

## Editors Column

## Running Clubs: Fitness and Community



**Summer Park**  
Grade 11  
Harvard-Westlake School



Kicking off Sunday with a 3-mile run, 7:45 a.m., with a running crew to help one go farther.  
[Source: Author, Summer Park]

There is an African proverb, “If you want to fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” The proverb is often used to emphasize the importance of community, collaboration, and sustained collective effort. There are numerous running clubs throughout Los Angeles that not only help build community but also help runners go farther than they would alone,

bringing this proverb into reality.

The benefits of running have been widely noted. The American Heart Association has stated that aerobic activities such as running improve heart health, lowering the risk of heart disease, regulating cholesterol, maintaining weight, and reducing stress and depression, among others. However, it is not always easy to

get started or stay motivated to train throughout the year. This is where running clubs might help.

LA Running Connoisseur has a list of running clubs throughout Los Angeles County on their website and Instagram. Founded in 2019 by Kate Olson, it catalogs more than 130 active clubs, consisting of over 200 weekly meetups from Santa Monica to Silver Lake. The site allows runners to search by neighborhood and day of the week, helping newcomers and athletes discover anything from jogs to marathon training groups. “Some clubs are intense, others are purely social, and there’s a place for everyone, regardless of age, background, and level!” says a college student living in Koreatown. “Some days, I go to Silver Lake for a jog, while I go to the Beverly Hills club on Sunday mornings.”

The rise of running clubs reflects a broader shift in L.A., focusing on community, accessibility, and fun. For example, WalkGood-LA, a nonprofit organization that meets on Wednesdays at 6 p.m. in Arlington Heights, blends running with community wellness, offering inclusive spaces for everyone.

The group, which stems from social justice marches in Los Angeles, now organizes weekly runs and yoga sessions that center around healing, connection, and accessibility, reflecting how many local clubs are reshaping the definition of fitness.

Another popular way runners look for community is by using the Strava app. Founded in 2009, the San Francisco-based platform has grown into a global community of more than 100 million users, turning individual workouts into a collective experience. Strava has a GPS activity tracker, recording routes, pace, elevation, and performance metrics, like other running apps such as Nike Run. However, what sets it apart is the social aspect of it. Many local running clubs depend on Strava to organize and communicate their meeting location and times, which keeps members engaged and makes the information accessible.

As Angelenos lace up across neighborhoods from Griffith Park to Playa Vista, runners are not doing it alone but in communities that will take them farther than if they ran alone.

## Student Reporter

## Reimagining Classics at the Getty Center



**Dana Rhee**  
Grade 12  
La Canada High School

Perched high in the hills of Los Angeles, the Getty Center has a renowned collection of European paintings and special exhibitions on view. Upon arrival, the tram ride up to the museum’s entrance sets a scenic tone, offering a panoramic view of the city. It’s not every day that a high school field trip involves students standing in front of a Jacques-Louis David painting and trying to replicate the poses of Telemachus, Odysseus’s son, and Eucharis, his nymph lover. During the pandemic, the public was inspired to recreate artworks with their own props at home from Getty’s online collection, allowing for humorous and masterful interpretations of the classics. For my school’s AP Literature class, students were assigned a project inspired by this trend, which bridged art history and the creative mind. Each group had to choose a painting from a different era and recreate it, and for my group, we chose the Neoclassical era.

From the 18th century to the early 19th century, Neoclassicism was an art movement characterized by a return to the ideals of classic antiquity in Greek and Roman works. In the South Pavilion, our group explored the idyllic



Sebastiano Ricci captures the aftermath of a dramatic battle where the Greek hero Perseus uses the head of Medusa to turn his opponents into stone.  
[Source: Author, Dana Rhee]

landscape of earlier Rococo artworks. François Boucher’s Aurora and Cephalus and Venus on the Waves were tall, decorative panels with depictions of Greek mythology. The pastel palette and loose brushstrokes created a lighthearted, ethereal sense to the pieces. As my group moved on

to the Neoclassical era, a painting by the eminent Jacques-Louis David caught our eye. The Farewell of Telemachus and Eucharis depicted the mythological lovers in a poignant moment of farewell. Telemachus stares directly ahead in a look of restrained passion as he must leave in search of his

father, prioritizing a noble duty over his desires. With an upright staff, his statuesque expression is in contrast to Eucharis, who rests her head upon his shoulder. Another artwork, Perseus Confronting Phineus with the Head of Medusa, by Italian painter Sebastiano Ricci, captured the aftermath of a dramatic mythological battle. The Greek hero Perseus embodies the ideals of courage and virtue as he turns his opponents into stone.

Walking through the gallery, we noticed that many paintings from the Neoclassical period depicted mythological subjects, timeless tales that served a didactic purpose and revealed human flaws. The Neoclassical movement was partly a reactionary movement to the frivolous and lavish style of the Rococo era, reviving the aesthetics of Greco-Roman art. From lessons of restraint and sacrifice, Neoclassical art resonated with moral stories compared to the lighthearted themes of Rococo art. I am looking forward to bringing these stories to life, dressing as the characters and using props from home to step into the roles of mythological heroes, gods and goddesses, and mythical creatures.

## Student Reporter

## One Team, One Goal, Fighting for Victory



**Katie Lee**  
Grade 10  
The Science Academy STEM Magnet

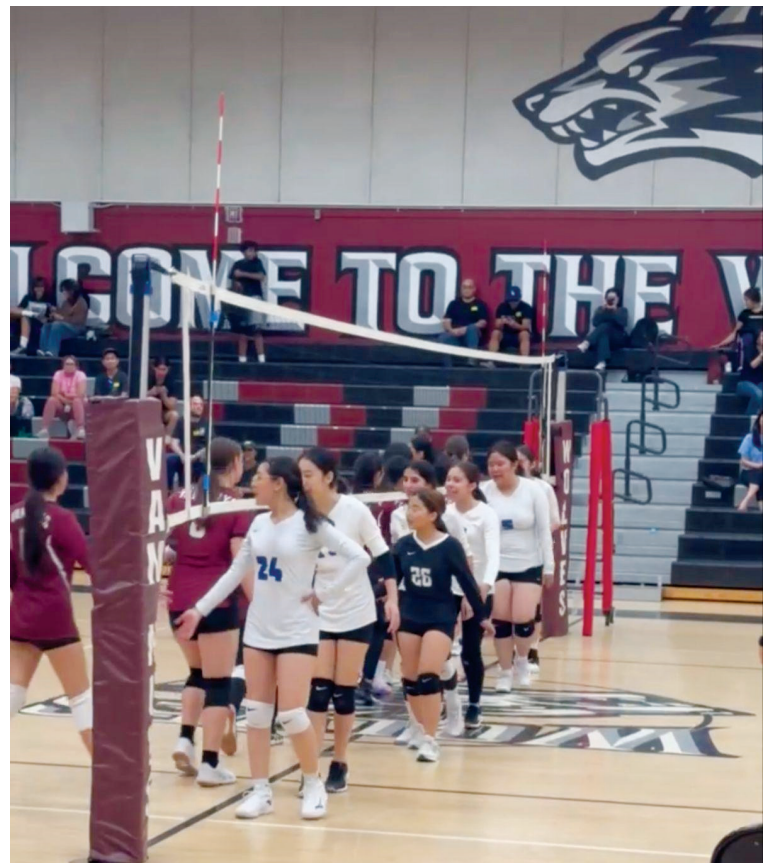
After weeks of daily practices lasting over two hours, the girls’ volleyball team at The Science Academy STEM Magnet kicked off their season strong in August. The Varsity team has a four-game win streak, while Junior Varsity is right behind with a 3-1 record. Both teams have displayed determination, whether during intense practices or on game days. The addition of new players from different grade levels brought fresh energy, and they adapted quickly to the court.

As a member of the team myself, I have learned that volleyball is more than just winning a game. It’s about being able to communicate with others, trusting your teammates, and much more. Not only do these skills help during games, but they also help with my everyday life. Coming from a current sophomore, it is false to say that it’s not challenging to manage school life with sports every day of the week until the season ends, but overall, it’s worth it. With practices happening every day from 3:35-6:00, I get home around 7. But that doesn’t mean I start my homework right away - with the urge of wanting to lie on my bed when I come home straight from practice, I still have tutor sessions to attend, which

range from an hour to an hour and a half.

However, when it’s game day, I put all that thought away and focus on winning and being one as a team. Whether it’s from doing chants after one’s success, reassuring one after they’ve made a mistake, or celebrating together after each point, this is all because of one thing. Teamwork. For me, I believe that I wouldn’t have been able to be where I am with this team if it weren’t for my amazing teammates. If someone makes a mistake, they don’t get mad. They give advice on how they can fix their mistakes. Not only has this helped me, but it has also helped the entire team.

Starting the season, Junior Varsity won both sets, leading to a 2-0 win. Being too focused on the moment, I didn’t see Varsity’s reaction to Junior Varsity winning, but as I rewatch videos that parents took, Varsity was celebrating as if they had won. Not long after, it was Varsity’s turn. Winning all three sets, Varsity won 3-0. Seeing both Varsity and Junior Varsity cheer for each other shows that no matter what happens, we all have each other’s backs in any situation possible. And this is not just seen with players; the coaches are the ones who are our



The girls’ Volleyball Team wishes good luck to the other team before the game begins.  
[Source: Author, Katie Lee]

role models. They show us that no matter what happens, don’t let the mistake get into your head.

If it weren’t for the coaches, the players would not have been able to thrive on court.

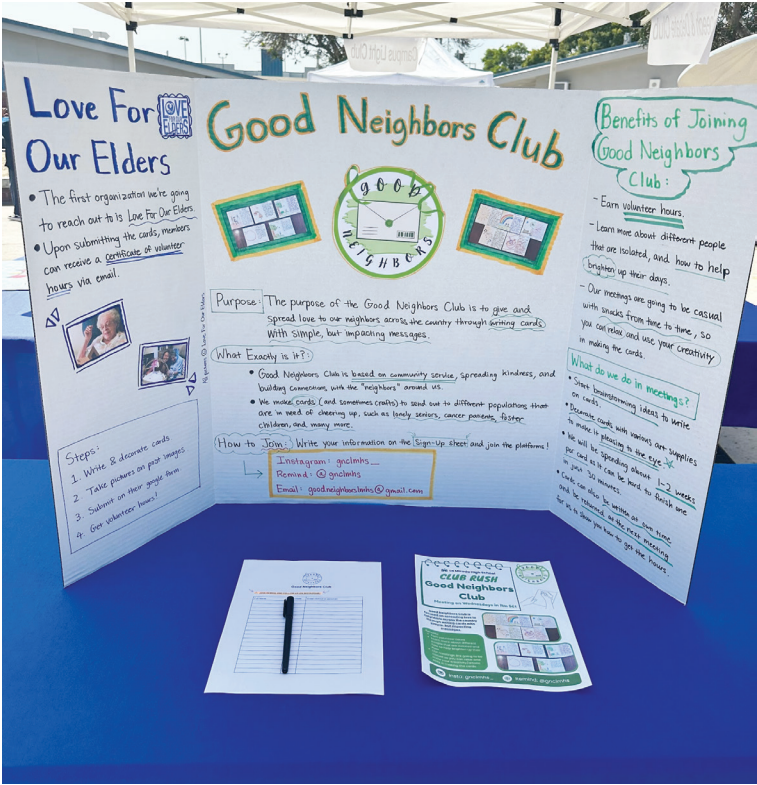


Student Reporter

## Club Rush Highlights School Impact



Amber Lee  
Grade 10  
La Mirada High School



The Good Neighbors Club's information trifold, which we used to promote our club during the day of the Club Rush, brought many students over to check out our booth. [Source: Author, Amber Lee]

It has now been a little over a month since most schools started. At my high school, La Mirada High, the biggest September event is Club Rush, where students can explore and sign up for a variety

of clubs that spark their interests. After participating in multiple clubs during my freshman year, I wanted to start my sophomore year by creating one of my own. With some research and the sup-

port of my friends, we launched the Good Neighbors Club.

Good Neighbors Club is a volunteer-based card-writing club. We write simple, but heart-warming messages to groups of people, such as lonely seniors, cancer patients, foster children, and so on. I've looked into various organizations where I can write cards to different populations and get volunteer hours in return. This also helped me gain research and communication skills. Coming from experience, I know that high school students aren't the biggest fans of joining clubs without benefits like food, volunteer hours, parties, and so on. So, making my own club based on volunteer hours that are heavily needed for all high schoolers was a perfect match.

A week before Club Rush, I met with my friends who wanted to serve as board members in order to prepare for the event. Together, we designed our logo, flyer, sign-up sheet, Instagram account, and an informational trifold. We also mailed our first batch of cards to the nonprofit card-writing organization we were going to work with, called Love For Our Elders.

The most difficult part of the club-making process was trying to make the board members

do their assigned jobs without sounding too bossy. Knowing that we all have our strengths and weaknesses, I assigned everyone to parts, like myself completing the trifold and my artistic friends helping with the club logo. Each part was successfully completed by the day of Club Rush.

On September 17th, Club Rush finally took place, and the day flew by quickly. Students from all grade levels gathered in the main quad to explore the different booths. Although ours was a bit slow in the beginning, towards the middle and end, students came rushing in to sign up. In total, we had about 30 new students sign up to be members.

Although it was very exciting to contribute and get involved in school, I have realized that being the president of a club is not easy. There are a lot of background activities going on in the formation of a club that I didn't know of, like making a club constitution, writing the meeting minutes, obtaining a meeting room with my club advisor, promoting our club, and so much more. Though I am certain that through this club, I will learn valuable lessons and gain experiences that I can only go through in my high school years, with all these tasks awaiting me.

Student Reporter

## Boost Your Brain for AP Success With UCLA



Tae Lee  
Grade 10  
Science Academy  
STEM Magnet



High school students take part in AP readiness classes for extra assistance from UCLA experts. [Source: Author, Tae Lee]

For many high school students, Advanced Placement (AP) courses can feel both exciting and intimidating. These classes provide an opportunity to earn college credit, boost GPA, and explore challenging subjects, but they also demand thorough preparation. To support students and teachers, UCLA hosts AP Readiness Programs, where AP experts provide guidance through a mix of online Zoom sessions and in-person meetings on UCLA's campus.

The main goal of UCLA's AP Readiness Programs is to strengthen performance in AP courses across both STEM and humanities subjects. Each session is led by experienced AP teachers and UCLA faculty, who clarify questions, review exam-style problems, and share effective study strategies. The program also supports teachers, offering tools and strategies to enhance classroom instruction, exchange ideas, and practice new approaches to course material.

Some of the AP Readiness meetings take place virtually over Zoom, allowing students and teachers to join without having to travel. These online sessions maintain the same structure and material as the on-campus events, featuring live instruction,

exercises, and collaborative activities. For many students, Zoom may be the preferred way to stay engaged while balancing school, extracurricular activities, or family responsibilities. Zoom sessions also expand the program's reach, recognizing that there may be students and teachers located far from UCLA, enabling them to participate without worrying about transportation. This accessibility ensures that a greater number of students have the opportunity to receive AP-level preparation.

Other times, AP Readiness classes happen in person at UCLA. These sessions bring students together in large lecture halls, where the energy is often

described as motivational. For high school students, the chance to step onto a university campus adds excitement to the experience. Many participants say that it helped them visualize themselves as future college students. These meetings also allow for more dynamic group work, interactive activities, and connections with peers and teachers across the region.

One thing to note, however, is that these courses do not cover in-depth material for personalized learning. Due to the large member sizes, the learning curriculum is not designed to be individualized, but rather broad, so each student can understand

a certain subject more. There is a way students can obtain further knowledge, though, as professors provide their contact information after the session. This allows struggling students to reach out for assistance via email or phone for a more detailed discussion about the topic.

John, a close friend of mine, attended one of these lectures in hopes of helping his grade improve; "I was struggling with biology because of the complex anatomy and vocabulary that were being used in the textbooks. Going to UCLA's program really made me understand the topics with more clarity and got me a 5 on the AP exam." AP readiness shaped many students' academic success and provided a good foundation for free practice in difficult concepts.

Ultimately, these sessions ensure that the program stays both accessible and impactful. UCLA's commitment to supporting AP students and teachers highlights the vital role higher education plays in strengthening high schools throughout California. For many participants, AP Readiness is an engaging and beneficial program to prepare for future academic goals and the transition to college.

Student Reporter

## Bright Lights, Big Lessons: Vegas Uncovered



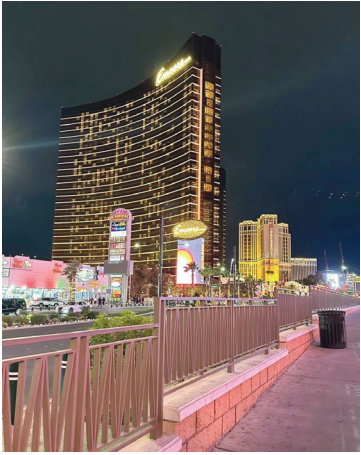
Sarah Li  
Grade 11  
Crean Lutheran  
High School

Recently, I went to Las Vegas with my parents to take a break from my hectic schedule. One would imagine neon lights, casinos, and nonstop entertainment when thinking of Las Vegas. This is also what I expected.. More than sightseeing and entertainment, the trip provided a good opportunity to detach myself from busy student life and taught me several valuable life lessons.

As a high school student, my life is a relentless cycle of assignments, tests, and extracurricular activities. Every day follows the same routine of going to school, studying, and sleeping. Being in Las Vegas allowed me to step out of the cycle and experience life in a novel way. Walking down the Strip, I could let go of the pressure and anxiety that I used to carry every day. During these moments, my full attention was on immersing myself into the vibrant atmosphere: the sparkling lights, the bustling crowds, and the laughter that permeated the entire city. For the first time in a long while, I was willing to slow down my steps, pause, and truly absorb the wonderful scenery before my eyes.

The more I walked further down the strips, the more I was mesmerized by the details that shape the unique identity of Las Vegas. Each piece of architecture seemed to tell its own story: some were designed in a contemporary fashion, and others were inspired by opulent European palaces. Along the sidewalks, street performers infused the city with more energy. Magicians amazed the crowd by showcasing their wonderful tricks, and musicians played their guitars to attract pedestrians' attention. Their performance reminded me that one can have joy not only in grand concerts, but also in simple moments without purchasing expensive tickets. Seeing strangers coming together during that time demonstrated the connectivity and beauty of art.

Beyond the performances and buildings, the trip gave me something deeper: time to reflect on myself. I totally forgot all of the endless schoolwork and exams; I could finally think about what fills me with contentment and happiness. I once believed that satisfaction stems from academic success. In reality, contentment



Beneath the glowing lights of Las Vegas, I learned to slow down and appreciate life beyond school. [Source: Author, Sarah Li]

can come from a variety of sources, even the small and simple moments. I realized that while excelling in school is essential, the joy from admiring stunning constructions and experiencing simple events can be just as fulfilling and meaningful.

To this day, Las Vegas first comes to mind whenever people ask me about my most unforgettable travel experience. I returned home with unforgettable remind-



Las Vegas surprised me with a replica of the Eiffel Tower, showing how the city mixes designs from around the world. [Source: Author, Sarah Li]

ers: to cherish the beauty around me, embrace simple pleasures, and notice meaningful experiences. More importantly, this Las Vegas journey reminded me that life is so much more than accomplishments and milestones. It also encourages me to explore more of the world and not to be confined to the routines and pressures of school life. More than a student, I am a human, blessed to live beyond achievements.