

The Poly Optimist

John H. Francis Polytechnic High School

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SERVING THE POLY COMMUNITY SINCE 1913

OCTOBER 2014

Poly Dodges the Bullet

By Kate Martinez
Staff Writer

In the event of a mass shooting at Poly, students and faculty can be reassured the LAUSD school police are locked and loaded with military grade weapon.

Los Angeles Unified School District police acquired weapons of war through the federal's 1033 program. LA unified is one of 22 school system in eight states that received the free gear.

LAUSD website states, "Los Angeles School Police Chief Steve Zipperman, in consultation with Superintendent John E. Deasy, is recommending the district



LAUSD's new APC

Photo provided by Google

return some salvaged military weapons obtained through a federal program."

LAPD returned three grenade launchers that were acquired after 9/11, but held onto the 61 M-16 assault rifles, capable of 950 rounds per minute, and a twenty foot long, 14 ton Mine Resistant Ambush Proof (MRAP) armored vehicle similar to the ones used in Iraq

warfare.

The armored vehicle is stowed in a secret location; it has been in the department's custody since July.

The LAUSD website states, "The firearms originally received in 2001 are essential life-saving items and the LASPD will continue to have these items as part of our equipment inventory. The rifles, modified from automatic to semi-automatic, are a part of a 40-hour certified training program

for sworn police officers."

The LA times reports that Zipperman said the grenade launchers were never used and so they were

returned. Zipperman said, "It's a piece of equipment that's not essential for our mission, so we will be disposing of those."

Many Poly staff were appalled by the MRAP tank, Kirk Jeppson, poly's administrator, exclaimed, "That blew my mind, that supposedly LAUSD has a tank. I honestly think that's too much."

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The Happiest Homecoming on Earth

Poly picks Disney theme for 2014 homecoming.

By Juan Garcia & Jaycelle Tadena
Staff Writers

Homecoming is the American tradition of welcoming back alumni from high schools, colleges and universities.

The tradition of homecoming began around 1910 and spread all across America by the 1920's as a way to show school pride.

It usually includes activities like sports, culture events and a parade that runs through the streets of the city or town.

Missouri University and Illinois at Urbana-Champaign University claim to have first established the annual tradition of homecoming in college campuses.

But controversy still lies in who first began the "homecoming" tradition in the United States.

Baylor University held the first homecoming to take place around a sports themed event.

Poly's homecoming tradition continues with fireworks at halftime.

Some of Poly's own Alumni are teachers here at Poly Irene Maliwan, Science teacher and this Year's Grand Marshall, graduated from Poly in 1995.

Maliwan stated that Poly's Homecoming hasn't really

changed since she was here.

The Parade and fireworks have always been a tradition at Poly.



King Jose Dominguez and Queen Laura Garcia

The only difference is that Poly no longer has a Homecoming Dance.

Film Teacher, Dennis Madrigal who graduated from Poly in 2001 stated, "I wish I went to more homecomings, it is definitely a bigger deal now than when I was a kid."

Athletic Director, Kim McEwen has been at Poly for twenty-five years.

McEwen states that Poly's homecomings have been getting better and better each year.

She adds that Poly has the

best parade in the city.

"As the Athletic Director, by far we are the best parade I have ever seen or been a part of. As



Photos by Victor Garcia

for the Pep Rallies, Leadership does a fantastic job."

She added, "They [Leadership] started using the auditorium a few years ago and added in all the technology, with the movies they do."

McEwen also states that the football games are usual always a sell out.

"We have a huge number of Alumni coming back and it's a really fun evening."

This year's homecoming royalty is Jose Dominguez as King and Laura Martinez as Queen.



Poly's Pioneering Push through Racial Barriers



By Joshua Penado
Staff Writer

Former Poly Principal and Poly Optimist advisor James B Taylor has been recognized by the Private school organization Green Dot for his lasting contribution to students throughout the Los Angeles School District. Green Dot awarded Taylor with the naming of their new school "James B Taylor Animo Middle School" in Los Angeles.

Attesting to the lasting influence on student's lives, former alumni from over fifty years ago, Jeff Perlman, Joan Everest, Jane Grupe, among other alumni at-

tended the school naming.

"Mr. Taylor was such an inspiration to all the students in our day; I remember how he would wake up early in the morning to drive students to school and how he would patrol around the school interacting with everyone along the way," said Everest.

"Everyone loved him he was just an amazing inspiration to us all, when we heard that he was getting a school named after him, we just had to come and see it for ourselves. Taylor was just such an inspiration to us all and is still influencing the lives of students today."

Joe Trento, former Optimist editor, comments on Taylor's influence on his career as a CNN journalist, an author and his current position as President of Public Education in Washington D.C. "Taylor really helped open my mind to writing which, I believe, really helped me as an author and as a professional writer." Trento's published works include "Unsafe at Any Altitude" and "The Secret History of the CIA."

Taylor was the former Poly Optimist advisor before being named the first African American Vice Principal and later Principal in LAUSD, both positions

were at Poly. Taylor then became LAUSD's first African American Deputy Superintendent.

Jeff Perlman, also a former Optimist Editor, accredits his success as an intern for the New York Times and later a journalist for the Washington Post, Wall Street Journal and the Los Angeles Times to Taylor.

"Mr. Taylor was a huge inspiration to me because he provided someone to look up to." Said Perlman "I can honestly say that Taylor had influenced me to go above and beyond in both my career and life"

As the "Boys Vice Principal"

[Continue on pg. 4]



James Taylor Photo by Victor Garcia



Photos by Victor Garcia

Homecoming Pride

Poly's 2014 Homecoming

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Photo by Victor Garcia

Principal Bennett Speaks

Ari Bennett expounds on school spirit.

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OPINION

EDITORIAL

Anti-Virus

Across every headline today is Ebola. News across the globe has been constantly tracking it as it spread across West Africa and, more recently, into the United States.

Not to say that this threat is not a serious one, because it surely is, but people are failing to notice the fact that there is already a virus spreading across the United States, within our school systems.

Enterovirus 68 is an enterovirus that, although considered rare, has been spreading exponentially within school systems throughout the country.

According to the CDC, 691 people in 46 states and Washington D.C. have been sickened by the virus, with one case confirmed in Riverside County on October 3rd.

The virus almost causes respiratory illnesses, with symptoms similar to the common cold. As the virus progresses, respiratory failure and paralysis can occur.

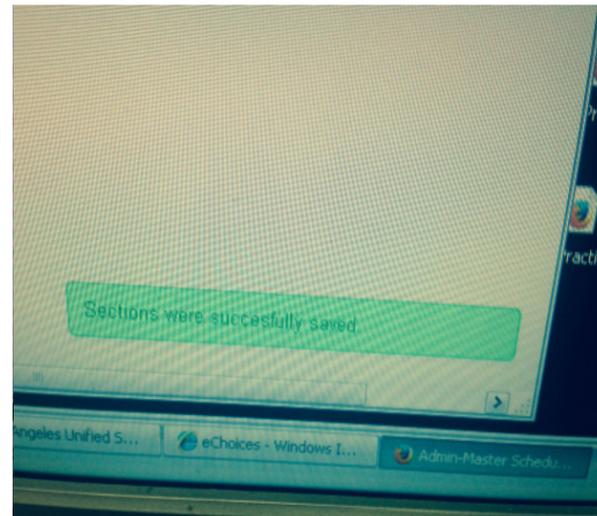
Now, what am I getting at? The most important way someone can prevent getting the virus, as it is spread through saliva, is washing your hands. It seems so simple, and it is. It is made

very difficult, though, when Poly's bathrooms do not have soap.

And while I am not saying that Poly has to have sterilized bathrooms, disinfected tables, or hand sanitizers around every corner, but at the very least, we should have soap and paper towels for students to wash their hands; the basics would be nice.

I see students picking up garbage or handling trashcans and trash bags without gloves, surely Poly can provide basic hygienic protection.

MISIS Successfully saved LAUSD style, spelling error and all



Screen Shot from MISIS Message generated from MISIS after data input

It has been over ten weeks since the fiasco of MISIS caused chaos during the first three weeks of school. LAUSD has acknowledged the system has its flaws, and is moving SLOWLY, but surely, towards fixing this nightmare.

After talking to Counselors Narmeen Elfarrar and Jayne Couchois, as well as Louie Olvera and Noel Villanueva in the Attendance Office and Counseling Office respectively, the progress of MISIS seems to generally be viewed the same.

Elfarrar says, "MISIS continues to have glitches, it is a work in progress, and the district is still trying to make changes. They are aware of the discrepancies it is causing students, and families, and schools, and they are trying to work on it."

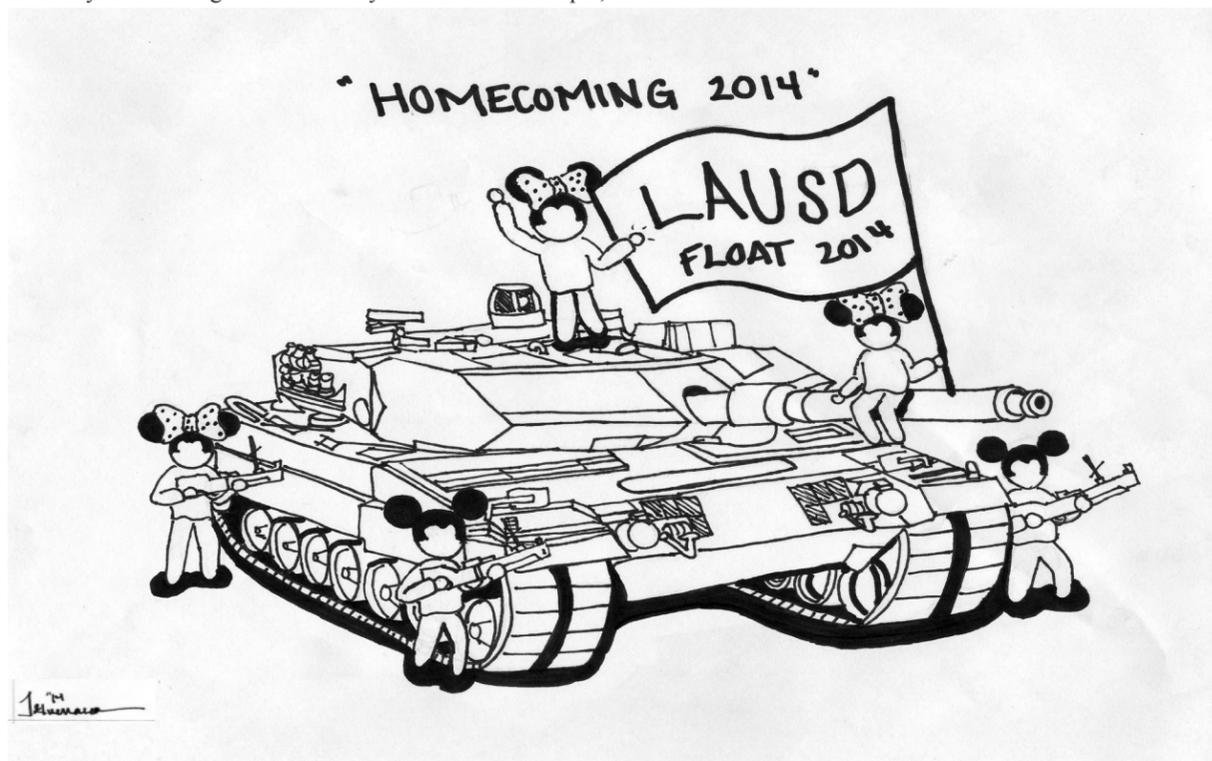
Louie Olvera in the attendance office commented, "There have been a lot of improvements made to the system as far as scheduling students, giving the grades, entering the information into the system; whereas in the beginning of the school year we couldn't even enter information in, students had to have paper schedules and they weren't in the system. It's about 70% to 80% better since the beginning of the school year."

Ms. Couchois, Magnet Coordinator said there are still significant problems. Neva Bryan, magnet counselor, walked in with a student's records that still haven't been accepted into the system.

"We changed the student's schedule, and then double checked to make sure it was in the system. And now Ms. Bryan is checking it a third time and it's still not there."

Bryan's view of MISIS was merely described as "Bleep, bleep bleep, bleep bleep bleep bleep."

But despite this, all generally agree that with time, the system has improved, and will continue to get better. Noel Villanueva, the registrar in the main counseling office said, "There are still things that need to get fixed, but they are working on it. We are not able to do a lot of the things we are used to doing, but with time, maybe a year, it will be alright."



High Students, Low Grades

The legalization of Marijuana has been gaining momentum in the past few years. In the United States, there are established laws restrict the sale, use, transfer and cultivation of the drug, although some states have decriminalized Marijuana for medical use. Colorado and the state of Washington have made marijuana legal for recreational use. States that decriminalize marijuana for medical use only allow individuals over the age of eighteen who have a prescription from a certified physician to buy the substance from city permitted weed shops. States that decriminalize marijuana for recreational use allow its

citizens to purchase and use marijuana like any other commodity purchased at a store. Individuals must be eighteen and over, to buy marijuana. Also a state tax is imposed on the shops that sell the drug. But what are the effects of the legalization of marijuana? Obviously the increase in revenue for those states will be a consequence of the legalization, as well as an increase in jobs. All these effects sound good, but the negative side to the legalization is the increase in the use of marijuana. Students here in California already use marijuana even though it is illegal for recreational use. If we allow this drug to be easily acquired, drug

abuse will be out of control. Student will be high during class. Students will get lunch not because they like the food but because they have the munchies. Instead of stopping at the local 7-Eleven for a slurpee, students will stop at the local weed shop and pick up a joint for first period. This drug will be all over our school, and students will be influenced to try new drugs as they become tired of using marijuana. This drug needs to stay out of our schools. Legalizing Marijuana in California would be horrible mistake. It will push our students out of school and toward the wrong direction.



the OPTIMIST

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EDITORIAL POLICY

The OPTIMIST is the voice of the Poly community, and follows the Code of Ethics for the Society of Professional Journalists. Editorials are the opinions of the staff.

CAMPUS

Head Parrot Speaks

Principal Ari Bennett speaks of Poly pride.

What is Poly Pride? What makes us special? In the words of trailblazer and former Poly Principal Mr. James Taylor, we “do what others are afraid to do.” Mr. Taylor’s words inspire me. I hope they inspire you. A few weeks ago, to answer these questions, I would have focused only on recent innovative reforms. I would have focused on adoption of a 4 period bell schedule and 4 quarter calendar that gives



Principal Ari Bennett

Photo by Victor Garcia

students opportunities to accelerate, receive support, and take additional classes each year, including college classes. I would have highlighted our team approach

to support student needs applied by the Freshman Center, 10th Grade Center, Newcomers’ Academy, Math/Science Magnet, and now the Royal and Gold

Academies, in addition to our historic (near unanimous) vote to become a Pilot school that has more autonomy.

To provide context, I would also mention that doing what others are afraid to do has a purpose. Poly has become one of only three high schools in LAUSD to earn “Excelling” status, and our obsession for college readiness has helped our school to become number one in the state in admissions to CSUN.

However, what I recently learned is that the Poly

Pride we share and the cutting edge, innovative approach that has become our hallmark, began long ago. Did you know Mr. James Taylor became the first African American principal in LAUSD at Poly High School in 1962? He went on to become deputy superintendent. I’m proud to know we are part of a legacy, a legacy that emphasizes quality over convention. Whether it is the civil right of Mr Taylor earning a promotion despite the racial discrimination of his time or helping to provide our students’ civil right of access to a high quality education, I’ve never been prouder to be a Poly Parrot.

Freshman Corner

Photo Finish

Freshman class enjoys new class and a new teacher.

By Ashley Tulle
Staff Writer

Parrots welcome new staff member, Jason Duchan, to the Poly community in the Freshman Center.

Prior to Poly, Duchan taught at Marquez High School in Huntington Park for eight years.

Duchan studied at Pratt Institute in New York

City, one of the top art and design schools. He originally thought of majoring in advertising design until his professor told him he excelled in graphic design.

After receiving his Bachelors in Fine Arts in community design from Pratt, Duchan worked a number of jobs in New York City, including Port Authority, Simon and Shuster publishing, communication design for Pratt. Duchan even ran a business in 1999 until he lost it due to the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Before Duchan began teaching he was a graphic

designer. “I always drew as a kid. I actually wanted to be a cartoonist” said Duchan.

After months of struggling with the loss of his business, Duchan and his family moved to Los Angeles. For some time he worked for Disney as an Art Director. He is divorced and is the father of a 21 year old daughter and owns a Siberian cat.

For Duchan the easiest thing about teaching is the joy that comes from it, both the students and Duchan enjoy the time in the classroom. On the other hand,

the most difficult part for him is grading the students.

Duchan’s inspiration to be a teacher came from his art teacher at Pratt.

When Duchan is not teaching at Poly, he is jamming out to classic rock and Jazz. He also paints a combination of abstract and realism.

Duchan lives by the quote “Never step on a Dream.” This theme is clearly evident through his life as Duchan continues to do what he loves.

Referring to Poly, Duchan stated, “I like that it’s a big school and there are



Photo by Victor Garcia
New Freshman Teacher Duchan

other art teachers besides me”.



Photos by Victor Garcia and Jonathan Femat



FEATURES

Restorative Justice

Students get second Chance

By Juan Garcia
Staff Writer

At one time, Poly students received truancy tickets and routine suspensions for arguing with a teacher or administrator, or for having alcohol or small amounts of dope on their person.

Now, in 2014, all that has changed. Both LAUSD, and Poly administrators, have now adopted a program called Restorative Justice.

Restorative Justice is an approach to correct misconduct by "restoring" the consequences brought on by the bad behavior.

For example, with restorative justice if a student was to steal, the solution would be to return stolen property and have the student reflect and correct the consequences brought on by the theft.

This technique can be applied to a wide variety of misconduct such as bullying and willful defiance.

In May 2013, LAUSD adopted the Board Resolution-2013 School Discipline Policy and School Climate Bill of Rights.

This new policy asks staff to "utilize alternatives to school suspension to correct student misconduct, and develop and implement Restorative justice practices as an alternative to traditional school discipline."

This policy was pushed by civil right activists who argue that, although African Americans make up about 6.5 percent of the states students, they constitute 19 percent of suspensions for willful defiance. A great disproportionality of numbers.

Research shows that students who are suspended are much more likely to end up in the juvenile justice system or drop out of school.

Photo by Jonathan Femat
Restorative Justice at work

Before the implementation of restorative justice, if a student harassed or threatened school district personnel the student would be suspended.

Now students will complete intervention by doing exercises such as a "recovery think sheet" and "reflective behavior journaling."

If this approach does not work, other actions will take place such as a change of teacher or class.

Poly's new Opportunity room is an example of these new policies.

According to Opportunity Room instructor, Ruben Ruiz, the opportunity "gives students the opportunity to reflect on his/her actions, the opportunity to assume accountability for what he/she did, the opportunity to continue to do his/her work and the opportunity to give back to the community to balance out the negative action that he/she did by doing something positive."

Administrator, Kirk Jeppson, states that restorative justice practices work in the way that the consequences of the misconduct are associated with a student's bad behavior.

Jeppson provided an example of a student who was misbehaving at an off-campus basketball game.

Instead of suspending the student, he was made to volunteer with special education students, to supervise them and to help these students out when they had sport activities.

Jeppson also explains other ways that restorative justice is implemented.

"If a student vandalizes school property, they are required to do campus beautification."

In this case, the student destroyed school property, so to restore the bad behavior the student must clean up the school campus.

The punishment for the action is related to the misconduct.

"Sometimes the family can also become involved," explains Jeppson.

He states that the family can also be forced to pay restitution for the damage. However, when the offense is too severe, restorative justice cannot be used.

"If a student takes another's life, how can you restore that? You can't," explains Jeppson.

Furthermore, Jeppson states that when it comes to seniors it is much easier to implement restorative justice practices.

Jeppson states, "When it comes to seniors we just take away their senior activities."

Photo by Victor Garcia
Instructional Specialist Artin Arhanian

Senior Committee is the way that seniors are disciplined.

Senior Committee advisors include Jeppson, Serna, Kieper, Pham, Le Clair, the student's counselor, and Yeganyan. Sometimes the student's parents are present at the meeting.

The Student's teacher can also have a say in what happens in the committee.

"When a senior commits an offense we put them before a Senior Committee and the committee decides whether senior activities will be taken away," added Jeppson.

Usually a senior activity is put in jeopardy, which causes seniors to be cautious not to commit an offense again.

Jeppson stated that this technique is obviously exclusive to seniors because in reality one cannot take away activities from underclassmen because they have no such activities.

So when it comes to ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade students other restorative justice approaches are taken into account.

Assistant Principal Artin Arhanian further explains the implementation of this new policy.

"Offenses are now divided into three tiers."

Arhanian states that stabbing another student or teacher or acts of such a degree are categorized into Tier I offenses, which lead to automatic suspension or even expulsion.

The school must follow the district mandate which is a compulsory suspension for five days.

Tier II and Tier III offenses are of lesser severity and can be approached with restorative justice practices or the Opportunity Room.

At the time of press there were no Poly students in the Opportunity Room.

[From front page]

"It's something that we believe is a life-saving vehicle," Zipperman said to the LA times, "And certainly we realize we need to take a look, this is the best alternative right now for us until we find something else that is more conducive to a police-type of rescue."

Javier Rios, former Army member, who served two deployments in Iraq, argues, "[An MRAP has] absolutely no reason to be in any school ... that's over kill. I know the swat teams have lightly armored vehicles, those would probably be better."

"It has no other place other than a bomb squad, that's the only place for that," said Rios.

10th grade dean, Hardip Singh agrees, "It's a school, not a military base."

The police have increased their

presence and force in schools, especially after the Sandy Hook massacre in 2012. Arming the school guards created a debate on whether having high powered weapons, like the modified M-16s, could prevent a mass school shooting.

"[School guards] already have a 9mm revolver on their waist. I don't see how an automatic weapon will change anything," said Jeppson.

11th and 12th grade dean, Gabriel Cerna adds, "We don't need LA school police running around with M-16s ... I think they are armed well the way they are now."

"I think they're unnecessary, it's hard for me to envision a scenario where that would be necessary" said Principal Ari Bennett.

Poly does, however, have an organized working protection plan.

"We have a lot of security, more security than the norm, we've purchased extra security guards so there are extra eyes... we have an effective lock down drill," affirms Bennett, "We haven't had a shooter."

Is Poly prepared to defend against a mass school shooting? "I don't think any school in the United States could say that they could be prepared enough," replied Bennett.

The majority resent the idea of LAUSD being in possession of war grade weapons.

Rios states, "I don't necessarily agree that they should have it. Considering they've had [the weapons] for so long and they've never had an incident where they would need it"

"It's crazy to me, it's hard to wrap my mind around that a school

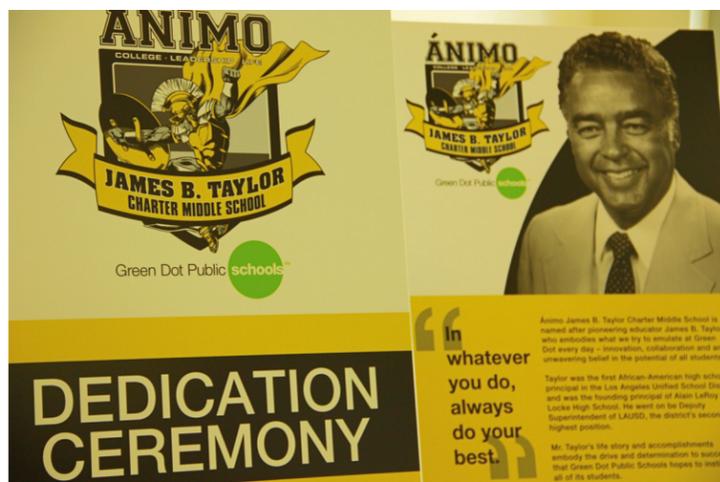
[From Front Page]

of Poly, Taylor was described in Poly's 1954 year book as "an active leader in community life and school life here at Poly."

In the 1962 September edition of the Optimist, Taylor, as the new Poly Principal, set out to de-

one of the biggest race riots in Los Angeles History and I'm still astonished by the amount of courage it would take to stand up as a school principal during those racist times."

Taylor also offered stability during the John F Kennedy crisis.



Animo Board inspired by Taylor

Photo by Victor Garcia

fine what a modern High School should look like along with a student's responsibility. "Your first responsibility in high school is to work hard and learn. You have a fine school and a capable faculty to help you, but remember, the most important factor in your success is you. As a High School, our goal is to make sure students are college prepared while, also providing the most diverse set of classes to put the 'PolyTech' in Polytechnic"

Grupe commented on the time period of Taylor's Principalship "Well, Mr. Taylor is special not only because he was such a great and interactive principal but because we're talking about the 1960's which was during

"I remember hearing Mr. Taylor come over the intercom and inform us that JFK had been shot. Everyone was shocked over the news," said Everest, "The way that Taylor rallied us as a country is still one of the most memorable speeches I've heard to date. Nobody felt more American than on that day."

Responding to the Optimist's attendance at the ceremony Taylor stated "I am filled with joy that you (Optimist reporters) would come to this event; I have so many fond memories of Poly and can honestly say that Poly has inspired me to achieve what others were too afraid to do, Poly will always have a place in my heart."



Assault Rifles given to LAUSD

Photo provided by Google

district would invest in weaponry of that caliber," said Jeppson, "I personally would like to see more money devoted to mental health to help students ... I'd rather see the district devote resources to empowering adult staff members so

that they can issue consequences that are real to the students but also protect staff members and students."

Bennett proposed, "The less guns the better."

ALUMNI

Poly Alumni joins the Halls of Justice in George Washington Law School

By Ashley Tulle
Staff Writer

Poly Alumni Karinina Cruz graduated in the class of 2010, then moved on to join the UC Berkeley alumni, graduating May 2014.

She now attends George Washington Law School in Washington D.C.

Cruz shares her reflection on her studies and the road to academic success with the Optimist.

Cruz grew up in the Philippines and from a young age developed a love for reading.

At the age of seven she collected books such as Harry Potter and other detective stories.

In 2006 at the age of 14, Cruz immigrated to the United States.

She was awestruck on student's lacked discipline and respect towards elders and authorities.

Cruz attended Poly for all four years.

In her freshman year she started writing short stories for relatives to read.

Cruz started writing for the Poly Optimist in her sophomore year.

"Journalism has definitely made

me the inquisitive and persevering person that I am today" Cruz said.

In her junior year she participated in a summer program at Princeton University under the Junior Association Scholarship.

In her senior year, Cruz led Poly's Aca Deca team to their first regional championship in Sacramento. Cruz graduated Poly with Summa Cum Laude which is an honor reserved for students with a perfect academic record.

Cruz stated "AP classes and Aca Deca really taught me self-discipline and perseverance when it comes to school work."

In her years at Poly, Cruz earned the Principal's Honor Roll from 2007-2009, as well as Advanced Placement Scholar.

From 2008-2010 she got an award for Academic Decathlon team member and in 2009-2010 Cruz was a Discus Award Winner-All around student.

In 2010 she was a recipient of Asian American Pacific, Christa McAuliffe and California Scholarship Federation scholarships.

In Cruz's senior year, her top choices were Columbia and Princ-



Cruz graduation from Berkley

Photo Provided by Cruz

eton, unfortunately she was not accepted.

Cruz was left with two choices. UC Berkeley or UCLA, her final choice was Berkeley.

"In retrospect, I'm glad I ended up at UC Berkeley. I absolutely enjoy doing research and UC Berkeley is a premier research university, so it was a perfect fit for me."

On May of 2014 Cruz graduated from UC Berkeley, with high honors and degree in Bachelor of Arts with a double major in English and Rhetoric. In her senior year Cruz wrote her

Honors Thesis.

This is a major research project that she worked on for an entire year with the guidance of two or more professors.

Cruz was also on the Dean's Honor List, Honor's to date recipient- given to students who maintain a grade point of 3.7 and above.

Four years at UC Berkeley were no joy ride, Cruz says "Procrastination is your worst enemy in college."

Cruz would not have been involved in great opportunities such as the Honors Thesis or being able to be

a reporter for The Daily Californian, being able to help publish a book without getting involved around her community and teachers.

Cruz had also written for The Daily Californian for a year in her freshman year of college.

In addition, she also helped publish a book on Caribbean musicians, interned for the Anthem Press in London England, and wrote for some online magazines.

As of August, Cruz has been attending George Washington University Law School in Washington D.C. She chose law instead of English because she wanted to do something outside of academia.

"Just work really hard" Cruz says as she pushes through the difficulty and rigor given to her.

She applied for scholarships and took out loans, but it wasn't enough to cover tuition and living expenses, however through the help of friends and family she is able to continue on her journey.

"I wanted to let my family know that I appreciate their sacrifice and support," Cruz says.

Cruz's motivation to continue on and not give up derived from her family, friends, and desire to succeed.

As Cruz reflects with the Optimist about her years of success and difficulty she advises fellow parrots "The college office at Poly is a great resource, so always ask if there are any college representatives coming and go listen in during their presentations."

She wants to be the kind of person that people look up to, "I want people to acknowledge my perseverance, and that perseverance is key."

Poly Grad Pursues Activist Leadership Role at UC Davis

Armando Figueroa becomes third Chicano Student Body President at UC Davis

By Emily Pintor
Staff Writer

Armando Figueroa was a former Poly student who is now blazing trails at University California Davis, especially in social justice activism.

Figueroa wrote for the Optimist and went on to UC Davis where he is majoring in Sociology and Chicano Studies, two subjects that are dear to him. "I noticed really quickly that I was really big on social issues. They always seemed to resonate with me because I realized my community was affected greatly by the larger systems Sociologist and Ethnic studies address" said Figueroa.

Figueroa would like to seek a career in Education Policy and reform. English classes were a big help to him not only in education, but in life overall. "There is no such thing as over thinking" is a constant quote Figueroa fondly remembers.

When asked of his experiences at Davis Figueroa stated, "I love UC Davis! I knew I had a golden opportunity that I couldn't mess up. I was just grateful someone in admissions took a gamble on me and so I decided very early on to become involved in the Davis community and never stop giving back to it."

Since his Freshman year Figueroa has been extremely involved in his Davis community. He participates in government and Peer Advising programs.



Armando Figueroa on UC Davis campus

Photo provided by Figueroa

This year Figueroa is the third Chicano Associated Students University of California Davis president out of the 100 leaders they have had. This accomplishment is a sort of double edged sword, Figueroa stated, "It makes me extremely proud although, I really do wish it wasn't the case. It's a huge indication on how much work California's public University systems still needs to properly represent California's population."

In addition to being involved in his student community, Figueroa is also an avid protestor. His fighting spirit was noticed here at Poly when

he partook in the protest against the cut of Poly's French program.

Figueroa led a student protest and sit-in at Poly's quad. Later, sitting in the hallway of the administration office Figueroa forced Poly's principal Gerardo Loera to step over Figueroa to access his office. He elaborated on this saying "I saw the cut as extremely problematic and inherently racist. The large Chicano/Latino population at Poly was narrowly limited to only Spanish to fulfill the students' foreign language needs, as opposed to giving them diverse opportunities."

Northern California is also

experiencing Figueroa's passionate nature. "I've been involved in the greater Occupy movement in San Francisco and Davis' protests against the lack of state support for education. Also, even more global and controversial movements such as the current actions taking place for Palestinian human rights."

In the Occupy movement, Figueroa was a part of a peaceful protest that focused on tuition increases and the dwindling access to higher education. Figueroa was outraged when he and other activists witnessed UC Davis officers pepper spraying peaceful protesters. At the time, the protest made national new headlines.

Figueroa is extremely adamant

about speaking up for those voices in society that cannot. "It's something that will always follow me no matter what my position or environment. It's always way more convenient to be silent and complacent, but power and authority, are things in my opinion, that need to be broken down and questioned," said Figueroa.



Police Pepperspray student protestors

Photo provided by Figueroa

CAMPUS

New Man with Many Words

Poly Seniors work with new teacher.

by Emily Pintor
Staff writer



Photo By Victor Garcia

New English teacher Mark Bilovsky joins the ranks of Poly English and AP teachers. The new AP Literature teacher attended UC Santa Cruz. He is recently married and shares two cats, Burt and Ernie, with his wife. Bilovsky is well traveled and has been to 46 states and 9 different countries. "If I had my way, I'd travel the world all year long" said Bilovsky.

Prior to Poly, Bilovsky lived in Santa Cruz and taught at Harbor High School and North Monterey County High School, both small, rural schools.

The Valley native went to Granada Hills High School and graduated class of 2002. He participated in the marching band and is still in close contact with his high school friends.

Teaching offers fulfillment for Bilovsky. "I like taking these unfamiliar concepts and making students see how they relate to their own lives" said Bilovsky. "A lot of

books in English are written by dead white men and it is easy for students to dismiss them without a glance. I see my job as the bridge between that gap".

For Bilovsky, students are the easiest part of teaching. "I love hearing about what clubs people are in, what they do with their extra time, and what they are into. Teenagers continue to impress me with their interests and ability to cope with serious issues" said Bilovsky.

Books have had a huge influence on Bilovsky's love for English, but more importantly, the art of teaching itself has had a greater impact on his career choice. "I think learning is part of being human. There is no one that hates learning and I love being part of that process" stated Bilovsky.

Bilovsky is the son of a retired teacher and principal, so growing up he believed he was not going to continue on that same path. "After a while I realized that every job I had, the things I liked the most about the job had to do with teaching. I loved training new employees, working with youth, and I loved talking about books and writing. I think I was the last one to realize that this is what I was going to end up doing."

Bilovsky says of Poly that "Teachers are dedicated and are doing extra work, administrators have student interest at the heart of all of their actions, and the students work hard and are strong advocates for themselves. It is a wonderful environment to be in".



From the Office to the Classroom

by Kate Martinez
Staff writer

Gracie Banuelos continues to make history at Poly with her first official teaching job as a new History teacher.

Banuelos has been on Poly grounds for a while, working ten years as a secretary. She started out at Beyond the Bell, a program which provides afterschool courses to aid students. Banuelos then worked as a substitute for LAUSD for about six months.

"I worked really hard and attended college at the same time, finishing my education."

She is extremely passionate about US history saying, "I was supposed to major in English, and when I took two history classes, it just changed my whole way of thinking. The classes were not boring for me, they were interesting ... That's when I knew history was for me".

Banuelos loves being a teacher and enjoys having a positive effect on her students. "It's really rewarding to be a positive influence to students that need just a smile sometimes ... someone positive to help them through these dif-

ficult teenage years."

Her inspiration for pursuing a teaching career derived from her 6th grade teacher, Mr. Reed. "He was the type of teacher that saw the good in everybody and focused on that. He knew the negatives of his students, but he grasped on to their positives and just worked off of that".

"He made it so exciting, that we were eager to learn. He was tricking us into learning boring subjects; he would hype it up so much that it was just fun." said Banuelos.

Banuelos's motto is to treat others the way you want them to treat you. "I believe if you respect people, smile to people, and treat them well, you will end up being treated well in return."

She says the easiest part about teaching is being supportive and encouraging. "It's in my nature, it's naturally who I am."

Banuelos believes the most difficult part is attempting to help a student that keeps turning her down. "It's sad and hard to not be able to capture all the students equally ... to see them choose not to do well when they're able to."

But all work and no play, makes Banuelos a dull lady, which is why she has a life outside of Poly. She's happily married, with three children:

Javier, Daniel, and her baby girl Crystal.

Cooking is her passion and there was a time when she watched nothing but cooking shows, especially her favorite show Diner, Drive-ins and Dives. She said she likes to cook many dishes; Mexican (which she grew up with), Italian, Chinese, etc.

Another passion of hers is music. Banuelos played piano for six years and has a wide range of genres she enjoys. "Anything that makes me move and that has rhythm and beat, I love it. Because I also love dancing" laughed Banuelos.



Gracie Banuelos Photo by Victor Garcia



HOMECOMING 2014



Photos By Victor Garcia, Michael Manzano & Jonathan Femat

ENTERTAINMENT

By Emily Pintor
Staff writer

The world's smallest woman, a lobster handed man, and a pair of conjoined twins are just a few of the so called

IT'S A FREAK SHOW

'freaks' the new season of American Horror Story has to offer. These unique characters are a lot more than the surface shows.

American Horror Story Freak Show, set in Jupiter, Florida in the 1950's, did not disappoint last Wednesdays night. Viewers got a sight of the horrific and unique characters this season will explore.

Again creators and producers Ryan Murphy and Brad Falchuk create a beautifully horrific world that weirdly parallels our common day lives. The Freaks are merely seeking somewhere to belong and be a part of.

Fraulein Elsa Mars (Jessica Lange) is the ring leader and star of this season's new plot. Her circus is facing some difficulties, little revenue and only two customers. She sets her sites on Bette and Dot Tattler, conjoined twins (Sarah Paulson), in hopes of giving her failing business a surge of life.

Though Bette and Dot share the same body, they do not share the same beliefs. There is a clear struggle that is seen between the sisters. Bette is skeptical and controlling while Dot seems

to be carefree and child-like.

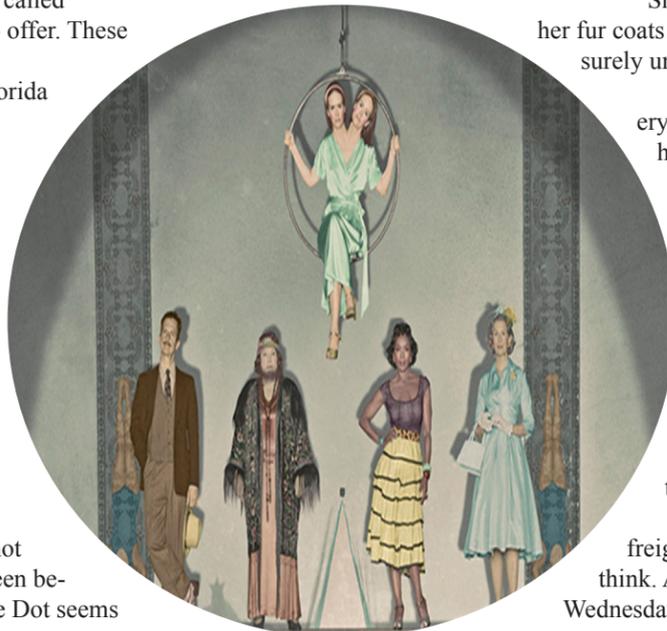
Mars wants to be a star and will do anything to achieve it. She is charming and sharp and her charisma vibrates through her fur coats and dark sunglasses. Her motives and challenges will surely unravel later through the series.

She believes her new group of freaks will lead everyone, or at least Mars, into stardom. Whether the freaks are happy or not, the circus is the safest place for them to be.

One of the most mysterious characters noted in the first episode is the violent clown who constantly patrols the city for his next victim. He has the same ghastly expression on his face and says nothing, but his motives may be linked to a dire experience the viewers will learn of later.

The characters deal with more hardships than just their deformities. They have to constantly hide in the shadows and when they finally step out, they face violence. Almost all of the 'freaks' are kind-hearted and share the same values as any other person.

Though it is a freak show full of unusual and almost frightening characters, they may be more similar to us than we think. American Horror Story Freak Show can be seen every Wednesday on FX.



Word Bank

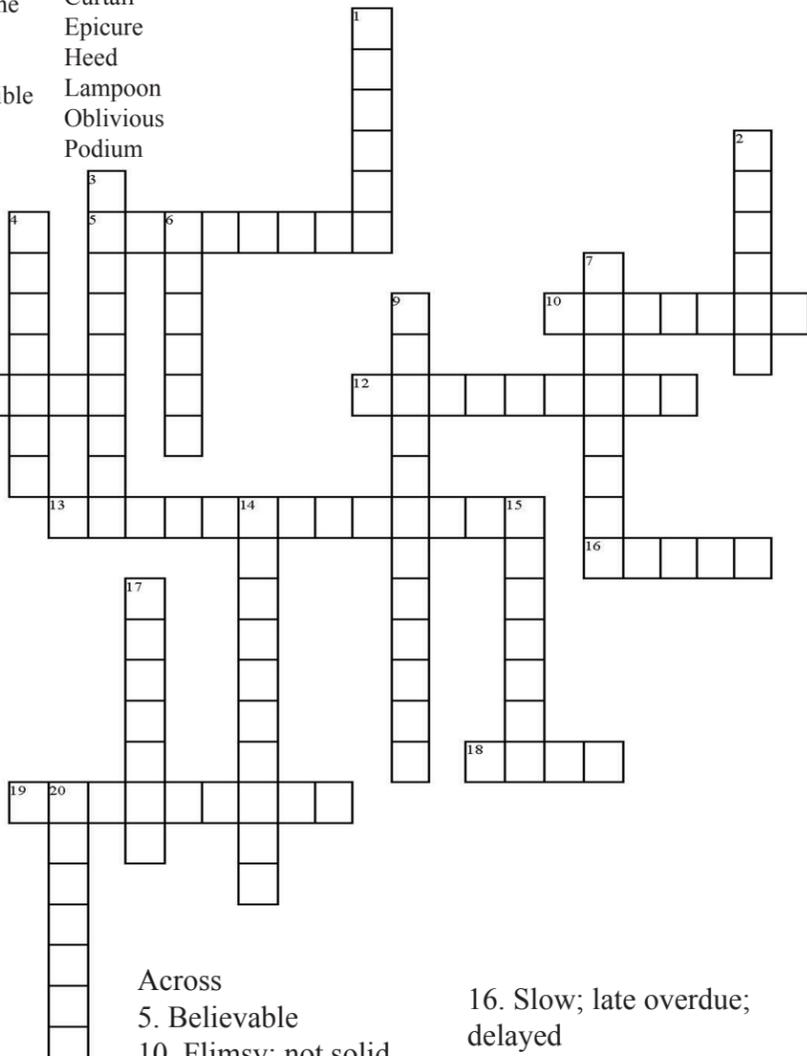
- Abrogate
- Blasphemy
- Credible
- Enigma
- Harbingers
- Labyrinthine
- Nuzzle
- Plaudit
- Reprehensible
- Tardy
- Acquiesce
- Bombast

SAT Crossword Puzzle

- Curtail
- Epicure
- Heed
- Lampoon
- Oblivious
- Podium

- Down
1. cuddle; snuggle
 2. raised platform
 3. to agree to; give in to
 4. cut short
 6. puzzle; mystery
 7. echoing
 8. statement giving strong praise
 9. complicated; highly convoluted
 14. indicators; bringers of warnings
 15. someone who appreciates good food and drink
 17. arrogant, pompous language
 20. ridicule; spoof

- Across
5. Believable
 10. Flimsy; not solid
 11. Cancel; deny; repeal
 12. Totally unaware
 13. Shameful; very bad
 16. Slow; late overdue; delayed
 18. Listen to
 19. Speech which offends religious sentiments



Game of Thrones



Sudoku

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

SPORTS

Friday Night Fight

By Michael Manzano
Staff writers

In the rival game against North Hollywood, tensions peaked when two players from both teams started to brawl.

After multiple attempts by the referees, Poly administrators intervened to

break up the fight.

The hot-headed bunch were finally disbanded. Although Poly scored a few more touchdowns, Poly leaves the game with a loss.



Referee stops the brawl.

Photo by Victor Garcia



Photo by Jonathan Femat

By Jonathan Femat
Staff Writer

Poly's offensive right guard, Anthony Luna is sidelined for the season after receiving a traumatic brain injury, in an off campus game at Helen Bernstein High School.

A traumatic brain injury occurs when an external force traumatically injures the brain.

Luna stated "It was a play where I had to pull and lead block for the running back and myself, then a lineman and I collided helmet to helmet we fell back due to the impact".

The consequence for a concussion injury in California is players have to be sidelined for at least a week before returning to play.

Though doctors told Luna he could not play for six weeks, his coach said otherwise and ended Luna's season early, due to health concerns.

Tackled out of season

Luna was expecting to play for the entire season but due to his injury he will no longer play his last year at Poly.

He stated "it sucks because it's my senior year and I wanted to play with all the people I started with."

Parrots conquer Knights

Girls tennis prevail on the court.

by Kate Martinez
Staff writer

Poly girls' tennis team conquers SOCES in a home game with a score of 5-2, on October 13, 2014.

Girl's tennis coach, Evan Rabins stated, "A great effort from our girls,

Homecoming Defeat



Photo by Victor Garcia

By Jonathan Femat & Kate Martinez
Staff writers

The Parrots their fourth home loss of the season Friday night, a 26-14 shellacking. Poly now ranks last in the East Valley League. Undeclared Arleta and Grant are one and two respectively. To get out of being last in the ranks Varsity coach, Jose Campos said "we've got to try to win two out of the next three games."

The Parrots got off to a slow

start, trailing 20-6 at the half. Behind 26-6 after three, the parrots cashed in on a short drive to make the final score respectable.

"I feel that we didn't execute very well, we can't dictate a win without scoring points offensively. All and all I think we played well, we just didn't execute, if we did we would've come out victorious." stated Campos.

Campos praises his star players, "I don't like to single anyone out but our most experienced and returning players like our

quarter back Scott Diaz, wide receiver George Willkon, and linemen Javier Uribe and Anthony Luna." Both line backers are on the injured list.

Injuries continue to plague the parrots with overall 13 players on the injured list, with 9 previously injured and 4 from Friday's game; Erick Espinoza, Edgar Rodriguez, Aaron Esqueda, and Scott Diaz.

The Dons will entertain Grant on Friday, while poly goes on the road to play league-leading Arleta.

Parrots spiked by Mustangs

By Jonathan Femat
Staff writer

The Poly Parrots'

Volleyball team lost Monday's home conference match against Arleta by a score of 3-2. The Parrots were off to a great start with the first match ending 27-25.

The Mustangs took revenge leaving the Parrots in the dust 25-6. The Parrots quickly took charge ending the third set at 25-14.

The fourth set ended at a close match with Mustangs in the lead at 25-20.

Parrots held off the Mustangs 15-6 ending the last set of the game with the Mustangs in the lead.

The Parrots last faced the Mustangs on September the 15, and lost the game 3-0. Parrots came back but lost by one set on Monday's home game.



Karen Garcia blocks the ball. Photo by Victor Garcia

as our best player was out sick. Basically, everyone shifts up a spot, and the girls performed heroically, for the most part."

Number one singles player, Rosset Limbo unable to play on Monday, is substituted by number two singles player Angela Lawenko, who won her set 8-2.

Rabins then said, "When Angela is getting her first serve in, she's really, really tough. The poor girl on the other team didn't even see half of them."

"The real hero of the match, though, was Alexia Barrera, who won her first match ever playing singles, against some really solid competition," said Rabins. Barrera won her set with 8-5.

All of Poly girl's doubles players won their sets, "Doubles one was Kristine Aqui and Maria De La Rosa. They were ahead 5-2, yet lost control and fell behind 6-5. From that point on, though, they really played well under pressure and won 8-6."

"A very gratifying year continues!"



Photo by Victor Garcia
Maria De La Rosa racquet ready.