

NEW FUNDING AIMS TO HELP SPECIAL NEEDS PROGRAM



Credential candidate Alan Spencer works with a student in a math clinic in early 2018.

Photo courtesy of Humboldt State

by Becca Laurenson

The HSU special needs teachers program was awarded a residency grant worth about \$200,000 per year. This covers the resident education fees and any other fees within the program. The administration of funds are from the Humboldt County Office of Education as well as partner Humboldt State University. A major part of this program is to reduce the turnover or drop of special needs teachers in Humboldt County.

The four individuals partners are David Ellerd, a professor and program leader, program coordinator Bernie Levy, Colby Smart, superintendent of educational services, and Jenny Bowen, Director of Personnel Services Humboldt County Office of Education. The grant was first established three years ago when Ellerd, among other members, wrote the grant to provide funding for local schools that were having issues getting special needs teachers as well as having them stay for five years. Levy, the program coordinator,

wanted to help with getting school teachers and credentials for those teachers. “Apart from being a resident, they have the opportunity to continue working and most people in this program are already working as a classroom aid and they were ready to sort of taking the next step,” Smart said. “It provided funding for the residency program for ten residents,” Levy said. “It could be ten different schools,

[See Funding • PAGE 4](#)

How a local clean energy microgrid could transform California

The Schatz Energy Research Center shows that renewable energy goals are attainable for California

by Gabrielle Sturm

A new project in Humboldt County is paving the way for clean energy operations throughout the rest of California. After two years of planning, construction of the Redwood Coast Airport Renewable Energy Microgrid is set to begin in April of this year. A microgrid is decentralized from the larger energy grid. It is able to become its own “island.” It ensures that power can be restored to a specific area during emergency situations even when the larger energy grid is down, such as during a public safety power outage. A notable component of the RCAM is that it is entirely run by renewable energy, operating off of solar power, making it even more appealing to the area.

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HSU soccer alumna goes for the goal

Katie Talbert starts the preseason with the NWSL’s OL Reign

by Elliott Portillo

Former Lumberjack Wildlife Major and Goalkeeper, Katie Talbert spent four years patrolling and defending the nets at College Creek Field and now finds herself with the opportunity of a lifetime: an invitation to preseason training camp with Seattle’s OL Reign of the National Women’s Soccer League (NWSL). Beginning February 1, The trial pits Talbert against some of the best young talent in the nation for a chance to play at the sport’s highest level domestically. “I’m just so excited to be able to train with professional soccer players,” Talbert said in an exclusive interview. “It’s just taking one more step higher in the competition that I’m not used to and I’m super ready for the challenge.” Soccer comes naturally to Talbert, who started playing at age four. At age 11, she played competitively, alternating between field and part-time goal keeper. When she was 14, her club team converted her to a full-time goal keeper because there were no other players at the position. “I started playing and I just picked it up really fast, and so they were like, ‘oh you’re good at this, we’re just gonna keep you at goalkeeper,’” Talbert said.



Photo by Elliott Portillo
Jacks senior goalkeeper Katie Talbert rolls a ball back into play during a match against CSU Monterey Bay at College Creek Field on Oct. 20, 2019.

“I was a fast learner on how to play that position.” “And then I just kept playing,” Talbert said. “I just enjoyed it because I like throwing my body in the air... which is fun.” The position change helped the Sacramento native accomplish another one of her childhood goals: to play soccer at

the collegiate level. After decommitting from Sonoma State her junior year of high school, Talbert found Humboldt as the place she wanted to be. “I’ve always wanted to play college soccer,” Talbert said. “I contacted them [Humboldt] because they had a wildlife major and I always wanted to be a wildlife major from when I was a little kid.”

While at Humboldt, Talbert proved crucial as a defensive specialist, earning all-CCAA honorable mention honors in 2017. Her height, athleticism and fearlessness proved to be vital assets on the field. During the off-season, she trained

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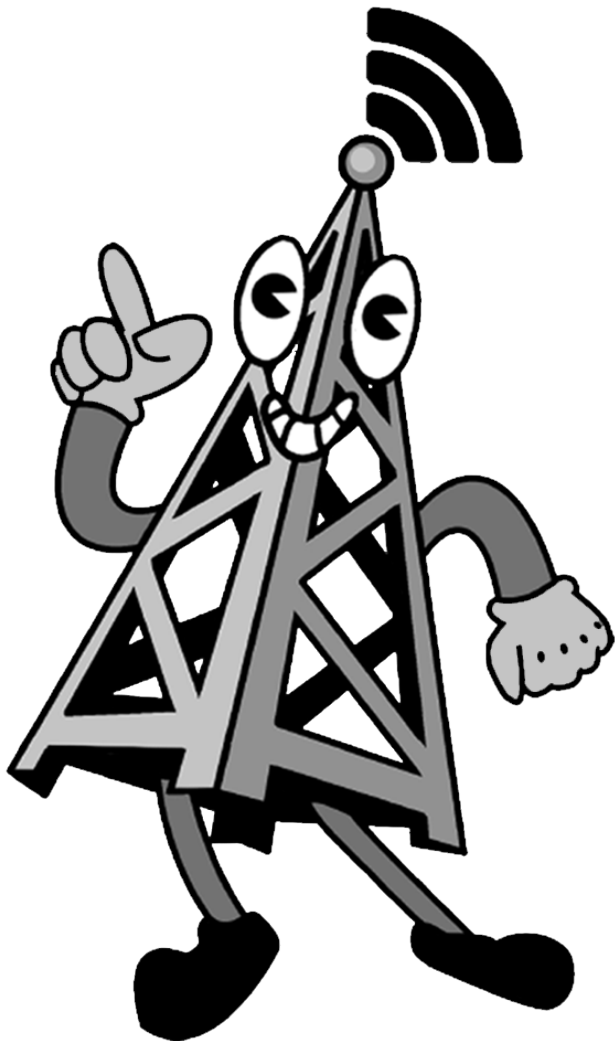
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How to throw a COVID friendly Super Bowl party

Football fans rest assured, Super Bowl partying will commence

by Whitney Mccoy

Though Super Bowl may look and feel different this year, it is not to say there isn't fun to be had and an array of commercials to be watched. Anyone reading this truly only care about the commercials? We thought so. To all you football fans and commercially driven spectators, we are here to give you the ultimate guide to throwing your first ever pandemic-friendly Super Bowl party.

First thing first, the big game between Kansas City Chiefs and Tampa Bay Buccaneers will air Sunday, Feb. 7 at 6:30 p.m. ET (3:30 p.m. PT) and will be held at the Raymond James Stadium in Tampa. This serving as a first in Super Bowl history where a team will play at their home field. Also, this will be marking a historic moment for Buccaneer Quarterback Tom Brady, as this will be his first Super Bowl not playing for the New England Patriots. Brady previously played a total of 20 seasons for the Patriots and won 6 Super Bowl championships, the most of any quarterback.

Alright, alright. Enough about that. You want to know how to throw a COVID friendly Super Bowl party. That is why you're here, we get it. Look no further. There are many ways and options you can tackle this, no punt intended.

1. Host a virtual watch party:

You may do this a few different ways. One is with our beloved Zoom. If you don't know what Zoom is in 2021 then I really don't know what to tell you other than you must live under a rock. To watch via Zoom, simply have all participants stream the game while Zooming one another. CBS will be streaming the game for free at their website. We'd suggest utilizing app services like DoorDash, UberEats, Postmates, etc.. or supporting a local restaurant that is offering delivery, that way all participants can order from the same eatery, making it feel as though you're together. You may also host/join watch parties from sites like Hulu Watch Party or Teleparty.

2. Host an outdoor watch party:

This option is obviously weather dependent. If you plan to host an in-person party be sure to check the CDC guidelines for how to do so safely. If you're offering food, which we assume you are, we suggest cooking something easy like burgers. But make sure to plate the food yourself, as the host, following proper protocol. Make sure you have hand sanitizer stations and that people wear their masks whenever possible. Opt for foods like shish kabob's, burgers or sliders, make individual hummus veggie dips in their own mason jars, or set aside small individual cheese boards for each attendee. You may also consider a BYOP (bring your own picnic) party, so kind of potluck but not really.

3. Play games and don't forget to make it memorable:

Have Super Bowl predication bets going, try to guess the commercials, what the overall theme of commercials will be, or opt for a Super Bowl Commercial Bingo and offer a prize for the winner or play Super Bowl trivia and assign teams. The options are endless so have fun with it. But most importantly, stay safe.



Photo courtesy of California Storm



Photo by Thomas Lal



Photo courtesy of California Storm



Photo by Elliott Portillo

(Top) Katie Talbert at a photoshoot for the California Storm. 2. Talbert makes a leaping save during the first half of the team's match against Cal State LA at College Creek Field on November 9, 2019. 3. Talbert kicks a ball away during a match with the California Storm. (Bottom) Talbert kicks a ball back into play during the team's match against Stanislaus State on October 6, 2019.

TALBERT

FROM PAGE 1

and played with the Sacramento-based California Storm of the Women's Premier Soccer League (WPSL). The semi-professional team, which boasts distinguished and accomplished alumni such as USWNT member Alex Morgan, gave Talbert another opportunity to improve her skills.

"Every summer I'd go home and play with them, and I found that team has helped me a lot [to] get better," Talbert said. "A lot of the girls on the team are ex-pros or DI [Division I] college girls, so I think that's been a level up in competition."

Storm Head Coach and Executive Director Jamie Levoy, who has known and coached Talbert the past four summers, feels that she has all the tools necessary to be successful at the next level.

"She's versatile," said Levoy. "She knows how to read the game beyond the goal keeper. She makes fearless decisions."

As one of the few invitees to come from a small Division II school, Talbert noted that there is a bit of a chip on her shoulder going up against women from a variety of esteemed universities.

"I'm pretty sure most if not all of the other girls coming in for the preseason and trials are all from DI schools," Talbert said. "I really feel like I'm kind of like the kid coming in in a way."

Despite that, Talbert feels her time at Humboldt and the competition she faced there have also prepared her for this moment.

"It [Humboldt] gave me a great opportunity," Talbert said. "A lot of my friends who I played soccer with competitively were committing to DI schools, and then I committed to a DII school, so nobody really thought that it would be great competition, but the fact that we are in one of the tougher

DII leagues for soccer definitely helped my career a lot."

"There's an expectation," Levoy said. "That's what a lot of people look at: 'did you play for a top 25 program?' I think it's cool she can go in and say, 'look, you don't have to play at the biggest school.'"

For Talbert, she believes the opportunity ahead sets her up for success later.

"I had an offer from a team in Portugal that I turned down to come to this try-out because I thought this would be a better opportunity for me to continue playing in the NWSL or other opportunities to come in the future," Talbert said. "My main end goal if I can is to possibly play for the Sacramento NWSL team whenever that happens, which I heard might happen in 2022."

Whatever happens, Levoy believes Talbert is set to succeed.

"Honestly, she's so deserving and she's a great athlete," Levoy said. "Everything is falling into place for her."

A new COVID-19 strain arrives in Humboldt County

People across Humboldt County are preparing to combat a novel coronavirus variant

by Gabe Kim

Humboldt County is one of the most isolated counties in California. From this came low numbers of coronavirus cases, a luxury that other counties in the state didn't have. That has all changed recently. Cases have shot up in every county in California and now there is a new coronavirus strain making its way around.

Known as L452R, this variant largely remains a mystery to local health officials and there has only been one confirmed case for this new strain in Humboldt County as of publication.

Humboldt County Health Officer Dr. Ian Hoffman believes that while the new variant may be unique, it is not necessarily more dangerous than other current strains.

"I think from just knowing about the other variants, symptomatology should be the same. The UK variant doesn't show any worse outcomes, it's just more transmissible," Hoffman said in a video interview with the Humboldt County Department of Human Health and Services.

Clairissa Keesey, an HSU senior and a studio art and business marketing double major, is on edge about possibly contracting the new coronavirus strain given her job.

"I'm a healthcare worker, I work with direct patient contact as a caregiver, so it definitely makes me nervous," Keesey said. "But I just got the

vaccine so I'm hoping it works."

The guidelines and practices surrounding coronavirus in Humboldt County remain steadfast.

HSU's Campus COVID Safety Coordinator Jennifer Sanford outlined some of the ways that HSU is readying itself for the onset of the L452R variant.

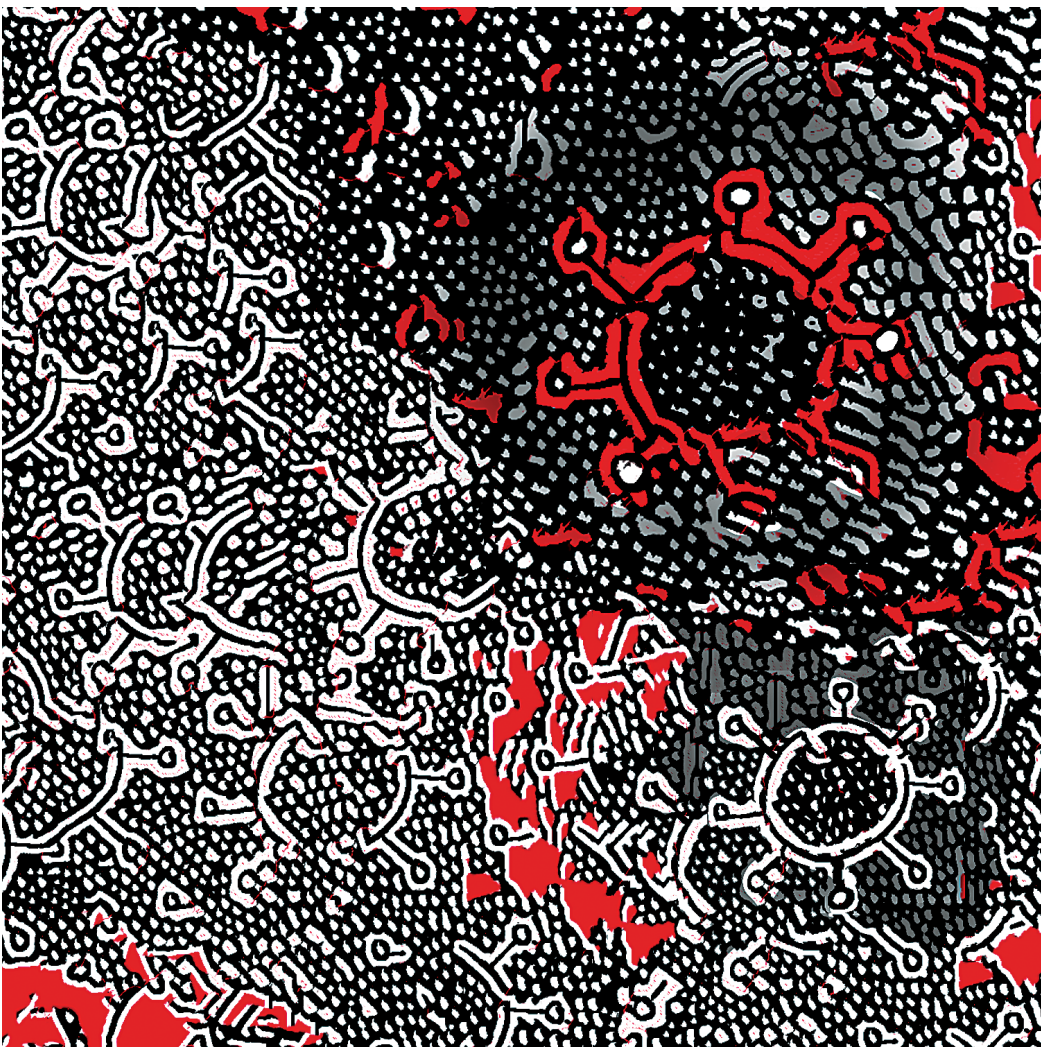
"The campus emergency team EOC, and advance planning team both meet twice weekly and continue to be responsive to new developments in terms of campus plans," Sanford said in an email interview. "We are keeping an eye on the new strain and other happenings and these will be considered in plans concerning the current semester, summer, and fall."

On a county-wide level, Dr. Ian Hoffman doesn't foresee any new rules being enacted, even with the arrival of this new strain.

"There should be no change in our practices because the things that we do to prevent the new strains are the exact same things we do to prevent the old strains," Hoffman said. "So that would be: distancing, masking, avoiding gathering, washing hands."

For Sanford and her group, the landscape of the situation is constantly evolving and thus they need to be ready for anything.

"In a nutshell, plans adapt as new information comes to light," Sanford



Graphic by Sam Papavasiliou

said in an email interview. "Lots of on-campus testing will continue moving forward and we are looking now at

how to get the vaccine out to the campus community in an efficient manner as soon as it is available."

Nina G uses comedy to start conversations

During the virtual comedy event held by the SDRC, Nina Ghiselli tells her story and emphasizes the importance of student disability resources within schools

by Poppy Cartledge

On Jan. 28, HSU students were able to tune into a virtual event held by the SDRC where comedian Nina Ghiselli, better known as Nina G, provided laughs and a deeper insight into how she got to where she is today.

Nina G, a comedian, professional speaker and author of "Stutterer Interrupted" reflects on the importance of student resources for students with disabilities.

"It was resources like those provided by the SDRC that allowed for me to get through school," Nina G said as she reflected on the struggles that she faced in grades K-12.

When she was eight-years-old, Nina G was diagnosed with dyslexia and accommodations became essential for her progress in school. It was not until eighth grade, after receiving a failing grade in her math class for only doing half the work, where she recognized the lack of awareness surrounding the accommodations set for those with disabilities.

Heather Hollingsworth is a first year transfer student at HSU and resonated with Nina G when it came to the lack of understanding when it comes to accommodations.

"Some of the professor's excuses are that accommodations give me an unfair advantage", Hollingsworth said. "It would be too much work on their part, they do not think I need them, and lastly, my favorite, that I need to find a way to get over my disability and stop using it as an excuse to be lazy."

Back in October of 2017, the SDRC launched a "1 in 10" campaign. It was an effort to spread awareness about the

amount of students with disabilities on campus, encouraging inclusion and acceptance. The campaign expressed that although disabilities are not always apparent, they are still widely present among the student population.

Kim Coughlin-Lamphear, a student access advisor for the SDRC, feels like it is important that students at HSU keep in mind that the SDRC makes up 10% or more of the student population at times.

"We are really trying to take away the negativity surrounding disabilities," Coughlin-Lamphear said. "The usual, visual picture that students will have is someone who has a physical disability that you can make note of, but that is not always the case."

The reality of living with a disability is diverse and Nina G focuses on that, along with other stigmas surrounding the misconceptions that society has when it comes to understanding and including people with disabilities. Her journey of being a stuttering comedian is continuously a work in progress as Nina G constantly wants to improve her art and reach more audiences. She wants to continue to bring awareness, while also using humor as an unconventional approach to tell her story.

For the SDRC it is important for the students at HSU to have a deeper understanding of where everyone is coming from and encourage inclusivity across campus.

"For any individual, there's this notion about being included, of being understood," Lamphear said. "So having someone who promotes that understanding and inclusiveness is what Nina brings forward for a lot of people."



Photo courtesy of SDRC

FUNDING FROM PAGE 1

it could be less spending on how many residents in a particular school for five years."

Prior to this program, there was a mentoring program established but had little success and high turnover in teachers.

"They found over the years in research that retention rates for special education using the internship model have been huge turnovers, in other words, you might get a teacher staying in the profession one or two years and then leaving prematurely," Levy said.

Since the partnership with HSU has simplified credentials and residency, this program has been a great success in helping the community. Smart has seen great success in this program and even more than ten residents apply.

"Part of the agreement is that the

student will teach in the district for four years," Smart said. "That's really the goal, we really try to match residents with school districts who are looking for or needing additional special education teachers."

With this program's success, there have been a few complications in the program regarding the pandemic, but some new opportunities as well.

"One of the benefits with virtual instruction is that we realized that we can deliver our course work to outlying areas where the folks can't leave their

school to come to Humboldt," Ellerd said. "One of the things we have been discussing is being able to continue to deliver our course work online so those folks in the outer areas will be able to participate in the program."

The overall goal is to help students get the credentials they need to become special education teachers and stay in that district to stop the turnover in Humboldt County.

"Primary goal of this program is to build up and promote special education in our community," Smart said.

Local Restaurant owner Esteban Gonzalez passes at 55

A small-town treasure’s legacy lives on in the community

by Brianne Beronilla

Esteban Gonzalez was 55 when he passed away from pneumonia in relation to COVID-19 on January 12. The tragic news shocked the community and everyone that knew him, leaving behind a huge legacy and heartfelt memories with those who knew the well-known Arcata restaurant owner.

Gonzalez was able to open his first taco truck in 2000. What started as just him and his wife selling food out of a trailer, expanded into a second location and became one of the most popular restaurants in town. After the pandemic started, his outdoor benches continued to be a convenient destination to go out to eat.

Located in the heart of downtown Arcata, the restaurant provided high school and HSU students a delicious and positive place to stop for lunch or dinner.

One of those students is Brandon Allen. He grew up in Humboldt County and went to Arcata High School.

“This is just such a loss for the community all around,” Allen said.

Allen remembered stealing a soda from Gonzalez in his freshman year of high school when Gonzalez caught him in the act. Allen felt so bad that he went back after school to apologize. Instead of punishing him, Gonzalez was actually happy to see him.

“He was super understanding, letting me know that everyone makes mistakes,” Allen said.

Even after high school, he continued to eat there and Esteban would still remember his order and want to hear about how he was doing.

“Esteban was such an important part of my teenage years,” Allen said. “He taught me a lot without me really grasping it until much later.”

Kyra Cohen, a senior at Humboldt State and an Arcata native started going

to Esteban’s during their freshman year of high school.

“He was the first in Arcata that all the high schoolers knew and loved. He’d help out kids when they were short of money, and simply had the best restaurant for Arcata kids,” Cohen said.

Gonzalez’s restaurant was not only a great place to eat. He also created a fun and loving environment every time you walked in.

Cohen remembers making jokes with her friends, and Gonzalez would just crack a calm smile. He’d often jokingly laugh and smile at them.

“He’s the go-to for sure. I crave an Esteban’s burrito more than anything,” Cohen said.

Brook Reeser is an HSU senior who grew up in McKinleyville. She worked at Redwood Day Camp during the summer, and she and all her co-workers would go to Esteban’s for lunch. They all called his burritos the “best they’ve ever had.”

Arcata Main Street set up a GoFundMe page for Gonzalez’s family and has already surpassed their \$15,000 goal with \$28,116 as of Feb 1.



Flowers from the community are gathered around Esteban Gonzalez’s restaurant on Jan. 30 in memory of his passing.

Photo by Brianne Beronilla

Biden administration has a long road to student loan relief

Current and former HSU students reflect on the Biden administration’s student loan relief plans

by Poppy Cartledge

President Joe Biden leaves his first day of office with continued pressure to follow through with his proposal to relieve \$10,000 off all borrowers’ debt following his extension of the nearly year long federal student loan freeze through September 2021.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in March, Biden took to Twitter to share his thoughts on the first stimulus bill, where he also urged that some sort of student loan relief should be included within it.

“We should forgive a minimum of \$10,000/person of federal student loans, as proposed by Senator Warren and colleagues,” Biden wrote on Twitter. “Young people and other student debt holders bore the brunt of the last crisis. It shouldn’t happen again.”

Within his first day of office, Biden made progress with his proposition to tackle the student debt crisis through addressing the issue within one of the 17 executive orders made. This consisted of extending the pause on interest and principal payments for student loans through Sept. 30.

Following this busy first day, many members of Congress are pushing Biden to do more. The likes of Senator Elizabeth Warren and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer are leading a group of other influential Democrats in pursuit of asking for \$50,000 of forgiveness per each federal student loan borrower. A few of the more progressive members of Congress, such as Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Sen. Bernie Sanders, are calling for complete cancellation of student debt. As COVID-19 cases are on the surge, they collectively believe that tackling the burden of stu-



Graphic by Poppy Cartledge

dent debt is essential to combat the financial hardship that citizens are going through.

Lily McIntire received both her Bachelors and Masters degrees studying Biology at HSU. She is currently in the process of obtaining her PhD in Ecology at San Diego State University.

In regards to what she hoped for student debt forgiveness with this new administration, McIntire was apprehensive. She explained that the accumulation of the student debt crisis has always been a looming issue, but the pandemic has made it more of an up-front issue.

“I’ve been in school continuously, so I’ve been in deference,” said McIntire when asked how the burden of student

loans has affected her personally. “However, they have stopped interest fees until September too, which is a huge relief for me because a lot of my debt from grad school was unsubsidized.”

According to data that was crunched by the Department of Education, the average debt for an HSU graduate student is around \$20,000. However, only around 26% of these students are making some progress toward repayment.

Peggy Metzger is the Director of Financial Aid Services at Humboldt State and feels enthusiastic about the change that the Biden Administration has the potential to make for recent graduates.

“There are a lot of students at the University that are out there with a debt of \$10,000 or less,” said Metzger.

“The amount of students that would be able to wipe out their debt completely is quite large.”

Metzger also said that the relief of student loan debt could potentially help graduates focus on obtaining their first job or buying that first house. It would allow them to get a better start in life.

Karolyn Fagundes is currently a graduate student at HSU who is in the process of obtaining a masters in forestry and has thought little about her student debt situation post-graduation.

“I’m pretty deep in student loan debt, but I don’t know how it’ll affect me after graduation,” said Fagundes.

Fagundes explains how the idea of being in debt is not entirely concrete since she has yet to make any payments. However, she feels skeptical about the current administration’s capabilities to make a real difference when it comes to student loan debt. Like many, Fagundes is questioning whether this first executive action made by the Biden administration is setting the tone for further progress with student loan forgiveness.

“In the coming days and weeks we will be announcing additional executive actions that confront these challenges and deliver on the President-elect’s promises to the American people,” White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki said in a statement on a press call the on Jan. 19 before inauguration day.

In the coming months, the Biden administration is going to be watched closely as they are expected to make longer strides toward combatting many pressing issues during such a vulnerable time. The student debt crisis is currently on the hot seat and Biden’s exact plan of action is still unclear for many.

Improving one’s health within the trees

How being in nature improves mental health



Photo courtesy of Sheila Camerarena
Sheila Camerarena lives her life on the edge as she basks in the beauty of Lake Tahoe.

by Kiera Price

Rosa Granados is a member of Women’s Cross Country at Humboldt State University and found when problems arise, doing something with her time was helpful.

“I started running when there was something crucial going on in my life, running helped me find my home,” Granados said.

According to pilot studies published in the “Journal of Adolescence,” outdoor activities can improve one’s overall health.

Granados was raised in foster care, a difficult experience for her, but was able to find a family with the members of her running team and a passion for running which positively impacted her health. Running was a place for her to disengage from stressful situations and focus on the peaceful environment of nature.

“It’s very important for everyone to practice self-care and expand one’s own definition of wellness,” Granados said.

Granados enjoys hiking through the forests of Humboldt and the calmness of nature. It was a great place to disconnect from society as there was

often a lack of cell reception. This caused her to feel present in the moment.

Enjoying nature helped Granados cope with depressing situations and accept life experiences that she couldn’t control.

According to an article published in the journal “Perspectives in Public Health”, “Using a combination of arts- and nature-based activities, present distinct synergistic benefits that have the potential to make a significant impact on the psychosocial wellbeing of adult mental health service users.”

Granados’ job at Harm Reduction at HSU was about helping others with their mental health and trauma.

In order to maintain Granados’ job with care, it was important for her to take care of her own mental health and wellbeing.

Sheila Camerarena had a similar life experience to Granados.

“Being a social worker can be very draining and I always have to remember that I need to take care of my needs first before I can help others,” Camerona said.

Camerona also had a hard time at home. She found herself having to grow up very fast, taking a massive toll on her.

“Knowing these difficulties I had at home is what led me to nature, it was like an escape,” Camerona said.

Growing up, she found peace with bike riding throughout her neighborhood and grew up to become a lover of hiking.

Nature helped Camerena get in touch with her spirituality and culture, it gave her a sense of connection with the world around her that she always wanted to find.

Several studies have suggested that having a deep connection to spirituality can lead to a more positive well-being. According to the article “Enhancing Spirituality and Positive Well-Being Through Nature,” a study by Stringer and McAvoy wrote exposure to nature can lead an individual to connect to something greater, increasing their cognitive abilities and creative abilities.

Similar to Camerarena and Granados, Annika Slattery was also searching for a home. Fresh from Hawaii and stepping foot in Arcata for the first time in her life, Slattery wasn’t sure if this was the place for her.

Slattery was planning on getting her degree and moving back to Hawaii, however, things changed when she fell in love with the environment at Humboldt State University.

“I started learning about my awesome major and it was everything I wanted,” Slattery said.

Slattery is a recreational studies major and fell in love with forest bathing, being outdoors, and enjoying nature with her fellow classmates.

She focused on recreational tourism and backpacking trips with classmates, from rafting trips to beautiful hikes in the forest.

Being outside, enjoying nature, and being disconnected from the world for ten to fifteen minutes, Slattery not only found her home but developed a family bond within her major.

“With this pandemic, I felt very contained and that my life had shifted into this box, I never realized how being outdoors could greatly improve your mental state,” Slattery said.

Why I value banana slugs and you should, too

by Elise Fero

Good day reader! I am here to invite you to understand why I, Slug Girl, love banana slugs.

As someone who comes from Colorado, these creatures are beyond bizarre. How dare they even exist? They look like they’re from an alien planet, or fell out of Ron Weasley’s mouth after a spell.

But trust me, you will learn to love these beautifully insane creatures just as I have.

When you come to Northern California, there are two tokens: Bigfoot and banana slugs. But this isn’t a Bigfoot column so we can leave that for later, although I’m sure Bigfoot is a fan of banana slugs, too. Just saying.

In fact, these creatures are one of the phenomena that people look for when they visit. If you don’t see one, how are you getting the full experience?

As a local, you may see these friends as pests. I understand, they are practically slimy boogerish mice. They invade your gardens and leave gooey paths, but these living boogers are kind.

I met these creatures in armfuls. The first time I met them, I put over 40 on my arms. They crawled all over me, curious and kind as can be. What other creature lets you hold them so dearly?

I learned that these sweet friends love to play games. Once they become comfortable with you, you can teach them to follow you, climb onto you, and perform very very simple tricks. Trust me, I’ve done it and that is not meant with sarcasm.

Go out and visit a sweet banana slug. Even their name is cute! Plus based on my research, they like to be rickrolled so you can perform that experiment for fun, too.

Sincerely,
Slug Girl



MICROGRID

FROM PAGE 1

The prime contractor and lead technology integrator for this project is Humboldt State University’s very own Schatz Energy Research Center. The RCAM will be the first-ever multi-customer microgrid in Northern California.

Environmental Science Professor Jack Murphy said that in his opinion, the clean energy microgrid is a great idea for two reasons.

“The first is just that it contributes to the decarbonization of our electrical generation, and that’s good,” Murphy said. “Less carbon dioxide going into the atmosphere is good and humanity needs big clean energy projects ASAP. The second reason it’s a great idea is that the airport could be critically important during regional disasters such as tsunami or earthquake, and having a microgrid operable when the grid is down would be hugely important.”

Another important goal of the RCAM project is to create a template for the construction of other clean energy microgrids across the state.

By partnering with PG&E and the Redwood Coast Energy Authority, the microgrid will be an example for the rest of California of the policies, tariff structures, and operating procedures that are involved with a project like this.

“The RCAM project has led to the development of PG&E’s recently proposed Community Microgrid Enablement Program,” David Carter, principal engineer for the Schatz Energy Research Center said. “CMEP creates a process and a path for other eligible communities to deploy front-of-the-meter, multi-customer microgrids that will provide resilience to critical facilities.”

With the details of the successful project documented, other communities can use it as a technical guide for the construction of new microgrids. Reducing the use of fossil fuels in a state that has the second highest amount of annual carbon dioxide emissions in the entire country is an exciting step forward toward combating climate change. The RCAM project demonstrates that it is possible for a community microgrid to be powered by 100% renewable, solar energy.

When asked about the work of the Schatz Energy Research Center, HSU alumnus Kyle Powell said that he is

continuously inspired by the various sustainability efforts that come out of the university’s programs.

“Humboldt State as a whole does a great job of promoting sustainability and clean energy throughout all of its programs,” Powell said. “It’s one of the main factors that brought me to the university, and it continues to influence my life on a daily basis.”



Photo by Dakota Cox
Slug girl strikes on Sept. 20, 2020.



Photo by Elliott Portillo
The entrance to the Schatz Energy Research Center on the Humboldt State University campus on Feb. 1.

OPINION

The vaccine rollout creates more controversy

We must continue to do our part to stop the spread

by Poppy Cartledge

Following the tireless debate that we began to witness in March over wearing masks and the continued misuse of the social distancing mandates, we should not be surprised that continuing to adhere to these guidelines post-vaccination is questionable to some.

Yes, according to the Center for Disease Control, the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine is 95% effective, but that doesn't mean you should throw away social distancing measures just yet. Although it is highly effective, the vaccine is not perfect and health care professionals remain uncomfortable with "returning to normal" after the first couple rounds of vaccines have been distributed. Dr. Michael Saag, professor of medicine at the University of Alabama, compared the pandemic to a wildfire, saying the vaccines take fuel out of the fire.

The small chance of getting COVID-19 after receiving the vaccination continues to grow as cases are still on the surge within many counties, especially Humboldt. On Jan. 26, in a virtual meeting of the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors, they indicated that although the state has lifted stay-at-home orders, Humboldt County is still in the purple tier and is expected to stay there for several weeks.

In a new model released by the CDC, we see that around 60% of new COVID-19 cases have been linked to asymptomatic spread. The concern of scientists is that those who have been

vaccinated could potentially still have the ability to spread the virus, even if they are not likely to get sick themselves. The common misconception is that once you are vaccinated, you are immune to the virus, but there is not enough evidence that suggests this to be true.

"If they were asymptomatic but equally contagious, then that's going to have quite an impact on the epidemic," said Richard Menzies, an epidemiologist who directs the McGill International TB Centre in light of the new CDC model addressing asymptomatic spread. Dr. David Ho, a virologist working on developing monoclonal antibody therapies for COVID-19 at Columbia University added that it sometimes takes up to one month, or slightly longer, for protective immunity to set in after vaccination.

It is especially important during this time that those who've been vaccinated continue to wear a mask and adhere to social distancing guidelines. As we move through the following weeks, to ensure the effectiveness of newer vaccinations, those who are already vaccinated have an important role.

Since vaccine distribution began in the U.S. on Dec. 4, the CDC's daily data tracker shows that we have administered more than 30 million doses as of Monday, Feb. 1. In order to achieve herd immunity through vaccinations, experts believe 75-80%



Graphic by Sam Papavasiliou

of the population or more would have to be vaccinated.

Vaccinations are massively important in combating COVID-19, but simply administering doses to the public is not going to be enough in

ending the pandemic. The best way to ensure that we are doing our part for our community is to continue adhering to mandatory state guidelines: wear a mask, wash your hands and keep your distance.

OPINION

COVID-19 has proven especially deadly to brick and mortar business



Graphic by Dakota Cox

by Dakota Cox

As our collective shopping behaviors change to accommodate the COVID-19 pandemic, Amazon feasts on the misfortune of millions of Americans struggling to pay their rent and keep food on the table.

According to data gathered by Yelp, approximately 60% of businesses registered with the app that shut down when the pandemic first reached the United States will never re-open. Only including the 5.3 million active, claimed local businesses registered with the app, as of August 2020, nearly 100,000 American businesses have been forced to permanently close their doors.

Many corporations have also expe-

rienced varying degrees of drowning during the pandemic, with retail chains closing over 8,700 stores in America in 2020 according to the Coresight Research report. This number comes in just shy of 2019's record breaking 9,300 closures that's predicted to be broken in 2021, with over 2,000 closures already in the first month alone.

This downward trend of brick and mortar retail is an ongoing result of the 2008 real estate bubble burst. Combining a struggling economy with a rise in popularity of e-commerce – allowing customers to seek out the best possible deal through a variety of providers at the click of a button – brick and mortar retailers were forced to significantly discount their prices in order to con-

vince an especially stingy consumer base to buy. With shoppers becoming accustomed to the new prices, retailers were forced to adjust or disappear. This phenomenon has gone on to become infamously known as the "retail apocalypse," claiming over 1.3 million American retail jobs in the last decade alone.

The enormous gap in the market created by the retail apocalypse has been seamlessly filled in by e-commerce. While tens of thousands of brick and mortar stores have closed over the past decade the internet's online shopping Goliath, Amazon, has massively multiplied in size, increasing their 2010 net income by a factor of almost 10 in 2018 and growing their employees by a factor of nearly 20 in that same amount of time. To meet the increased demand for online shopping created by the COVID-19 pandemic, Amazon hired over 400,000 new employees in 2020 alone, bringing their total employee count over 1 million.

Amazon has achieved such massive growth so quickly as the result of a business model that is essentially built around one core concept Jeff Bezos refers to as "customer obsession." Amazon's ultimate goal is to create loyal customers that won't just return once, but hundreds and thousands of times. They do this with the assistance of a website the company has collectively invested billions of dollars and man hours into, in order to connect customers with as many possible items they're interested in, in as few clicks as possible.

Providing additional incentive for customers to spend even more money and time engaging with the brand, Amazon's Prime membership includes free shipping on all items and access to Amazon's video and music streaming services for the price of \$119 per year – a number small enough for almost one in three Americans to justify the purchase and large enough that they will be especially inclined to get their money's

worth out of their subscriptions. Combining the perks of membership with a consistent and vast stream of products that appeal to the consumer and a pricing model specifically designed to undercut the competition, they become unstoppable.

In order to consistently provide the best prices for a vast variety of products on the internet, Amazon trades off especially low net profits on sales for the increased business their prices attract. In fact, the majority of the corporation's income is actually generated by the Amazon Web Services. Essentially, this means that Amazon has been reducing businesses to rubble left and right for the past decade, all so they could eventually capitalize on their popularity and finally make a decent profit from a virtual cloud.

With the pandemic stoking the fire of the retail apocalypse, as is the case with climate change, we are fast approaching a point of no return. While faceless retail corporations will continue to exist in some capacity for those who refuse to conform to the online platform, private businesses will someday become a thing of the past if we can't collectively escape the "every man for himself" attitude our society has adopted.

We need to look past the immediate future and understand that helping others ultimately helps everyone in the long run. So, instead of outsourcing your next purchase for a cheaper price, whatever it may be, invest in a business from your local community. Take pride in watching your wealth spread, rather than sulking in the shame of knowing you're feeding the beast that intends to devour the businesses your neighbors have devoted their lives to.

Author's Note: This righteous rant brought to you by a shameless Amazon Prime member. Do as I say, not as I do and together we can save the small business.

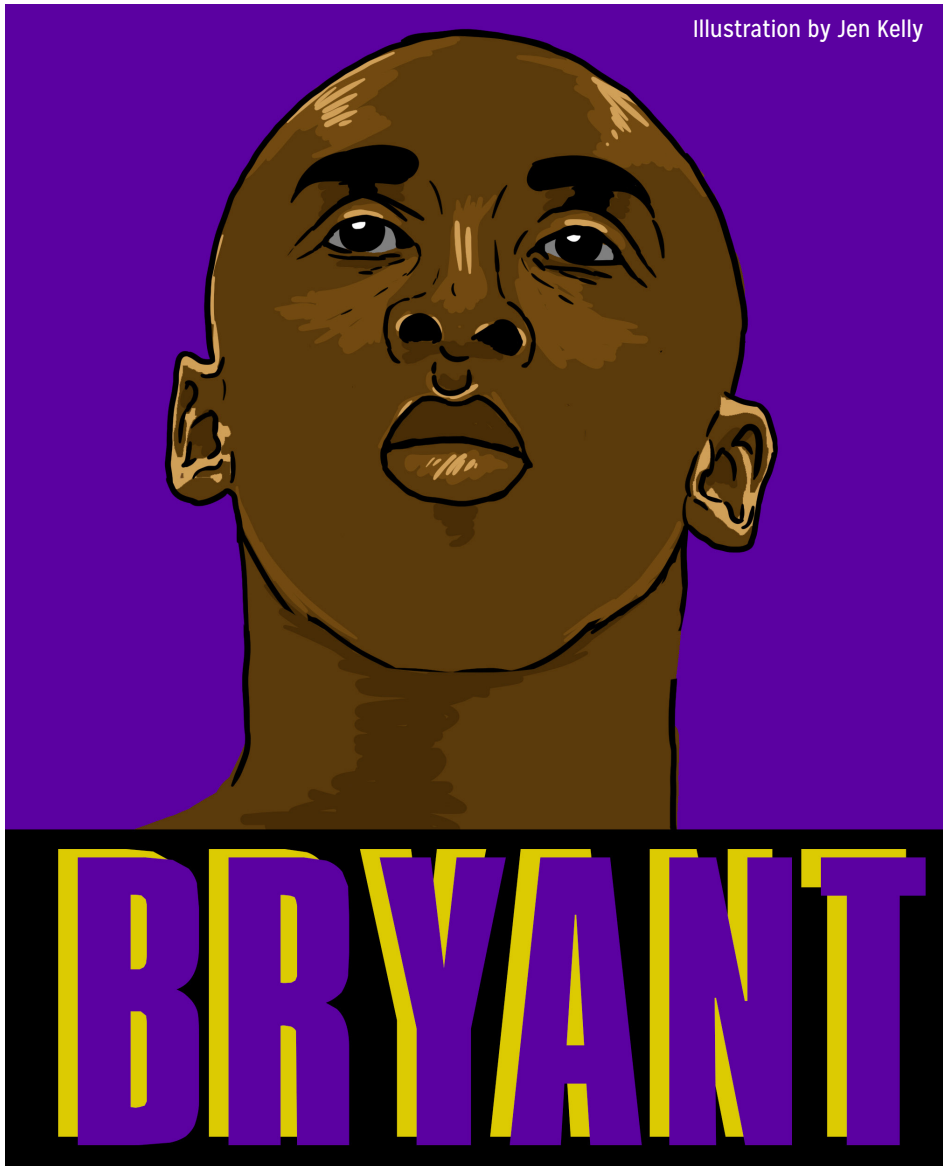
Remembering Kobe

by Justin Celotto

Shifting the true crime narrative matters

What Netflix is doing right in true crime docuseries

by Elizabeth Hannah



“Everything negative – pressure, challenges – is all an opportunity for me to rise.”

—Kobe Bean Bryant

Kobe Bryant will forever be remembered as the 20-year Laker who won five championships, three being second star to Shaq and two with Pau Gasol as the only other all star on his team. Kobe Bryant died in a helicopter crash one year ago on January 26, 2020. Although the Black Mamba is not with us anymore, Mamba mentality and the legacy left behind will continue to shape the future of athletes and competition.

Jason Uipi, a junior at HSU and resident of Los Angeles, was sitting in the HSU Library on that day when he heard the news of Bryant’s death.

“He was just that [guy] to me,” Uipi said. “Being a Laker fan and seeing his work ethic was crazy. He had everyone’s respect including his rivals.”

Kevin Arias, an HSU freshman also from LA, thinks there may not be another player with the mindset like Bryant again.

“His mindset is what set him apart from everyone,” Arias said. “ As a Laker fan it was very fun to watch one of the greats. He was an inspiration to us kids growing up watching him be

loyal and successful.”

Dante Cappellano, a junior at HSU and lifelong Laker fan, was devastated when he learned of Bryant’s death.

“I cried thinking about his family and all that he did for others was now gone.” Cappellano said. “He was that Mamba mentality that symbolized grinding until you are the best at what you do.”

However, Kobe Bryant was not the only one to lose his life that day. Bryant’s daughter Gianna lost her life as well. Kobe had been taking Gianna to a basketball event when the helicopter crashed in a Los Angeles field.

“His daughter had so much promise and work ethic in her,” Cappellano said. “The world not having them in it anymore is a terrible thought.”

Although Kobe Bryant is not with us anymore, what he brought to the table as a lifetime Laker will never be forgotten. Bryant will forever change the game of basketball even if it is through what he left behind. The words and teachings of the Black Mamba will never be forgotten by his peers, fans, and loved ones.



As a true crime junkie, I will and have consumed all things released that I can. That includes documentaries, podcasts, books— basically label anything true crime and I am there.

In the true crime community, there is ongoing discussion as to whether or not retelling these stories is glorifying criminals and exploiting survivors for views and reads, which ultimately equate to dollars. You can tune in to any crime program and walk away whenever you find yourself getting bored, without the cognitive realization that the reality still stands. Survivors and victims’ families must live with this day in and day out.

Recently, Netflix released a new documentary, “Night Stalker: The Hunt for a Serial Killer,” based on the crimes of Richard Ramirez, an elusive serial killer active in the mid ’80s. Netflix is no stranger to true crime docuseries, they have a slew of them in their catalog, but now with the Night Stalker we’re seeing a deviation from the traditional storytelling.

Shifting the narrative is crucial for true crime. The new style is not as controversial or shocking because we’re not seeing the nitty-gritty, dirty details, but, the stories of survivors and victims are still able to be told. True crime is built on shock value, but it’s vital to remember that there are real people behind the headlines.

Television writer Kayla Cobb explains in an interview with “Decider,” “They’re all too focused on providing some sort of explanation about how this monster came to be that the reason they’re monsters — the very people whose lives they ruined become sidelined. These survivors become secondary characters in the story about the worst moment of their lives.”

One of the most popular true crime documentaries released last year, “Seduced: Inside The Nxivm Cult,” was based on Keith Raniere who profited

off of people in a multi-level marketing scheme turned cult. Show creator Cecilia Peck chose to focus and let the story be told by survivors.

“One of the reasons that people will speak about traumatic subjects is because they believe that others can learn from their experience,” Peck said in an interview with “Decider.” “They want to turn that trauma into activism.”

Recognizing true crime as more than entertainment allows for uncomfortable conversations to take place about reform - how we approach and prosecute predators, how to support survivors and how we can continue to keep our communities and loved ones safe.

True crime journalist, Billy Jensen, has highly publicized the idea of crowdsolving, “utilizing the eyes, ears, and expertise of individuals, both locally and across the globe via social media, to aid in the solving of crimes”, and citizen detectives, “an individual who devotes his or her time and expertise to aid in the solving of crime, without compensation or expectation of reward.”

Through Jensen’s podcast with Paul Holes, the notorious cold case detective who solved the Golden State Killer case 40 years later, they utilize their standing with law enforcement to vet the tips and suggestions from “citizen detectives” to pass on to detectives on active cold cases.

Take a look at how cases are being handled now. Cases from decades ago are being solved through DNA submitted in public databases, through tips after reintroducing the cases, through real and honest conversation between media and their audience.

And that is what true crime should be, a lesson, a warning, advocacy. The shift has, and will, continue to create a space for empathy and reflection, healing for survivors and families of victims.



2 BURRITOS \$15

3 TACOS \$6

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TACO TUESDAY

\$1 TACOS