California if it were passed, while proposition 63 would tighten gun restrictions and require background checks for prospective gun owners. These are just a few of the numerous impactful measures on the November 8th ballot.

There will also be an election for the 14th congressional district representative, who represents East Palo Alto as well as much of the rest of the peninsula in the house of representatives in congress. This contest will see incumbent Democrat Jackie Speier running against Republican Robin Chew.

East Palo Alto citizens will take part in the election of a new assemblyman for California's 24th state assembly district. The race is between Mark Berman and Vicki Veenker, both of whom are democrats.

The November election will also see a race for the

open senate seat in California after long time senator Barbara Boxer announced that she would not seek reelection. Her replacement will be decided between Kamala Harris and Laureta Sanchez, who are both Democrats.

### NATIONAL

There will also be the presidential election this November which has pitted Republican Donald Trump against Democrat Hillary Clinton, with a number of third party as well as independents running as well.

Trump, while running on the Republican ticket, has been seen to have a mix of conservative and liberal leanings fiscally and socially, while taking a hard line against immigration. He has gained most of his popularity due to his financial success and due to him not being a career politician. His running mate, Michael Pence, is a

continued from page 1

Tea Party Republican.

Hillary has shown support for leftist economic policies and most liberal social reforms. While generally holding true to the standard Democratic platform, she has secured most of the moderate vote but the Benghazi scandal she is involved in has shaken the confidence of many Democrats and also failed to win the Bernie Sanders supporters after he failed to win the primary. Hillary has chosen Tim Kaine as her running mate, who is fiscally a Democrat with a more conservative view of social issues.

There are also a number of third party candidates on the ballot including Libertarian candidate Gary Johnson, Green Party candidate Jill Stein, and a long list of independents running as well.

## Talking with Henrietta

### How Will You Cast Your Vote?



Photo courtesy of Talking with Henrietta From left, East Palo Alto City Council member Lisa Yarbrough-Gauthier, show host Henrietta J. Burroughs, and East Palo Alto City Council member Carlos Romero are shown on the set of the Talking with Henrietta television show after the taping of their October 27, 2016 discussion on the council members' election campaign priorities.

This show can be seen n Channel 30 on the Midpeninsula and on the Internet at the days and times below until Sat. Nov. 12 on Sundays@5 p.m., Tuesdays@8 p.m., Wednesdays @ 2 a.m.and 11 a.m., Thursdays@8 p.m., Fridays@3:30 a.m. and 12 p.m. and Saturday at 10 a.m. Get more information about this show on the East Palo Alto Today website at [www.epatoday.org/tv.html#citycouncilcandidates](http://www.epatoday.org/tv.html#citycouncilcandidates)

**Three cheers to the Talking with Henrietta show, "The Social Determinants of Health."** This show was selected for a 2016 San Francisco Peninsula Press Club award. You can see a portion of the show on Youtube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IM6SZUAcliU> and read more details about the award on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/talkingwithhenrietta/>

**It's 2016! This year East Palo Alto Today celebrates its tenth year serving the East Palo Alto and Belle Haven communities**

**Join us in planning the celebration of East Palo Alto Today's birthday with a "Media Day" event.**

**We'll have communications workshops along with awards and prizes for writing enries by children and adults alike.**

**The East Palo Alto Center for Community Media, which sponsors the East Palo Alto Today newspaper, is looking for partners. So, if you're interested in helping to plan Media Day and in partnering with the center, let us know.**

**Call (650) 289-9699**





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# November 2016 Election Information

## Información Electoral de Noviembre 2016

In addition to 17 statewide propositions, the following are East Palo Alto's municipal election options for consideration: Three (3) positions for City Council, and Three (3) local measures:

- Measure P: East Palo Alto Neighborhood Safety and Vital City Services Measure.
- Measure J: Rent Stabilization and Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance.
- Measure O: A business license tax on landlords with five or more units to provide funding for affordable housing programs.

Además de 17 proposiciones estatales, estas son las opciones locales para votar en East Palo Alto: Tres (3) posiciones por Concejal, y tres (3) Proposiciones locales:

- Medida P: La Medida para la Seguridad de Vecindarios y Servicios Vitales de la Ciudad.
- Medida J: Ordenanza para Estabilización de rentas y evitar desalojos excepto por causa justa.
- Medida O: Un impuesto sobre propietarios de cinco (5) ó mas viviendas para proveer fondos para programas de viviendas asequibles.

The last day to mail in your ballot is November 8th. Polls are open on Election Day November 8th 7am-8pm. To determine your polling place or request a vote-by-mail ballot call: (650) 312-5222 or [www.shapethefuture.org](http://www.shapethefuture.org)

El último día para enviar su voto por correo es el 8 de noviembre. Las urnas electorales están abiertas en el día de elección del 8 de noviembre, 7am-8 pm. Para determinar su lugar de votación, llame al (650)312-5222 o visite [www.shapethefuture.org](http://www.shapethefuture.org)



**Visit/Visite:**  
**[www.cityofepa.org](http://www.cityofepa.org)**

*\*Mailing provided for informational purposes only.  
The City of East Palo Alto does not advocate a yes or no vote on these measures.*