

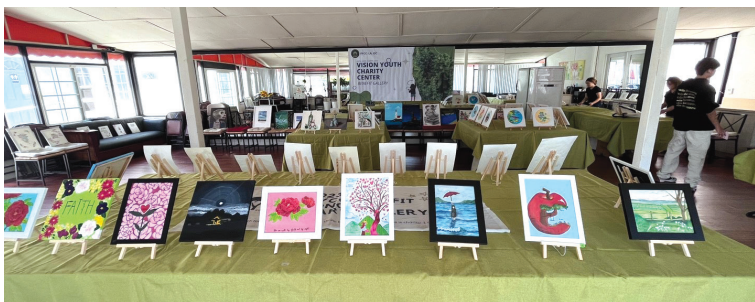
## Student Reporter



Theo Lim

Grade 9  
Crescenta Valley High School

## Vision Youth Charity Center's Summer Art Exhibition

Each art piece shows the students' unique understanding of the theme.  
[Source: Author, Theo Lim]

Creative art pieces attract people from all over the world. Recently, students from South Korea and the greater Los Angeles area came together to collaborate on an art exhibition. On June 17th of 2023, the Vision Youth Charity Center (VYCC) showcased an art gallery in an effort to raise funds for North Korean refugees who are struggling with the physical and mental scars of past traumatic experiences. The second I stepped into the gallery, I felt the dedication and passion of the youth who were willing to support one another.

Months before the event took place, the VYCC had been planning and discussing the details of this season's exhibition. We researched and found out that North Korean citizens have been having a harder time than usual since the pandemic started, due to stricter policies regarding the border and quarantine measures. Based on this, we chose the theme of love and hope, especially for those who are in need of help. Members and families then gathered on the day of the event and started off the show with a prayer and a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

The displayed paintings, crafts, and t-shirts caught my attention, each illustrating the students' unique understanding of the theme. It was inspiring to see more than 20 art pieces that showed the talents of these young artists who had poured their hearts into their work, all in the name of alleviating the suffering of those less fortunate. The vibrant colors of the paintings, positive messages inspired by bible verses, and the simple yet meaningful designs of the t-shirts, served as a reminder of how beautiful charity work is.

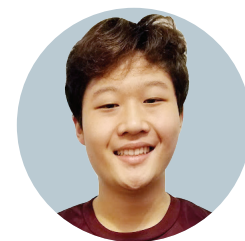
The art show was not just about the students' artistic talents, but it was a sign of hope for the North Korean refugees. Every purchase made and every dollar spent directly contributed to funds for organizations dedicated to supporting the human rights of these individuals who have endured unimaginable hardships. My family and I couldn't resist buying t-shirts and paintings from the

event, we were compelled to support the fundraising through our purchases.

I communicated with other staff members and families about how amazing it was to see the unity of the organization. People from Orange County, LA, and South Korea were able to merge their efforts and spread positivity by bringing attention to their movement. This fascinated me as I realized how people were able to unite under one goal, despite their diverse backgrounds.

Helping the organization clean up the stations and reorganizing the tables, I left the event with a renewed sense of hope and positivity. Each and every piece showed me how powerful art can be in terms of social impact. It was an experience that left me with the importance of kindness, empathy, and the belief in the worth of every human being.

## Student Reporter



Hahn-Saem Lee

Grade 11  
Northside College Preparatory  
High School

## Helping Hispanic Immigrant Families

People whose parents are immigrants or who are starting to learn a new language at school should acknowledge that it is complex and requires a lot of time. Immediately trying to learn a new language might be frustrating due to the lack of communication, but what if there was a program to aid in smoothening this transition? Nammin, a community service program run on behalf of HANA Center, helps create the path toward learning English.

Since 1972, HANA Center has been working within the community. This organization initially started by aiding Korean immigrants and Korean-American families to adapt to the new culture in America. In the subsequent years, the HANA Center has worked on helping anyone in need and branching out to people with different backgrounds other than just Korean Americans.

With this mission of unity in mind, the Nammin program was created. Building from the ground up, the Hispanic immigrants needed a place to sleep, eat,

stay warm, and settle into the new environment. After being provided with a hotel to call home, the HANA Center gave them the chance to learn English. Each lesson occurred twice a week for an hour, and everyone from toddlers to adults were allowed to join. Starting with the basic alphabet, numbers, and building skills so that all the members could learn to read, write, and speak, learning English seemed like a goal out of reach. Even with some similarities, English is very different than Spanish. One needed to pronounce the letter 'j' and learn how to pronounce vowels in different scenarios. However, as each lesson went by, everyone was able to start communicating their own



Information about HANA Center [Source: HANA Center]

thoughts in English. Now it was the students that were asking the teachers, "How are you today?" rather than the other way around.

With eagerness and enthusiasm, the students came to class ready and prepared to learn, but they also made it enjoyable for those teaching them. The Hispanic families shared their native cultures and cracked jokes, making the group feel more connected. Despite the cultural and language barriers, being able to communicate and laugh together made it much easier to create something more than just a teacher-student relationship.

In order to maintain this rela-

tionship while keeping the students' education in check, there are some skills that volunteers need to develop. Learning to communicate through gestures, talking slower, and emphasizing each syllable in letters isn't natural for a native speaker. However, for those learning a new language, these strategies help immensely. Volunteers must be patient and willing to repeat words, phrases, and sounds several times so that the Hispanic immigrants don't feel discouraged from asking questions and learn to have the right pronunciation.

Volunteering within Nammin creates experiences that are mutually beneficial for both the educators and those learning. Branching out to those in need created an outlet for those who want to help. Giving high school students, as well as others, the opportunity to volunteer in this program helps apply what one learned in school to the real world. This program truly represents HANA, meaning one in Korean, by joining people from diverse backgrounds together through education.

## Student Reporter



Aspen Lee

Grade 8  
Santa Fe Christian  
Middle School

## Starpower Nationals in the Las Vegas Heat

United by a love for dancing, over twenty dance studios across the west coast came together to compete in Las Vegas during the hot days of June. After months of long performances and competitions, talented dancers of all ages showcased their routines and solos for multiple judges and audiences. Starpower Nationals Dance Competition is an event that is always looked forward to by all studios, especially when it's in Las Vegas or, brightly described as Paradise Valley.

Over the course of five days, groups from San Diego to Phoenix presented their best performances to receive adjudications, trophies, scholarships, and more! Each day was filled with multiple award ceremonies, where medals as big as faces and trophies taller than children were acquired by the top dancers of the session. Not only

were there hours of friendly competition each day but on the four different stages, every single dance was assessed by the judges' preferences and enjoyment. To bring more fun to the week of dance competition, one day was dedicated to all the graduating senior dancers, where they were able to celebrate their long years of dance as they move on to the next chapter in their lives.

A social event that every dancer and family can take part in is the neon day at Nationals, where everyone who is in neon and studio spirit wear can come to cheer on their fellow teammates onstage with their bright colors and energy. Although just being there to support is plenty, the overall dance studio with the most neon and spirit for their team gets to leave the final competition of the season with the title of Best Studio Spirit,

YMCA Dance Party on Stage During Last Awards Ceremony for Starpower Nationals  
[Source: Author, Aspen Lee]

along with a banner bigger than the size of a TV, to put in their studio at home.

My own dance studio, Fusion Dance Solana Beach, brought over 100 dancers to Las Vegas to perform and witness the progress that had occurred from the beginning of the season, in September through June. Despite the scorching Las Vegas heat, which, not to mention, is over 20 degrees hotter than the normal San Diego weather that we were all used to, FDSB

was able to bring what they know as the joy of dance from California to Nevada, with the constant cheer and outstanding performances in all levels, ages, and categories. The Starpower Nationals Dance Competition was a qualifying, invitation-only event, but unlike the standard competition with losers and winners, each studio acknowledged the pure talent in each dancer, and every person was so happy to do what they love with others who appreciated dance as they did.



Student Reporter



Ethan Chang  
Grade 11  
Stockdale High School

## The Nightmare-Fueled Mind of Tim Burton



Shadow Monster at the "World of Tim Burton" Museum, Seoul.  
[Source: Author, Ethan Chang]

Many of the movies we associate with a gothic and eerie atmosphere containing themes of horror, dark humor, and drama are often the creations of one particular director: Tim Walter Burton. Born on August 25, 1958, Tim Burton is responsible for the directing and production of movies such as *Beetlejuice* (1988), *Batman* (1989), *Edward Scissorhands* (1990), *The Nightmare Before Christmas* (1993), *Mars Attacks!* (1996), *Corpse Bride* (2005), and *Sweeney Todd*:

*The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* (2007), many of which remain beloved classics by many generations of viewers.

Burton's career in the film industry began in the 1980s when he was hired by The Walt Disney Company, which took notice of his 1979 animation short, *Stalk of the Celery Monster*. His stay only lasted a few years before he was fired following the creation of his live-action film *Frankenweenie*, a story about a young boy reviving his recently deceased dog. His firing was due to Disney's executives finding the film too dark and unsuitable for children. Following this setback, Burton went on to direct his first successful film, *Pee-wee's Big Adventure*, in 1985, which earned more than 40 million dollars at the box office. The film also saw Burton's lifelong partnership with famed film composer Danny Elfman, who would go on to work on several of Burton's films, composing

some of the most iconic themes in film history. Burton's career in horror-themed and gothic-designed films would later gain traction with the release of the films *Beetlejuice* (1988) and *Batman* (1989). Both films incorporated elements from Burton's own drawings, depicting creatures with disproportionate limbs and cartoonish appearances, gothic-style architecture, romantic drama, and dark humor, often depicting death or physical harm.

Much of the designs incorporated into Burton's films are largely based on his own sketches, which were heavily influenced by his childhood heroes, famed authors and illustrators, Dr. Seuss and Roald Dahl. His influences also extended to the story-telling of the authors The Brothers Grimm, who were responsible for cataloging and writing some of the most influential fairy tales in modern memory, such as Snow White, Little Red Riding Hood,

and Hansel and Gretel. Many of these tales carry dark themes, often depicting death, which were conveniently ignored by producers like Disney, who wanted these fairy tales to have a child-friendly and marketable appearance.

Even some of Burton's lesser-praised films, such as the remake of *Planet of the Apes* (2001), the remake of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (2005), the live-action *Alice in Wonderland* (2010), and *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* (2016), still carry some of Burton's own styles in terms of visuals and general atmosphere of weirdness and uncanniness that makes his films unique to watch.

Overall, if anyone is interested in worlds and stories that combine the elements of what many often consider too dark for a regular audience while also combining dark humor and drama, I suggest you take a peek inside the many movies and projects of Tim Burton.

Student Reporter



Elena Joo  
Grade 11  
Winston Churchill High School

## Winston Churchill High School Activities This Summer

When we were little children, we would be so excited that school was finally over. We would go to the pool, have playdates with our friends, and go to the beach with no worry in the world. Even though we may still do this, older students definitely have more responsibilities than before.

High school is debatably few of the most important years of our lives and determines a lot of our futures, even though it may not determine all of it. Because of this, what you do over summer break matters. And this is what students from Winston Churchill High School are doing over this 2023 Summer!

Starting with myself, I am a rising senior at Winston Churchill High School. I successfully finished arguably the hardest year of high school, but I still have a lot of things to complete for a productive Summer. This 2023 Summer, I will be attending a Summer Program at Boston University for News Writ-



Brian Chen serves a ball in a volleyball game at Winston Churchill High School while practicing over the summer..  
[Source: Author, Zoey Tahardi]

ing, which I believe will be very helpful in further developing my skills in writing. I will also be visiting a number of universities both near me and out of state, some examples being George Washington University and New York University. I am also taking the SAT for the last time in August, so I will be studying extremely hard to get my desired score this Summer.

Another student with interesting summer plans is Catherine Chan, a rising junior from Winston Churchill High School. She has a lot on her plate this summer,

as she is preparing for her junior year and the SAT. She will be attending weekly SAT Prep classes and will be solving problems and questions in her SAT workbooks. In the middle of all of this, she is also going to be visiting her family in Chicago, and visiting nearby colleges as well. Another interesting thing about Catherine is that she is also a very impressive junior Olympic swimmer! She is a part of the Swim Team at Winston Churchill High School and proudly says that "It is the summer league season, where we compete with a different team every Satur-

day." She will be racing in those competitions and will be bringing spirit to her team!

Staying on the same topic of sports, Brian Chen, a rising sophomore from Winston Churchill High School, says that he will be practicing volleyball in order to improve for the club season. He is going to be practicing with his team members and his friends all throughout the summer. He has been playing volleyball in an official team for more than two years and is a part of the volleyball team at Winston Churchill High School. He will also be going to nationals in Florida, which is the last tournament for every team's season. He says that this is an extremely big volleyball tournament and will be competing against other talented volleyball teams.

Students at Winston Churchill High School plan on having a jam-packed summer, with all sorts of activities occurring. So I have to ask, what are you doing this summer?

Student Reporter



Jiseong Yoo  
Grade 10  
Sunny Hills High School

## Sunny Hills Tennis Camp

Sunnyhills, a high school located in Fullerton, California, is very well known for its tennis teams, especially its girls tennis team. The Sunnyhills tennis team holds three-time CIF titles as well as 40 league titles. Recently they beat their rival school, Troy, in the league championship 10-8. These past years more than 30 or 40 people tried out for the tennis team. According to the coach of the team, Christopher Ghareebo, it wasn't always like this. Just 5 or 6 years ago, there weren't this many people playing tennis at Sunnyhills. Some other accomplishments these past years may be a two match-winning streak against Sonora high school and Fullerton High School.

In order to help students, the tennis program of Sunnyhills set up a camp where those interested in joining the team

could meet the coach and possible teammates. This camp, which happens at the beginning of summer break, is a great way to show the coach what you are capable of and get some extra practice in. It also helps people who are new to the game to learn the rules and get the fundamentals down. The camp is a week-long event and my friends and me, who attended, really benefited because of it. While practicing by yourself is also effective, I found that even the presence of a coach watching you can help you improve your shots and focus on the game better. Overall this camp is a good way to get introduced to Sunnyhills tennis and can give you a preview of the team's atmosphere and how they practice.

During the camp, there were about 3-4 coaches that helped the main coach. The students were divided into three groups, begin-



Many students try out for the game of tennis each year and many of Sunny-Hills students fail to get into the team.  
[Source: Author, Jiseong Yoo]

ner, intermediate, and advanced, and one of my friends and I were placed in the beginner, although at first, I didn't like being put there. However, as practices went on, I figured I would still learn some things even if I was in a lower group. Many incoming fresh-

men and returning students wish for an opportunity to play on the team. Myself included, many have been to tryouts last year and were surprised to see how many people came. In fact, out of the 30 to 40 students that tried out, as few as 3 or 4 people made the team. Lots of students practice during the summer and have private lessons. Students train countless hours weekly to obtain better skills and consistency to make it on the team.

While attending this camp this year, I felt motivated to make the team. Even though there may not be many spots open, I hope to make a good impression on the coach at tryouts. If your school offers a camp or any sort of practice of any kind, I recommend attending. This camp allowed me to improve and know what the Sunnyhills tennis will be like.