

Editors Column

Every Second Counts: Get CPR Certified



Aspen Lee
Grade 11
Santa Fe Christian School



Santa Fe Christian Students learning about the positioning, timing, and force needed to perform CPR.
[Source: Author, Aspen Lee]



Santa Fe Christian Students practicing CPR on infant and adult mannequins while receiving direct feedback from the instructor.
[Source: Author, Aspen Lee]

Cardiovascular disease, often resulting in cardiac arrest, is the leading cause of death in the world. In the case of a cardiac arrest emergency, every second counts. If CPR is performed immediately, the person's chance of survival can double or triple. The heart stops functioning, and blood flow to the rest of the body is halted in this situation, making it vital to circulate oxygenated blood to all the organs until the heart is returned to a stable condition.

Empowering all youth with CPR and AED training in school

will dramatically increase the number of first responders in communities each year and help to save lives. When bystanders perform CPR, individuals are increasingly susceptible to avoiding organ and brain damage until healthcare professionals arrive at the scene. As a result, this type of training for everyone, if done properly, can truly save a life. Knowing this, high school students are finding more and more opportunities in which CPR certification is necessary. For example, to participate in an athletic train-

ing program on-campus or be a lifeguard in the community, an initial requirement is basic certified CPR training.

The president of Santa Fe Christian School's MedPath Club, a group of students working to pursue a career in healthcare or STEM, saw this need and initiated a CPR certification opportunity free-of-charge through a medical training institution. The CPR instructor, an SFC parent and ER nurse, offered to teach a cohort of students basic life support through CPR, ventilation, and

use of an AED. In total, fourteen students were able to receive a HeartSaver American Heart Association CPR Certificate to confirm their accurate comprehension and implementation of the concepts and actions learned in the course.

Including freshmen through seniors, the students were able to practice and receive real-time feedback from the instructor and colored lights on the mannequin as well. Beyond just the ratio of 30 compressions to 2 breaths or the hand position on the chest when performing CPR, the participants gained insight into the role of cardiac muscle cells during cardiac arrest and the significance of ventilation during CPR. Freshman, Raul G., described this class as "A unique opportunity that allowed [him] to see a glimpse into the medical field and refine skills [he'll] need to use in the future".

As someone who hopes to become a doctor, seeing so many students actively participating and willing to learn how to perform CPR was inspiring. In a cardiac arrest emergency, every second counts, and their practice and engagement could, someday, save a life.

Student Reporter

Giving Teens a Voice: Youth in Government



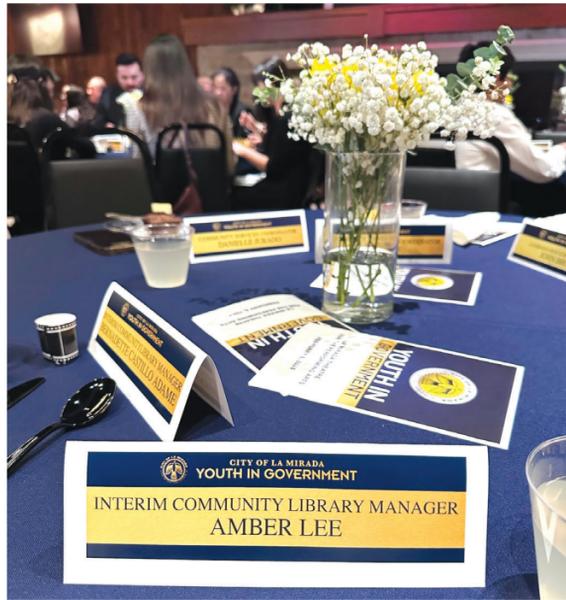
Amber Lee
Grade 10
La Mirada High School

Ever since I was young, I have always thought of city hall and city government as overwhelmingly sophisticated, hard-to-reach, and almost impossible to take part in as a young student. Ever since attending La Mirada High School, LMHS, and joining its Youth in Government program, my thoughts about the limited access to my city's government have changed in a positive way.

Essentially, the Youth in Government program started in 1960 at LMHS and is a partnership between the high school and the city, which pairs students with city council members. It aims to teach students about the government and helps them research local issues to propose community projects at the end of February each year.

Fortunately, I joined the program this year as a counterpart to La Mirada's interim community library manager, Bernadette. Recently, I attended the Luncheon event at the La Mirada Theatre of the Performing Arts to meet Bernadette while listening to our city members speak.

At the luncheon, La Mirada mayor Ed Eng introduced the guest speaker, Assistant Fire Chief Khoi Dao. He delivered an amazing speech about his life and advice for our young students'



The table at the Youth in Government Luncheon event at the La Mirada Theatre of the Performing Arts, where students listened to leaders in the community.
[Source: Author, Amber Lee]

future. Although he presented amazing points all throughout the speech, there were two major points that I took away.

The first point was about students' career paths. Dao mentioned that it is very important for us to choose a job that makes us happy because it is most likely

that we will be doing that same thing for the next 30 years. He also defined happiness as being able to support one's family, having a roof over one's head, eating good food, and having a stable routine in one's life, rather than being crazy rich and winning the lottery.

The second point he mentioned was to always give back to the community, whether it's through being in a high-positioned job like a doctor or lawyer, or simply by spreading kindness to others. He stated that someone's success doesn't measure how much he or she can give back to the community.

As a high school sophomore, the only memorable speeches I had remembered receiving were the ones from my school principals at assemblies under the scorching sun or inside the hot, stuffy auditorium. And even though I had sat through many talks before, the Assistant Fire Chief's witty and impactful speech made something inside of my heart actually feel lit.

Overall, the Luncheon event with Youth in Government was worth every minute. I was not only able to talk more with our city counterparts about the community projects we are working on, but I also gained valuable lessons from our guest speaker. Every meeting I attend with Youth in Government makes me realize how important youth involvement is to our growing brains and our future, and I thank our school deeply for continuing this program for the last 66 years.

Student Reporter

Harvard Model United Nations: A Trip to Remember



Jordyn Bak
Grade 10
Mira Costa High School

There are not many activities, with diverse topics, available for students to experience. On the other hand, Model United Nations (MUN) without a doubt showcases diverse topics through its countries, but potentially through fellow delegates. In Boston, Massachusetts, from January 29th through February 1st, Harvard held its 73rd Model United Nations conference as the oldest, largest, and most prestigious MUN conference for high school students.

I was given the fortunate experience of participating in this conference alongside delegates from various backgrounds. I was able to meet delegates from very different parts of the world. Some lived close by, as they lived only ten minutes away from Boston. Many others came from other parts of the East Coast, such as New York. Although I came all the way from the West Coast, I almost felt like a "local" as an American surrounded by delegates from different continents. Collaborating with delegates from various countries made this conference a very unique experience, something that I may never be able to experience again. I met delegates

from the following countries: Kazakhstan, China, Canada, Korea, Morocco, Italy, France, Tunisia, Kenya, India, Colombia, Brazil, and Venezuela.

One of the challenges I faced was working with not only a diverse group of students, but an enormous crowd of 260 delegates. This four-day conference was not only my longest debate but also the largest, considering the number of participants. It also proved to be a little difficult while working with those delegates from different backgrounds. There were some language barriers that gave a little difficulty on how to go about plans. Despite these issues, I was able to grow from this experience by working on solutions with these people.

This opportunity of meeting with other delegates has also allowed me to get a better perspective on countries I am not familiar with. A key component of Model United Nations debate is understanding and accurately representing a country's policy. Accurately doing this enables the debater to expand their knowledge on the topic while collaborating with potentially differing



Harvard Campus after the East Coast snowstorm during the MUN conference.
[Source: Author, Jordyn Bak]

countries. Therefore, working with a diverse group assisted in the process of understanding policies from different countries.

I represented the country of Chad, a nation in central Africa. While debating as an African country, meeting delegates from Africa truly broadened my view on their policy and gave me better insight. Although the topic, milita-

rization in space, did not have as great an importance to the country of Chad as it did to others, I learned to adapt to what I knew regarding the country's position on this topic.

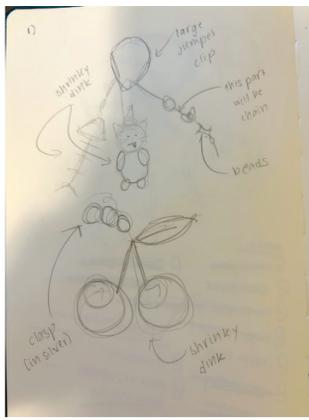
Despite my extensive experience in Model United Nations, Harvard MUN proved to me that I can always learn something new alongside a diverse group of peers.

Student Reporter

The Entrepreneurial Journey



Ashley Chun
Grade 11
Whitney High School



A rough sketch of a keychain charm design and the handcrafted charm bracelets that I plan on selling. [Source: Author, Ashley ChunMyself, @shuffled.charms on Instagram]

Many people have hobbies that include crocheting, jewelry-making, and other arts and crafts. But how many actually capitalize on their talents and hobbies? You may ask yourself why some people decide to open and run small businesses

and what struggles they go through. As the digital renaissance brings in a new era of marketing, entrepreneurs can now reach their target audience within their fingertips. To find out the answers to these questions, I have interviewed a few online small businesses—particularly those focused on arts and crafts—and recorded their results.

How does social media play a role in promoting your business?

Anyva, from anyvasjewelry, stated: "Well, it is obvious that social media has greatly benefited my company because that is where I sell all my products and make promotions so that everyone from all over the Internet can see what I have in store for them. As a college student myself, I still have many responsibilities in my school life, so balancing out both my business and my academics may be challenging. However, being able to handle all my affairs online makes it a lot more convenient for me and allows me to have

a better outreach without needing to be physically present during my work business hours."

How are you able to market your small business when large corporations—like Amazon and Shein—are a lot more appealing to the mass public with their lower prices?

Kathryn, from jewelry.katz: "Although the lower prices may indeed attract a larger amount of people, the quality and attention to detail of our products are testaments as to why many others are still drawn to small businesses. Additionally, there are many known ethical concerns regarding the practices surrounding fast fashion companies like Shein. In turn, those who want to be assured that their products are ethically sourced would also feel more inclined to purchase from small businesses."

Can you briefly describe the process of your production from start to finish?

Gabriela, from jjellyofu: "First, I use my drawing software, such as ClipStudioPaint or ibis-Paint X, to sketch out my initial design. Then, I will send it over to my manufacturing company so that they can review my designs before they print out the stickers, pins, or keychains that I want them to. Additionally, I also purchase other materials like shrink plastic, acrylic paint, keyrings, and clasps from craft stores in advance. Finally, once I receive the bulk of my product from my manufacturer, I take promotional pictures of it so I can upload them on my social media pages to let my customers know that I have another batch of products available for them."

Overall, these interviews have shown me the ins and outs of running a small business, and this information can be very helpful to any young creators who have wanted to establish their own business or create something new that they can share with the world.

Student Reporter

Cutloose, Footloose: DNHS Winter Musical



Kristine Park
Grade 11
Del Norte High School

With the dimming of the lights and a steady beat from the drumset ringing out, the start of Del Norte's winter musical, Footloose, was signaled. Over the course of five performances, this year's musical has become one of the most exciting and memorable productions our school has staged.

Based on the 1984 hit film and Billboard title song "Footloose," the musical is set in a small town where dancing has been banned, and the teenagers are determined to fight for their right to dance. While the storyline is filled with humor and lively choreography, its deeper themes of resilience and standing up for change were strongly felt by both performers and audiences. This musical brought out the conflicts between tradition and progress, and reminded the audience of the power and necessity of community and courage.

One of the notable aspects of this year's production was its set and stage design. The musical featured one of the largest and most elaborate set pieces Del Norte has ever used.

From shifting props to helping set the dynamic staging, the technical crew worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make sure every transition was smooth. Scene changes happened quickly and efficiently due to the team's coordination and preparation, which really shone through during



The colorful playbill sets the tone for Del Norte High School's winter musical "Footloose" and features interviews with cast and tech members. [Source: Author, Kristine Park]



Del Norte's pit orchestra, ready for their musical Footloose, pose in full '80s rockstar fashion. [Source: Author, Kristine Park]

performances.

One crew member added, "Every show is different, so it's exciting to see what each show will bring." That unpredictability is part of what made all five of the performances special; one of the key aspects of live theater is that every performance is slightly different. Each night has its own energy, which is shaped by the audience's reactions and the cast's momentum. Seeing it in person allows audiences to experience the full energy and emotion that make it so special.

The actors brought that energy in full force. From comedic timing to emotional solos, the cast deliv-

ered performances that were both funny and impactful. Their chemistry on stage made the story feel authentic, drawing the audience into every heartfelt moment and allowing them to truly connect with and understand the characters on a deeper level. It was clear how much dedication and rehearsal went into making the show as polished as it was.

Beneath the actors, the pit orchestra played a crucial role in keeping the momentum strong. Their transitions were seamless, and the music never lost its driving rhythm. Whether playing through an emotional scene or powering through a high-energy ensemble

number, the orchestra ensured that the excitement never dipped.

Footloose created lasting memories for everyone involved. For the cast, tech crew, pit musicians, and audience members alike, it was an experience filled with laughter, adrenaline, and shared celebration. As the curtain closes on this year's musical, there's still more to look forward to. In the spring, Del Norte will present its one-acts, which are short plays written and directed entirely by students. Footloose was only a sneak peek at the creativity and talent within our school community, and there is much more to come.

Student Reporter

Scrolling Past Culture and Context



Jean Lee
Grade 11
Marlborough School

Like every other teenager, a lot of my social life happens online. To the point that my average screen-time is much higher than the recommended amount. I've deleted apps only to redownload them later. I've set daily limits for myself, only to find that the content follows my everyday life without fail. Trends don't just live inside our screens: they spill into our kitchen, take over cafe menus, and affect the way we talk.

What worries me isn't just how fast trends move, but how quickly they spread without context. Social media turns everything into content. Seconds matter, and what the short clip chooses to focus on matters even more. When centuries-old traditions appear in a "morning routine," it becomes just another shallow moment. These traditions are often compressed into 15-second-long clips that just can't capture their depth or cultural significance.

Trend-washing has become increasingly frequent as platforms focus constantly on the "next best thing." Matcha has become the epitome of the clean-girl aesthetic. Hojicha is the next novel coffee alternative. Yoga, especially hot yoga, is marketed as a calorie-burning sculpt class.

Pilates is part of every it-girl's routine. Trend-washing happens when influencers rename or repackage traditional, and often ethnic practices, to present them as novel discoveries.

Many of these traditions come from marginalized communities, such as Asian cultures, yet their origins are rarely acknowledged or presented on such platforms. The history behind these foods and practices disappears, replaced by aesthetic language and images that value the external appeal rather than the origin. What once had a significant cultural meaning becomes just a visual accessory to many.

The problem isn't cultural exchange. People have always borrowed, adapted, and shared across cultures—we are mosaics of each other. The issue is that social media accelerates this process, removing the pause that once allowed for deeper exploration into origins. There's rarely space for context now, as views are optimized for engagement. Algorithms reward novelty, and something old has to be repackaged to look new and become viral. When novelty is rewarded, detaching something from its roots becomes the easiest way to win.



A cup of matcha, one of the most popular drinks on social media platforms currently, served with a cookie, is more than just a quick trend; there is culture behind this. [Source: Author, Jean Lee]

Influencer culture adds another layer: personal branding has become its own problem. What you eat, how you work out, and what you wear all feed into a curated identity. When these factors become part of your identity, it is often treated as another quality that can be changed to draw in more attention. Today, it's matcha; tomorrow, it will be another "exotic" gut-friendly, organic superfood. The cycle perpetuates.

My solution isn't to boycott these influencers; I think that they are engaging to watch and provide a great form of entertainment. It's about resisting the numbness that comes with repetition of the perpetual cycle—being aware of what is going on. What's important is to recognize that behind every "trend" there is history, a community, and even a story that existed long before it was deemed shareable to the public.