

## Editors Column



**Audrey Park**  
Grade 11  
Northwood High School

## A Second Home: Los Angeles' Intuit Dome



The Intuit Dome introduced audience members to comfortable seats and optimal viewing experiences through huge monitors that reached fans in the upper bleachers  
[Source: Audrey Park, Author]

Imagine you're watching a Clippers basketball game—paying close attention to the illuminated scoreboard, checking your phone at times, and resisting the urge to merge with the pillowy cushion beneath you. At halftime, you decide that it'd be a good time to take a break and grab a cold one out of the fridge, quickly returning to your seat afterward. Except, there's one catch: you're “not” at your house.

Los Angeles has served as the home to everything from aspiring sports teams—such as the Lakers

and the Clippers—to impressive architectural innovations. Specifically, the city's success in housing these sports teams would develop the grounds for a new location to sprout from the city of Inglewood, just south of the Crypto Arena, or the Clippers' previous home stadium. In the past month, it has occasionally opened its doors for fan events, and I was fortunate enough to attend one such gathering.

I soon learned that this stadium is not like its predecessors as its technologically profound theme

reigns supreme. During a live interview, Steve Ballmer, the owner of the Los Angeles Clippers from the National Basketball Association, elaborated how the goal of the stadium was to truly be a “second home” for fans by introducing technology that would make quick trips to different locations possible. As a result, several features would attempt to recreate the convenience of getting food, using the restroom, and sinking into a comfortable seat like at your home.

One significant example of these innovations was the touchless concessions stores. Concession pop-ups typically have an array of food items, meaning aisles would be lined with colorful options and refrigerated drinks. The Intuit Dome's locations weren't any different except for its reliance on technology to allow fans to enter and leave without standing in line, scanning for items, and consulting employees. Because everyone must download the Intuit Dome app in order to enter the premises, the app instantly processes fans' purchases. This feature is paired with an identity verification system that employs facial

recognition cameras to capture an individual's face and match it up to the user's account.

This convenience was even more reinforced by the abundant amount of clean bathrooms. Since the installment of the Intuit Dome, it has held the status for having the most operating toilets across all sports stadiums with a total count of over 1,100 toilets—twice the amount in most NBA stadiums. While this may seem like an unusual factor to highlight, sports fans who attend live events will know its implications. During halftime, the stadium seats will be relatively empty while fans get up to take a break. However, even after the game resumes, some seats may remain empty due to the difficulty of getting out of lines, especially ones forming alongside bathrooms. As a result, this detail further supports the comfort of watching a live event in your own home.

Ultimately, it seems that attending events at the Intuit Dome combines the benefits of watching sports at home and attending a live event. There's no doubt that this location will serve as a second home for fans for years to come.

## Student Reporter



**Claire Lee**  
Grade 11  
La Canada High School

## From Lab to Symposium: My Summer as a BUGS Jr. Participant

This summer, I was granted the opportunity to participate, for the second time, in the Bridge Undergraduate Science Jr. Program (BUGS Jr.) at the University of Southern California (USC). Having been a participant in the summer of 2023, I was relatively familiar with the basis of the program's structure and lab procedures. Seeing a myriad of new faces in the program, as well as some familiar ones, added to the excitement, filling the atmosphere with eagerness and ambition. I have already worked in a lab; however, returning as a BUGS Jr. participant provided me with a fresh perspective. Contrary to my previous experience, I was surrounded by peers within the same lab; together, we shared both the lab space and a common goal of academic pursuit.

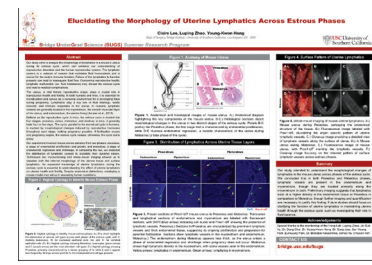
During the program and my seven-week stay, I immersed myself in a research project that focused on the lymphatic system.



Family members, mentors, and students attended the symposium, attentively viewing each research poster on display.  
[Source: Author, Claire Lee]

Along with my mentor, I employed a variety of techniques to analyze a mouse specimen, such as cryosectioning and whole-mount imaging. Though challenging at moments, the project was a memorable experience, one that I hope will aid me in future scientific work.

Under the guidance of my mentor, I navigated my project with ease, encountering little to no challenges throughout the process. Relying on the other lab members when I needed assistance while using the equipment



Depicted is my own research poster that I worked on this summer in the BUGS Jr. Program.  
[Source: Author, Claire Lee]

was just as helpful and optimized my experience. The cooperative environment of supportive individuals willing to answer my questions and guide me during my stay provided me with a safe place to expand my knowledge and gain insights into scientific processes—like PCR—that take place daily in the lab. With hopes that this experience will lay the foundation for my future career, I look forward to continuing to explore the field of science and potentially seeking out more opportunities in lab-like environments.

Upon submitting my final poster, I felt overcome by feelings of both anxiety and excitement, as I anticipated what would come the following weekend: the final symposium. On Saturday, August 3, all BUGS Jr. participants gathered on the main USC campus, prepared to present their research posters, all of which were placed on display. During each poster session, visitors would inquire about students' projects, acknowledge their efforts, or simply stop by and greet them. When questioned about what one thought about the program, one particular visitor said, “The program seems like the perfect opportunity for high school students to explore new pathways and engage in scientific initiatives.”

As I aspire to pursue a career in the medical or scientific field, the program was a chance to explore the laboratory realm and truly delve deeper into a potential career.

## Student Reporter



**Jenna Kim**  
Grade 11  
Pacifica Christian High School

## VeeCon 2024 Working as a Brand Ambassador

Veecon 2024 is an event hosted by Gary Vee, a famous entrepreneur and pioneer of building one's personal brand. Citizens of Los Angeles—alongside people of business, entertainment, and media—gathered in the LA Entertainment District to hear a wide range of influential speakers, entertainers, and brands, all while networking with the people around them. As my experience working at such a large event, the job was filled with many learning curves, but was also extremely rewarding.

As a brand ambassador, I was in charge of representing sponsors of the event. Although some of my coworkers stayed at similar stations throughout the three days of the event, I was allowed to work with four different brands,

being able to take photos, pass out samples with a food brand, and eventually assist the lead manager in overseeing over 40 brand ambassadors. Other than being hospitable, keeping good energy, and trying to get others to like the brands, some of the best parts of the job were the lessons I learned along the way.

From the first day, I learned that any job can make someone's experience. For instance, when I was working in “photo opportunities,” I had a lot of freedom in what my job entailed; I could just stand and ask to take people's photos, but I also had the opportunity to turn it into something more. In the beginning, only a couple of people asked for photos, but then, I started to take videos for them; instead

of a normal video, as a still shot, I did spins, runs, and made people do celebration poses, making onlookers line up! In fact, more people began to take pictures of the bikes on the scene and posted the videos on their stories, enthusiastically calling it “free content!” or asking if I was a videographer. Being able to be flexible and making the experience of something as simple as a photo shoot a special video not only made people feel more entertained, but also got more media coverage.

At the end of the day, though, I was really nervous about my first job. I had so much fun getting to meet new people, working with students with the same interests as me, and learning how to better an experience for a customer while



Working with some of the Mascots of VeeFriends to market a food brand was one of my jobs as a brand ambassador!! [Source: Jenna Kim, Author]

also being professional. Overall, I am so grateful to have had this experience and look forward to more in the future.



Student Reporter

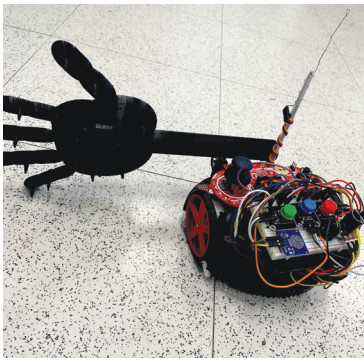
## COSMOS: What It's Like To Be a College Student for a Month



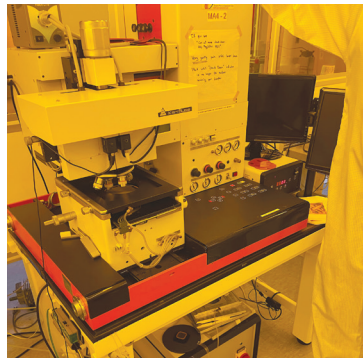
Theo Lim

Grade 11

Crescenta Valley High School



The final version of RiseNRun has a spiky hand attached to a servo motor to efficiently wake the user up. [Source: Author, Theo Lim]



A machine at the UC Davis Micro-manufacturing lab is used to prepare components for fabrication. [Source: Author, Theo Lim]

As a high school student who is interested in the STEM field, COSMOS, the California State Summer School for Mathematics and Science, caught my attention as it offered a residential camp designed to familiarize students with advanced scientific topics. With various clusters available at five UC campuses, the program provided a range of specialized topics such as quantum mechanics, semiconductor engineering, computers in biophysics, and robotics. I was thrilled to find out

that I have secured a spot in the Internet of Things cluster at UC Davis, where I knew I was going to gain hands-on experience and a preview of a possible major I would like to pursue in college.

A day in the life of a COSMOS student started early, with a quick shower before heading to the dining hall for breakfast. After the meal, it was time for the morning lectures. Two professors from the ECE department guided us through the confusing but fascinating topics of electrical engi-

neering and computer science. These lectures were tough, but the interactive lab after lunch was what excited most students since it gave us the "a-ha" moments of how the contents relate to devices in real life.

Because it would not be incredibly fun if these complex topics were being crammed into students' brains for the whole month, the camp reserved a good portion of time for afternoon activities, field trips, weekend events, and free time. One of the highlights was definitely the field trips, where we had the opportunity to visit the Lawrence Berkeley National Lab, the DMG Mori manufacturing site, and the micro-manufacturing lab at UC Davis. These trips gave us a glimpse of how research and development of the technologies we learned happen at a professional level. Other than that, free times were used by students to catch up on their studies or visit downtown Davis. Weekend events included BBQ and pool night, as well as nightly activities consisting of games for the COS-

MOS Cup, where clusters competed with each other for points.

The final week was dedicated to our projects. My group's project was a smart alarm clock that we named "RiseNRun." It was an alarm clock that moved around the room as it rang, requiring the user to chase it down and complete a set of random tasks to finally shut it off. Although we encountered technical difficulties implementing the "internet" aspect of the project, our plan was to have the robot connect to the user's phone through Wifi so that the user could set the alarm and check the robot's instructions for tasks on their device.

COSMOS was definitely the best month I have spent in high school so far. It was the hardest I have ever worked and the most fun I have had. The combination of college-like independence and freedom, the progression of my knowledge, and the friendships with peers who shared my interests made the entire experience unforgettable.

Student Reporter

## Rethinking Summer Work: Balancing Academics and Rest



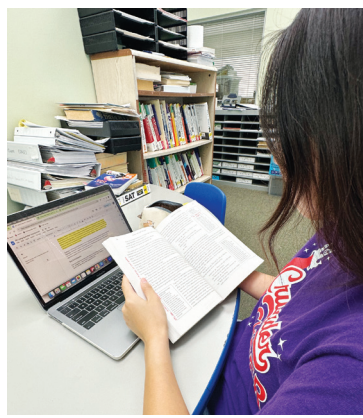
Crystal Her

Grade 12

Village Christian High School

As an AP student at Village Christian High School, I often question the necessity and impact of summer work on our academic and personal lives. On one hand, summer work can be considered crucial for maintaining academic preparedness. By engaging in assignments during the break, students can avoid the "summer slide," which refers to important knowledge from the previous school year being forgotten. Research from the National Summer Learning Association supports this claim, indicating that students can lose up to two months of mathematical skills during the summer. As such, summer work helps to ensure continuity in learning, keeping our minds sharp and ready for the challenges of the upcoming academic year.

On the other hand, the disadvantages of summer work are noteworthy, the additional stress it places on students being the main one. After a rigorous school year,



Isabel Kim annotates a novel for her AP Lang summer work. Does this cause more stress, or will it help her in the upcoming school year? [Source: Author, Crystal Her]

summer is usually viewed as a time for rest and rebirth, offering much-needed mental health relief. Many students feel overburdened and cheated out of this important vacation time by the demands of summer coursework. According to research conducted by the American Psychological Association, stress levels among high school students are on the same level as those of

adults, and taking up summer employment just makes the problem worse. Furthermore, students are frequently required to learn on their own without the direct assistance of teachers, which can cause knowledge gaps.

After speaking with a number of Village Christian High School students, I found that opinions were mixed but leaned towards negative sides, and students also had consistent feelings. When asked about the stress of summer work, rising junior at Village Christian High School Isabel Kim stated, "Summer work feels tedious and sometimes a bit useless." Others, such as rising sophomore Brandon Hong from La Canada High School, stated that studying over the summer helps him "prepare for the demands of difficult courses and gives me more confidence when taking tests." Still, while students see the need to maintain academic engagement, summer assignment loads frequently exceed the ad-

vantages. A lot of students say they would prefer a holistic strategy with elective activities such as internships or sports rather than having mandatory homework. According to a National Education Association poll, students strongly favor entertaining summer activities over typical school work.

The argument around summer work at Village Christian High School highlights a larger conflict between the necessity of mental health breaks and academic preparedness. While the benefits of preventing the summer slide are well shown, the added stress and challenges of self-directed learning during the break cannot be ignored. The mixed perspectives among students suggest that a more balanced approach might be the best solution, one that offers optional elective activities rather than mandatory assignments, allowing students to stay engaged academically and enjoy the much-needed rest that summer provides.

Student Reporter

## Become A Volunteer at Huntington Hospital!



Bailee Kim

Grade 11

Crescenta Valley High School

Many people struggle to find opportunities to get more hands-on experience in the medical field during high school. I also struggled to find more opportunities until I found Huntington Hospital. Huntington Hospital, located in Pasadena, California, offers opportunities to students who are sophomores and above, to work alongside medical professionals in a not-for-profit program. As a volunteer in the orthopedics unit, I have spent over a year assisting nurses and patients in completing tasks around the floor and also observed the different components that allow the hospital to run smoothly. Over the past year, I have not only just worked on the orthopedic floor but have been able to create a relationship with the secretaries and nurses present during my shifts.

In the orthopedic unit, my main job was to pass around ice packs and ice packs, pick up belongings, and to discharge patients. To some,

this might sound tedious and repetitive, but knowing that I am helping patients and giving back to the community makes the work extremely rewarding.

One of the most memorable shifts was during the Halloween season when a patient was offering candy to everyone. The nurses had let me know of this situation and asked me to pass out ice water specifically to the module she was in so that she could see me and hand me some candy. This act may not seem like much, but it was a very meaningful act to me because I felt that I had built a bond with the nurses on the unit as well as the patients. After this experience, I realized that the more effort and care I put into my work, the more recognition and affection from others I would receive. Experiences like these are my motivation to continue this physically tiring work.

On the other hand, there are also patients who don't appreciate the ef-

fort you put into them. One patient in particular had complaints regarding every position we put her in for transport. She caused a disturbance to the whole module by yelling whenever we asked her to cooperate with us. Multiple nurses had to eventually interject and force her into the position she had to be in, ignoring her protests against us, to quickly get her home. Luckily, I did not have many unpleasant patients. Watching the professional nurses who treated all patients equally - no matter if patients were kind or not - I attained new knowledge about caring for patients, like how to maintain composure when a patient showed violent behaviors.

Overall, even with all of the tiring shifts and long hours, Huntington Hospital has provided me with practical and interactive experiences that may be difficult to find elsewhere. The friendly nurses, staff, and patients who always give me a warm smile when I walk



One of my jobs as an orthopedic unit volunteer is to supply patients with ice and water. It may seem tedious, but it can be very rewarding. [Source: Author, Bailee Kim]

into the hospital make my experience enjoyable and help me to get through my time there. During the past year of volunteering, I gained a depth of understanding of how hospitals work with many jobs, and it changed how I view nurses and treat anyone outside of the hospital.



## Student Reporter



Zoe Lok  
Grade 12  
Lake Oswego High School

## Flight Delay: Being Held on a Plane for 3 Hours Before Deplaning



After deplaning, all of the passengers rushed to the gate counter to wait in line longer to see an American Airlines Agent and get more information about our bags, next flight, and compensation. [Source: Author, Zoe Lok]

On July 28th, my family and I planned to fly to Sydney for approximately a week for vacation. Our flight was at 11 pm, so there was a lot of time during the day

before heading to the airport. Once we arrived at the airport we were on a bit of a tight schedule and only had an hour to check in the luggage and get through security before boarding. We were lucky; we had Pre-TSA check, otherwise, trying to get through security at the LA airport would've taken a long time. This was our first time flying with American Airlines, so we aren't familiar with their procedures, and unfortunately in a situation like we happened to find ourselves in, we've heard that their customer service is lacking in many aspects.

At 11 pm, our flight was about to take off as usual. The crew checked everything in the cabin and we headed to the runway. Normally, as we are taking off, I sit on my phone before I lose reception, so I did exactly that this time. But after

an hour, I realized that our plane hadn't taken off and we were sitting in the middle of the runway. I didn't think much of it until they made an announcement over the intercom saying that there was a slight issue with the power box of the plane. We were told it was a minor issue and it would be fixed right away. After another hour and a half, it was almost 2 am, and many of us were exhausted and just wanted some rest. Some people needed water, and you would think that they would at least pass this around for the passengers while waiting, but for the entirety of the flight we weren't given water or anything to eat.

At 3 am, the pilot finally gave us another update, saying that we wouldn't be able to fly and that we would have to return the next day, but the time was not confirmed.

We were told that our luggage would be taken care of, but they wouldn't be able to provide us with a hotel to stay at, so we had to go find one. I talked to my dad, who is responsible for booking the hotels and flights in our family. He said that this had never happened to him before, and especially having to find a hotel around 3 am while every other passenger was as well was super stressful. He wishes that we could've at least been deplaned as they tried to figure it out or given food and water.

Although waiting all night on an airplane without accommodations, having to book a hotel in the middle of the night, and then having to return the next day was anything but pleasant, finally, we were able to make our way to Sydney, and had an amazing rest of our trip.

## Student Reporter



Kaylyn Wee  
Grade 9  
Ayala High School

## Chino Hills: Concerts in the Park



The crowd in front of the stage at Concerts in the Park.

[Source: Author, Kaylyn Wee]



The concession stands offered Mexican food, smaller snacks, and more.

[Source: Author, Kaylyn Wee]

Every summer, the city of Chino Hills, CA, has held an event called Concerts in the Park. As the name states, Veterans Park holds public music concerts for the community during June and July. Concerts in the Park starts on June 21st in Chino Hills Veterans Park and takes place every Wednesday until July 31st. This event is a great opportunity for many people, like family, friends, and especially for small artists who are trying to perform more often. It is a great place for groups

to get together to have fun during the summer.

The park series was a free and family-friendly event that showcased lots of variety in music genres, like country, tribute bands, and even Latin Salsa. The show ran from 7:00 to 8:30 PM, but the crowds always came earlier to do other activities and get good spots for the best experience.

While food and drinks from home were allowed, there would be a line of tents of concession stands for people to get food,

snacks, and refreshments. Besides food, people were encouraged to bring blankets and lawn chairs. Umbrellas, canopies, or other larger objects were not allowed in case they blocked others' views and ruined the experience. Not to mention, there was no age limit, so kids, teens, and the elderly were welcome, including pets. Because of this, there were various generations of individuals in the crowd, as well as many dogs.

Even with all this, why would anyone attend the event? As men-

tioned before, Concerts in the Park is a family-friendly event, or the ideal space to spend time with family and even catch up with friends. Usually, during the summer, some kids and teens are at home, rotting with their TV/computer/video screens. This event can be a chance to get some fresh air and have fun outside while interacting with others in the community. It is also a good place and a great opportunity for smaller artists to get exposure and have the experience of performing. Like artists, the companies selling food also have their names out there and sell their delicious goods. So, coming to this series of shows was undoubtedly beneficial to lots of people.

Concerts in the Park was an amazing community event in Chino Hills. The event was entertaining, accessible, and held many opportunities. Although it may be over for the summer of 24', there are always more opportunities next year for the summer of 25'.

## Student Reporter



Jayden Eom  
Grade 11  
Sunset High School

## Vacation Bible School Led by High School Students

Volunteer work is one of the most crucial parts of a High Schooler's life. Many High School students will spend hundreds of hours on volunteer work for their college applications. For some, the Church is a good source of volunteer work. One of the main sources of volunteering in the church comes from Vacation Bible Schools or VBS.

VBS is a camp for elementary school students, where they are able to do fun activities and listen to fun sermons from their pastor for 5 days. VBS is a great option, especially for high schoolers to lead stations or groups of elementary schoolers for about a week to combine for around 40 volunteer hours. When asking a volunteer about their experience, they answered, "It was definitely tiring with kids ranging from Kindergarten to 5th grade and especially difficult when the kids wouldn't listen. Despite that, it's always a fun opportunity to lead the kids



Leaders were seen dancing with students in the closing sermon of the VBS.

[Source: Nathan Sung, Volunteer]



Leaders and Pastor preparing for Day 1 of VBS.

[Source: Nathan Sung, Volunteer]

for a few days each summer."

Although the hours can be very tiring, I believe that it is very beneficial for everyone that high school students lead and volunteer. Not only does it take the load off of adults who may have other work that they have to worry about, but it also makes the kids less stressed about doing right or wrong, as teenagers can be a bit more laidback than adults. Not only this, but it also closes down the age gap quite significantly between the students and the leaders, making the kids feel more

comfortable and relatable. It also helps the leaders build relationships with the younger students and act as an older sibling figure to them. I also asked a volunteer about how it would compare to their other volunteering opportunities, to which they responded: "It was definitely more tiring than other opportunities with all the planning that goes into the groups and stations and with the overwhelming energy of the students, but I think that VBS is much more enjoyable than other opportunities that can feel more like work

at times." VBS is quite a common event among many churches and is very well known to high schoolers as a fun opportunity to get some volunteer hours.

Overall, I think events like VBS are a very good opportunity for volunteer hours, but also a very good opportunity for leaders to make relationships with the younger students and perhaps help guide them in their growth. I believe it is important for events like VBS to be led by high school students, and I think having more of these events wouldn't hurt.