THE KNIGHT TIMES

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Class of 2020

The Lost Year

How COVID 19 took away the 2019-2020 school year

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What if the year never ended?
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This is a special edition of the Knight Times.

Just like the many SOCES programs, the media class was not immune from the quarantine’s impact. Being forced to separate and work from home made working on this issue very difficult. The production of the newspaper is like a car engine. There are multiple moving parts that are all interacting simultaneously, and when we are apart, our engine that runs our class stalls. If you factor in only meeting one hour per week in virtual space, putting together this issue has had its challenges. This is why it’s a little late in its release.

This is our second attempt at a digital issue this year. It’s our attempt to be green and reduce the waste of paper, as well as to cut cost. Our original plan was to save money to print a special all color, giant sized final issue - our tribute to the senior class. Sadly, due to the quarantine, we won’t be able to release a final issue as we intended. Instead it will be digital like this one.

Finally, this is the final issue under the guidance of our outgoing graduating Editor-In-Chief India Bown. India has done a fantastic job this year in leading the class. The fourth estate is the voice of the people and essential in maintaining democracy. I’m so proud of how India has worked to maintain this essential truth at SOCES. I also want to acknowledge Kat Huynh who has done tremendous job spearheading our growing digital platforms. Both ladies have been with the program all four years of high school. It will be sad to say goodbye to them, and their contributions will be greatly missed.

Next month a group of new editors will take over the newspaper. We all hope we will return to SOCES in August, and we can once again report the news of our community. In the mean time, we hope you will enjoy this issue. Be safe and stay healthy.

- Mr. Pak, Journalism Advisor

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As this year is coming to an end, I reflect on the beginning of freshman year when I first joined journalism. On a whim I decided to change electives because I knew writing was a passion of mine. It was one of the best decisions I could make during high school. I didn’t know how to write a newspaper article, but all I remember was putting in my best effort in my work, taking notes from editors, and offering to do more. When it was announced that I’d be an editor the next year, I was not only surprised, but extremely grateful. I want to thank Mr. Pak for always believing in me and pushing me to be better. The last four years have been stressful, but it only strengthened my writing and design skills. I found a love for news and I’m so happy I got to finish off this year in media class. Hope you enjoy this issue. Thank you all.

-India Bown ’20, Editor-In-Chief
COVID-19 changed our schools and society...and it may stay this way for the unforeseeable future.
Six weeks ago the lives of the SOCES community were in the middle of the spring semester. Teachers were preparing to submit their ten week grades. AP students were getting ready for AP exams. Spring sports were just getting started. The senior picnic was about to happen. The theater department was about to present their spring production. Dance production was getting ready to put on their annual show. Students were planning promposals. Graduation plans were beginning.

And in a matter of days, it was all taken away because of COVID 19.

Six weeks later all that’s left are broken plans and shattered dreams. Our way of life has been turned inside out. Shelter-in-place rules have shut down society as we know it. Dwindling supplies have left our markets bare of essential items. Hundreds of thousands of Americans have lost their jobs and small businesses are barely staying afloat while many are closing. The economic devastation has our country spiraling towards a possible financial catastrophe that many experts say will take years for the country to recover from.

All of these changes have left many Americans shocked, bewildered, and depressed.

The SOCES community isn’t immune from these feelings and emotions.

“At first I didn’t think it was a big deal but as things got more serious it also got more scary because this whole situation was so new to us and everything is so uncertain,” said sophomore Gracie Arancibia.

Since the middle of March, SOCES has been engaged in remote learning. While the transition has not been smooth, SOCES has been credited with being one of the best schools in how they were able to launch their online classes. Still, the move to remote learning for teachers, students, and parents has been stressful and has reated consternation for all.

“Remote learning is easy enough to navigate however it is hard to keep on top of the work and workload and when things are due,” said sophomore Josh Blank.

While the remote learning has been able to allow students to continue their education, it can not replace their experience of attending school.

“I’m pretty bummed about losing the spring semester,” shared Arancibia. “There were some events I was definitely looking forward to like the basketball game. Mostly, I just miss being with my friends. It’s almost summer vacation and usually everyone is getting excited the school year is almost over and starting to make plans over summer but now it looks like none of that is going to happen so it’s a little disappointing.”

Unfortunately, many academic institutions have already discussed the possibility of being forced to continue remote learning in the fall. Some universities have already announced that they will only offer online classes in the fall.

If the pandemic is not over and social distancing orders are still in place, schools might turn to rotat- ing attendance. This means some students might continue online education while others will return to school or possibly take turns attending school. This would be a great experiment and many dis- tricts across the country will be spending all summer planning for a fall semester with COVID 19.

While having many months to prepare for a fall semester during a pandemic will certainly be better than having to suspend school suddenly this spring, there will still be many problems to address. How will sports happen? How will creative arts students in band, choir, and drama be able to perform? How will next year’s senior class be able to fundraise? Where will the funding come from?

Despite all the questions about the future, one thing is clear. LAUSD Superintendent Austen Beutner has stated that the safety of the students and the school employees is the district’s top priority and schools will not resume until the government says it is safe to do so.

Senior Melanie Garcia lost the best part of senior year due to the pandemic that shut down LAUSD schools.
A Quotidian Life in Quarantine

By Auden Meyer '22

“Prediction: In 9 months there will be a minor baby boom and in 2033 we will witness the rise of the Quar-Tees.” According to the United Nations World Population Prospects 2019, adolescents aged 13 - 19 make up about 11.1% of the world’s population this year. Between 2030 and 2035, they will make up about 10.65% of the world’s population. Even if that prediction was made before the global pandemic started, I’d say let’s focus on the 865,223 (give or take) teens that are actually enduring the effects of COVID-19 today. As I’m 16, possibly the most teenager-y age a person can be, I have a few words to say about the virus, too.

Going into remote learning, I, like so many others, couldn’t wait to have some time to just relax. In fact, I was worried I wouldn’t have enough to do. However, it turns out that I am cursed with being too busy during the day. Let’s see, I have my six classes plus Advisory, plus studying for my AP Bio exam once a day, plus taking Algebra 2 on top of my regular math class, plus my language class that I do outside of school. Then, I try to work out once a day and leave enough time to play a couple rounds of my favorite video game, Town of Salem. So yeah, it’s a lot. And I’m not too happy about the lack of free time it’s giving me, or my growing problems with posture after slumping in my seat all day.

Unfortunately, I am also prone to social anxiety. It was tough for the first couple weeks to be separated from my friends, but I’ve gotten used to it. Still, the loneliness is there, clawing at me every once in a while and dragging me into a sour mood. On a more positive note, I am pretty blessed with being an introvert, so the radio silence is durable. Especially because of all the family Zooms that I’ve been doing.

Like other families all over the world, I have a newfound appreciation for talking to my family. Maybe it’s because I don’t talk to my peers all the time any
more, maybe because COVID-19 is so scary, but I think that the change to being stuck inside alone all day has brought about the need for connection and a sense of normality for everyone, not just me. People want to feel that they are not alone and that others are struggling, too. They want to make sure those closest to them are okay, but going through the same inconveniences. They want to talk and hang on to what used to be normal. I see that as I spend more time in isolation, social interaction becomes less necessary as this becomes the new norm. Even so, it is something I always look forward to and I am so grateful that I live at a time where the kind of technology that allows people to communicate no matter the distance exists.

Life in quarantine as a quaranteen is stressful, but not unbearable. I am so holed up in a single space that the events there are all I can focus on, so the suffering going on outside is hardly penetrating my mind. Instead, I stress about all my academics and the work they are requiring, my unwanted yet somewhat appreciated solitude, and the internal effects the Coronavirus is having on the mental and emotional health of my family. Still, I try to be optimistic, and as time goes on, this life becomes more normal. Which is good, because I know the struggles I face now are absolutely miniscule compared to those of others, and that it is all worth it (even with an inevitable second wave). I know that I am one of 865,223 teens just like me, and everyone is struggling together.

Pictured left to right:
Taylor Block trying to get practice in during quarantine.
Marco Zepeda practices for his driving test during the quarantine.
Trey Block gets some fresh air during the quarantine.
Life in Quarantine

The shelter-in-place order has not only affected our regular routines of school, studying, and work, but the activities that bring us joy and happiness have also been taken away. Being confined to our homes has left us little options for fun. Here's what some of the members of the media class have been doing to keep themselves mentally stimulated.

During quarantine, I have been watching Netflix and been playing Playstation 4 with David, Zach, Jared, and Brandon. Some shows that I have been watching are Black AF, All American, and Arrested Development.
- Andrew Gerbs

During quarantine, I workout and play video games. - Zachary Schwinger

I have been playing video games with David, Dylan, Brandon, and Zach. Also, once a week we go on drives. Last week we went along PCH from Santa Monica to the end of Malibu. Other than that stuff I have not picked up any new hobbies.
- Jared Horn

I have played ping pong, rode my bike, played PS4, watched Ozark and started “The Wire,” and gone for drives. This is what my day looks like. - Dylan Ross
I have been practicing my drawing skills and also with all the free time available I have been able to learn a new instrument, the guitar.
- Nishi Khandaker

I like to take both my little sisters for a little ride on our scooters. That’s a nice way for us to relax and change our bored moods.
- Harnoor Khandpur

I’ve been spending time making music and watching a lot of cool movies.
- Arman Khachatryan

I’ve been mainly singing and painting if I’m being completely honest. I would take up cooking but frankly I don’t want to burn the house down by accident, my mom would kill me.
- Melissa Rodriguez

My quarantine hobbies are baking and biking.
- Rowyn Lambert

Some shows I have been binge watching are Gossip Girl, Vampire Diaries, Supernatural, Pretty and Little Liars.
- Mariam Azizyan
Life in Quarantine

I have been reading a lot of books that I’ve had covered in dust since this past year. I have also been completing my homework on time just to keep myself busy. New shows that I’ve invested my time in have been an Italian show called Baby and a CW show, All American, which are both on Netflix.

- Brenda Jovel

Throughout all the craziness and the apocalypse outside, the hobby which I have inherited is rewatching all of my favorite Disney shows and movies. I find comfort in reliving my childhood days with my sister and family. We binge all of our favorite movies and TV shows, all while in pajamas.

- Geena Chernyak

Some new hobbies I have are walking or running around my neighborhood. I watch new shows like The Vampire Diaries and All American. I also started to bake more.

- Silvy Atajyan

Even though quarantine has been very difficult, what kept me going was watching tv shows and making Tik Toks. The shows that I watched during quarantine are All American, On My Block, Vampire Diaries, and Money Heist. These shows kept me busy and active in a way. For Tik Tok I just learned Tik Tok dances, so I can keep myself active and busy.

- Lucy Pogosian

During quarantine I have spent most of my time cooking, baking and learning new music pieces on the piano.

- Julie Kartashyan
COVID 19 CRASHES SENIOR YEAR CELEBRATIONS

By Brenda Jovel ‘20

The recent outbreak of the Coronavirus has affected millions of lives around the globe. The virus has currently infected over 2.76 million people worldwide and led to the unfortunate deaths of over 194,000 civilians. The modern world has never experienced such a dangerous outbreak like this before, and everyday people are beginning to learn the struggles of self-quarantine.

LAUSD schools have shut down since March 16, 2020 after school officials declared mandatory shutdowns. The shutdown of all schools across Los Angeles County is meant to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus. Schools have now adapted to online learning for the upcoming months.

Governor Gavin Newsom has stated that LAUSD schools will most likely stay closed for the rest of the year due to the pandemic. Many students have now gotten used to logging into Zoom or the Schoology platform Conference where they are able to attend online-class sessions with their teachers and peers. It is a new routine that many students around the world have been attempting to adapt to as their remainder of the school year will take place in their homes.

Senior Lianna Engoyan expressed her thoughts on the whole issue:

“Well, it's unfortunate that all of our events are postponed and likely cancelled. For me personally, it feels as if all my hardwork has gone to waste. I've worked really hard all year for my AP classes, especially chemistry, and now I'm probably not going to take the tests. But at the same time, I know it was all for a good reason. So despite not being able to fully experience Senior year, the quarantine is preventing a lot of vulnerable people from getting infected by keeping us all at home as much as possible”.

Senior Jessica Hernandez also expressed her thoughts:

“I understand that the shutdown of schools is to take precautions to prevent the virus from spreading, but hearing that it might go over the two-week mark and possibly until summer is the sad part for us seniors. A lot of seniors are devastated at the fact that we won't get to spend our last couple of months together before we walk the stage or experience senior prom. It's truly heartbreaking for the Class of 2020”.

Unfortunately, the SOCES Senior Class of 2020 will not be able to experience a full senior year. Just last week, the senior cabinet came out with a letter directed to all SOCES seniors that all events planned for the month of May have been cancelled. Seniors can ask for refunds by emailing socesclassof2020@gmail.com and writing down their homeroom number and full name. There has been talk about LAUSD giving an online graduation to many seniors across the world, but the SOCES Senior Cabinet is currently trying to have a traditional ceremony.

Our senior sponsors, Mrs. Goldstein and Mr. Pak, have been at work trying to keep up with all of the venues and contracts made in the past month. We thank the Senior Cabinet and our Sponsors for continuing to work hard to make the end of this Senior year great!
**VIRTUAL SPIRIT WEEK: April 27 - May**

SOCES students participating in our first virtual spirit week.

Monday, April 27 - Pajama Day
Attend your classes in your PJs!

Tuesday, April 28 - Bucket List Day
Dress up doing the first thing you’ll do once the quarantine ends.

Wednesday, April 29 - Workout Gear
Wear your workout clothes

Thursday, April 30 - Jersey Day
Represent your favorite team!

Friday, May 1 - Class Colors
Show your class spirit and colors!
Learning the Value of the Voting Process

By Brenda Jovel ‘20

The recent Civics Project led by Seniors Raman Dhandi, Roman Guevara, Nicole Katibi, and Priya Khullar took place on Monday, March 2nd. The Civics project is a requirement for the AP Government course where students must participate in any activity that relates to the government. This could include students to help out at the nearest polling area or even participating in a nearby campaigning event for a particular candidate.

AP Government students campaigned for their chosen candidates. Each group consisted of about 3-4 students who set up tri-folds with information about their candidate. Other SOCES students from younger grades listened to a few groups who highlighted the policies that each candidate was advocating for. AP Government students were also allowed to create pamphlets or any type of merchandise to campaign even more for their chosen nominee.

The students participating in the event are the following:
- Bernie Sanders: Amber Barahona, Margarita Resendiz, & Unnati Prajapati
- Pete Buttigieg: Raman Dhandi, Nicole Khatibi, & Priya Khullar
- Elizabeth Warren: Ava Basileo, John Park, & Henry Parker-Elder
- Joe Biden: Trizhia Matusalem, Samia Sami, & Marian-na Tonoyan
- Tom Steyer: Nash Farrand, Roman Guevara, Sully Koch, & Arthur Musayelyan
- Amy Klobuchar: Adriana Castaneda, Joyce Huang, & Brenda Jovel
- Michael Bloomberg: Nathaniel Der, Michael Maroutian, & Eduardo Sanchez

Every homeroom on campus was given a link to vote for a candidate on Tuesday morning for a mock election. Elizabeth Warren won 4th place, Michael Bloomberg won 3rd, Joe Biden earned 2nd place, and Bernie Sanders garnered nearly 50% of the vote declaring him the winner of this mock election!

Organizing this project wasn’t as complicated as it seemed but produced important results. “When I was organizing the project, it was an easy process,” said Raman Dhandi. “My main concern was whether a lot of people would join and execute the project. It was a really short time frame, but the turnout was amazing and I couldn’t ask for anything better. I’ve never really been involved with politics so this was an eye-opening experience. I started to learn more about the candidates lives, both professional and personal. After this project, I am definitely going to vote for future candidates that I believe in (P.S.-#Pete2024).”

Nathaniel Der, another student who participated in the project gave his thoughts on how his own experience went as well: “Overall, I felt the campaigns people presented were thorough and well thought out. When campaigning, I found it more important to focus on a candidate’s policies rather than their personality, as policies have a greater impact on the world. Campaigning itself was enjoyable and it gave me a new view of the representative democracy we have in the U.S. along with its unique form of government.”

Thank you to all of the students who participated in this mock election at SOCES. And a huge thank you to Mrs. Goldstein for leading this entire project to help out her students in AP Government!
By Arman Khachatryan ’20

With Super Tuesday having passed and the presidential election coming up in November, it’s time to exercise that right to vote, and for many it’s the first vote they cast. Voting is an important part of the American experience - after all, it is the voice of the people. The engine of the nation is the public opinion.

It’s no secret that younger people don’t get out to vote. Older demographics disproportionately vote in higher numbers. The older people get, the more likely they are to go and vote. There are many reasons behind this: 1) teens are less interested in politics; 2) they feel their vote won’t make a different; or 3) they have schedule that conflicts with the time of the election. Teens also face difficulty in finding out how to register to vote. There is irony in the fact that the majority of eligible voters don’t vote.

Although young adults historically don’t vote very much, it is a huge benefit to them if they do. If more young adults voted, issues concerning the younger demographic, like out of control tuitions and the college debt crisis, would be a more important topic that politicians would be forced to address if they want to get elected. Our voice and opinion has value and your vote counts for the future of the nation and the present issues plaguing the younger generation.

This is a sentiment that’s shared by first time voter David Khalulyan: “Young people should vote because our futures depend on today’s elections. If we want something to change we have to start trying now, and our vote is one simple way to accomplish that.”

After being asked why he thinks young people should vote, Ryan Mashayekhi, also a first time voter, responded, “Because every vote counts, it allows you to help shape your community.”

SOCES makes the grade

US New high school rankings for 2020 were released this month and Sherman Oaks Center for Enriched Studies was ranked as one the top public schools in the United States. SOCES has been ranked #495 out of all high schools nationally, 63rd in California, and 7th in LAUSD. SOCES was also graded as the 97th best magnet school in America.

Overall, SOCES received an overall score of 97.22

The full rankings breakdown can be seen at the US News website.

Congratulations to the entire student body and faculty for this achievement. Your hard work has made Sherman Oaks CES one of the premier schools in both the country and the district.

News Bytes

Students must have their lockers cleared out by May 15. Any items left in lockers after May 15 will be thrown out. Campus is open on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Students will begin returning books and chrome books on June 1. The schedule will be announced on Schoology.

Any senior who ordered a class jacket can pick theirs up in the main office any day of the week.
Amidst all the chaos of the coronavirus, a light shines through with exciting news pertaining to an esteemed member of the SOCES community. A teacher well known by those in AP and regular Government, as well as her AVID students, Ms Goldstein is one of the most beloved educators on campus although many don’t meet her until their senior year of high school. Before quarantine and state regulations were instituted, it was announced that Gabriela Goldstein was awarded the CCSS Outstanding Secondary Level Social Studies Teacher of the Year.

Amongst her recognized teaching philosophies, she is also a role model to many at SOCES due to her leadership qualities and teamwork skills. Demonstrated through her roles as Senior sponsor (more than once), sponsoring several clubs including Latinos Unidos and AVID club, and holding multiple weekly tutoring sessions for struggling students, Ms. Goldstein holds her position to the highest form of professionalism.

When asked about how she stays motivated, even with the lack of appreciation and funds many educators receive, she responded, “you definitely get appreciated by students, even if it’s not in the moment... also I think parents who are really involved in their child’s education know when a teacher is really trying to help them... you know when you’re doing your best as a teacher and knowing the impact that I have on the students is what keeps me going as a teacher.”

Before earning a B.A in history at UCLA, growing up she knew she had a love for learning, whether it was reading books or watching documentaries, Ms. Goldstein was never one to shy away from the truth, but to be drawn closer to her historical curiosities. “I love learning new things in general and I’ve always loved history films and documentaries. Those are things that have resonated with me - real stories and real people. Those things resonate with me.”

For Gabriela Goldstein, a person’s character can be admired and can also be nurtured in her students. She has always tried to reflect the qualities she sees in her role models, including courage, having strong beliefs and the convictions to stand up for them. These are qualities she wants to emulate in her teaching philosophy and instill into her students.
The story of how Tequilla Mockingbird became the sound of the class of 2020
At SOCES there is a band class that performs yearly for the band concert. But ever since 2017, there has been one band that’s been performing at talent shows and has certainly made a name for themselves. The band started when four sophomores joined together. The original line up featured: Jonathan Espinosa, a man who played drums as if he’s been playing with the pros; Erick Barajas, a trumpeter who could easily amaze people with his skills on the trumpet; Muqtadir Mubdi, a saxophonist who could play with such a jazzy, and bluesy soul; and Nikolas Ramos, a guitarist and singer who could sing like there’s no tomorrow and played the guitar like it was his last time playing. Together they started something that would have a bigger impact on the class of 2020 than any student could have imagined. They turned heads as they gave an astounding performance at the 2017-2018 SOCES Talent Show. As junior year came along, the band added two new members. Michael Koch, a bass guitarist who could play the bass line of any song asked to play, and myself, Paolo Duarte, a young kid just starting to learn how to play piano.

As the 2018-2019 Talent Show came by, the band would work hard and spend hours together to put on a show. And putting on a show was an understatement. With songs such as “Hooked on a Feeling,” “I Want You Back,” and of course, “Tequila” by The Champs, the band left everyone in the auditorium cheering from start to finish. The band successfully ended the Talent Show with a bang. This show was when the band knew that performing together was what they wanted to do. Immediately after, the band would continue to practice together and sometimes just go and jam around together. This was a bond of a band that could only have a bright future.

Senior year. A year that seemed so far away for all of us. A year we looked forward to yet dreaded at the same time. This is the year Tequila Mockingbird would play its last shows at the school. At the start of the year, they only expected to play the talent shows and to make it the best of all their years performing. However, an opportunity opened up for the aspiring band. Senior Breakfast! News would come in saying that the senior class wanted Tequila Mockingbird to play at the breakfast. Instantly after hearing this, the band was ecstatic to play for the special event. They added one more member, Michael Rodriguez, a student of the guitar. Performing at the breakfast would increase notability for the band around the school. This caused the band to have plenty of more opportunities at school events.

After the senior breakfast, one last member was added to the group and he fit in perfectly as soon as he joined. Petrose Keshishyan, a junior saxophonist with tremendous talent and much room to grow. The band played at the Fall Festival among all the amazing performances by Dance
Production, the school band, and more.

The 2020 SOCES Talent Show was another unforgettable performance for the band. Closing out the Talent Show once again, the band delivered yet again a great performance as the crowd cheerfully sang along to every song such as "Best Part," "Day n Nite," and once again "Tequila." Drummer Jonathan Espinosa spoke about the last talent show and said, "It's really sad that it was our last talent show ever. Throughout all the performances, the fans were the best part."

After what I would say is hands down one of my most memorable performances, the band hung out backstage and it was like a family reunion. The bond this band has is one that is rare to find. That time backstage was full of laughter and memories I know none of us will forget. Just like a group of friends hanging out on a regular school day, backstage was the same.

My personal experience with the band throughout all these years is something I will hold with me forever. The memories I've made with this band are the same memories I will look back at when my kids ask me about my time in high school. I will tell them all the stories of the fun and stressful times with the band. From the fun jam sessions where we all just freestyle, to where we got stressed about which songs to choose or how to play a certain part, no matter what, this band has completely changed my life. I will tell my kids about how this group of misfits, a group of kids that you would never see walking the halls together found their own group connected simply by music. How some of the shyest kids and the most outgoing kids met in the middle and found a voice expressing how we felt without having to say a word but by playing notes on an instrument. Each of us, different but with one goal: to entertain the crowd. A memorable experience and life changing without a doubt.

If I could say one thing to the band I would like to simply say thank you. Thank you for changing my life. Thank you for accepting this beginner pianist with only a year of experience and helping him grow. You guys pushed me further than I ever expected when I first sat down and decided to play piano. Thank you for always having my back no matter what happened or what I went through. I know we all expected to play at the school for more shows but if that doesn't happen, just know it's not the end for us. We'll find a way to get back and jam out with each other again. If we don't see each other by graduation I'd like you to know that if I could go back and do it all again, I would. I don't care if I go back to being a beginner, I would go back to see those memories and experience them again. Thank you and from the bottom of my heart, I love you guys.

Tequila Mockingbird, Out!
Recently SOCES 8th grader Sunny Cai won an award for her performance in the tenth grade mathematics competition in the inaugural Maryan Mirzakhani AMC 10 Awards, which was hosted by the Mathematical Association of America American Mathematics Competitions. Maryan Mirzakhani AMC 10 Awards were given to 149 female students across the United States as top performing female students in each Mathematical Association of America section. Earlier in the year Sunny Cai also won the SOCES Scripps Spelling Bee and competed in the regional round where she reached the 4th round. The finals of Scripps National Spelling Bee were canceled this year due to COVID 19. The Knight Times staff had the opportunity speak to Sunny about her math accomplishments and what it takes to do well in school.
Interview with Sunny Cai

What award did you win? How did you learn about this competition? What made you want to enter?

The award is called the Maryam Mirzakhani AMC 10 Awards. It’s sent to the top 5 scoring females in each of the 29 regions in the US and Canada on the AMC10. Ours is Southern California and Nevada. The AMCs are a series of international tests aimed toward middle and high school students. The AMC10 is for anyone in 10th grade or younger. Since the goal of these tests is to get students interested in math, I wanted to try it. Your test score can be written on your resume, and some schools like MIT actually ask for it, so that was another reason I entered. Also, if you get a high enough score, you’ll be invited to other tests (American Invitational Mathematics Examination, etc.) and eventually the international olympiad (IMO).

Can you explain the competition process? What did you actually have to do? How many people took part in this competition? How long was it?

Our school has to register for the test first. For students, you’d start by signing up with the teacher in charge, who was Ms. Sabio this year. On competition day, you’d be pulled out of class at a set time, and you’d sit in a room with other test-takers. The test has a time limit of 75 minutes, and it has 25 multiple choice questions that are answered on a scantron. On the AMC 10, it’s only what you’re supposed to learn up to 10th grade, so there’s no calculus or anything taught in higher grades. Worldwide, tens of thousands of students who are looking for a challenge in math take it every year. Schools like Granada Hills hold this test for students who want to go further into the subject. In fact, schools get recognized for their students’ grades, and this year, the only schools in the valley with students who qualified for AIME were SOCES and North Hollywood High School.

Why do you enjoy math?

I like the feeling of accomplishment from solving a hard problem after spending a lot of time on it. In addition, I think math is useful in many other areas. For things like science and engineering, learning math is needed to understand the subject. Not only that, math is used to make everything around us, whether it’s technology, our houses, or everyday utensils.

Math is a subject that turns a lot of people away. What kind of person likes math? Is it an experience of excitement? Accomplishment? Is it like solving a puzzle?

I think anyone can learn and enjoy math. There’s no specific type of person it’s aimed toward; regardless of race, gender, or age, anyone can like math. Similar to many other things, improving after putting in a lot of hard work is a feeling of accomplishment. In some ways, it’s similar to solving a puzzle. It’s a challenge, using problem solving and logic to arrive at a conclusion.

What level of math are you in now?

I’m taking geometry at school right now and other classes at AoPS (aops.com/online), both of which have helped me a lot.

What advice can you give to others to improve in math?

The most important part of improvement is your mindset. You can excel at math regardless of what people tell you. It doesn’t matter who you are, you can make progress as long as you keep working hard at it. The learning process is long, and you shouldn’t expect results overnight, but as long as you keep trying, you’ll see improvement.

You also won our school’s spelling bee. How did you do in regionals?

I was out after the 4th round, and during that round there were 27 people left. I wish I had done better, but I don’t think it’s too bad. It was a really fun experience overall, especially meeting all the other competitors.

Are you better at math or english? Which do you prefer?

I don’t think I’m better at either one, and I enjoy both equally. Even in math, English is important to communicate ideas.

You’re obviously a very strong academic student. How did that happen? And what advice can you give to others that might be struggling in school?

A lot of people think success is luck, but most of it is just effort and work. I think improving academically means putting in a lot of time into studying. And it’s important to not give up. You won’t see anything in a day, but you can’t just stop there. It’ll take a while for results to show.

Being an academically inclined student, how has remote learning affected you? What do you like and dislike about it?

I actually kind of enjoy remote learning. It gives me the flexibility to choose my own schedule and spend more time focusing on what I need to work on. The only thing I dislike is that without the school environment, it feels less serious.

What do you miss about school?

I miss all the people at school a lot. And seeing everything in person made it harder to forget about homework.

What are some things you have been doing during the quarantine besides school work?

I’ve been spending more time practicing piano and clarinet, and I’m taking online courses outside of school. I also started working out a bit, but that’s about it.
WHAT IF...

The spring semester was going to bring a lot of great events and sports. The Knight Times reached out to the students that were going to bring you these events to share with you what might have happened.
By Alex Estrada '20

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic that has closed our schools, the Drama program had to unfortunately cancel their Spring play, *As You Like It*. As You Like It is a classic Shakespeare comedy written in 1553 and has been adapted many different times. However, the version of our drama program has a twist. Instead of taking place in the 16th century, this version takes place in the 1960s. If the Shakespeare show happened, students and teachers would have seen a classic play transformed to fit the look and feel of the decade of revolution.

Unfortunately, the show had to be scrapped two weeks before performing. Costumes were close to being finished, and major rehearsals were underway. This is a very upsetting ending to all seniors as they do not get a Shakespeare or Thespian show. Shakespeare shows are always great because they give the cast free range to portray their character based on the time period. The play follows Rosalind and her cousin Celia as they flee from their Uncle’s court. The audience would see their journey through the Forest of Arden where they would find love and encounter many different characters. One of Shakespeare’s most famous characters, Jacques, is in the show and recites some of the most famous lines in theater history.

*As You Like It* would have been a great show and it’s unfortunate that it was not able be performed for the school. The pandemic couldn’t have come at a worse time for drama. Best of luck to the SOCES Drama program as they look forward to next year’s shows.

“*All the world’s a stage,*
*And all the men and women merely players;*”

*As You Like It Act II, Scene vii*

Drama students from this past Fall’s production of *The Addams Family*
As my last year of choir, I'm very disappointed that it had to be cut short. We had so much planned for both the spring and pops concert. Truly I am heartbroken that we won't be performing at any festivals and making our school proud by getting an excellent award or even better, a superior. I will truly miss every concert that I've performed at. I'm glad we went out with a bang at the winter concert. I truly hope those of you who went enjoyed the singing of elementary, middle and high school choir. I also hope that you appreciated Frank Seed's solo and the duets by: Bivienne Mariscal and Jessica Hernandez as well as Nikolas Ramos and myself. I would also like to thank the other seniors in our class: Vanik Galstian, Arman Khachatryan, Olga Kushnirovich, Angelo Panopio, Logan Pepper, Liam Purcell, Kenneth Rasmussen, Margarita Resendiz, Myles Shin, Isabelle Smits, Eli Swissa and last but not least, Valerie Yermakova. We truly dedicated a lot of time to our last year of choir to try to make it the best. I wish nothing but the best for Ms. Escobar and her choir students for the upcoming years.

With the uprising of covid-19, many things were lost especially for the graduating class of 2020; however with the closure of schools, the SOCES Wind Ensemble lost a huge part of their year. Every four years, the Wind & Jazz Ensemble takes a big trip for a festival, and this year we were headed to New Orleans, Louisiana. The year started off with a boatload of excitement as we were getting ready for the festival, and Mr. Johnsen challenged us with the song, "Pusztta," that had our fingers falling off by the end of it. Since August 20th, we've been working non-stop pouring our blood, sweat, and endless tears into it. Eventually, news of the coronavirus spread, leading Mr. Johnsen to write a very hard email informing everyone that our festival will be canceled. This shattered all our hearts as we realized that we would not be able to perform after all the time and hard work that we invested. The closure of schools also meant that the seniors would not be able to have their last spring concert and the infamous “Salute to Seniors Night,” which we’ve been looking forward to since we joined band in elementary/middle school.
If we had our dance production concert this year, we think it would’ve been the best we ever had. This year, our theme was Rewind, which means everything was based on songs and dances from as early as the 20’s. It was going to start out with groups of dancers representing different decades. We choreographed short 30 second dances for each decade and we were going to dance with the corresponding songs.

This year’s dance show was going to be something a lot of students wouldn’t forget. Stunts were going to be performed, new faces added, and an overall great show. There was even supposed to be a guys dance. The show has been talked about since the beginning of the school year so if it did happen, a lot of people would’ve been proud and happy they got to see it. On behalf of the seniors in dance production, thank you to the members of the class, you guys made the dance experience fun and we wouldn’t want anyone else around us. And the biggest thank you to soces and it’s students for being the best and most supportive audience ever. We can’t wait to see what dance will look like these next years as you guys grow.

However, it is unfortunate how we did not get the chance to perform our dances to the audience. As a class we worked very hard to put these dances together in order to keep the audience entertained. The way our dance class worked was we have four sessions and we work on opening and closing. As mentioned before the opening dance was going to have a different decade throughout the performance. This year’s opening dance was very different compared to the previous years. In spite of the dance show being canceled we were going to be celebrating our 30th year of dance production. Being part of dance production was our second family, for preparing the show we always had after school rehearsals and usually those rehearsals brought us closer as a family. Our experience in dance production was wonderful, we all have improved as dancers and opened up to each other. These past 3 years of being part of dance production was worth it.
The SOCES swim season started on February 20 and sadly ended on March 5 due to the unfortunate disaster of the coronavirus. The swim team was only able to compete in three meets where we were able to bring home the victory from each one of them. As a team, we would have most likely been undefeated League Champions and many of our swimmers would have had the opportunity to swim at the CIF semifinals and CIF finals (which would have taken place in the middle of May). Many of our swimmers have been on the team for many different seasons and understood how the team worked; our new freshman swimmers were just starting to understand how the team was being run. All the swimmers would continue to succeed, as this season progressed because we were lucky enough to have many more “in water” practices.

This year there were three seniors on the team: Nicole Khatibi, Anahit Marashlian, and Hannah Medved. These swimmers started the swim team four years ago when our two dedicated and determined coaches joined the SOCES Swim Family as well. The last home meet would have ended very emotionally as these three swimmers would have been acknowledged at our “Swim Senior Night.” These senior swimmers were all captains who loved bringing spirit to the team and wanted to show the rest of the team the potential it had.

Our coaches taught us many different life lessons as many of the swimmers looked up to them. They brought much positivity to our team and always wanted us to keep our heads up throughout any hard times. Our coaches always wanted us to do our best not only on the swim team but also in our everyday lives. Even though this season sadly ended early, we know that the bonds and the lessons created will forever be a part of us. The future of the swim team will continue to remain certain as we know they will continue bringing home many more victories.
Before the varsity volleyball team was forced to end their season, they obtained a record of 3-2, including winning their first league game against Northridge Academy. The Knights had a two-game winning streak when their season was halted. Everything was going great for them and they were confident that they had a chance to finish undefeated in league. This year, the team has a legitimate shot at winning the League Championship. Additionally, they were just moved up to Division 2 this season, which meant that they would face opponents in a higher division than they were used to, and they were ready for it. The volleyball team this year was confident that they could compete in this year's Division Championship Game, as well.

The volleyball team was also expected to have the annual Senior Night on April 23, 2020. However, the Seniors that have waited four years to obtain their Senior Night for volleyball sadly faced the reality that it wouldn't occur this year. The list of seniors on the varsity team included Jeffrey Ambriz, Luis Del Rosario, Sam Choi, Liam Purcell, Jesse Schneider, and Douglas Rawcliffe, and the seniors on the JV team included Anthony Le and Timur Shakirov. We appreciate these seniors as they have worked very hard and brought great spirit, morale, and leadership to the team this year.

By Jeffrey Ambriz '20
What if the 2020 baseball season didn’t get cancelled? One scenario is that my teammates and I would be much happier. We put in four years of hard work to try to get to the City Section Championship game at USC. For our season to end like this was just frustrating and definitely sad. Our team was just starting to figure it out after our win against Chavez on Monday, April 9th. We didn’t think we would be playing our last game of our high school career. We had an upcoming game against Reseda and then league was going to start. When the season was cancelled, I was growing more confident in our team, we were getting good production out of the freshman, and the pitching staff was beginning to form. Everything was looking good because other teams in our league had lost seniors from the previous year and it was time for the SOCES class of 2020 to step up. If the season had never been cancelled, I think we would have been real contenders to win the league title and had a good possibility to play at USC for the championship. It makes me emotional writing this because this season was possibly the end of my 13 year baseball career and this isn’t the way I wanted it to end with all of the hours I have put into baseball. Unfortunately Zach Schwinger, Jared Horn, Jacob Munoz, Matt Ambriz, John Park, Colin Kleiger, and myself didn’t get to complete our senior year, but it was an amazing high school career for all of us.
If my softball season were still going on right now, we would be fighting Northridge Academy for the title of Division 2 League Champs. Our softball team has been league champs for the past three years. Not only have we formed a bond as a team, but also a bond as sisters. If softball had not been cancelled, we'd be playing our hearts out in this heat to get on top and string together a whole lot of wins. We would be having after school practices, training to play our best against the other teams in our tournaments. We would have had our senior night yesterday. A day to honor the seniors for all the commitment, knowledge, and love they’ve given to the team over the past four years - a day filled with balloons, flowers, and baskets, but most of all tears, smiles, and laughs. For a select few, there’s still time for them to enjoy another season or two, but for others, they won’t pick up a bat or glove for years. This softball season wasn’t like any other season; we had potential to do better than previous years. We knew our mistakes and were starting to learn from them in order to become a team we would be proud of. If my softball season were still going on right now, I’d be playing the sport I love and not taking a minute of it for granted.
If my senior season of tennis wasn’t canceled my teammates and I would’ve been potentially celebrating CIF Division 1 Championship. The last four years have been such a grind of hard work and dedication. With COVID-19 ending all high school sports seasons, it felt like a spit in the face. We as a team have been practicing so hard throughout the season to accomplish our goal of winning a championship. We started the season strongly with a 5-2 record. We had two big wins over Grant High school and Taft High School. Before the season ended our team prepared for a big game against Birmingham High School, where we would dominate. We were on pace to be league champions once again. We were also big contenders to go all the way to win a championship as we had a very strong team that was up for the effort. We also lost the opportunity to be able to send our players to the individual’s tournament at the end of the season due to it being canceled. (Individuals tournament is a tournament that contains the best players from southern California) With our season being cut short, it feels bittersweet due to the fact of us seniors will not be able to have a Senior Night nor a team banquet. It’s really emotional for me to write this article because I have been playing this sport that I love since I was six years old and it’s potentially the last time I will ever play this sport competitively. I want to give a shoutout to the other seniors on the team, Myles Shin, Mariyan Popov, Nat Der and myself as we all had successful high school careers.
Prom, some may call it a cliche high school experience, others might confess that it’s the event of the season and a major aspect of being a teenager. To all of the students at SOCES looking forward to their senior prom, the pandemic has seriously affected the sentiments of their last year in high school. For many, this would’ve been their first prom ever and was the event most anticipated of the year or of the entirety of high school.

So, what if Prom wasn’t delayed? If prom took place on the date we planned, May 24, there would be so much on people’s to-do lists to get prom ready! Whether it’s getting your nails done and looking for the perfect dress or getting fitted for a tux/suit and getting the right colored corsage (or any combination of the two), there is a lot that goes into the traditions of prom attire and preparation.

Once your whole look is put together, a way to capture all the fun memories with friends is to have prom photoshoots with dates and friends that you go to prom with. Using a nice fancy camera or a camera phone, you have pictures to look back on for years to remember your high school days.

Another fun part about prom is the ride to the venue. Going with just your date, best friends, or a mixture of both, classmates sing, laugh, and converse before attending the actual prom portion of the night as a way to hang out before the dinner and dancing of the evening. The ride to prom is also filled with Snapchat photos and videos, making it easier to share with one another.

The most anticipated part of the night, walking to the venue to begin a night that rounds off the year. With decorations all around, music blasting, and lots of room to hit the dance floor, all the excited guests enter the prom venue. Cameras flashing from the yearbook staff as the food comes out fresh from the kitchen, students fill the tables and receive a full and fancy meal. You and your friends are laughing and making jokes that would soon become memories that you talk about in the future. For one single night, every single worry of yours is gone and you enjoy every moment you get to have, surrounded by your friends and teachers who have helped you get to where you are.
ENTERTAINMENT
Soundtrack of SOCES
By Kenny Rasmussen ‘20

Kenny picks the songs that best capture the adventure of the 2020 school year.

If you told yourself everything that was gonna happen this year, do you think you’d be able to believe yourself? Personally, I would’ve sworn life was playing a prank on me. So to reflect that craziness, the craziest journalist has been shouldered the task to score the year, utilizing whatever he can recollect from the year to bridge the details.

“Livin’ on a Prayer” by Bon Jovi - In an era where rock is no longer the ubiquitous powerhouse of mainstream hits it once was, this song manages to stay afloat in our minds. Besides, the lyrical content that everyone remembers from the song is increasingly relevant, especially the line about Livin’ on a prayer as disease ravages the year and confines us to our homes.

“Shhh…” by Future - This spacey trap song is more relevant to our year than the average student would think. Just look at the uncensored title and remember the boys bathroom, you’ll see what I mean.

“Nightcrawler” by Travis Scott - A sleepy banger that the DJ should’ve played perfectly scores our notorious homecoming. This is the kinda music you throw water and mosh to.

“Let Your Love Be Known” by Bono - A song dedicated to Coronavirus victims from U2’s lead years would’ve been more appropriate as a closer for a tracklist.

“Telephone Calls” by A$AP Mob - I’m kind of cheating with this one admittedly but song’s declaration that those listening are the remainder of their kind seemed appropriate.

“Dear God” by XTC - A song where the singer loses faith due to all the tragedy befalling the world. This and the last song could’ve been replaced by R.E.M.’s “end of the world” song but that seemed all too predictable and ultimately over dramatic.

“We Made It” by Busta Rhymes and Linkin Park - A rapper known for aggressive delivery teams up with Nu Metal Legends to create a surprisingly mellow and genuine song of triumph. Reflective of the kind of relief those who get out of this quarantine might feel.

“Good Morning” by Kanye West - Feels a little weird to close this off with an opener but between the anthemic feel, lyrical content, and music video, this felt the most graduatesque on an album titled Graduation.
Most of us have been doing one thing during this quarantine, which is watching Netflix. We scroll through our home page wondering what to watch as we mindlessly grab that ice cream from our fridge and the chips from our pantry. We have already seen 50% of the t.v. shows and movies on Netflix. You are craving and wanting a new show to binge watch at 2 a.m. and I have just the show for you.

The show that everyone should be watching is called (drumroll please) “#Blackaf.” This show is so awesome. It was created by Kenya Barris who not only acts in it but he wrote and directed it. If his name sounds familiar you probably know who he is. Kenya Barris is the creator of “Black-ish,” “Mixed-ish,” “Grown-ish”, and he has worked on movies like “Girls Trip”, “Shaft”, “Little” and the list goes on (probably longer than a CVS receipt). The show follows Drea (who plays Kenya’s second oldest daughter) who is filming a documentary for her NYU application. Drea has five other siblings Chole (the oldest), Izzy (the third oldest), Pops (the fourth oldest), Kam (the fifth oldest), and Brooklyn (the youngest). Rashida Jones plays Kenya’s wife in the series and their chemistry is immaculate. Throughout the 8-episode series it shows the Barris family as they go on hilarious adventures all while talking about important black issues. The show can be described as the “Office” mixed with “Black-ish.” My mom and I watched the entire series in two-days and we almost died laughing. This show will bring you joy, love, laughter, and probably some tears. It is so important to have a show like this in 2020 because it represents a black-sitcom in a new light. Plus the soundtrack is pretty awesome. So, sit down turn on that Netflix and be sure to click on “#Blackaf.”
More Quarantine Picks

By Susan Simonyan ’21

A lot of us are bored on this “break” without anything to do other than school work, eat, sleep, and FaceTime friends because that’s the only way we can see one another right now. However, to make time go faster during this time, Netflix is a good distraction, with many movies and TV show selections to binge watch in one day.

_The Good Place_ is an amazing series with three seasons on Netflix. I don’t want to spoil too much, but if you’re a fan of comedy, I’d recommend watching right now! Young & Hungry is also an interesting drama and comedy filled TV show with five seasons on Netflix, It’s about a food blogger, Gabi, who interviews for a job to be the personal chef of a tech entrepreneur, Josh, and after she gets tired, so much happens. Maybe even some romance between the two? You’ll have to watch to find out.

If you like drama, Netflix has so many selections for you, but I recommend watching _Gossip Girl_ and _Glee_. They both have six seasons and will keep you occupied during this time of boredom. The Fosters is also a really good heartfelt drama with five seasons as well.

If you like documentaries, I recommend watching _The Trials of Gabriel Fernandez_, it’s a really sad six episode documentary, but really interesting to watch.

_The Good Place_ recently released its third season of the show and it’s really interesting to watch with many plot twists you’d never expect.

As we all know, Netflix put on many Nickelodeon shows to stream such as _Victorious_, which I’d recommend watching because it’s interesting and so funny. It’s a classic and will make time pass by. With this I’d also recommend watching _Sam & Cat_, it’s also funny and would relieve stress from what’s going on in the world right now to keep you healthy.

Lastly, I’d also recommend watching _The 100_. It’s an interesting drama about the destruction of civilization from a nuclear Armageddon on Earth, and the only survivors are the 12 on international space stations in orbit at the time, and it also has six seasons.

Disney+ also has many shows, especially classic TV shows to binge watch during this “break” such as _Hannah Montana_, _The Suite Life on Deck_, and others.

Make sure to do your school work, binge watch a couple Netflix shows, and stay safe during this time by washing your hands, social distancing, and staying inside.

Stay safe Knights!

All images from imdb.com
With many places either being shut down or governments enforcing quarantine, many people without a doubt are staying indoors in an attempt to combat the dangerous COVID-19. But when you’re forced to stay indoors for many days at a time, what is there to do? One of those things is to play some video games, of course! Here are some suggestions for games to play or replay while on lockdown (note: some of these suggestions are based on what I have observed to be popular and are being hyped up as something to play during this time) - Marco Zepeda ’20

1. **Animal Crossing: New Horizons**: The fifth mainline entry in the now-beloved life simulator series, this new entry sees life taking place on a vacation to an island. As how a life simulator should be, players are free to live life however they desire. The series’ transition from the typical town/city life to an island life is sure to change things up quite a bit, but should nonetheless provide something new and fun to both new and returning players.

2. **DOOM Eternal**: The sequel to 2016’s DOOM series reboot, this first-person shooter game sees a soldier battling the forces of Hell who have invaded Earth. A series of internet memes have been spawned from the game’s release date, as it shares its release date with the game mentioned above.

3. **Ring Fit Adventure**: A cross-genre fitness RPG game where you must make your way through levels and defeat enemies using fitness moves. The game is controlled with a ring-shaped controller (hence the game’s title) which responds to the movements you make with it. Coupled with the fact that it’s very lengthy, as well as having a story to follow, it should be sure to at least change something to you that you’d be glad to have! In fact, so many people want to play this game during quarantine that there is actually a shortage of copies of the game!

Besides these games, a few other games that you should play are online-multiplayer oriented games or single-player story-heavy games, such as RPGs or visual novels. Of course, there is no limit to what you can play or what you want to play, this list is merely suggestions.