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EL CORAZÓN
— THE HEART —

2023-2024

-A JOURNAL PUBLICATION FOR IMPERIAL VALLEY COLLEGE STUDENTS-

Purpose: To provide students at Imperial Valley College with opportunities to share their work with a wide audience. It will allow students to submit entries in a variety of categories and to be recognized for excellence.

There has been no such campus-wide opportunity for honoring and publishing student academic work.

A project of the Spencer Library faculty and staff, EL CORAZÓN will allow students to present their work, and have selected submissions published and displayed on the library webpage and in the library.

CATEGORIES PRESENTED:



Essays



Poetry



Painting



Music



Drawing



Speech



Photography



Creative
Writing

Mil Gracias...



We want to express our sincere gratitude to Dean Betsy Lane for her vision and dedication in creating the "El Corazon" journal publication. It has become a valuable platform for showcasing the creativity and voices of Imperial Valley College. We also extend our deepest appreciation for your years of tireless service to the college. Your hard work and leadership have undoubtedly left a lasting positive impact on countless students and faculty.



Photography



Jorge Chavez Jr., a Brawley native now calling El Centro home, is on the verge of completing his studies in Nursing at Imperial Valley College. Additionally, he serves as a tutor at the Learning Services Department at IVC. Scheduled to graduate from the Registered Nursing Program in June 2024, he is set to continue his education at San Diego State University, aiming to earn his Bachelor of Science in Nursing this fall 2024. Jorge's aspiration is to become a compassionate and knowledgeable nurse, serving his community and beyond. Inspired by the diverse cultures and fashion of his travels, he finds joy in photography and modeling as personal pursuits.



“Kimono Culture: A Modern Ode to Japanese Culture”

By Jorge Chavez Jr.



“Love Blooms”



“Las Vegas”



Beatriz Ramirez is from Imperial Valley, but she was born in Mexicali, B.C. She likes to reflect on beauty in nature and even on little things that go unnoticed. Currently, she's studying ESL. Her major will be psychology in the future. Her dream is to become a social worker and work with people with disabilities.



Essays

“Enlighten Your Life: Blossom Inside Out”

By Sophia Rubio

Yoga is a form of exercise for spiritual peace, mental and physical health. Yoga is a practice that is meant to promote spiritual balance by relaxation, mental clarity and physical flexibility. In today's society, there are different styles of yoga from Vinyasa, Kundalini or Yin among many others. Yoga can also be practice in different places such as outside with nature, alone inside a room or as they do in modern society “ in yoga class”. Yoga at one point became more of a social trend but it is more than that. I consider yoga a life style, it is a spiritual journey and physical and mental transformation. Regardless of the purpose of why people are practicing yoga, yoga's purpose is to be in touch with your higher self, find balance within yourself and live a healthier more positive life.

Developing a connection with yoga is more than just throwing a mat on the floor and stretching, it's by truly finding who you really are inside so that you can achieve peace and spiritual growth. Waking up at 4:30 am or 5 am to do yoga was at first dreadful. As I laid down on the mat, I was always there physically but mentality I could not sync my body, mind and soul. I would begin with my overthinking, I couldn't relax. I would re-center myself and began to listen to my breathing, that would help me focus again. I needed to understand more than the analyzation of what I had been, where I was and where I wanted to be. I needed to learn how to be in the moment. At first, I just couldn't understand the depth of yoga but it became a need. My body did not feel yoga as a workout but as nurture to my body, mind and spirit. Although many perceive yoga as option to maintain physical health, you can seek also healing, mental wellness and spiritual growth in this practice because it is an evergrowing journey.

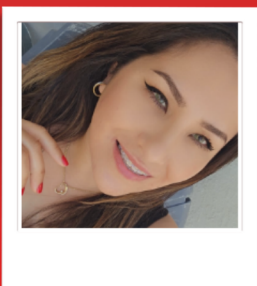
As I laid there on the floor, on my yoga mat, surrounded by a bunch of people, I said to myself: how am I supposed to relax here with a bunch of sweaty people around me taking up my oxygen! I hope I do not get a whiff of someone because eww! After my first official yoga class was over, I head back to my friend's house. My friend was the yoga instructor at that gym. She asked me if wanted to practice a Reiki session and I agree to! Her room was pitch black. She lit some candles and gather 7 rocks of different colors; she called them crystals. She placed these crystals aligned to my body vertically. As she played relaxing music she told me to breathe and to have specific thoughts. I couldn't relax, she noticed the tension in my breathing. She asked me to breathe a specific way and that managed me to relax my body. Then she asked me to relax my brain, to clear of any thoughts and just listen to her voice. As I started to drift into the sound of her voice, her breathing, I can feel her put her hands over my for head, then she would tap the middle of my for head, and place her palm. She repeated these movements as I felt a tiny draft going over my body. She went silent and just breathed, I started to drift into sleeping mode but at the same time I was conscious. I asked myself, is this was relaxing feels like? She asked me to repeat " I am letting go of what does not serve me". I repeated, and she asked me to pray to my god, to who every I believed in, whom ever I set my faith to and so I did. At that point religion did not matter, what mattered was faith. After what felt like 30 min, my friend stop. She said she could not go further because there was something there that was too strong and too heavy. I knew what she referred to but how can I speak about spirituality to someone who is learning spirituality and was not born with it. During the beginning of my yoga journey, I came across books that my friend kept through her practice and educational journey on yoga. The book that made an emotional connection in my life was called Light on Life by Bellur Kishnamachar Sundararaja (B.K.S.) Lyengar. Lynegar is a wise man, a yoga guru. His origins are from India and he is known for his yoga practice. The tone in the book of Light on Life is philosophical and soothing. As I read his book, the majority of his philosophical statements made sense to my doubtfulness. In B.K.S.'s book he said: “Yoga is like music: the rhythm of the body, the melody of the mind, and the harmony of the soul create the symphony of life.”. A beautiful quote that did not make much sense because it seem like yoga poetry and I loved it. But after months of doing yoga, without noticing, I caught on to the rhythm of my life. This open-up the path to mental wellness and spiritual growth. Society might see yoga as just another exercise or another fad but there is more meaning behind just a stretch. You can recognize yogies when you see them walking around with their roll-up mat! Some yogis wear spandex clothing (super tight workout clothe) or you can see them wear loose light clothe (this is more my style).

You can recognize a yoga session when you see individual practicing poses that hold still, have long flowing movements or even laying down flat on their backs. A yoga session gives you time to breathe as you follow the flow of poses, also it helps you accept the moment. Practices like Integral yoga helps you be in touch with your higher self.

Getting in touch with your higher self through meditation and stretches is peaceful. Achieving a certain level concentration is not easy but with Ujjayi breathing, Sun Salutation and Lyengar yoga, it will help you connect with your mind and body. Doing this practice has allowed me to connect with my higher self. On a daily basis these practices have helped me analyze who I have been and who I want to be. I project myself to serve one purpose: that is to be a woman of God, a good woman to the universe, to have strong faith, and to bring light in others' lives. When you are able to connect with your higher self, you find a balance not only spiritually but you also find physical balance. You have to remember "the body is the foundation for balance in life" (Lyengar). The Sun Salutation is yoga practice that has educated me on how to get in-touch with my higher self through poses and it has taught how be in touch with my third eye. The Sun Salutation poses means that you are spiritually giving thanks to life, to your god, to whomever you believe in, for another day. I find it best to do the Sun Salutation during the day, for me early morning in order to project myself on how to be a better person than I was the day before, to control my breathing promoting more patience. I root myself to this earth to try to balance my chakras by listening to my body, to my energy. All is a reflection of yoga practice that becomes part of my spiritual growth. Learning the balance of the body; controlling your body language, your breathing and controlling your thoughts, it develops knowledge on how you react to things in life. You find a balance mentally and spiritually meaning you are aligning your chakras and this will help you awake your third eye. Chakra balancing consist of aligning you 7 internal elements. The elements are based on air, fire, water space, light and cosmic energy. These elements are aligned vertically from your crown of your head to your pelvic. The 7 chakras are: crown, third-eye, throat, heart, solar plexus, sacral and root. These chakras are the scale inside that you need to heal in order to find healing and balance in your life. The healing of the chakras is what helps you grow spiritually. Every chakra has a way to be taken care of, how you take care of yourself is what you feed into yourself. Just like a flower, if you give it dirty water, it might not blossom. Think positive, speak positive, feel positive, eat right do not abuse your body, center yourself, your environment will feed your energy. Every chakra represents and helps a part of you! It helps with anxiety, overthinking, stress! how you think, how you reflect, how you speak, how you love yourself, how you feel, how you define yourself, and how you preserve yourself, all chakras are a reflection of you inside; you cannot lie to yourself of you truly are inside. Yoga is a mirror of the inside out, before your yoga journey, would you take a look in the mirror?

I believe learning about the Reiki sessions, chakra balancing, the Flower of Life and the different styles of yoga has given me a depth understanding that yoga is more than just physical endurance. Having a 6th sense is not only from the movies but it is real in the spiritual realm. There I was, thinking that the Lotus was a pretty symbol used for propaganda and that the chakras were just made-up "elements" also for propaganda but having a deeper understanding of yoga has taught me more than just its origins. There is a specific reason why the lotus flower was selected to represent yoga; the "Flower of Life" has a beautiful meaning. The chakras explain the connection your body was with yoga and the spirituality behind yoga is more than just believing; its hearing, perceiving and growing. It all just connects!

Yoga was life changing for me. I can't do much physically now, since postpartum I pulled-out the nerve that held the last two lumbar on my spine. I limp now, I can't be on my feet more than 20 min or walk for more than an hour. I wait impatiently on my appointment for back surgery. I have my yoga mats that I pull out to try to stretch. I still sit down and meditate and try not to awaken the spiritual realm, from ujjayi breathing to pranayama breathing is what I am sticking to. I learned about mantras chants and hand mantras that express your energy and so much more. I practice yoga now my way, I have taken what I have learned and made it Sophie's style. It might not be the most authentic way but it is original and the outcome is just right for my body, my soul, my mental wellness and my spiritual journey. I know once I have back surgery I will have to go through another journey; my comfort is that yoga will be there for me every step on the way.



Sophia Rubio was born in Santa Maria, CA. She is currently a Plant Science major with the heart of a writer. Her artistic dream is to become an Author with the No. 1 best selling book across the nation. Poetry and Narratives are dear to her heart as inspiration flows through her words. Her goal in writing is for her words to touch people's hearts and for emotions to mark people's souls.

“The Black Panthers: The Blueprint of Trial and Error”

By Jazmine Jones

America when Jim Crow was in full effect was extremely unforgivable and hostile towards a certain group of people. Black Americans would be treated poorly, often at times they were murdered and convicted of crimes they did not do. This law enforced segregation amongst Blacks and Whites, which began immediately after the 13th Amendment was ratified. Slavery was abolished, but Jim Crow was an underhanded continuation of it. In 1865, Jim Crow was born and did not end until 1965 when it was met face to face with the revolution of Civil Rights. It may have reached its demise shortly after, but the bloody past would still leave its residue and aftershocks on America. Blacks, and those in support of them would go out into the streets and into establishments peacefully protesting. Even though they were being non-violent, they were faced with extreme violence and brute force. Those carrying out these actions were typically law enforcement and their White counterparts. Many individuals who would cause the protesters such chaos often were never reprimanded or punished for the hate crimes they committed. Those committing those lewd and horrific acts were praised and glorified, which would create further cases of innocent people being harmed. Bloodshed and fear really did encourage others to carry out the same destruction. A group would come a decade later to change the narrative of peaceful Black Protests. The Black Panthers would originate and begin their journey as a prominent Civil Rights organization. The newfound leaders and originators, Huey Newton and Bobby Seale, would both share the same upbringings with one another. Both of their families fled the south. Newton's family arrived in Oakland from Louisiana, and Seale's family arrived from Texas. Jim Crow was alive and well, to Oakland, California, where they would meet. Their shared story is one of many Black families on the West Coast. This would be known as the second wave of the Great Migration. Jim Crow pushed out many families that were suffering from the hands of racism. Many if not all of those families were in search of better opportunities when it came to work, so that played a part in the mass movement. Even though they were in a new environment, racism wasn't dead at all. They were faced with many of the same issues that they faced in the South, and it was often played out by the law enforcement in their communities. Huey Newton and Bobby Seale were heavily motivated by their first hand encounters with racism, and it drove them to join certain groups as well as leaving certain organizations. Huey was heavily involved with activist organizations at every school he attended, from high school to college. Bobby was in the U.S. Air Force for 3 years and was discharged for bad conduct. He then enrolled at Merritt College in Oakland, and met Huey Newton. They would then join forces and brainstorm one of the biggest pivots in Civil Rights history. “Segregation now, segregation tomorrow, and segregation forever.” would be stated boldly by Gov. George Wallace in Montgomery, Alabama in 1963. In 1965, Jim Crow would be abolished, and the Black Panthers would be introduced by Huey Newton and Bobby Seale for the very first time.

The Black Panthers knew exactly how to fight and what exactly to target. Due to their leaders being born and raised in areas where Jim Crow was extremely prevalent, there was a deep passion and understanding on how to approach the Civil Rights movement. Huey and Bobby were tired of seeing Black Americans horrifically getting beaten down in the streets, so there had to be another way. Knowing how to defend one's self was important to the Panthers. They made sure to implement education on these matters in the community. Seale would be sharp in this area due to his previous experience in the military. The teaching of how to operate firearms and how to properly operate in hand to hand combat would put more of a halt to the senseless beatings of Black Americans who did not fight back in the name of peaceful protesting. Self defense classes would be taught in these communities, as well as many other forms of education. One thing that was valued more than anything to the Panthers was education. Education was the main thing they implemented to Black Americans, so Liberation Schools were created. These schools would teach the Black History that schools completely avoided. I can definitely see why this was important to them.

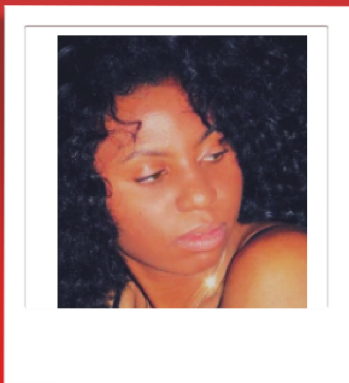
In modern day society, we have states like Florida that are making it their mission to completely remove Black history from being taught in schools. They were already experiencing this in the 60s and beyond. The Panthers believe that the teaching curriculum back then didn't properly prepare Black students for the life they had before them. Many of the things taught in schools back then were believed to be “one size fits all” teachings. A lot of the time it caters to a certain child, and wouldn't be seen as relatable to all children of all races. Along with the Liberation Schools, nearly two dozen social and education programs would be in operation by the Black Panthers. Free breakfast, Health Care, cash aid, food provision, transportation, and even Sickle Cell Screenings would be examples of what they brought to poor Black Americans. They also made sure to fight the good fight when it came to defending the party.

There were very remarkable women in the Party such as Assata Shakur and Angela Davis. These women would be extremely notable within the whole party as well as their communities. Assata Olugbala Shakur's name has a significant meaning. Assata means "she who struggles", Olugbala means "for the people", and Shakur stands for "the thankful one". This is a West African name Assata began to use once she rejected her birth name, or "slave name" as she describes it as. Miss Assata has a name that is very much so symbolic. It definitely is something she lived up to in the utmost way. She definitely struggled for the people, and was completely thankful for it all. No matter all the hardships she faced, she knew it was all for a bigger purpose. She and the Black Panther movement paved a way for all the Black Americans facing discrimination in every way possible in the 1960s and prior to. She fought so much until she went into exile in 1979 to Cuba. That's where she fled when she escaped federal prison. Imagine being born in 1947 when the Jim Crow laws were alive and well. Everything is so segregated that you couldn't even live amongst anyone who wasn't from your race, while the law was only enforced onto your kind. That would make anyone upset and hungry for justice. It just takes a special kind of bravery to be a leader and fight against it, let alone be a woman of color while achieving it. They painted her as this monster, along with the Black Panther movement. They were very much so active in their communities in the most positive way. They provided education, confidence, funding, and aid to the residents whether it meant food, medical, or whatever desired to help them thrive. Pretty much everything needed to build a successful community, they made sure they had it available. Imagine watching the very same community you've done any and everything to keep at a certain level start building themselves up. You placed laws in place to make sure they wouldn't prosper, an education system made to keep them unaware of themselves and their history, and not providing them justice when it came to their innocent blood being shed at your hands. Anyone would get tired of you, but the brave ones who do risk their lives for their communities. Happily, bravely, and gratefully. Angela Davis is one of the widely known political activists here in the United States. She's so widely known that John Lennon and Yoko Ono have written two songs about her. The title of the songs would be "Angela" and "Sweet Black Angel". Davis is also a professor that has written about and gave lectures on social rights and social injustice. One of her main focuses was on the dismantling of the Prison Industrial Complex. She would be a valid advocate due to her experiencing false imprisonment and having her own experience being in the prison system. In an interview Angela goes into detail stating, "It's important to point out there is a corporate stake in this, not just the criminal justice system" (Davis 02:58). She discusses that the prison system is moved more so by money. Many times, innocent people are falsely incarcerated only to be looked at as money generators. There are many people who will never get years of their lives back due to this industrial complex. Corporations seek multi-million dollar contracts with state governments. The total amount of money made off of every person incarcerated, is over \$74 billion, and raises every single year. Out of the passion she has for dismantling this system, she has created an organization called Critical Resistance, which works to abolish the prison-industrial complex. It originated in 1997 and has been in operation ever since.

The Panthers opened free health clinics across the country. They believed everyone should have the right to health, as well as have access to it. Their goal was to provide community-based health care while it also had roots in the Civil Rights Movement. Two activists who were also physicians banned together and created the first US community health centers, one in Boston and one in Mount Bayou, Mississippi. Sickle Cell Anemia is a disease that mostly affects people of African descent. It's extremely painful and can also cause premature death due to the toll it takes on the human body. It was often neglected by doctors due to the lack of care when it came to Black individuals seeking aid from the Health care system. The Sickle Cell Screening program would be created to help individuals receive aid for their positive status, or even discover their status if it has yet to be revealed by previous Health care providers. The Panthers took it into their own hands when it came to screening for this disease since the government and Health care system failed in that area. In 2023, we are facing some of the highest mortality rates when it comes to Black mothers giving birth. Many Black women are dying while giving birth, including their children facing fatalities along with them. The sad thing about it is that it can all be prevented. Often Black women are ignored when it comes to them notifying nurses about issues they are having during birth, including extreme pain that is abnormal. They only seem to jump into action when the woman is halfway towards her demise. In Georgia, a Black family that was birthing a son, underwent him being decapitated during his delivery. This happened last month, and these sorts of horrific occurrences keep happening. This is an example of what the BPP were trying to combat decades ago. They had all of the right intentions, but many things have yet to be resolved. Hopefully we end this once and for all. Around 1968 and 1969, the Panthers began to fall into hot water with the FBI. They were staying within the law, but the FBI and law enforcement began to create ways to illegally destroy them. Misinformation, creating infiltration amongst group members, and carrying out violent attacks against them dismantled the whole party. The composer of "West Side Story" was under the FBI's radar just for being friends with members of the Black Panthers? Leonard Bernstein, found himself taking the stand in defense of his freedom of expression against the FBI. This all started when he carried out a fundraiser for the panthers in his apartment.

The pressure of the FBI forced him to denounce certain friendships out of protection for himself. That can definitely show you how strong their intimidation tactics are, while also showing you how powerful and the amount of fear that was created by the Black Panther movement as well as their potential. The leader of the Chicago chapter, Fred Hampton, was a victim of COINTELPRO. He was violently shot and killed by the FBI, and infiltration was the culprit. One of his group members, William O'Neal, was working with the FBI to eliminate him. Jealousy and envy fueled the member to betray him. A movie called "Judas and the Black Messiah" depicted what occurred in great detail. Many of the members began to break away from the party out of protection of their lives. It took about 20 years for them to come to an end, which sadly came in the mid 1980s. Huey fled to Cuba when he was faced with multiple murder and assault charges. He lived there for 3 years and later came back for trial. He was acquitted of those charges since they were falsified. Another member accused of the same thing, Assata Shakur, also fled to Cuba years after Huey did. The only difference is that she stayed and made Cuba her home, and Huey came back to the states. Newton faced his demise in 1989 and suffered a gruesome death. He was murdered by a member of the Black Guerrilla Families in Oakland, Ca. BGF is a prominent violent Black street gang that had a really bad relationship with the Black Panther Party, due to the Panthers cracking down on those who sold drugs to the Black communities. Providing your own people with self-destructive activities is something that was not tolerated in any shape or form. If a group is fighting to free Blacks from oppression, they will definitely not accept their own people causing oppression on each other for monetary gain. That caused problems that lasted over 20 years. Huey was shot leaving a drug den that was originally a place where he organized Panther meetings. He was shot twice in the face after saying to his killer, "You can kill my body, and you can take my life but you can never kill my soul. My soul will live forever!"

The Civil Rights movement was one that experienced innovation over the more recent years due to the Black Panthers. Still to this day, they have made an impact on history as well as the current social movements that have emerged. This project taught me so much and even had me questioning how I viewed this specific group. It also caused me to have a deeper understanding when it came to why they took their distinctive approach. When you traumatize a group of people, they resort to living certain lifestyles as well as engaging in certain activities. Drugs, gangs, and abuse have been a part of many of the group members' lives before they became Panthers. They once didn't know better just like everyone else who have been in the struggle, yet they had a passion for wanting to help their brothers and sisters. Did I agree with all of the ideologies they may have had? Not at all. What I did admire is their "At all cost" sort of mindset. The Black Panthers made sure to provide communities with everything the residents couldn't get on their own due to their circumstances. When there are certain hindrances in place for certain people, it makes life harder for them in ways one could never understand unless they are a part of that group. They did their best to execute aid for Black Americans in many ways that eventually spread all over the country. Even the United States' government picked up their blueprint when it came to providing school children free breakfast and lunch. The Panthers may have been looked at as a "militant" or "terrorist" organization, but they did a lot for people. Many of their members may not have had the most clean and pristine histories, but they did the best they could to improve the life of circumstances for Black Americans. They may have been infiltrated and targeted by their own members and the FBI. They may have also been destroyed by their own hands as well when it came to their misuse of power, but it taught anyone who ever researched them a valuable lesson. The story of the Black Panthers showed me a clear blueprint of what to do, and what not to do within an organization. No one is perfect in any shape or form, especially leaders. All we can do is fight for what we deem as right to the best of our abilities.



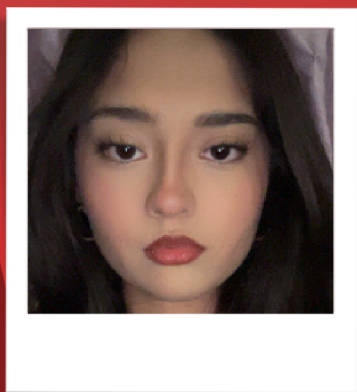
Jazmine Jones is a 25 year old woman who was born in Brawley. She is a new mother to her 4 month old daughter named Paxton. Paxton is her entire world and inspires her in all that she does. Jazmine is an artist who creates writings, paintings, drawings, as well as making clothing. She also has skills in the beauty industry that consists of being a nail artist as well as a body sculptor. She uses her artistic abilities in many areas of her life since it is a skill that she sees as a gift to not only herself, but to others. Jazmine is currently majoring in Nursing, and has a goal to become a nurse practitioner. She will be transferring to San Diego State University to receive her Bachelor degree of Science and Nursing. Jazmine has a love to help and inspire others, as well as making them feel beautiful inside and out.

"Fading Memories: My Movie Stub Collection"

By Celeste Garibay

I like to think that everybody has their 'thing'. The 'thing' that they can't get enough of, when they talk about it their face lights up, and their tone of voice changes. Whether it's books, jewelry, toys, action figures, or movies, there's a 'thing' for everyone. For me, it was those little movie tickets that are given to you when you go in to watch a movie. That's my thing. I've always been a movie nerd and I am proud to be. I love that every time I walk into the movie theater; I get a new experience. A couple of years ago, I just randomly decided that the slip of paper in my pocket was valuable. I'm the type of person who likes to take a lot of pictures or keep every birthday card that is given. I love holding onto memories and keeping movie tickets was just another way of keeping the experiences alive. Nowadays, technology has taken over almost every aspect of our lives, and I am surprised movie theaters are still giving out physical tickets. This just gives me an even bigger reason to collect them and adds so much more value to them. The first movie ticket that I collected had to be for the movie, "Avengers: Endgame". It was such an incredible experience that I wanted to cherish it forever. I grew up with Marvel which is why Marvel films are so prominent in my collection. Although I'm always excited to add different genres: Marvel films, family films, and the rated r movies. Technically, this summarizes the different genres and categories in my collection. As my collection increases, it puts into perspective how much I love films and how they have shaped me. Collecting movie tickets is important because it allows people to keep their memories and experiences alive. My favorite category has to be Marvel film tickets. These are films made by the Marvel Studios company. Marvel and their characters formed a huge part of my childhood, so it is always a priority to bring a film ticket home when I go watch them in the theatre. Marvel films have been constantly hated and described as corny or the oversaturation of movie releases. The thing about Marvel films is that they DON'T lack diversity, genres, or representation. I think that having these Marvel film tickets allows me to keep that memory of Marvel films alive especially since they have made history at the box office. What makes up a Marvel movie is good writing, some of the best lines have stuck with me, and I've used them as motivation in my daily life. Another characteristic is their ability to add humanity to fictional characters, it makes you relate to them, and it becomes much more fun to watch. Marvel films are like pieces of one big puzzle, every film forms a part of the wide cinematic universe. Among the multiple tickets for Marvel films I've collected, the one that stands out the most is my "Endgame" movie ticket. Endgame is a prime example of why movie ticket collection is so important. When Marvel's Endgame was released, it brought together so many fans and nostalgia. My brother and I had anticipated this movie for years, so we got the best seats in the theatre and on premiere night. The movie was a great success and an incredible experience. I know my small insignificant movie ticket will be worth a lot of money in the future. As of right now, Endgame is second at box-office in the alltime list. Marvel constantly inspires me to continue to collect movie tickets. Although Marvel tickets are great, Family film tickets are also a satisfactory part of the collection. These are films that fall under the family comedy genre. Movies have always been there as a coping mechanism when I feel anxious, or something bothers me. In a way, it helps me escape my problems for a bit or if I identify with one of the characters, it makes me feel seen. What makes these film tickets different from the other categories is the fact that I watched them with my family. Growing up, my family couldn't afford to go watch movies often, but now that I am older, I have the privilege to go as often as I like. What's so great about these movies is that they light up your day a little bit, there are rarely any dark themes, and usually pack good soundtracks. A common mistake people make about these movies is that they are cliché, or cringy. The truth is not all movies have the same comedy or plot, in fact, the most unexpected are usually the funniest that the whole family can enjoy. For example, a personal favorite I have is "Alita: Battle Angel". We weren't expecting the movie to be as good as it was, and unfortunately, it was overlooked by a lot of people. My father, older brother, and I went to go watch it one afternoon and for the first time in a while, my dad didn't fall asleep. You'd be surprised how many times, my father walks into the movie theater and ends up falling asleep. The movie was entertaining, fun, and action-packed. Something I would like to add is the importance of family time. Most of the good memories that I have with my family are when we go together to the movies.

Now that I am older, my mother has more anxiety attacks, so she hasn't set foot in the movie theatres for a long time. Although, I will always remember how fulfilling it was to have my entire family watch a movie and pass the popcorn around. It stuck to me, and I plan to do the same with my children. This group is small, but it deserves a category which is Rated R movie tickets. The films that fall under this category are movies that are restricted to audiences under 17 years old unless accompanied by a parent or guardian. Such movies contain strong language, violence, sexual content, or other mature themes that aren't suitable for younger audiences. In this category, I don't have many ticket stubs because I just recently turned 18. Although, I did make a couple of exceptions for certain movies. Rated R movies tend to have a bad reputation because they promote violence. In my opinion, Rated R movies shouldn't be entirely blamed for the violence we see in real life, and are much more than meets the eye. Rated R movies are like rollercoasters for people who seek adrenaline and plots that challenge them. I love it when I sit down and watch a movie that leaves me questioning everything afterward. An example of this is the movie "Everything Everywhere All at Once", this movie was confusing, exhilarating, ridiculous, and yet one of the best films I've seen in a long time. The plot is not as simple, and it requires you to step out of your comfort zone. Archita Kashyap, a writer from YS Life, stated, "As everything occurs simultaneously in the film, the biggest risk is that of the audience getting overwhelmed by the events that unfold. Even if verse jumping is tough to keep up with, the film's essence is its most attractive draw—the philosophy of life." I can agree with this statement, I remember how overwhelming it was to see this movie on the silver screen. There is so much going on that a minor would not be able to comprehend. In the chaos of it all, it made me appreciate movies under this category so much more. Hopefully, Rated R movies will lose their bad reputation and will become more appreciated by more audiences. Above all, I've had people tell me that I am simply accumulating trash in my room. They see these insignificant ticket stubs as more paper that should be thrown away. On the other hand, my best friend told me once, "That is such a smart unique thing to collect." I've known her for a year and our love for movies has strengthened our bond. When she discovered my collection, it was like she entered a whole new world. It inspired her to do the same. She understood the meaning behind it too. It was smart to collect something small like a ticket, where it doesn't ask for much space. It's unique because every ticket is different, it comes from a different movie. Lastly, it is the symbol of nostalgia. I like walking into the movie theatre and knowing that it will be a different experience every time. Instead of taking pictures to conserve memory, I am conserving a ticket to look back on. When I look at my tickets, I remember more vividly who I shared that evening with, if we got popcorn or not, and if we left the movie theatre laughing. I know it sounds silly but it's true. It helps me remember the experience, and that's what the collection is all about.



Celeste Garibay is from El Centro but was born in Mexicali, B.C. Currently, she's pursuing a degree in Business Management. Her ultimate goal is to attend a nearby film school to become a film director/writer. She adores movies more than anything and always cries when watching La La Land. In addition to this, she also finds interest in writing, painting, singing, and playing the guitar.

Poetry



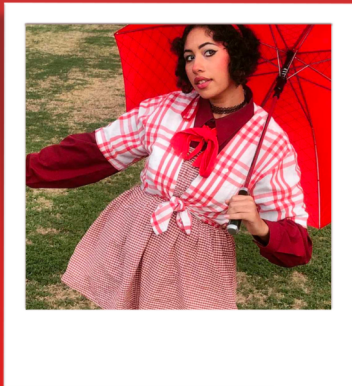
“Poet’s Lament”

By Annaka Penner-Smith

-Pity, Sympathy, and Blank Looks-
It is not worth explaining,
All that would get me is pity I do not deserve
and sympathy I do not want.
I just want to feel seen, heard, felt, and held,
understood without saying anything.

-Mostly-

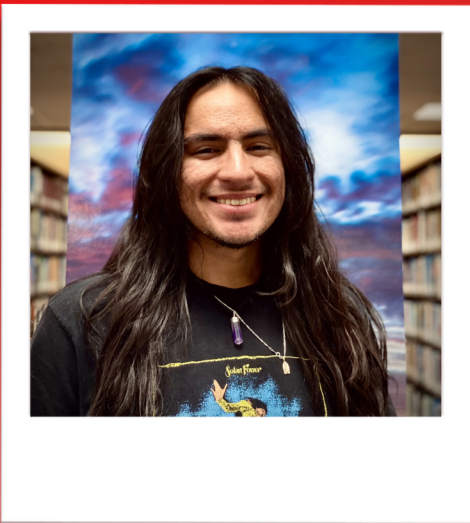
I think my art is good.
I think my poetry is good.
I think I am good,
Mostly, mostly.
- Unappreciated-
I was a melody
You were deaf to it
I was poetry
You were illiterate
You flipped through the pages
In the book, that was me
You liked my pictures well enough
You found them pretty
Pleasing to the eye
Pleasing in your mind
I held your interest
For at least a little bit
It was enough for me
It was enough to be seen
It was enough
For at least a little bit
Till you got sick of it
And now I am left with it
The weight of the pages unread
Poetry left unseen
There was so much depth to me
So much meaning
So many thoughts
Too many feelings
Pressed between the pages
Like flowers crushed beneath
The overwhelming burden
That is me.



Annaka Penner-Smith is currently 23 years old, and is from El Centro. She has lived in the Imperial Valley all her life and has always turned to creative writing as a way to express herself.

"Loss For Those In Wanderlust"

By Alexander Solorio



Alexander Solorio is in his second year at IVC as a Digital Design and Production major, with hopes of transferring to CSU Northridge where he will study Studio Arts. Born in Coachella Valley and raised in the rigidity of the Imperial Valley, Alexander's poetry is often eclectic and inherently personal. Each line is born out of a whimsical drive to deliver a heartfelt message from the inner space of his psyche, reflective to that of the world he sees.

Where do I want to be?
Where do I want to go?
Why won't this world simply let me
Go with the flow?

I've very few steps to follow
My, that's one tough pill to swallow.
Heavy is my mind and somehow still hollow.
That being said, I feel like the 13th Apollo.

Fragility and agility are neither here nor there.
What really matters is the hardship I bare.
Will I ever walk my path without being scared?
In any instance I'm up in the air.

It's nobody's fault, truly
That my mind is of basalt, yes it's rather unruly.
My soul screams for a break, a new fault,
And a future I've built, that I may exalt.

Emotionally I'm in turmoil, all the time.
I simply crave consistency, and, like a mime
I find myself silent, there's hardly a spoken line, and,
If you notice, each of these lines have an obvious rhyme.

As I walk world, seeing its waste and its disparity
I taste the question; the value of my own rarity.
Out of fear, I still look to the sky for familiarity
Saying "mom I miss you, and your sense of clarity."

I think it's just me. I repeat the cyclical one, two, and three.
I think it's just my brain, the way it fears the lightning amid the rain.
The way it can produce the urge to step in front of the train.
In that regard I simply want to be free.

No longer will I sit and ponder the days of past,
God forbid I broaden my horizons so vast.
I mean really, I've no other choice.
I'll fly the colors and sing with my whole voice.

Even if I feel like cannon fodder
I'll have to do it all for my mother and father.
As I explode with the force of the sun,
I'll remind the would that I am their son.

The world around me, however unsoundly
I see myself everywhere no matter how profoundly.
In the desert sun and the deepest ocean.
I set in motion, my love for life, a new devotion.

As I make my way to the land of Oz,
I hope I arrive there, finding my greater cause
And like Dorothy I'll remember it's all up to me,
Happy I will be, in a life that was made my me.

And now I know, that no matter where I go,
I want to be Dorothy, and say: there's no place like home.

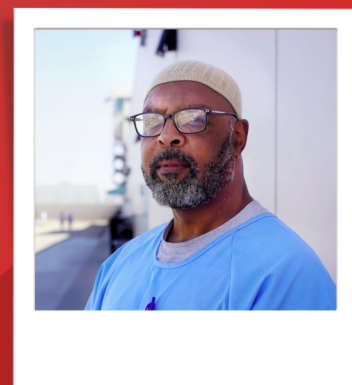
“Life Is My Impetus”

By Robert Smith Jr.

I start this with the thought
That
We should be grateful
That
We were taught—that,
Life is precious
So, I brought the thought back—that,
We should be faithful
At
What we ought...
Yes.
We owe a duty
To the life that brought beauty to life.
Yes.
Back from the darkness
When darkness was solace
Until light,
Came,
Back
Pushing my growth
So that I get the most
Out of life,
And,
Death.
Yes.
Inspired by breath
Waiting to exhale
For those who can not breathe
‘Officer, I can’t breathe’.
When I express that,
I thank God that, I still have life
So that, I may leave, a legacy of life
Because I believe, that life is my
afflatus,
And there is no life after this.
In the darkness,
So that God can bring light,
Back.
Yes.
Then I will see ways
To make the best of me
And I will gaze into the rest of me,
And redact,
That,
Mess.
Yes.
Back into blackness
For life that may lack this

Impulse to live.
Therefore,
In darkness I practice
Humility
Perfecting the ability,
To flourish,
In sorrow.
Because tomorrow,
I know the sun will come out;
Tomorrow.
So, I nourish the thought that,
The sun will come out
And shine,
That gives me courage,
So that
I may shine
Radiance and luminosity,
Without reciprocity,
Because light is selfless.
Yes.
It gives and it gives,
Life,
So that I may live life,
Die and relive life.
Yes.
Life is my Impetus.
I’m inspired by life,
Yes.
Life,
I’m into this,
Life
Which gave birth to the universe
And beyond the earth
Into the 7 earths
The multiverse
Yes
Before the first
Omega
Before the genesis
Before Sega
Segno
Before the atom was alpha
And exploded into beta
Wait-a-minute
How does science fit in it?
Well...
Science is knowledge
And knowledge is life
Therefore, life is infinite
Yes
Life is infinite
Never ending
Sending
Electrical pulses

Into a mind filled with psychosis
Near to insane
Let that be the closest
I get to the darkness of gray matter
Invane
It doesn’t matter
If I take the Lord’s name
Invane
As death approaches
And encroaches upon time
Lord please!
Don’t take my life, I want mine.
I wanna live.
Lord please.
Don’t take my life, I want mine.
I wanna live.
Lord please.
Officer, I can’t breathe...
Mama!
Eli, Eli, Lema Lachtmani.
Lord please.
Yes
Life is my Impetus.



Robert Smith Jr. is an incarcerated individual at Centinela State Prison. He is 53 years old and has been incarcerated for thirty-three years. He was born in Yonkers, New York and after a tumultuous journey, raised in Palm Springs, California. He is Muslim and he believe strongly in rehabilitation through the arts. He is a painter, a poet, a playwright and a spoken word artist. He is a mentor in the Restorative Justice Program and he is a facilitator in the Alternatives to Violence Project. He is a student at Imperial Valley College in pursuit of a degree with hopes that it leads to a Masters.



Speech

“Across the Street From Bitterness”

By Isabella Buckner

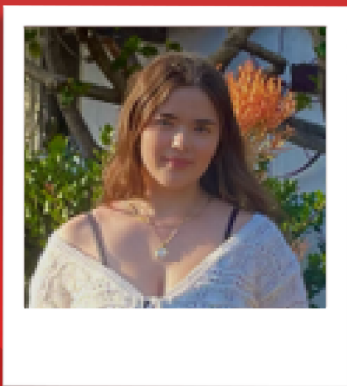
Across the Street From Bitterness

I met a man who took business classes so that his wife, who loved reading to no end, could open a bookstore. I admit I cried. I sobbed like a baby as I thought “This is love. This is love if I’ve ever seen it,” and I felt so happy for this couple I had met for a matter of minutes that I didn’t even have room for jealousy.

I used to be so jealous of people who were happy and successful. I was so bitter that I couldn’t be like them, and it poisoned my perspective of the world. Then I shook hands with a man who casually mentioned he loved his wife so much that he would learn business so she could sell the books she adored. He said it like it was nothing. To him, this was just another thing he would do for her. Something in my heart exploded for this couple and I left our conversation feeling like I was holding onto something great and beautiful.

I think it can be hard to be happy for others when you’re not happy for yourself. And I really, really get it. I was stuck in that perspective for so long. But, lately, I have been seeing love everywhere. On the other side of bitterness, I’m seeing passion. I’m seeing others’ success, others’ love, and I’m imagining myself in their shoes, and I’m seeing what I couldn’t before. I met a gardener who made a successful business by selling plants, and it all started because plants brought back memories of gardening with her late father. I’m imagining myself as her, a child, hands full of soil while pushing seeds into the ground with my father who I love. I’m imagining remembering my childhood with scratched knees, gardening gloves, and my dad every time I sell a fern. I imagine myself as her and my chest bursts with love for this woman I barely know. Instead of jealousy for her connection with nature, I just feel joy. I might’ve been bitter before, hating that she was more successful than me, but now I just see her passion for the natural world and I feel happy. I feel connected.

When you change “That could have been me” to “That’s not me, but it’s still beautiful”, you find the world around you is a lot more lovely than you thought.

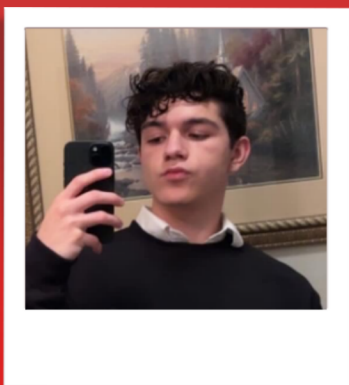


Isabella Buckner is a long time resident of Brawley but was born in Orange County and hopes to soon live in the city or near the beach. Dual majoring in Digital Design & Production as well as Communications, Isabella enjoys all things creative and imaginative. Her hobbies include designing, reading, photography, and romanticizing the small things in life.

“Self-Reflection”

By Damien Hurtado

There is something truly significant about pondering upon our wildest dreams and our current situations. When you're going through tough phases of your life, it's always important to provide yourself with soledation at the right moment. Sure, friends and family serve as a great distraction, but what do you think about when you're not with them? That's when your darkest thoughts shape inside your mind. Instead of giving the power and resources for those negative thoughts to thrive, think about where you've been in the past and all the hardships you as an individual have overcome. Give yourself credit for every influential action you have provided not only to others around you, but most importantly to yourself. Think about an unimaginable joyful future where your dreams and goals are all accomplished. Put yourself in a position where you have the mentality to do so. Look forward to a brighter future no matter how impossible those goals may seem. Work up to those same goals because no matter how hard you try, even if you don't make it to the very top, you will end up in a higher place than you could've been if you didn't give it a chance. It doesn't all have to happen at once. Instead, give it time. Give yourself time. Now, this may sound crazy to some, but during that time alone talk to yourself. When you listen to your thoughts, you are listening to yourself. Get an idea of what you truly want to do with your life. No matter how old you are, there will always be something worth searching for to find true happiness. The pursuit of happiness is something everyone is in search of, so go ahead and pursue your happiness no matter the cost. Commitment in relationships, friendships, or even in the workplace come from inner happiness, so commit to yourself primarily. Find true happiness with yourself. I want to encourage everyone to sit alone for one or multiple hours, and just think.



Damian Hurtado was born and raised in Calexico, California. He's majoring in Studio Arts and plans to transfer to study Animation. He hopes to accomplish his life long dreams to provide entertainment, pride, and confidence to others around the world not only through his art but through his words and actions as well.

“HOPE”

By Jesse Torres

Everything tests man, says the gods, so that he
he robustly nurtured, learns to give thanks for all, And
understands the freedom, to set out to where he will—F. Hilderli
Only when we are no longer afraid do we begin to live. The
idea is to use your situation/circumstance as a starting
point, not an endpoint. A genuous is not born but educated
and trained. Do you want to be right or do the right thing?
Everything you lack should make you appreciate what you
have. You learn by living. Our lived experiences is an expertise.

We take what we have for granted and often have
to lose-it to realize its value. Jesse there is only one thing
you have to change in this life? and that is Everything!
Paiadigm shift. You don't need to have a lot to do a lot.
Progress is progress. Sometimes were tested not to show
our weaknesses, but to discover our strengths. Our choices
reveal what we truly believe and value. The difference
between a good day and a bad day is often a few productive
and healthy choices made at decisivre moments. We make
a few changes, but the results never seem to come quickly
and so we slide back into our previous routines, Unfortunately,

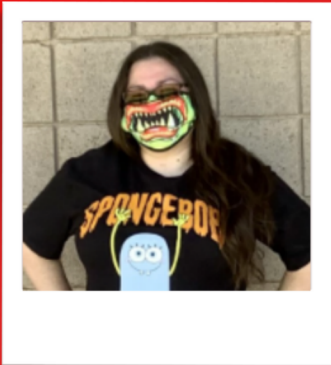
the slow pace of transformation also makes it
easy to let a bad habit slip. Learning one new idea
won't make you a genius, but a commitment to life
long learning, finding valuable lessons and wisdom
in nearly every experience you have. A beautiful day
begins with a beautiful mineset when you wake up.
Take a second to think about what a privilage it is to
simply be alive and healthy. The moment you start acting
like life is a blessing. I assure you it will start
to feel like one. Time spent appreciating is time
worth living. In theory you can enjoy almost anything.

In practice, you are more likley to enjoy the things
that come easy. We all have a limited time on this planet,
and the truly great among us are the ones who not
only work hard but also have the good fortune to be
exposed to the opportunities that favor us.



Jesse Torres a student at Centinela State Prison. Born June 10, 1978 in Ontario, California. Majoring in: Psychology. He enjoys writing, reading, sports, Hebraic-Hermeneutics. Impossible odds set the stage for amazing miracles. I took part in almost every kind of evil and the whole community knew it. Growing up in a very volatile environment, it wasn't conducive to healthy relationships or trust building. When you're sick and tired of being sick & tired, you make a change. Change was to cost me. I have the currency to pay for it: TIME. Everyday incarcerated living can be perceived in many ways. Some see a day as a struggle, others as an opportunity to grow. I want to lead by example that change is possible. Plus IVC, is all an opportunity for me to turn inwards and change my mind, heart, soul, so I can beat the statistics & live a fulfilled life as a free person. Helping Ourselves Pursue Excellence: HOPE.

Drawing

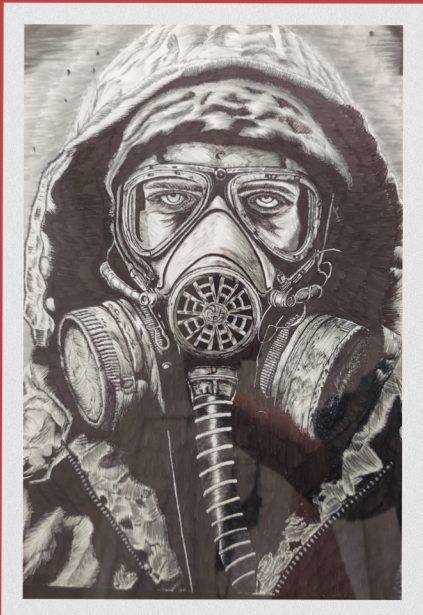


Angela is a nontraditional student from Brawley. She recently earned her A.S. in Digital Design and Production and is currently working on her A.A. in Studio Arts. Her artistic endeavors are the result of collaboration with fellow artist and her sister, Jinx. Inspired by her mother and sister, her quest is to always find beauty in the unconventional.



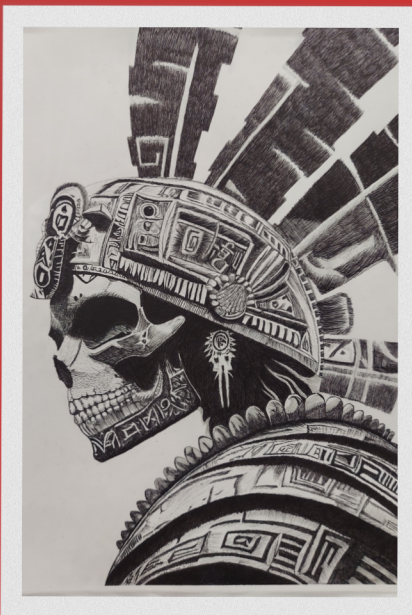
"Canned Sardines"

By Angela Leyva



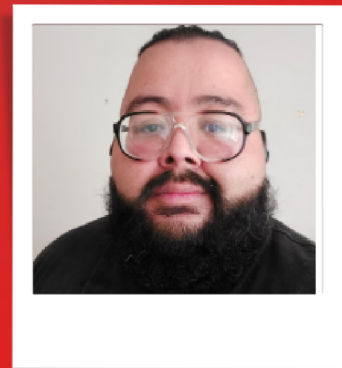
"Toxic Environment"

By Daniel Barrera



"Forgotten Pride"

By Daniel Barrera



Daniel Barrera Jr. is from Calexico, but he was born in Glendale, Arizona. He is majoring in Studio Arts and hopes to transfer to Cal State or a school in Arizona to continue his studies. He believes in trying to make people feel strong emotions when they experience his pieces. He enjoys driving through Imperial Valley at night, because the peace and quiet is in contrast with its normal manic pace.

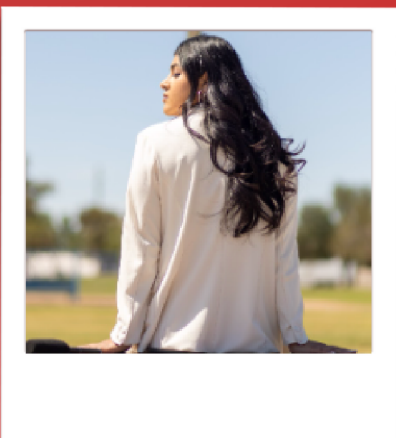


Creative Writing

“Inspired”

By Yisel Arias

My name is Yisel Arias. I am Alpha Athlete Vision. I have been inspired to provide sports reporting coverage for all athletes in the Imperial Valley. As a former athlete myself, I felt that the athletes from this county never got the recognition they deserved. My goal is to give them all a voice, and recognition for not only the athletes in this area but surrounding areas. As an Imperial County native and involved in all these sports Holtville was the first to open up their doors to me. My first coverage was a softball post game interview with two Holtville athletes Demi Johnston, and Kamryn Walker. Growing up as a very shy young individual no one would've ever thought this girl is going to be the one to cover sports or to be in front of a camera. After my first interview, I knew this was what I wanted to pursue. It was all new to me, but I found that it made me happy and it is where I am supposed to be. I truly feel that when I am out in different locations covering a variety of sports, I'm not really working, because I enjoy my time. I'm enjoying my life. I enjoy covering the events that I attend. I learn something new all the time. I have been exposed to different events and it has been a great experience thus far. I began in the Imperial County, but through time with continuous networking I had the opportunities that would then lead me to covering different MMA organizations, flag football coverage, and a variety of events in the San Diego County and Los Angeles County areas. Initially, I covered sports that I was familiar with but then I began to challenge myself and cover sports that I needed to conduct research and then I would learn it and use all the information for my future interviews. I would make sure that when I needed to cover an event I was ready and feel confident to interview the athletes. Through my sports reporting journey I am constantly learning. I have learned that I have to be mentally strong to know who I am and what I bring to the table. Through experience there have been times where people try to bring me down with negative messages and/or comments but the truth is not everyone is going to want to see you succeed. You may never know who deep down wants you to fail. As you rise up from the negativity you realize there's only one way to prove people wrong and that is success. Gather all the negativity, doubt people give you, and use it as motivation to keep you going. As a woman working towards an industry in sports where it is male dominated, I feel that I may never know who I may be inspiring. I am inspired constantly by three women who I have had the pleasure to connect with in the beginning of my sports reporting journey. These women are Aliyah Funschelle, NBA Ambassador and ESPN reporter; Samantha Rivera, anchor for CBS Miami; and Heidi Androl, UFC rep. I get so used to the day to day sports coverage that for me it feels normal but for younger girls or younger athletes it can be somewhat of a reminder to them that they can do whatever they want to do in the career of their choosing.



Yisel Arias is a twenty-one-year-old sports reporter pursuing ESPN. She created her own sports reporting brand called Alpha Athlete Vision at the age of eighteen. She first started providing interview coverage for athletes in the Imperial Valley to help them get the recognition and spotlight they deserve. As a former athlete, she knows what it's like to work hard in the sport she once had dreams to pursue. After some time she then made her way into not only different cities and states but also different sports organizations such as MMA and USA Flag Football. She created Alpha Athlete Vision to not only give the athletes a safe sports platform to voice themselves but also to give back to the athletes who put in countless hours into their sports. Alpha Athlete Vision not only provides the spotlight to athletes but also inspires, motivates, empowers the next generation of alpha athletes to work hard for their dreams in the sport they love. She is Alpha Athlete Vision. Anytime. Anywhere. Alpha Athlete Vision Is There. At the end of the day it is for the athletes.

“Border of Emotions”

By Marijo Vera

Have you ever been between the border of your past and your children's future? Crossing the border in search of a better family future is commonplace nowadays, but not everyone knows what they are really leaving behind. Deciding to leave your life and everything you know to start in a new country is always a big step, and you must be prepared mentally, physically, and financially to make it happen.

It was 2016 and I was back in my beautiful hometown of Mexicali B.C. after being divorced a few years earlier. At that time, my oldest son Diego was about 6 years old, a mature, understanding, serious, intelligent, and loving child, while my youngest, son "baby Alex," was barely over two and a half years old but unlike his brother, he was very restless. Without a doubt, my children were so different from each other, but my purpose as a mother was the same. I just wanted to see them happy and have an uninjured childhood; unfortunately, my partner and Alex's father did not have the same purpose. If there is one thing I have no doubt about, it is that Diego's childhood was not planned because as time went by the days and nights became colder at home, the screams and aggressions towards his mother were more constant, and at his young age he only had to say with his soft voice "calm down mommy, here I am." If there was one thing we were both aware of, it was that this was not the life we wanted, and Alex was beginning to realize the aggressions his father had against me, so it was time to do something for our safety.

I will never forget that autumn afternoon in which, with tears in my eyes, I began to fill the car with essentials such as clothes, photos, and some of their favorite toys. And just like that, without thinking so much, armed with courage, I took my children, and we fled in my car to the border, far from the aggressions and illusions, watching in the rearview mirror as I left everything I knew behind. At this point, my mental health was not at all good, my feelings were mixed because I wanted the best for my children, but I was afraid that I could not take care of them alone. I had no money and no roof over my head. I remember seeing them in the rearview mirror playing and laughing without understanding what was going on while I cried with happiness because I just looked at them and thought, "this is the best for you, because your country is the USA, and I am in the USA". Subsequently, I called a shelter where they support women who have suffered domestic violence to see if they had a place for us, and it was my pleasant surprise when they told me that they were waiting for us.

Once settled in the warmth of the shelter, where toys and clutter prevailed, I started looking for a job, as part of the shelter's support was to help you find an apartment and a job. I was emotionally sad and physically tired, but I had to fight for my children, so I took advantage of the support I could find to get ahead, both from shelter and government assistance. There is no doubt that the support they gave us would be of immense help because the shelter, if you found an apartment that fit in the authorized budget, they would pay the rent for six months, taking a percentage of your salary as savings, to return it to you as saving at the end. Finally, things were starting to turn bright for us because, even though I had no experience, I was able to get a job in the field, and, even though, I had to get up at 4am in the frosty winter, I was happy and grateful. After five months passed, things got better and better, and although we were incredibly joyful living in a small studio, I had the opportunity to rent an improved apartment on my own without the support of the shelter, and so little by little my financial stability improved.

In the end, that torment that we lived through was nothing more than a gray memory that little by little has been left behind. Emigrating to the United States, and leaving everything behind has been one of the bravest acts of my life, and of which I feel proud of the effort of both the children and myself. Today I can raise my head with pride and happiness because I feel mentally, physically, and emotionally prepared to continue achieving my goals on this border of emotions.

Marijo's bio:

Marijo likes acting, theater, and skating. She has been on her own since she was 19 years old and something she can tell you about herself is that she is proud of who she is because she achieves the goals that she proposes regardless of the adversities. When she came to the USA, she started with nothing, working in the field as a first step, then as cashier and then promoted to assistant manager. The fact that she didn't handle the language well was not an impediment, but after 4 years she decided to quit to seek her own personal growth and to study psychology at IVC. Although the first few months were very difficult because she didn't have a way to pay the bills sometimes, she didn't give up and continued and now she is almost ready to transfer.

Painting



"Joyful Child"

By Helios Garza



"Lady of Sorrows"

By Isabella Gutierrez



Helios Garza is from Brawley, born and raised. He is majoring in Administration of Justice and Studio Arts. He will be graduating in June and plans to enter the workforce in Law Enforcement, such as for Customs or the Sheriff's office. Words of affirmation



Isabella Gutierrez is from Imperial but was born in El Centro. She is currently majoring in Studio Arts and is looking to transfer to the UCSD with a double major in Studio Arts and Graphic Design. She is inspired by the beauty of life, especially

people and their emotions. She wants to capture the moments in time when a person smiles, laughs, or cries.



"Picasso The Horse"

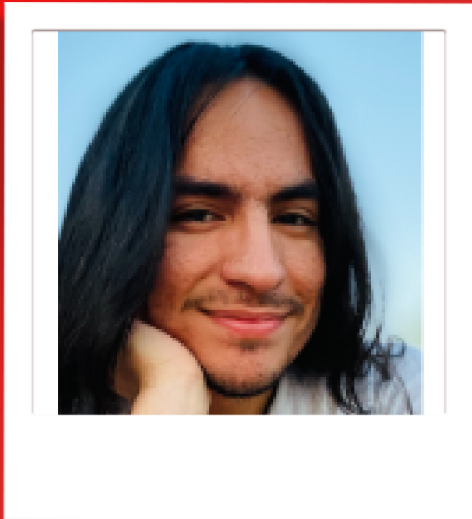
By Laisa Martinez



Laisa Martinez is a current IVC student from Heber. She is majoring in Studio Arts and will transfer to CSU Fullerton in 2024 with the goal to be an art teacher. Laisa gets inspiration from multiple sources of media she likes and also from her love of animals.



Music



SCAN ME



"Stars that Fall"

By Alexander Solorio

Jazz ShaMari Mikeda LedBetter was born in Hartford, Connecticut, coming from Jamaican, Cuban, and Indian descent. Since a child in the Cayman Islands, she had a strong passion for art



of all forms. Attending school primarily in Southern California, and moving to Imperial Valley in 2018, she is currently studying Studio Art and plant operations at IVC. She is self-taught, and known for

her abstract creativity, and forming a new genre: Up-cycled, reused, double entendre, dual masterpieces. Jazz is not only an artist, but an author, advocate, and activist for many social injustices, creating a nonprofit foundation "Harlot Heart".

SCAN ME



"Keep Going (Mother and Son)"

By Jazz LedBetter

Faculty Submissions

Las Playas

By Jay Lewenstein

Hace poco tiempo que leí un artículo en el periódico San Diego Union Tribune sobre una nueva playa en México D.F. Sí, así es, rodeado de tierra en medio del país, una de las ciudades más grandes y mas congestionadas y más violentas en todo el mundo, habían acomodado una playa con arena, mar y bikinis...

¿Como ves? Que ocurrencia!

Yo conozco este lugar. Hace veinte años trabajé y estudié en D. F.

Participé en un programa de maestros bilingües de California, y como parte del programa tuve que vivir con una familia Mexicana que por casualidad vivía en un departamento en la Villa Olímpica - en uno de estos edificios ilustrado en la foto! Viví con ellos en el decimosexto piso.

Digamos que conozco este lugar bien, muy bien. Me explico. La cosa es que yo era en aquél tiempo una persona bastante nerviosa, y no me gustaba mucho la idea de vivir con otros. No me malinterpreten.

Mi familia mexicana era muy buena gente, me ayudaron, me apoyaron, me animaron a hacer cualquier cosa. Sandra, la mamá de la familia, era solo unos años mas grande que yo, y tenía un corazón de oro. Me trataba como si yo fuera su propio hijo.

Total, como dije, no soy una persona segura de mí mismo, y a pesar de siempre hacer mi mejor esfuerzo para llevarme bien con la familia y hacerlos sentir contentos y felices conmigo, y a veces, me deprimía. Hasta hoy, no estoy completamente seguro de lo que pasó. Quizás no supe convencerme que este gringo (yo) era un verdadero miembro de la familia, y que nunca lo sería. Casi todas las noches me despertaba muy agitado. No podía conciliar el sueño, y no sabía como calmarme, si no podía dormir, me ponía muy nervioso, y entre mas nervioso estaba mas difícil era conseguir dormir.

Ayyy. Mi vida se convertía en una pesadilla, a veces duraba hasta 4-5 días sin poder dormir. Andaba por el trabajo y mis estudios como un fantasma. Y claro, mi familia noto mis problemas e hicieron todo lo que pudieron para ayudarme. Hablaron conmigo. Me preguntaron cosas, cambiaron mi dieta, fijaron una cita con el doctor. Hicieron todo con tal de hacerme sentir mas cómodo en la casa, pero nada funcionó.

Todo eso me dejo muy amolado y triste, y cuando llegué a este punto de rendirme y regresar a los estados unidos, una noche tuve una idea. No quería regresar. Tenía muchas ganas de conseguirme la credencial. Bueno, en lugar de temblar y sacudirme en la cama y sentir pena y piedad por mí, decidí esa noche ponerme los tenis y salir a dar unas vueltas afuera. Eso es, para calmarme y recobrar control de mis emociones, me encontré corriendo en las horas de la madrugada - 1:45, 2:35, 3:10, a cualquier hora que me despertara - salía a correr en este mismo lugar donde hoy crearon esa playa artificial, 10-15 kilómetros en la pura oscuridad. Las Playas (en español) 2

Fue así como conocí este lugar.

Aquí en Mexicali, vivo solo, y no tengo los mismos problemas con el sueño que tuve tenido en el D. F. Pero todavía corro mucho. Desde que volví a los Estados Unidos he seguido este hábito de correr en las horas muy tempranas. Y ahora en Mexicali corro en la ciudad deportiva por la UABC, y a veces en los campos por dos lados de la frontera - he corrido como 6 maratones - pero creo que mi lugar favorito de correr es la playa de Mexicali. ¿Han oído hablar de la playa de Mexicali? Creo que es un gran secreto, por que cada vez que hablo sobre este tema con un Mexicalense, siempre me ve como si estuviera loco.

Siempre les digo, "Me gusta correr al lado de la playa de Mexicali. Es muy tranquilo."

Ellos me dicen "¡ ¿Qué?! ¡ ¿Cuál playa?! " Ellos me explican que estamos en medio de un desierto. No hay nada de playa, ni mar. Eso es la verdad. Pero hay mucha arena, les digo. Y cuando corro en las pistas al lado de los canales que separan California y México, veo el

agua y los patos y huele a pescado. Si cierro los ojos, me siento como si estuviera en San Diego corriendo al lado de Mission Bay .El ambiente me hace olvidar muchos problemas. En cuanto mas corro, más olvido mis problemas. La playa es mi mejor terapia.



En estos días, todavía nos comunicamos Sandra (mi mama mexicana) y yo. Quedamos muy buenos amigos del año que pasamos juntos. Me ha escrito mucho. Se interesa sinceramente de mi vida aquí en Mexicali. Siempre me pregunta cosas como, cuando voy a casarme, y le pregunto a ella cuando va a aprender a hablar chino.

Pero esta vez es ella quien esta muy triste. Su hermano se esta muriendo de un tumor en el cerebro. Ya no tiene pelo en la cabeza a causa de los tratamientos de quimioterapia, y ha perdido casi la mitad de su peso; todos los días, ella se queda a su lado en el hospital, sufriendo con el, con un tratamiento tras otro.

De todas formas, la quiero mucho. Ella es la mujer más cariñosa que he conocido en mi vida, y nunca se me olvida como estaba a mi lado cuando yo tenía todos esos problemas.

Claro que no es fácil escribirle cartas a una persona que esta sufriendo tanto. Para distraerla un poco de la miseria que esta padeciendo en un cuarto callado y estéril en un hospital, trato de compartir cosas agradables con ella como lo que hago en mi trabajo, o de las cosas que hago en mi cocina. Otro día le escribí de mis vecinos borrachos que me invitaron a acompañarlos a San Felipe. Pues, a decir la verdad me invitaron en mi pick-up para llevarlos a San Felipe por 2-3 días, y si yo hubiera querido ir, yo podría haber ido también. La cosa es que tengo que trabajar. Hoy. Viernes y Sábado también. No puedo (eso es lo que les dije. Ellos son borrachos, cada uno. Me da un poco de miedo de ir con ellos en un viaje.)

Últimamente, mi mama mexicana casi nunca me responde y no la culpo. Ya se como es andar así tan desolada sintiendo que ya no puedes mas hasta que no piensas, no hablas, no duermes... Por supuesto no puede plasmar por ahora sus verdaderos pensamientos en una pinché nota... No se lo que voy a hacer. He tratado de hablar con ella por teléfono pero tampoco responde mis llamadas. Realmente estoy preocupado por ella.

Por eso, le escribo a ella esta nueva carta sobre un artículo que había leído en el San Diego Union Tribune. Se dice que están construyendo una playa artificial muy cerca de su casa. Y en esta misma carta voy a escribir que sería una buena idea darse una vuelta Las Playas (en español) 3 al lado de la playa. Le diré a ella que yo también, voy a ir por la playa de Mexicali. Espero que ella sepa que todo el mundo esta conectado por agua. Así es, las gotas de lluvia que caen del cielo, se quedan en los riachuelos en las montañas, y estos riachuelos fluyen hasta los ríos, y los ríos fluyen hasta el mar, y mucha agua se evapora y se forman nubes..

Sería una buena idea darse unas vueltas para soltar la pena. Ándale. A veces es la única manera que queda para mantener la cordura: Que camines, y que camines, Sandra, hasta que no puedas más. No me importa lo que dice la gente sobre la playa de Mexicali, ni de la playa artificial de D. F. El agua nos conectará. Por mal que vayan las cosas, si sigues andando por la playa en México, yo voy a seguir por la playa en Mexicali, quizás nuestros caminos se cruzarán en el camino y sentirás mi apoyo y amor.

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“There is no doubt that creativity is the most important human resource of all. Without creativity, there would be no progress, and we would be forever repeating the same patterns.”

Edward de Bono



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