

# The Holy Optimist

John H. Francis Polytechnic High School

VOL. V

12431 ROSCOE BLVD. SUN VALLEY, CALIFORNIA, 91352

MAY 2007

## Polytechnic First High School in Nation to Offer Advantage Plus to Freshmen

Program of Academic Rigor Presented to Poly's Incoming Freshmen.

By Francisco Perez & Belle Tadena  
Staff Writers

Beginning in the Fall mester, 2007, the Advantage Plus Program is being introduced to the incoming freshmen class. This new program enables students to advance in classes and prepare themselves for the competitive universities they are to encounter. Selected members of the Advantage Plus program are provided with a curriculum, giving them access to their full learning capacity.

"The program gives non-magnet students the opportunity to accelerate their classes to keep them from being held back from the classes they truly need," proposed Patricia Flenner, Assistant Principal, from the Freshmen Center.

Students are chosen based on academic excellence, and for CST (California Standardized Test) test scores. Freshman Center staff looked at students' records to determine acceptable candidates for the program. An open house was held to invite those who were interested.

"Students who scored 'basic' on their CST and have A's and B's on their report card have a higher chance of being admitted to this program as opposed to students who scored 'proficient' or 'advanced' and have D's and F's in their academic classes. But the question is, do they have the drive to do it," said Flenner.

The program is for the students that feel held back and are willing to be pushed further. "Every student has access to the maximum of their ability," Flenner said. The beginning course will start with one month review of Algebra 1B and continue with Geometry and Foreign Language. Three years of English is still required.

[Advantage Plus cont. Page 5]

## Students Send S.O.S To Presidential Candidates about Education

Students meet with MTV News on student issues.

By Julissa Delgado & Jennifer Rivera  
Staff Writers

Retired school superintendent, Roy Romer met with students from six San Fernando Valley schools in a townhall discussion to emphasize why education should be a priority in the upcoming Presidential campaigns. Leading the discussion with Romer was MTV News Correspondent SuChin Pak and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell. The filmed discussion took place at Grant High School on Wednesday, May 2. The students had the opportunity to voice out their opinions on education, the good and bad.

The campaign for education is called Ed in '08. It is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates



Photo by Jennifer Rivera

**A SELECT FEW:** Students represent Poly at MTV forum. Left to Right: Aaron Sanchez, Mr. Leclair, Sergio Huizar, Michelle Aguila, Benito Gonzales, Joey Lemus, Julissa Delgado, AP Gerardo Loera.

Foundation and the Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation. [Students cont. Page 7]

## ESL Students Celebrate Accomplishments

By Vilma Diego  
Staff Writer

Students entering Polytechnic High School where English is not their native language have additional obstacles to overcome. After many years of having an ESL program at Poly, the first formal ESL awards ceremony was held to celebrate the hard work and success of the students.

Mr. Fishman, the ESL counselor said, "I think it was very heartwarming."

The ESL program has students from a variety of native languages including, Spanish,

Korean, Thai, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and other languages from India and Pakistan. The program helps students with English classes and includes all the A-G requirements.

The Small Learning Community of The Newcomers (ESL students) celebrated students moving to regular English classes on April 27 in the cafetorium. It wasn't just a celebration of completing a program, but also a celebration of the Newcomer's group moving to the other Small Learning Communities at Poly. "The feeling was of a

[ESL cont. Page 7]



Photo by Tatiana Tejada

**AWARDS BY THE DOZEN:** Left to Right: Rodrigo Rivas, Ada Nuñez, Elizabeth Peña, Gabriela Portillo, Laura Gonzalez, Lervin Lopez and Ms. Slezak

## Dreams Come True

Gowns and tuxedos were the order of the night for Poly Parrots at Prom 2007.

By Ana Loera  
Staff Writer

May 19, 2007 was an unforgettable night for many, but especially for seniors

Ruby Sanchez and Bryant Salvatierra.

The two were crowned queen and king at this year's Senior Prom, held at the Omni Hotel in Los Angeles.

As students and guests arrived and registered, they placed their votes in the ballot for their favorite Prom court contestants.

Everyone was then invited to have dinner, take photos, and hit the dance floor.

Hector Colon, 12th grade council sponsor stopped the dancing to announce this year's Prom court.

The votes were counted and the crowd of appx. 600 was

seated. Three male and seven female contestants stood, nervously awaiting the final results.

Sanchez and Salvatierra



Photo By Mildred Fuentes

**ROYALTY AT THE PROM:** Queen Ruby Sanchez and King Bryant Salvatierra share the traditional waltz at this year's prom.

The couple

completed the traditional first waltz and then the crowd

partied on

dressed in their formal gowns and tuxedos. The DJ played a variety of music that ranged from 50s to techno to Spanish rock. The genre of the music played changed from one song to the next and kept people moving for the rest of the evening.

were announced as Poly's 2007 Prom Queen and King to the cheering crowd.

The new queen and king took center stage as junior council members did the coronation.

The couple completed the traditional first waltz and then the crowd

partied on

dressed in their formal gowns and tuxedos. The DJ played a variety of music that ranged from 50s to techno to Spanish rock. The genre of the music played changed from one song to the next and kept people moving for the rest of the evening.

## THE POLY OPTIMIST

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**LETTERS**

Letters to the Editor are accepted and encouraged for topics relevant to our readers. Submitted letters must be typed or neatly printed in ink and must have the signature of the writer. Editors reserve the right to determine which issue the letter will be published in, and the right to edit the letter for grammar, length, and structure.

Corrections published in the regular issue of the newspaper.

Send all letters to Rm.11 or leave in Ms.Matlen's box.

**EDITORIAL POLICY**

The Poly Optimist adheres to the responsibility of a Free Student Press. It serves as a voice for the student body and the community. This newspaper accepts all the responsibilities inherent in being a free press. The Optimist staff strives to follow the Code of Ethics for the Society of Professional Journalists. Editorials are the opinion of individual staff writers, and not presented as news facts.

**Corrections:**

-In the April Edition the Optimist incorrectly named Mr. Hopkins as "Anthony" Hopkins. His name is David Hopkins.

-In the April Edition the Optimist incorrectly named Aaron Sanchez as "Erin" Sanchez.

-In the story titled "Parrots Defeat Wolves," the Boy's Varsity Volleyball team played against the North Hollywood Huskies and not the Van Nuys Wolves.

## EDITORIALS

## Hope Still Lies Ahead For Undocumented Students

By Christian Faundez  
Staff Writer

Everyone should have the opportunity to go to college. For some students however even the application seems out of their reach. That has all changed in California since the passing of CA State Assembly Bill 540 which allows illegal immigrants to pay "in-state" tuition. Not all undocumented students do not know that they really can afford to go to college in California today.

Some ask why go to college if it is not going to change anything in my life? The truth is that college, all over the world, is a treasure that not many people have because it is either unaffordable or out of reach. A college education is a recognized standard in this global economy and valued as an intellectual asset. Students should take advantage of what our nation offers. There is plenty of help within the California school system, all one must do is ask.

Teachers, parents and stu-

dents have fought so that illegal immigrants can have the same opportunity as any other student. The laws have changed and this is all for the better. Four year colleges have programs that make it easier for undocumented students to pay off student loans or simply pay their tuition. Some offer jobs and some have organizations in support of their daily needs whether it is with a financial or a legal problem.

If you are undocumented you should not give up on pursuing higher education. Many parents who crossed the border, worked on farms, fields and who suffered and endured so much, did so to open up opportunities for their children. They wanted more for their children. Do not let their hard work and effort be in vain. Grab hold of all the educational opportunities you can.

"The educated differ from the uneducated, as the living from the dead"

- Aristotle

## Voicing Out on Violence

By Jennifer Rivera  
Staff Writer

School shootings, fights, gang activity, all have one thing in common: Violence.

The Virginia Tech tragedy that occurred in April shows the outcome of someone's uncontrolled violent actions and no one doing anything about it. Innocent lives were lost and it could've been prevented. Students at Virginia Tech took notice of the event but the school did nothing to keep them safe and away from the danger. Violence is an inevitable problem in any society and that needs to be reduced and taken care of.

Violence in society and schools continues to rise. Students constantly worry about their safety and wonder if anything will happen. With the high increase of school violence students become distracted and stray from their schoolwork. School officials need to take greater cautions about this problem because the students are depending on them to keep them safe while at school.

The reality of this problem is that young people are influenced by so much violence around them. This includes television shows, movies, wars, and video games which

all demonstrate that using guns, bombs, and violence is the way to deal with problems. Young people see this as 'cool' and exciting and a clear cut way to deal with their problems, so they imitate it. These 'solutions' cost innocent lives and nobody is creating an alternative viable to teach people about violence. Everyone needs to be educated and understand that violence is never the answer no matter what that may be.

Schools teach students what they need to make something of themselves and becoming a violent person should never be an acceptable goal.

A sad truth is that people seem to get away with violent acts. When someone gets into fights, they get a day off from school and then return and continue their angry ways. The students actions are never really addressed and those underlying causes.

Schools need to give more attention on educating students to be civil and cope with their problems in different ways other than to fight or be violent.

When you see someone with the signs of violence, it needs to be dealt with, not ignored.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Math Coaches Give Thanks

Dear Editor,

We read your Optimist article on the Sudoku and were very surprised, excited and pleased that the math finally got a spot light. Coming from the math people, we would love Sudoku puzzles to be a frequent occurrence in our Poly Optimist. Thank you.

- Norma Grimaldo, Math Coach and Jenny Pacho, Math Coach

## Surveillance Cameras in Poly?

Dear Editor,

One of Polytechnic High School's biggest problems is tagging. Have you seen tagging on campus? Most of the tagging happens on the weekend or at night. About 1,440 work hours are spent between 3 custodians just to clean off tagging each year at Polytechnic HS. By using video surveillance cameras we can prevent tagging from happening.

We surveyed 10 administrators because we wanted to know their opinion of video camera surveillance. Their unanimous 100% opinion was YES to video surveillance. Their reasons ranged from the obvious stopping tagging to saving money by making the taggers clean off the tagging. Most surveys said that they did not want a camera in a restroom.

Twenty teachers were surveyed and 17/20 or 85% said YES to the surveillance cameras. Most teachers were comfortable with the idea of

surveillance cameras by citing a cleaner campus and saving money. Two out of twenty or 10% of teachers said NO, citing civil rights and privacy issues. One teacher said maybe.

Twenty seven out of twenty or 90% of the 30 students surveyed said NO to video camera surveillance. All of these students said that they would have no privacy. Many students didn't want to go to the restroom and be watched. Video surveillance would be like prison for many students. Three out of thirty or 10% said YES, citing a cleaner school.

Tagging is a serious problem at Poly and we need a solution. However, in a world where everyone is watched from satellites, to traffic lights, to stores in the mall what difference will one more camera make in your life, or is this one camera one to many?

- Cindy De La Mora, Julio De La Mora and Veronica Gonzalez

## IMMIGRATION

By Fernando Marquez  
Staff Writer

"Immigration." Defined as the action of entering and settling in a country to which one is not native.

I believe that today's world leaders should come to agreement on immigration policies; policies that are fair to the migrants and serve the country of destination. The movement of individuals from one country to another, has been and will be an issue that will continue to plague the leaders of tomorrow for generations to come in America and around the world.

The controversy surrounding this issue has been highlighted by 2006's May Day nationwide marches; demonstrating both the political and social conflict.

Immigration should be an asset for all countries. It allows for a mixture of cultures and ethnicities. It even is the basis for the growth of one of the most powerful countries in history, America. Without immigration our country would not be the great diverse nation

that it is today. Immigration infuses the United States with a plethora of cultures, languages and ethnicities.

Immigration as a whole is not an issue limited to the U.S., but a global issue. Immigration has several causes including war, poverty, and overpopulation. Oppressed and impoverished people will always seek a better life at any cost. Many people immigrate to flee from the horrors of war.

Some immigrate in the hopes of acquiring a better life or in search of better educational, professional or financial opportunities.

Still others migrate because their home country is too overpopulated. All these causes have the same result: the collective movement of people to different lands that can better support their lives and lifestyles.

The issue of immigration in the U.S. should be recognized and dealt with immediately and just and humane solutions should be created for the benefit of not only migrants but of the rest of the people as well.

### Sudoku Time!

2		8		6	5		7	1
1						3	5	
			1	7		9	2	
5			7	4		1		3
3	1	7			2			4
	6		5	3				
		1				6		2
6	4		3		7		1	
9			8		6		4	5

### April Edition's Sudoku answers:

Back by special request to all you sudoku fans out there, we offer you another. For all you "word-smiths" out there try to "Amass your Ivy League Vocabulary Skills." Answering in edition.

3	9	7	4	8	6	1	5	2
2	5	4	3	7	1	8	6	9
6	8	1	5	9	2	4	7	3
5	4	2	7	1	8	9	3	6
7	1	9	6	5	3	2	4	8
8	6	3	2	4	9	5	1	7
1	3	6	8	2	4	7	9	5
4	7	8	9	3	5	6	2	1
9	2	5	1	6	7	3	8	4

By Joseph Garcia

## Spiderman Is Back in Black

Raimy brings back Peter Parker with a new edge and graphics.

By Eric Bejarano  
Staff Writer

New York's all time favorite super hero has returned to save the city once again, from criminals and villains. Sony Pictures and director Sam Raimy presents the third sequel of the Spiderman Film Franchise. Raimy is best known for directing the classical cult horror films "The Evil Dead." Like all other Spiderman movies, the film is based on the entertaining and famous Spiderman comic books. Spiderman faces many new villains including The Sandman (Thomas Haden Church), New Goblin (James Franco), Venom



Sony Pictures

(Topher Grace) and the evil extra terrestrial black goo. The Movie is rated PG-13 for mild violence and battle scenes. Tobey Maguire plays Spiderman, also known as Peter Parker. Throughout the film Parker goes through many personalities from the nerdy schoolboy to emotional depressed guy. Spidey is consumed by his feeling to take revenge on his uncle's killer which is amplified by the black goo. Parker does awkward things such as kissing his former love in front of Mary Jane and then

acting like nothing happened. Spiderman is an action packed film, which is full of many visual effects. Spidey engages in battle with his rival New Goblin, who later becomes his ally after being hit on the head. Venom and The Sandman form an alliance against Spiderman, engage him in the end. Spiderman 3 left off where the second one ended. It was a good sequel to the Spiderman trilogy. If you enjoyed seeing the first two, then it's well worth watching the third.

## Amass Your Ivy League Vocab

freevocabulary.com

### ACROSS

- 3. An imaginary belt encircling the heavens within which are larger planets
- 5. To deem worthy of notice or account
- 7. Alert and intent mental watchfulness in guarding against danger
- 9. To calculate arithmetically (also a noun meaning zero or nothing)
- 10. One slightly skilled in or acquainted with any trade or profession
- 12. The period of time during which anything lasts
- 15. Still existing and known

### DOWN

- 1. A roguish, mischievous boy
- 2. Foolish
- 4. To regain

- 6. Absolute power arbitrarily or unjustly administered
- 8. Not possessed of reasoning powers or understanding
- 11. A square shaft with pyramidal top, usually monumental or commemorative
- 13. That which contains and gives shape or form to anything
- 14. adj. Corporeal
- 18. A labyrinth
- 19. A slender, graceful young woman or girl
- 20. To attack on all sides
- 21. To avoid by artifice

## California Crazy Laws

- Burlingame: It is illegal to spit, except on baseball diamonds
- In California you may not set a mouse trap without a hunting license.
- Pacific Grove: Molesting butterflies can result in a \$500 fine.
- In California it's against regulations to let phones ring more than nine times in state offices.
- In Los Angeles, years ago it was legal to cook in your bedroom, but not to sleep in your kitchen.
- Community leaders passed an ordinance that makes it illegal for anyone to try and stop a child from playfully jumping over puddles of water.

crazylaws.com

### TUXEDO TROUBLE By Raymond Carrillo



Raymond Carrillo

# Stress, Six Letter Killer

By Jennifer Miranda  
Staff Writer

The clock is ticking, You haven't even started your homework, college is just around the corner and you have no idea what you want to do with the rest of your life, and now your best friend is having "issues" with you. You feel really stressed but what exactly is stress and how does it affect you?

Many people don't realize how dangerous being continually stressed out really is. Stress is a normal physical reaction that occurs when you feel threatened or overwhelmed. You perceive a situation as threatening or feel overwhelmed because you are dealing with too many responsibilities in school, home, or everyday life and you don't know what to do next.

Stress can lead to serious long-term physical damage such as ulcers, stomach pain, or indigestion.

Physical signs stress include: headaches, digestive problems, muscle tension and pain, sleep disturbances, or weight gain or loss.

Stress also affects your mind in various ways such as memory problem. You may experience difficulty making decisions, an inability to concentrate, confusion, or desire to escape or run away instead of dealing with the problem.

Teenagers have an assortment of stresses in their lives and school is definitely one of the biggest.

According to Counselor Steve Thatt, Not only do stu-

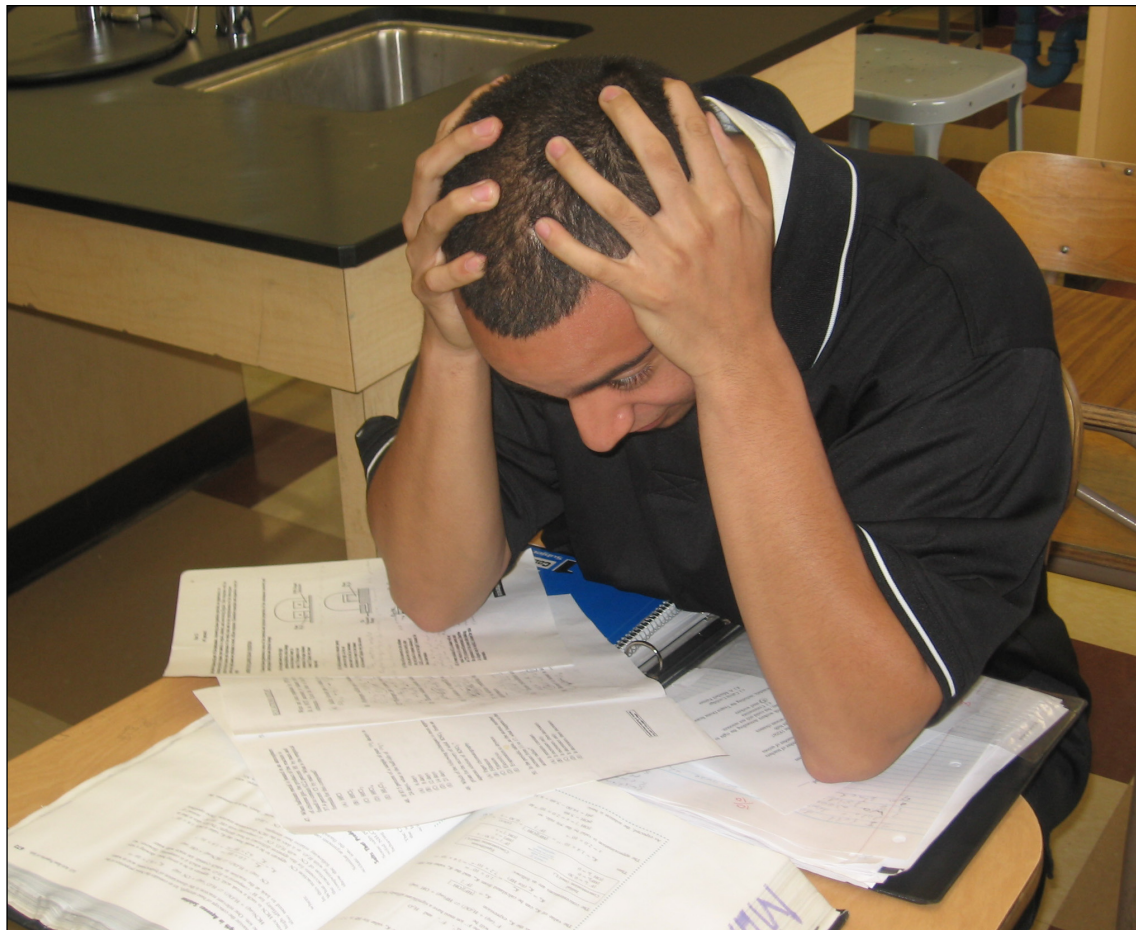


Photo by Fernando Marquez

**AP PROBLEMS?:** Junior Jose Avendano stresses out over AP exams in May.

dents have to be the best that they can be but now that school has gotten more competitive, students find themselves running the extra mile by joining clubs, playing sports, and volunteering almost all of their free time, because they think this will make them "stand out." When asked if school has gotten harder over the past five years, Thatt said, "There are definitely more requirements, especially when a student wants to go to a four year college." Students find it almost impossible to have a life and relax once in a while.

"Not only do I come to school everyday, I also go to adult school, and I volunteer

at my church Mondays, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Sundays!" says Junior Liliana Silvas, "That's what colleges are looking for."

When a teen fails to rise up to meet their expectations, or that of others, teenagers experience frustration, anger, and depression.

Students, like adults struggle with time management. Unable to find enough time of their own, students often lose interest in studies, drop-out, or fail classes. They often feel stressed by being asked to do too much in too little a time. "I come home exhausted and I never have time to help my mom around the house, I think

my grades are going down because I'm constantly tired at school, and I sometimes go to sleep in my classes," Silvas said. "The world itself is a stressful place, with supporting family, jobs, and responsibilities. Stress is much greater when you leave high school," said Thatt.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, Suicide is the third leading cause of death for 15 to 24 year-olds. Every hour and forty-five minutes another young person commits suicide.

If you're feeling stress, alcohol and drugs will not make it better. These remedies usually only create more problems.

## AB540: Undocumented Students Given Chance

Law gives students ways to go to college.

By Evelyn Escobar & Christian Faundez  
Staff Writers

Are you an undocumented junior or senior whose dream is slipping away because you are unable to pay for college? High schools all around California have undocumented students, otherwise known as California State AB540 students. Before January 2002 undocumented students thought they could not afford to attend college because they had to pay out-of-state tuition.

Currently out-of-state tuition at UC's, Cal States, and community colleges are triple the fee for tuition. For UC universities it is six to seven thousand dollars extra for international students. In Cal State universities it is \$339.00 per unit and for community colleges it is \$26.00 per unit. Now, the California state Assembly Bill 540 allows undocumented students to pay in-state tuition.

This law only applies to the state of California and does not provide financial aid to undocumented students. FAFSA, grants and federal loans are not an option for them. Students can apply for scholarships if they are eligible.

"All eligible students can apply for scholarships. There are eligibility requirements, some are for specific ethnicities, some are for specific GPAs, etc. There is a scholarship for everyone. There are many scholarships for AB540 students. You won't get a scholarship if you don't apply," said Leona Warman, college counselor.

To qualify you must: have attended a California high school for three or more years, pass the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) and graduate like any other high school student. An affidavit must be filed at the University where the student was accepted. This verifies that the student is in the process of getting documentation.

Most four year universities have resources to help students with this issue.

"UCLA has a group on campus called 'IDEAS' that sponsors events in which people come and donate money to help create more scholarships," said Dr. Ron Lehari, Social Sciences, Magnet teacher.

## Students Learn To Stay Sober and Safe

By Michelle Zamora  
Staff Writer

A car might not be the first thing that comes to your mind when you think "dangerous" In reality a car is a deadly weapon when used with alcohol and speed.

Recently C.H.P demonstrated on the Polygon the "Sober Graduation" program. Officers Norm Kellens and David Hovey of the C.H.P were promoting the "Sober Graduation" program with real life examples and consequences of what driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs can do.

Yaneth Lupian, a junior talked to the Optimist about the Sober Graduation display.

Lupian said, "At first there was curiosity when I saw the display and when I saw the car I thought, no one could have



Photo By Efrain Rodriguez

**A SOBER GRADUATION:** California Highway Patrol arrives at Poly to encourage Parrots to stay sober.

made it out of that alive."

They presented pictures and real life testimonies of those who survived near fatal accidents and how they looked before and after. "Seeing the car

was very shocking to look at," said Lupian.

The Sober Graduation program was established in 1985 by the C.H.P department and targets more than 61 schools

in the L.A.U.S.D district. It promotes Sober Graduation at this time because this is the season when seniors graduate and have celebrations such as prom, grad night, and their cap and gown ceremony.

According to <www.caraccidents.com> (who collect data from the Federal Highway Administration) car accidents are the leading cause of death among teenagers in the United States, accounting for 36% of all deaths of persons aged 15 to 19 years. A 16 year old is 7 times more likely to get into a fatal car accident than someone between 30-47 years of age. Of all fatal teen car accidents, one-third involved speed related collisions and one-quarter involved the use of alcohol.



Photo By Mildred Fuentes

**KNACK FOR HISTORY:** Jennifer Murray teaches students to care about the past and themselves.

## Ex-Texan, Future Barista?

History teacher Jennifer Murray shares her vision with her students.

By Mildred Fuentes & Jennifer Rivera  
Staff Writers

Social Studies teacher Jennifer Murray, who has been teaching U.S. History, World History and Immigration at Poly since 2003, says her goal is to get her students involved and interested in studying.

"I figure if I could get more people interested in learning history, then I could get more people interested in finishing high school," said Murray.

What appeals to her about teaching is working with students and learning.

"I really enjoy working with people, helping people see what I see," said Murray, "If today I'm teaching an immigration class and how the Aztecs came here, seeing how historical forces changed society, that's what I see is important and I like showing kids that there are connections in this world."

Murray is known for her fun projects and colorful methods.

In a Global Studies class she taught recently, she experimented with her students by drawing a map of the world with chalk on the blacktop outside her classroom.

Murray used the map to show students how clothing comes from all over the world and what pay garment workers receive.

"I was surprised," Murray said. "I didn't know if the students would like it or would understand it. Then I realized

that they did like it and they were really blown away by it."

Murray attributes some of her inspiration to a former teacher. "I had an AP European History teacher who was very demanding, who taught us a lot and it really inspired me to be a better student," Murray said, "but I didn't think I was smart enough to be a history teacher."

Murray, who was born in Spring, Texas, decided to move to California four years ago to be different.

"My parents lived in Houston their whole lives, my grandparents, everyone I know was from Houston," noted Murray. "I didn't want to get married and have kids and die in Houston."

So after teaching in a 9th Grade Center in Houston for two years, Murray headed west and joined the Poly staff.

She has a twin sister named Linda and a younger brother, Justin.

Her favorite activities outside of school include cooking, trying out new recipes and surfing the internet.

Murray says she didn't care for high school, but found college more to her liking.

"High school was long and tedious. I had to wake up too early in the morning and I worked after school," Murray said.

"I hadn't discovered coffee yet," Murray noted, "but I really loved college. I got to pick the classes I wanted to take and wake up later."

Now that she has "discovered" coffee, Murray feels she has a second job to fall back on.

"If I can't keep teaching, I'll be a Starbucks barista," she said.

# Sergeant Smith At Your Service

Sgt. Smith moved on from the Air Force to train Poly cadets.

By Jane Cenon  
Staff Writer

Senior Master Sergeant Billie Smith educates and trains high school cadets in citizenship, community service promotion, leadership skills and self-discipline, as Junior ROTC instructor here at Poly. As Aerospace Science Instructor, Sgt. Smith strives to build and improve the character and skills of the cadets.

"Education is the most important gift you can give to anyone, because giving an education begins to change a life forever," stated Smith.

The Air Force Junior Reserved Officer Training Corps (AFJROTC) curriculum emphasizes the Air Force heritage and traditions such as flight sciences, military aerospace policies and space exploration.

In February of 2005, Sgt. Smith joined Poly as an ROTC Instructor. The choice of school was difficult for Sgt. Smith but as soon as she met the cadets of Poly she made an immediate connection.

"It may take time to build a two way mutual respect but it is worth it when the cadets come back to you with their success stories during and after their time in JROTC," expressed Smith.

A bond was created between Sgt. Smith and her cadets, who she also considers her children. She wants not only to teach the cadets but also to inspire them to be better people.

Sgt. Smith remembers how her mother would tell her, "Be your own person and never let anybody take your character."

"The Colonel and I strive to connect with each cadet to help form tomorrow's nation by educating proud and patri-



Photo By Jane Cenon

**SMILING SGT.:** Senior Master Sergeant Billie Smith enjoys working with Poly Cadets and preparing them for their future.

otic cadets – tomorrow's leaders," said Smith.

Sgt. Smith is grateful for the chance given to her to educate and motivate students at Poly. For her, turning problems or issues into opportunities and to rise to challenges is very rewarding.

With a father and stepfather as military men, Sgt. Smith grew up in a military installation and has been considered a "military brat." She was determined to acquire a college degree and be able to travel and she saw the doors of the Air Force open to many opportunities for her career.

In order to perform her duties in the Air Force, Smith has to move from station to station. She has traveled around the world while fulfilling her responsibility, whether it was an Air-to-Ground Voice Radio Operator, Aircraft Maintenance Trainer or Chief of Education and Base Train-

ing Office. She has traveled to Texas, Mississippi, South Carolina, Hawaii, Maryland, Italy, Florida, Japan and New Mexico.

"The military provided a good life for my family," Smith said.

Sgt. Smith has an associate degree in Information Management and Education Instructional Technology from the Community College of the Air Force and completed a Bachelors Degree in the University of Maryland. Sgt. Smith had to leave the Air Force for 18 months through a program called "Boot Strap" to complete her Master Degree in Education with Southern Illinois University (SUI).

"I spent 24 years in the military and have never regretted, not even one day, that I served on active duty," stated Smith who is now on active duty training the cadets of Poly.

## High Achievers Gain Opportunities

[Adv. Plus cont. from Page 1]

The program is not to rush freshmen into college; it's a way to get a head start on the general major necessary in competitive universities.

This program is intended solely for residents of the school. "Students who do not have the access to the magnet department will be able to enroll in classes they need," Flenner said. "Another requirement, besides scoring

high on the CST is to be able to maintain A's and B's on their report cards," Flenner said, "we would only accept students who have the desire to work hard for the program."

Polytechnic is the first school in the nation to try out this program. Flenner said, "We looked at each students record to make sure they would be able to handle the program," Flenner said, "when I proposed the idea it

was hard for it to be taken into consideration but as people deliberated the program more, the teachers liked it."

The Freshmen Center is expecting fifteen to twenty students to enter high school under the curriculum of Advantage Plus Program. This program is expected to start running as soon as the new incoming freshman arrive and it's expected to get more highly gifted students involved.

## The Beat Goes on for Poly's Drill Team



Photo Provided By Ana Loera

**DEVOTED DRILL TEAM:** Despite having no formal coach, this year's Drill Team succeeded on their own and won 3rd Place at a competition held at Six Flags Magic Mountain.

By Tatiana Tejada  
Staff Writer

Poly's Drill Team completed at Six Flags Magic Mountain, taking third place in medium military division out of seven schools Sunday, April 29. Their success this year can be attributed to the leadership, of their captain Mericia Alcaraz and co-captain Ana Loera, who persevered without any formal coach.

There were many obstacles they had to overcome from the moment the team was formed; these included delayed uniforms, fundraisers and structure. "We could have done better with a coach because

we would have had less disagreements about discipline, routines and dress code. Moral support was a neglected necessity, however the team managed to work together and accomplish a victory," explained Loera.

Mr. Isaacs agreed to be their official sponsor. Mr. LeClair, Ms. Heilbron, Mrs. Elias, Mr. Schwal and Steve Nares provided much needed support from Poly's faculty and staff.

Etiquette uniforms were only worn once during football season due to lack of funds. Without supervised coaching, fundraisers are non-existent. The dance routines were created by Alcaraz with the help

of Poly's senior student, Sergio Rodriguez and tabs of previous routines.

Lack of coaching affected the teams discipline that started with 44 members and ended with 22 members. "The biggest support that the team had came from parents who let us participate in our events," said Alcaraz.

Alcaraz and Loera believed they would have 1st if they had the benefit of a formal coach.

It's a great accomplishment that both captains achieved. They had to deal with schoolwork, paperwork, the team and a social life of their own. But in the end Poly's drill team never gave up.

## PARROTS GO SING

By Alejandra Grimaldo & Vianey Vargas  
Staff Writers

What do Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, and Goofy have in common? They all got to hear Poly's Choir sing their hearts out. Poly's Choir traveled to Orlando, Florida for competition and fun. They left L.A. Thursday, April 26 and returned Sunday, April 29.

They toured Disney World Epcot, Universal Studios, Island of Adventure, and Downtown Disney. Choir raised their own money through activities, which included: Poly Idol, Valentine's Day Dance, Singing Telegrams, and selling candy bars. "Even though it was hot and humid, we still sang awesome," says Eric Reyes, C-track Freshmen.

"It has been the most memorable trip that the Choir has taken, leaving many memories behind," says Jennifer Cabrera, C-Track Senior. In the competition, they sang a love, gospel, and foreign language



Photo Provided By Belle Tadena

**WORD HARD, PLAY HARD:** Choir fundraised all year-long to get to Orlando. They competed and won the silver plaque.

song. The songs were "Cantate Domino" by Giuseppe Pitoni and Linda Spevacek, "That Ever I Saw" by Darmon Meader and "Steady My Trembulin' Soul" by Mark Hayes. Choir took the Silver plaque. "We ignored the weather and had the time of our lives," says Jonathan Ramirez, A-track Sophomore.

"This is the most amazing trip that the Choir has ever participated in," says Kevin Patterson, Choir instructor.

The Choir members would like to thank Dr. Jan Fries-Martinez, Principal and Mrs. Shery Lopez for all their help in making this trip possible.



Photo By Tatiana Tejada

**PIGS CAN FLY:** Ivonne Moreno's school pig is on display as the first prize winner in the ceramics piggy bank contest.

## CERAMIC CONTEST

By Sergio Fajardo & Tatiana Tejada  
Staff Writers

Ceramics is not just a class for fun, but also an art form that can help relieve stress. To many students working with clay, creating plates, cups, bowls and figurines from clay is the art of a sculpture. Mrs. Daneshvari, C track teacher holds a teapot and a piggy bank contest for her students during Spring season. All entries are welcome, with the best creative work chosen by Poly's

principal and staff members.

Ivonne Moreno is this year's first prize winner for both the teapot and piggybank contest. She received \$150.00 reward and a Senior Award certificate for ceramics. When asked where her designs originated she said, "I got my design for the teapot from a computer game named McGee's Alice In Wonderland. As for the piggybank I just tried to be creative and have fun with it." Ivonne's winning teapot will be displayed at CSUN later this year in their art showcase.

## Recognition for Poly's Band and Orchestra at Heritage Festival

Band and Orchestra bring home the Bronze from San Francisco.

By Natalie Castaneda & Evelyn Escobar  
Staff Writers

Poly's concert band and orchestra traveled to San Francisco, April 26 to compete against other high school bands and orchestras in their 3A division.

This is their fourth year competing at the Heritage Festival. The band and orchestra returned from this four-day trip with a Bronze plaque.

"The band overall had a good performance but we have done better," said Steven Isaacs, music director.

The band and orchestra were ranked by overall points and received the bronze plaque based on performance. Decisions were made based on how

many points were given and the range, gold plaque, silver plaque or bronze plaque.

The band's performance included "Danny Boy," an Irish piece, "Americans We" and "Pageants of Glory."

The orchestra's performance included "Touch of Ireland," a combination of "Concerto #2," "Brandenburg" and "New World Symphony."

"We did the best that we could with the little warm-up time we had, but we did not play to the best of our ability," said Manny Alvarez, sophomore percussion player.

The band and orchestra students also went sight seeing. This included the famous Golden Gate Bridge, Pier 39 and the Palace of the Fine Arts. In the Palace of the Fine Arts at the Golden Gate Park, the students were able to see Greek sculptures, statues, columns and beautiful gardens.

## Lets all Scream for Ice Cream

By Marcie Ulloa  
Staff Writer

The cooking club is selling ice cream during lunch and after school to raise money. Mr. Higgins is the sponsor of the club and is open to anyone who has the excitement to cook.

“I like to get people together with the love of cooking like myself and to bring out the enthusiasm and

their spirit in cooking,” said Higgins.

The clubs main purpose is to eventually start a scholarship fund.

“I want to do the scholarship for a student that I feel deserves to go to a culinary school that doesn’t have the means,” said Higgins.

Cooking Club has twenty-five active members that meet Thursdays at lunch in room 62.

## POLY BOOSTER CLUB NEEDS A BOOST

By Eric Bejarano  
Staff Writer

The Poly Booster club, beginning next July, hopes to help students at Polytechnic High school by raising funds for sports, clubs, music, and academics.

Their first fundraiser will be a carnival. The Carnival will be held the weekend of August 24,25 and 26.

Students will setup booths and sell food items.

The club is promoting itself to obtain more members and help the school with needs of sports, clubs and school supplies.

The Booster Club is headed by Poly parent Maria Barnoya, who can be contacted through Ms.Flenner’s office in the Freshmen Center.

## Students Voices Heard

[Education from Page 1]

Six students represented Poly at the discussion, who attended with Leadership sponsor, Mr. LeClair, Assistant Principal, Gerardo Loera, and the Principal Jan Fries – Martinez.

Students discussed many

obstacles to reach college.

“A lot of people who are in charge of our education, they don’t expect us to do anything,” said Aaron Sanchez, from Poly.

Hopefully presidential candidates will hear student voices and find bipartisan solutions for the benefit of students.



Photo By Evelyn Lemus

**PARROTS FLY THE COOP:** Students spent a day learning about aviation careers.

## PARROTS TAKE TO THE SKIES

Students take a day to view their future options in aviation careers.

By Evelyn Lemus & Belle Tadena  
Staff Writers

Poly Parrots joined hundreds of other students for the Aviation Career Day, April 20th. Its purpose was to introduce students to the numerous career options relating to the Aerospace industry.

High schools all over the San Fernando Valley attended the fair hosted by Syncro Aviation Inc., Van Nuys Airport and in conjunction with the office of L.A. Councilman Tony Cardenas.

Pia Damonte from the Dean’s Office said, “Exposure. That’s what the tour was all about.”

Students were introduced to many different opportunities

that relate to aviation, careers including internships, and scholarships. The National Transportation Safety Board also offered information for those who wish to pursue a career in law enforcement within the Aviation industry.

“The students’ behavior really did surprise me,” said Damonte. “They were very enthusiastic.”

Students were encouraged to participate in activities. Some were able to create model aircrafts, while others piloted airline models, and/or wore pilot gear for visual reality simulation.

Many high school students may find their future education to be very expensive. The U.S. Coast Guard representative explained that training and money for college is available making an aviation career possible. Students are reminded to ask for help in the college office with Ms. Warman.

In addition, the National Aeronautic and Space Administration (NASA) provided information about their program and the required education to join the NASA team.

“The exhibits in the tour made me want to pursue my career as a pilot even more,” said Colleen Tomsik, who attended the trip.

Students learned about the differences between private and commercial airlines. Privately owned planes include smaller aircrafts while larger planes include government owned, military, or commercial airlines.

Remember it takes more than just pilots to keep on going; there is more to flying an airplane, from mechanics, engineering or interior designs, to flight attendants, and military related careers including search and rescue with the U.S. Coast Guard and National Guard.

## ESL TRIUMPHS

[ESL from Page 1]

small learning community, a family, students, and adults together,” said Fishman.

Students were invited to participate in the ceremony and recited their own poems. Ms. Hays’ English class performed their own original plays, where they made fun of themselves constructively. Guitar and piano players accompanied the presentations. Ms. Espinoza presented a slideshow to the audience, composed of students, teachers and staff from the ESL program.

Mr. Dechenes, a 3 and 4 ESL class teacher said, “I feel very proud to be an ESL teacher.”

During the ceremony, the ESL 3 and 4 students talked to the newcomers and stu-

dents in the program. The graduating students encouraged the audience to keep working hard and to not be shy about being in ESL. “We used to be just like you,” said the students as they explained how they used to be uncomfortable with English.

Since most of the students are new to the country, they also had a chance to visit different parts of Los Angeles. This year’s students went on a field trip to the Santa Monica Pier.

After the ceremony Ms.Slezak and Ms. Gonzales from the Parent Center organized a cookout for the students. “It was very difficult to organize and all ESL teachers really embraced the opportunity to help them realize the big step they have taken,” said Ms.Slezak.

## Optimist Learns from the Best

By Sergio Veliz  
Staff Writer

Poly journalists paid a visit to the L.A. Times downtown and learned all there is to know about the paper’s coverage on world news.

“File. Click. Print. Click,” the tour guide described the process of today’s newspaper output and compared it to when it began.

Photography has come a long way from the Times early beginning.

“Back then your film was a glass plate,” stated the tour guide. “You had those flash bulbs that you had to change after each shot.”

“Since December 4, 1881, the L.A. Times has never missed an issue, that’s 126 years,” said the tour guide.

<b>Club Meetings</b>	<b>Thursday</b>
	<p><b>10th Grade Council</b> Ms.Calzada Rm. 115</p> <p><b>11th Grade Council</b> Ms. Pak Rm. 98</p> <p><b>12th Grade Council</b> Mr.Patterson Rm. M2</p> <p><b>Black Student Association</b> Ms. Terry Rm.29</p> <p><b>Chess Club</b> Mr.Berkeley Rm. 73</p> <p><b>Cooking Club</b> Mr. Higgins</p> <p><b>Latinos Unidos</b> Ms.Bonar Rm. 27</p>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
<b>No clubs Meet</b>	<p><b>9th Grade Council</b> Ms.Navarro Rm. 308</p> <p><b>Purposed Centered Humanism (PCH)</b> Mr.Cuevas Rm. 36</p> <p><b>Teens For Christ</b> Ms. Casillas Rm. 46</p>
<b>Tuesday</b>	
<b>Blue Ribbon Committe</b> Ms.Pleitez Rm. 211	
<b>Chess Club</b> Mr.Berkeley Rm. 73	
<b>Wednesday</b>	
<b>California Scholarship Federation (CSF)</b> Ms.Pleitez B Track-Rm. 115 A Track-Rm. Library	
<b>Chess Club</b> Mr. Berkeley Rm. 73	
<b>Gay Straight Alliance</b> Mr.Bertz Rm. 338	

# PARROTS SAVE THE BEST FOR LAST

Poly makes playoffs after defeating Van Nuys 28-1.

By Daniel Jimenez  
Staff Writer

Not only did the Parrots win the Sunset Six for the third year in a row on Friday, but they also made a statement. A big one at that.

There was talk that the Verdugo Dons were the better team. Say that after beating the Parrots in two out of three games this season, the Dons would take the Sunset Six Title. What was the statement made? The Parrots are still the best team in the Sunset Six League. A Poly victory over Van Nuys by a score of 28-1 proved that.

Coach Chuck Schwal and his team have not lost a series in over three years, with a record of 42 wins and 3 losses, and the possibility of not making the playoffs had never been considered until Verdugo posted a 12-3 league record this season. Two of those twelve victories coming versus Poly.

"They were just the better team in those two games, and we were a little worried down the stretch, but we knew they'd lose one more game, and we were facing Van Nuys for the last game," said Schwal.

A small sigh of relief was let out by the Poly baseball team when they took a peak at



Photo By Efrain Rodriguez

**HOW TO HIT A HOME RUN:** Poly Parrot Juan Carlos Sanchez hits an incoming pitch. Sanchez scored a total of 8 runs in the game against Van Nuys.

the standings, and then at the schedule: Poly had a one game lead over the Dons, and was facing last place Van Nuys in the season finale.

Poly had outscored the Wolves 34-0 in two previous games this season, but it was

still a game, and the Parrots still had to go out, perform, and get themselves a ticket to the playoffs. That they did.

"We still had to take care of business, we did, and we put up 20 plus runs," said Schwal.

The Wolves scored their

only run in the first inning.

Poly's Juan Sanchez scored six runs and batted in two more. Gustavo Garcia hit his fourth home run of the season and batted in a total of five runners. Oscar Soriano had five RBI's, and stepped on to the mound

to get the win, striking out six and allowing just one hit.

The Parrots will face El Camino Real on Wednesday May 23rd in the Playoff opener at Poly. The Conquistadors finished the regular season with a 17-13 record.

## Hopes and Hurdles

By Mildred Fuentes & Osvin Gonzales  
Staff Writers

Sylvia Alboniga has brought Track & Field up to new standards this year.

When she came to Poly the thought of running track never crossed her mind. However, she says, "Ms. Terry pushed me to do it."

Many people in her life are an inspiration she says, "My mom because everything I do is for her, Ms. Terry and Mrs. Brown because they're always there to answer my questions. Mr. Rivera and Mr. Cuevas for helping me and the track team. Mr. Cuevas encouraged me to try the hurdles."

"Learning to jump hurdles wasn't easy for me, I fell a lot, but I love it and I am still there," Alboniga said, "I love track."

Sylvia relates her running to her everyday life. She says, "I see every hurdle as an obstacle I have to overcome and the finish line is my main goal."

Alboniga broke Poly's school record with a time of



Photo By Mildred Fuentes

**STAYING STRONG:** Sylvia Alboniga jumping hurdles and breaking records for Poly's Track and Field.

46.3.

"I have goals to break my own records, on my 300 meter hurdles. I would like to run a 44. and I would like to run a 15 flat on my 100meter hurdles." As she is on her way to preliminaries, she would like to drop a second off of her time on the 300-meter hurdles.

Sylvia hopes to run for UCLA, but believes her

education comes first. She will be attending a community college and hopes to get scouted for her running.

When asked what she thought about in those 46.3 seconds she said, "A lot of things go through my head like pumping my arms and running as fast as I can. I always try my best and do my best."

## Running for Victory

By Mildred Fuentes & Osvin Gonzales  
Staff Writers

Coached by Mario Rivera and assistant coaches Rudy Cuevas and Pedro Valencia, Poly ended their regular season with five victories for the boys and three for the girls out of seven meets.

They achieved seven league titles and 19 advanced to city preliminaries, competing with

the top schools for the league title.

"Sylvia set the school record in the 100m hurdles with a time of 15.88." Cuevas says, "A 20 year old record."

Athletes with individual titles were, Victor Gamboa in the 110 hurdles. Micheal Park in the 400 meter, Stallon Watson in the 110 and 300 hurdles. Sylvia Alboniga in the 100 hurdles and the boys and girls 4x400 relay team.

## SPORTS ROUNDUP

### GIRLS

#### SOFTBALL

The Lady Parrots were eliminated from the playoffs after losing to the Palasades Dolphins by a score of 6-4. They ended the season with an 8-2 league record and made the playoffs for the second year in a row.

### BOYS

#### VOLLEYBALL

The Varsity Volleyball team, without star player Aaron Sanchez fell to Narbonne High School in the season finale by a score of 25-10, 25-11 and 25-19.

#### BASEBALL

The Varsity team won against Grant 5-1, improving their league record to 13-2. Gustavo Garcia allowed just three hits in the seven innings pitched. Two of the five runs scored by Poly were due to errors committed by Grant.