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The Graduation Edition

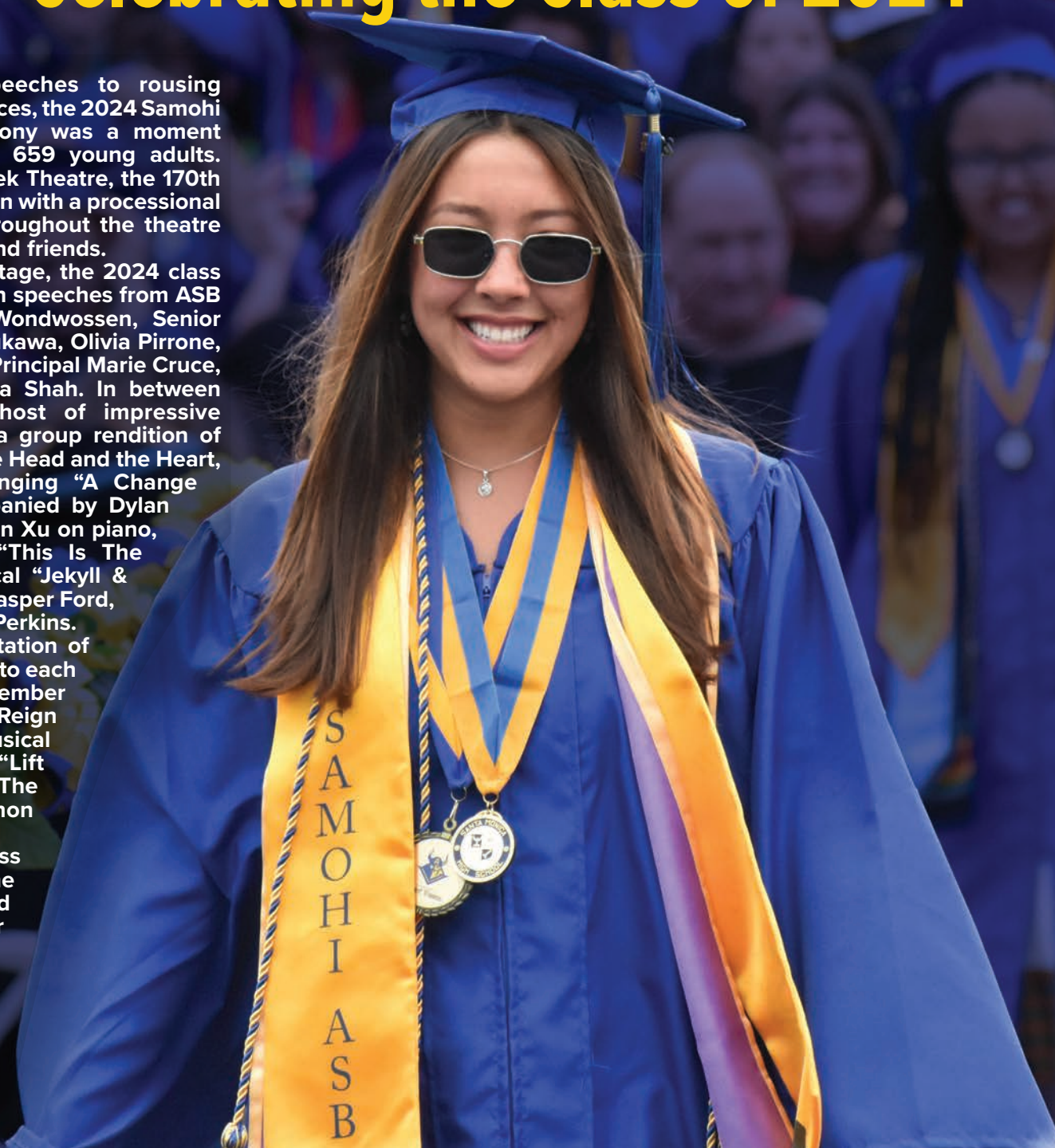
Celebrating the Class of 2024

From inspiring speeches to rousing musical performances, the 2024 Samohi Graduation ceremony was a moment years in the making for 659 young adults. Held at the Memorial Greek Theatre, the 170th graduation exercises began with a processional where seniors walked throughout the theatre space to wave to family and friends.

Once situated on the stage, the 2024 class and Samohi faculty took in speeches from ASB President Maryamawet Wondwossen, Senior Class President Jade Furukawa, Olivia Pirrone, Ava Waterstone, Samohi Principal Marie Cruce, Ryan Behzadi and Sienna Shah. In between the speeches were a host of impressive performances, including a group rendition of "Rivers and Roads" by The Head and the Heart, Azeliya Woldemariam singing "A Change is Gonna Come" accompanied by Dylan Cheah on guitar and Justin Xu on piano, and a performance of "This Is The Moment" from the musical "Jekyll & Hyde" by Xu, Carl Egert, Jasper Ford, Luca Lombardo and Milo Perkins.

After a lengthy presentation of diplomas, giving spotlight to each individual of the 659-member class, Marley Cortez and Reign Snowden gave the final musical showcase by singing "Lift Every Voice and Sing." The Valedictorian was Shannon Lee.

The entirety of the class then spilled out from the theatre into the track and field space to greet their families, celebrating years of hard work.



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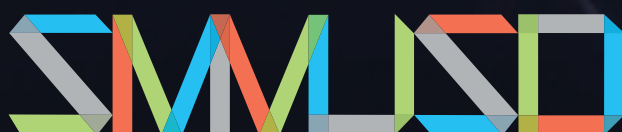
Dr. Antonio Shelton and the Board of Education

*Congratulate
and
Celebrate*

THE **2024 GRADUATING CLASS** OF

Santa Monica High School, Malibu High School and Olympic High School

We are proud of your accomplishments and wish you all the best in your future!



SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

www.smmusd.org

CONGRATULATIONS FROM SMMUSD

SMMUSD SUPERINTENDENT DR. ANTONIO SHELTON MESSAGE TO THE CLASS OF 2024

Congratulations to the class of 2024! Student graduates of 2024 had the most unexpected learning and growth experiences

in perseverance, adaptability, creativity, resourcefulness, time management and resilience, along with the usual coursework required in the state of California. First as the Samohi principal, then executive director of secondary schools and now as your superintendent, I am so proud to see how all our graduates have grown and developed into fine young adults, and we are proud of your accomplishments!

Because of what you experienced with pandemic school closures as you began your high school career, when we returned to school, you made the most of the opportunities presented and your level of appreciation for in-person learning was heightened compared to graduates of years past.

You have stuck together, learned together, worked hard



and have supported each other, along with your families, teachers, counselors, administrators and staff, through ups and downs to earn this accomplishment.

I want you to know I am incredibly proud of you. We look forward to hearing stories about your future endeavors and successes.

Whether you are going on to Santa Monica College, a four-year university, into a certificate program or other postsecondary opportunity, we know the class of 2024 will make a difference in the world. We need you to make that difference for the good of all.

Keep reaching for the stars and know that your time at SMMUSD has prepared you for a bright future. We wish you all the best in health and success in your future. Sincerely,

Antonio Shelton, Ed.D., Superintendent, SMMUSD



**MARIA LEON-VAZQUEZ, SMMUSD
SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER**

Congrats Class of 2024! Felicidades Clase de 2024! You finished your first stop of your journey of life! Hoping you all had a great ride at SMMUSD and that the education received will get you to your next stop of your journey! Don't forget to have FUN and enjoy Life! Terminaron su primera etapa en su jornada de la vida! Espero que tuvieron un gran viaje en SMMUSD y que la educación recibida les llevara a la siguiente etapa de su jornada. No olviden divertirse y disfrutar de la vida!



**LAURIE LIEBERMAN, SMMUSD SCHOOL
BOARD MEMBER**

What a milestone! Congratulations and my best wishes as you navigate the next steps and your promising futures! Allow yourself to explore, look for what you love doing, and don't limit yourself. Work hard but don't make yourself crazy. Be kind and caring. Find joy in life and in learning. Remember to reach out to others when you need a helping hand. And always know that your SMMUSD family is here for you. Cheers!



**ALICIA MIGNANO, SMMUSD SCHOOL
BOARD MEMBER / MIEMBRO DE LA
JUNTA ESCOLAR DEL SMMUSD**

Congrats, SMMUSD grads! Your hard work and dedication got you here. Best of luck and happiness in whatever comes next. ¡Felicitaciones, graduados de SMMUSD! Su esfuerzo y dedicación los llevaron hasta aquí. Les deseamos mucha suerte y felicidad en lo que venga.

CONGRATULATIONS FROM SMMUSD



**JEN SMITH, SMMUSD SCHOOL BOARD
PRESIDENT**

Congratulations! You have done a remarkable job getting through some very tough times and made it - such a good thing to remember when things get hard, and stuff happens. You have traversed this long educational journey and have gotten to this amazing milestone. Be proud of your accomplishment as you look to the future. Remember your empathy, your kindness, your worthiness and that you are deeply loved. Have compassion and keep discovering yourself and the world around you. And, make a difference, big or small, it all adds up.



**STACY ROUSE, SMMUSD SCHOOL
BOARD MEMBER**

Class of 2024! So proud of you and your accomplishments and your growth while in school. Whatever your next steps are, your family, friends, and school community are with you and behind you.



**ISAAC BURGESS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
MALIBU PATHWAY & SECONDARY
SCHOOLS**

Class of 2024! I commend you on reaching this important milestone in your life. As you celebrate, remember to thank your family, teachers, administration, support staff and friends for their continued support along this journey. Wherever your path leads post secondary school, let it be guided by positivity as you contribute to the society we all live in. Don't lose sight of your passion and I wish you continued success in your future endeavors.



**JON KEAN, SMMUSD SCHOOL BOARD
VICE PRESIDENT**

Graduates! If I could give you one piece of advice it would be to celebrate all success. So celebrate this moment and experience the joy. Wait. If I could give you two pieces of advice it would still be to celebrate all success but it would also be to seek out and find joy in every day especially with family and friends. No. Wait. If I could give you three pieces of advice it would be: celebrate success as one, find joy as two, and then treasure time with family and friends. At the end of the day these are the connections you will need to celebrate success and find joy. Congratulations and come back and visit us. We will always be your "home".



**MELODY CANADY, SMMUSD ASSISTANT
SUPERINTENDENT, BUSINESS & FISCAL**

Congratulations Class of 2024! Each of you are a shining star in your own way. You have such a bright and beautiful future ahead of you. Take this time to shine brighter than ever and enjoy all the wonderful things awaiting you. Your successes remind me of why I became an educator. Thank you for being you.



**DR. STACY WILLIAMSON, SMMUSD
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT,
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

Congratulations, Class of 2024! Today is a celebration of your hard work, perseverance, and achievements. As you embark on this new journey, remember the knowledge and values you've gained. Embrace challenges with confidence, pursue your passions with determination, and never stop learning. The world is full of opportunities waiting for you to make your mark. We are immensely proud of you and excited to see the incredible contributions you will make. Always believe in yourself and know that your potential is limitless. Best wishes for a bright and successful future.



**DR. RICHARD TAHVILDARAN-JESSWEIN,
PROFESSOR POLITICAL SCIENCE,
SANTA MONICA COLLEGE**

Dear Graduates,
On behalf of the Board of Education, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Class of 2024. Your dedication, resilience, and hard work have led you to this remarkable achievement. As you step into the next chapter of your lives, remember that the skills and knowledge you've gained here will serve as the foundation for your future success. We are incredibly proud of each of you and excited to see the incredible things you will accomplish. Congratulations, graduates, and best wishes for a bright and prosperous future!



**DR. MARK KELLY, SMMUSD DEPUTY
SUPERINTENDENT**

Congratulations to the Class of 2024. Each of you arrive at your graduation day having traveled your own journey. Graduation is the celebration of your accomplishment and begins the next part of your journey where you have the opportunity to self-determine what is best for you next. The world needs you as leaders and hope that you will engage with your communities and reflect the values, beliefs and experiences you gained in our schools. I wish you all the best and success as you begin your next journey.



**DR. STEVE RICHARDSON, EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR, ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

Congratulations Graduating Class of 2024!! We are so proud of you. It has taken 2340 days and over 13 years to get here. Along the way you have displayed resilience, determination and the unique gifts you possess. Wherever this next chapter takes you, show up with courage, compassion and authenticity. Know that we will always stand behind you.

CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE CITY OF SANTA MONICA

GLEAM DAVIS, COUNCILMEMBER

Congratulations to the Class of 2024! You have reached a significant milestone and now you can look forward to even greater opportunities. The future belongs to you, so make your voice heard! Whatever lies ahead for you, I hope you find fulfillment and joy.

CHRISTINE PARRA, COUNCILMEMBER

Congratulations to the Class of 2024! If I were to choose a quote to share with Santa Monica's Class of 2024, it is to go into the world and do what you love! There is no doubt that many in your class 10 years from now will be lawyers, engineers, medical students, programmers, teachers and working in professions that don't even exist yet and, no doubt, you will be great at those jobs. But that is not "who" you will be. "You" will be known for being Jason, Maria, Brian, Diego, and that is who and what you will be and that is enough.

CAROLINE TOROSIS, COUNCILMEMBER

Congratulations, Class of 2024! Your class persevered through a time of uncertainty to reach this milestone accomplishment. Your commitment to success has prepared you for a bright future. Your families, friends and community are proud of all that you have and will accomplish! As Samohi alumni, I know you each will use your education to go into the world and make it brighter in your own unique ways. I look forward to seeing you bring our Santa Monica values of inclusion and innovation to your next chapter. The city looks forward to following your future adventures and accomplishments!

OSCAR DE LA TORRE, COUNCILMEMBER

As I sat at Samohi's Memorial Greek Theater yesterday to celebrate the graduation of 659 seniors who make up the class of 2024, I was struck by how special this milestone meant to me personally. I have been to at least 20 graduation ceremonies, 18 while I served on the SMMUSD Board of Education. Yesterday's graduation ceremony was different because my son Oscar Jr walked the same stage I crossed in 1990 to complete my K-12 public school journey. For my son and as a father I felt a sense of accomplishment. It gives me great pride to share this amazing experience with my family and son. We have a generational connection to our beloved City, its institutions and community and this is special. It was moving to see former classmates and graduates of SMMUSD also celebrating their children's graduation from Samohi. We are at our best as a City when we come together to support our City's youth & their future. That is the definition of a strong community. So congrats to all the Class of 2024 City-wide! Know that you are loved and you make us proud.

PHIL BROCK, MAYOR

As you become Santa Monica High School Alumni, I sincerely congratulate you on your milestone accomplishment of walking into adulthood through this most exciting of times. You have repeated the experience of Samohi graduates since 1891 as you step forward into your personal future. You have transcended the tragedy of a worldwide pandemic through hope and the promise of a brighter tomorrow as you burst through the virtual Memorial Greek Theatre into the world that eagerly awaits you. All of you will change our world just as fabled Samohi graduates have before you. I, too, am a Samohi graduate — the Class of 1971, President of the Samohi Alumni Association, and a City Councilmember. We are incredibly proud of our fellow alumni, including two astronauts, a Nobel Prize winner, award-winning actors, prominent politicians, heralded athletes, beloved local businesspeople, service people, police and fire personnel, plumbers, electricians, and pioneers of the advancements that will come in your century. Each Viking has contributed to making our world brighter. It's your turn. Look fondly upon your years at Samohi as you go forth from the "Queen of the setting sun." Go Vikings!

LANA NEGRETE, VICE MAYOR

Congratulations to the SAMO graduating class of 2024! As an alum, parent, community leader, and advocate for your success, I am filled with pride and joy as I watch you embark on this new chapter of your lives. Remember to always do what you love and love what you do, for that is the key to true happiness and fulfillment. Know that you have the unwavering support of your Santa Monica community behind you, cheering you on every step of the way. Wherever your journey may lead you, always remember that you have a home here in Santa Monica. Congratulations, graduates, and may your futures be as bright as your potential!

DAVID WHITE, CITY MANAGER

Congratulations on your graduation, Class of 2024! I know you all put in a tremendous amount of work to get where you are today, and I hope you're proud of yourselves and all that you've accomplished. Your generation is inheriting a world that has significant challenges, but I truly believe -- based on the young people I've had the fortunate of interacting with in our community -- that you have the skills, empathy, passion and awareness to change the world for the better. Whether you are heading off to college, entering the workforce, or taking some time to figure out your next move, I wish you all the best, and am excited to hear about what you do next!

CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

T O THE CLASS OF 2024:

Congratulations! You did it. All of your hard work and effort has resulted in this powerful moment, which will launch you into your next bright chapter.

As you look around on graduation day, savor these special moments with your friends in a community that you helped to shape. Know that your leaders in Santa Monica and Los Angeles County are here to listen to and support you. Despite deep despair in our world today, your generation gives me endless hope. You care deeply about our planet and humanity. Thank you for boldly going forward and leading us into a healthier, stronger, and more inclusive future.

All my best wishes!

Lindsey P. Horvath

Chair, Los Angeles County Board
of Supervisors



CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE CALIFORNIA ASSEMBLY

CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2024!

As you walk across the stage, receive your diploma, and become a graduate of Santa Monica High School, one journey will come to an end, and another will begin. For the past four years, you have pushed through obstacles small and large, grown intellectually and emotionally, and, I hope, made lasting friends and memories.

As your representative in the California State Assembly, I can assure you that our community is deeply proud of you and your accomplishments. Now, as you prepare for life's next chapter, I hope you will channel the tenacity and determination you have displayed over the last four years into a willingness to take intelligent risks and push yourself to contribute to a better world for your family and community, as well as yourself.

Perhaps you will become a teacher, an engineer, a writer, a nurse, or an entrepreneur. (Or perhaps you'll come work with us in the state legislature—my newest staff member is a 2014 graduate of Santa Monica High School.) Wherever you go and whatever you do, remember to have confidence in yourself and a belief in the value of your authentic self. Regardless of the path you take, I know that our future will be brighter under the light of the incredible Class of 2024.

As you go forward and make your mark on the world, I hope you warmly remember the formative years you spent at Santa Monica High School—and the dedicated work of the parents, teachers, and administrators who have made your experience possible. Wherever you go and whoever you become, you'll always be a VIKING! Congratulations on this momentous step!

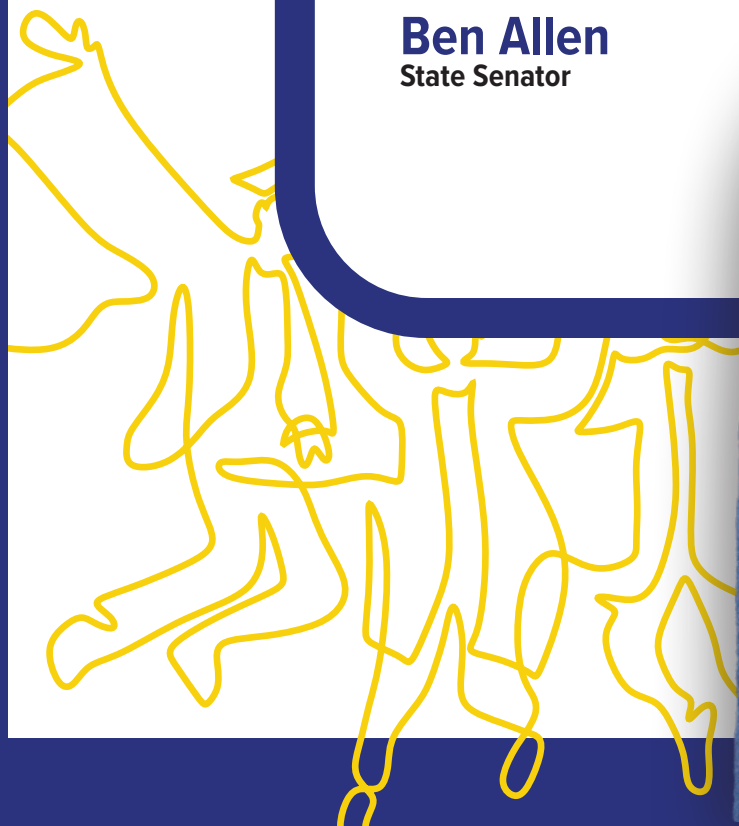
RICK CHAVEZ ZBUR
Assemblymember, Fifty-First District



CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE CALIFORNIA SENATE

Congratulations Viking Class of 2024 on your important achievement! I remember my own graduation from Samohi very clearly; this is an important milestone in your life that you will think back upon in the years ahead. While your lives are about to change in many exciting ways, I hope that you will take a moment over the next few days to reflect on your educational path so far and take some pride in your accomplishments. Despite growing up amidst unprecedented challenges, especially the craziness of the pandemic, you have overcome many obstacles to make it to where you are today. Success in life is not about avoiding difficulties, but rather learning to face, navigate, and supersede them. As you embark on this exciting next chapter of your life, I wish you the best of luck and cannot wait to see what you will accomplish next! And as always, do not forget the teachers, mentors, counselors, family members, and friends who have helped you along the way. The Samo community is cheering you on as you set forth to make your mark on the world!

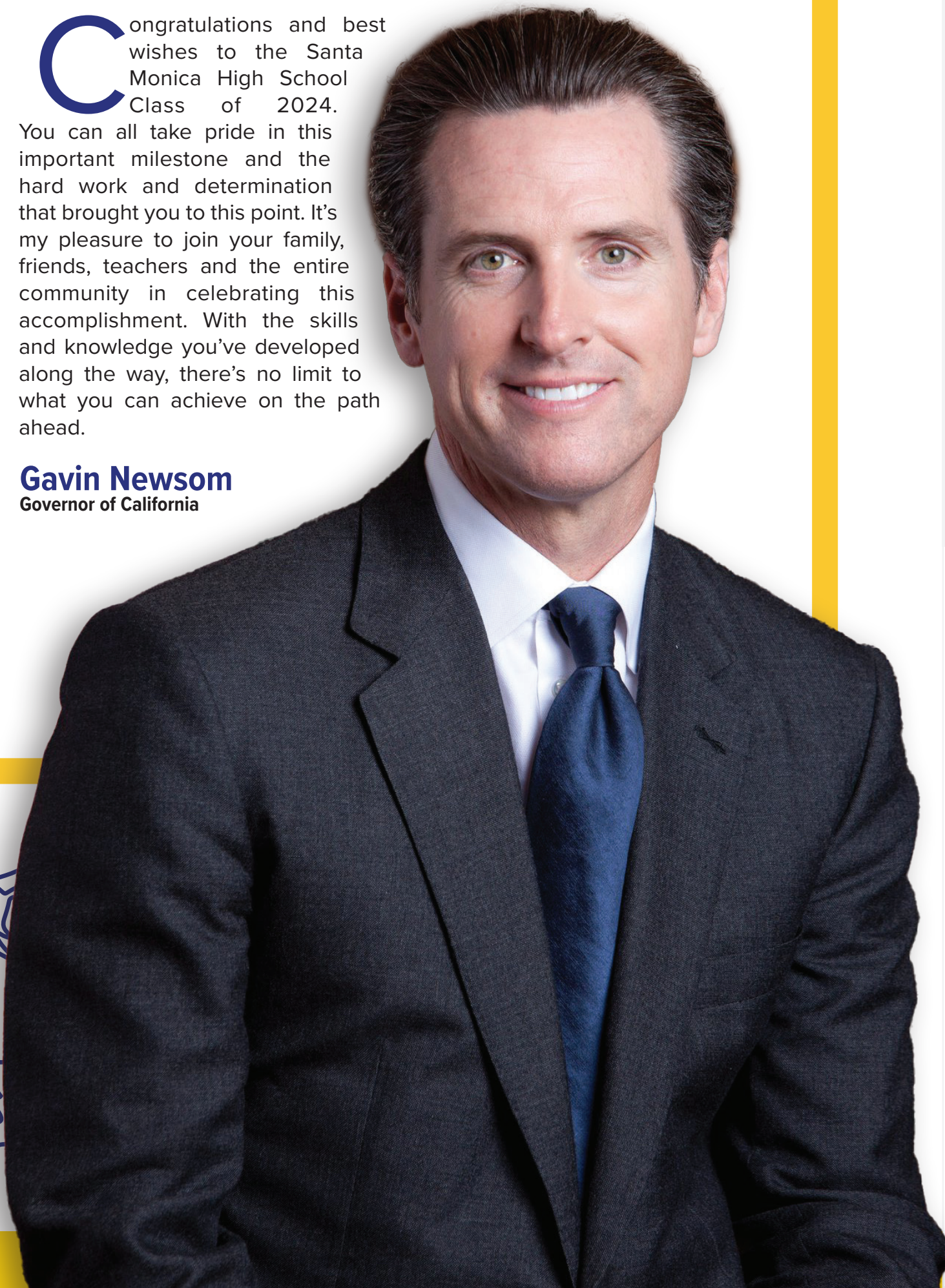
Ben Allen
State Senator



CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Congratulations and best wishes to the Santa Monica High School Class of 2024. You can all take pride in this important milestone and the hard work and determination that brought you to this point. It's my pleasure to join your family, friends, teachers and the entire community in celebrating this accomplishment. With the skills and knowledge you've developed along the way, there's no limit to what you can achieve on the path ahead.

Gavin Newsom
Governor of California



PUBLISHER

Ross Furukawa
ross@smdp.com

PARTNER

Todd James
todd@smdp.com

EDITOR IN CHIEF

Matthew Hall
matt@smdp.com

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Charles Andrews,
Jack Neworth,
David Pissarra.

CIRCULATION

Guadalupe Navarro
ross@smdp.com

STAFF WRITERS

Keith Wyatt
ross@smdp.com

Scott Snowden
scott.snowden@smdp.com

DIRECTOR OF ADVERTISING

Thomas Leffler
thomas@smdp.com

DIRECTOR OF ADVERTISING

Cindy Moreno
cindy@smdp.com

MARKETING MANAGER

Dina Araniva
dina@smdp.com

PRODUCTION

Esteban Inchaustegui
production@smdp.com

PRODUCTION

Julio Davalos
julio@smdp.com

1640 5th Street, Suite 218
Santa Monica, CA 90401
OFFICE (310) 458-PRESS (7737)
FAX (310) 576-9913



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Santa Monica Daily Press



The Santa Monica Firefighters Local 1109 want to congratulate the

Samohi Class of 2024

★ ★ on a job well done. ★ ★

From challenging times emerge emboldened leaders.



CONSTRUCTION A CONSTANT FOR CLASS OF SENIORS

From navigating a worldwide pandemic to forging new ways of learning, the Samohi Class of 2024 has been through it all, staying resilient through its four years.

Through it all, the places that students congregated were constantly shifting as well, as facility changes and improvements at Samohi were prevalent for the senior class. The Samohi campus added a new complex, the Discovery Building, in the fall of 2021, while construction on the upcoming Exploration Building and Gold Gym was an ongoing part of Samohi life.

The senior class started its Samohi career virtually in August 2020 due to the lingering COVID-19 pandemic, which made site work particularly impactful for students. Before reopening partially in April 2021, Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Chief Operations Officer Carey Upton and his team had to move “every desk in the district” three times over, not agreeing on what six feet of student separation meant. Though some students chose to stay home to end off 2020-21, campus facilities were pivotal to those that returned.

“From the day we closed school, we began working diligently to get school back open,” Upton said. “It took more than a year, and we kept chasing and trying to understand what it would take to get back open. While we were doing that, the kids (and teachers) were learning a completely new way to learn, the whole distance learning was a real challenge for everyone socially.”

Incoming sophomores were welcomed to a fully-open Samohi in fall of 2021, and were

also brought into the Discovery Building for the first time. The open-plan structure boasts 28 classrooms, 288 parking spaces, an Olympic-size pool, an indoor-outdoor cafeteria and rooftop classrooms. Since its opening, the building has been selected for several awards, including a leadership award from Green California Schools Summit in 2021.

The building was an interesting case for Upton and his team, since teachers typically need preparation time for a building that changes “the whole education plan” of the campus. However, the pandemic stripped away the prep, creating an awkward transition period.

“We sort of threw (everyone) in on the deep end to figure it out ... over the next couple of months, you started seeing some teachers and some students figuring it out ... by about the time we got to winter break (and) came back in January, what you started to see was (students) and all the teachers embracing how the building works,” Upton said.

The larger classroom sizes in the building shifted classroom settings in a “student-driven learning” focus, as opposed to traditional teaching models of students sitting in rows while a teacher stands in front of the class.

“So now what’s happening more is if you go through that building on many days, what you’ll see is students working in groups, working by themselves, some of them working with a teacher ... the building really allows for that in a way that our other educational spaces do not,” Upton added.

That student freedom has been a boon for

better workflow, according to Samohi junior Dalia Puchalt, who co-founded the school’s Architecture and Design Club for students to better understand the inner workings of building construction.

“Lots of students enjoy going to the communal spaces, and they find that they’re more efficient in getting (their) work done out there ... it’s just a much more welcoming space,” Puchalt said.

Samohi Principal Marae Cruce added that the Discovery learning spaces help students “develop some of the soft skills needed to be successful in college and careers,” such as fostering more peer collaboration.

“When teachers incorporated the flexible seating in and around the classroom, students started to see the possibilities,” Cruce said. “Now we see students naturally gravitated to some of the spaces and working together in small study groups.”

Other changes that Upton said students were “pretty adaptable” to during their time on campus were completed air conditioning upgrades, a re-adaptation of the Business Building to incubate Career Technical Education (CTE) programs, and a Samohi campus plan that created “new traffic patterns” to get around campus.

One of the most important facility changes at Samohi, though, is one that the Class of 2024 will not be on campus to see completed. Throughout their time at Samohi, construction has been ongoing on the new Exploration Building and Gold Gymnasium, slated to be open for returning students in August.

The new building will include upgraded workshops for CTE students and state-of-

the-art studio spaces for visual art, film and photography students. The Gold Gym, replacing the old South Gym, will feature dance and pep squad studios, new courts for basketball and volleyball, a yoga room and outdoor yoga area, as well as a new fitness room and outdoor fitness area.

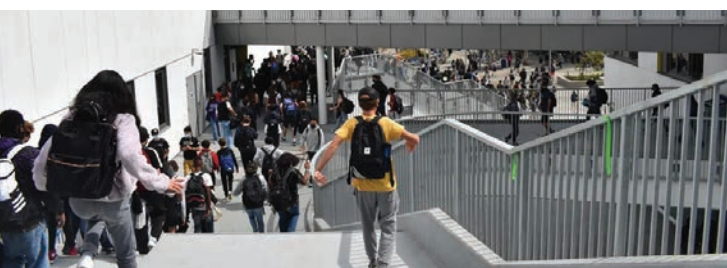
“These will be really great spaces for physical education and (sports in the) athletics program,” Upton said.

Puchalt was recently given a tour of the Exploration and Gold Gym site, and is similarly thrilled with what’s coming to campus.

“I told friends of mine and peers about certain aspects of the building that were really appealing to me, like the outdoor spaces for the visual arts and the updated equipment for all the multimedia classrooms,” Puchalt said. “I think that some people really did not know that the buildings would have these features ... so I think everyone’s really excited to see (the) new approach that these buildings can provide for us for learning.”

Though the Class of 2024 will not partake in those buildings, it had to deal with a host of changes in its own right, keeping heads high throughout.

“With any construction, it’s challenging when it happens, we know that it’s impactful to students and teachers,” Upton said. “I mean, the students are really resilient, they go with the flow, but it’s a challenge. We know that, but we are always trying to improve the educational facilities and make them better for students.”





OLYMPIC GRADS FIND 'BRIGHT LIGHT' AT END OF EDUCATIONAL JOURNEY



The diverse academic environment of Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District's Olympic High School was celebrated on June 5, during a graduation ceremony for 26 Olympic seniors and six Adult Education Center graduates at Virginia Avenue Park.

Olympic High serves as the continuation high school of the district, and was recently accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges for the first time in its history. The school enrolls students who are behind in academic credits and thrive in a smaller learning environment, benefiting from a diverse curriculum and individualized education programs. Olympic Principal Cynthia McGregor applauded the graduates during the ceremony, along with the "village" of teachers and staff who made the day possible.

"Today represents ... so many things to our students and to our entire school community," McGregor said. "Hope, endurance, personal struggle, perseverance, accomplishments and that bright light at the end of what felt like a very dark tunnel sometimes."

District Superintendent Dr. Antonio Shelton echoed those remarks by saying that graduation "is just the beginning of great things" for the 2024 class, adding that he expects the seniors to "give back to your community" and "find someone that you can encourage" amid various life obstacles.

"This is a long journey, you don't have to all do it in one day, but I ask you to begin the process of thinking about what is my path, and how (will I) pursue that path, and how (will I) execute what it is that I dream and hope for," Shelton

said. "All we want to let you know is that we believe in you, we trust in you, and we know that you will do great things."

Three of the Olympic seniors took to the stage to speak on their time at the school, including Elijah Medina, who transferred to Olympic after being told by his former school that he was credit deficient and wouldn't be able to graduate on time. He said that Olympic gave him "multiple opportunities" to accomplish his goals, a point of pride alongside learning opportunities like being a youth group leader at his church and a coach for his younger brother's little league baseball team.

"I want you to know that I'm praying for nothing but for your success and safety (in) all your lives, and I know that each of you are capable of reaching the level of success that awaits you in your dreams and endeavors," Medina told his classmates.

Fellow senior Daisy Estrada added that she was doubtful at times during her high school experience, but knew that "not graduating would never be an option." Estrada thanked her family, including her cousin who "bugged" her to attend school every morning. Alyn Crespo, who was called to speak last-minute, also had praise for a key family member in her journey.

"I want to say thank you to my dad for always providing for (me) and trying his best ... (to finally) see me up here and finally graduating," Crespo said. "I never thought I would ever come to something this big. After my mom passed away, I thought my life was over, but I want to say thank you to my dad for always working day and night."

The ceremony's keynote speaker was Ana Jara, who manages the Santa Monica Police Department's LEAD (Leadership,

Engagement, Achievement, Discovery) program that meets with Olympic students each week. The meetings aim to create connections between youth and police officers in a friendly, collaborative environment, and is something Jara said the "team looks forward to every week."

Jara added that Olympic graduates should live through curiosity "of yourself, of others, of the world and of possibilities," and should note to give back to their respective communities in the future.

"Remember that you are part of a bigger story, (and) as such, you're responsible for playing your role," Jara said. "We need you to be well, we need you to grow, we need you to believe, we need you to show up and be your authentic selves."

Over \$10,000 in scholarships were awarded to the 2024 class, coming from multiple local institutions. Medina received a scholarship from the Santa Monica-Malibu School Administrators, while Crespo and Kassandra Munoz were awarded by the Santa Monica-Malibu Parent Teachers Association. The Santa Monica-Malibu Classroom Teachers Association also gave a scholarship to senior Blake Rugh.

Other local groups handing out scholarships included Rotary Club of Santa Monica (to Joy Vine), the Kiwanis Club of Santa Monica (to Vine, Crystal Hernandez and Valerie Morales) and the Santa Monica Assistance League (to Morales, Bethany Desalegne and Sweta Chandra). Jeremiah Landers received the Otto Menendez Scholarship, while Aeneas Schofield was awarded the Perseverance Award from the family of Carmen and Jasmine Franco.



Congratulations

on an amazing finale to four years of perseverance, teamwork and love of the game of baseball! Bobby, Jackson, Jacob, Luke, Sage, Spencer, Theo and Tony-your families are so proud of you all and look forward to the places that you will go. The future is bright with stars like you boys leading the way!



CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2024!

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ATHLETIC STANDOUTS MOVE ONTO COLLEGE CAREERS

Years of practices, dieting and working out can be tough for a high school student-athlete, but some of Samohi's best rose to the challenge and were rewarded with a new lease on their athletic lives.

The school's robust athletics program presented another well-rounded class of student-athletes headed to the college ranks in February, hosting a National Signing Day ceremony in the campus' North Gym. A total of nine seniors put pen to paper on their futures that day, representing a wide spectrum of sporting, with more making commitments in the following months.

Class of 2024 student-athletes moving onto the next level are Vikings football standouts Caden McCallum, Jayden Montanez, Paco Vandenbrook and Ryland Hawkins; girls soccer star Cassie Bibby, lacrosse's Jasper Ford, boys water polo record-holder Darragh Flanders, girls volleyball ace Emersen Werger, sailor Oliver Reeves and baseball players Bobby Munoz and Tony Ponce.

Getting these student athletes to their Samohi career finish line were the coaches, teachers and administrators who acted as priceless mentors. Samohi Athletic Director Colleen Davenport commended the coaches for the "countless hours of work" to help students improve skills, while also praising the school's bevy of talented educators.

"To be a student athlete who has the opportunity to play at the college level, it starts in the classroom," Davenport added.

Two of the Vikings football foursome will be staying in-state, while the others are heading into more unique locales. Montanez, an offensive and defensive lineman for four years in the blue and gold, committed to the University of California, Davis. His defensive lineman mate Vandenbrook is staying in the Los Angeles area with a commitment to El

Camino College in Torrance.

Hawkins is headed to Salem, Oregon to play for Willamette University, while two-way star Caden McCallum will be heading across the country to Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts. Both McCallum and Montanez were All-CIF Southern Section Division 9 and All-Bay League selections in 2023, while Hawkins was an All-Bay League honorable mention.

Vikings Coach Carter Paysinger was glowing when speaking on the trio, which helped the 2023 squad reach the CIF-SS Division 9 championship game, including calling his linemen a "big reason" for the team's success.

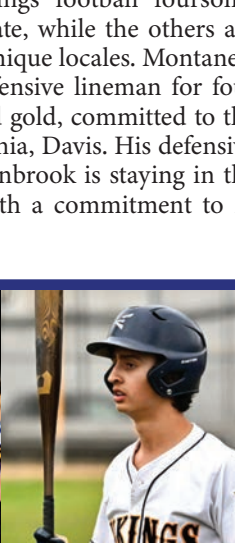
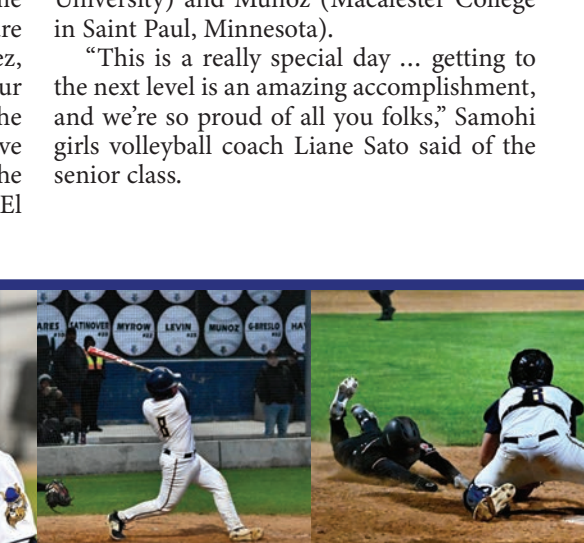
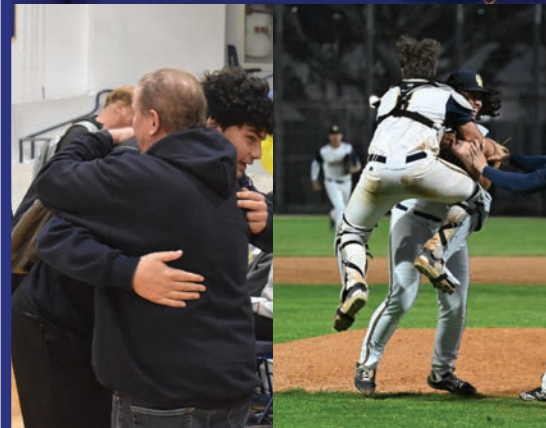
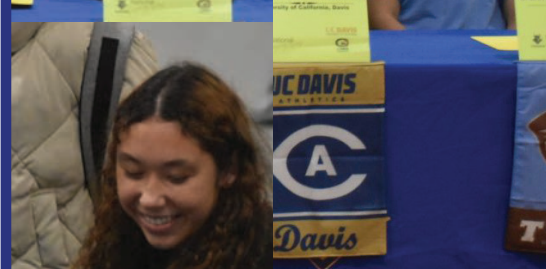
Bibby, who helped lead the Lady Vikings soccer squad to multiple CIF-SS playoff appearances, will be keeping it local by attending the University of Southern California.

"She's an outstanding student-athlete, she's a natural leader on and off the field, and we are very proud of her," Samohi girls soccer coach Alyssa Pazzi said of her star senior.

Other in-state graduates are Ford, attending Dominican University of California in San Rafael, Ponce, committing to East LA College, and Flanders, who is headed to Pomona Pitzer College in Claremont. Flanders holds the record for most career goals in Samohi history and was a 2022-23 NISCA Boys Water Polo All-American Second Team selection.

Heading out of California are Werger (University of Denver), Keeves (Tufts University) and Munoz (Macalester College in Saint Paul, Minnesota).

"This is a really special day ... getting to the next level is an amazing accomplishment, and we're so proud of all you folks," Samohi girls volleyball coach Liane Sato said of the senior class.



MUSIC SCENE CONTINUES WAVE OF NATIONAL RECOGNITION



Samohi students have played the right tune all year long, continuing to forge what has become a nationally recognized music program.

For the 22nd consecutive year, Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District (SMMUSD) has been honored with the "Best Communities for Music Education" designation from the National Association of Music Merchants Foundation, given for the district's "outstanding commitment to music education." The district was just one of five districts out of 80 in Los Angeles County to gain the recognition.

"The award recognizes the outstanding efforts by teachers, administrators, parents, students and community leaders who work together to ensure access to music learning for all students as part of the school curriculum," SMMUSD Superintendent Dr. Antonio Shelton said of the honor. "We would not have received this recognition without the hard work and dedication of many people providing equity and access to all our students."

Shelton also gave special thanks to the district's Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator, Tom Whaley, for his work "to ensure our students receive a world-class education."

"Every year for 22 consecutive years, our music teachers have stepped up and continued to deliver an outstanding music education for students," Whaley said. "SMMUSD has received this award consecutively longer than any school district in California, and that is due to the commitment and hard work of all our educational partners, but especially our fantastic music teachers."

A group known for its hard work is the Samohi Marching Band, which completed an exceptional competition season in the fall. Under the leadership of band director Kevin McKeown, the marching band participated in competitions in October and November, gaining accolades along the way.

In the 5A Division, the marching band placed first in the categories of band, color guard and percussion at the Simi Valley 54th Annual Band Spectacular, Cleveland High School All-Valley Band Tournament and William S. Hart Regiment 39th Rampage Tournament.

Further in November, the band placed first in those categories at the 10th Annual Duarte Field Tournament, along with winning the Music Effect Sweepstakes, Visual Effect Sweepstakes, Visual Performance Sweepstakes and Overall Band Tournament Sweepstakes. The next week, the band placed first in the category of band and second in the categories of color guard and percussion at the Savanna High School Field tournament, as well as achieving the Music Performance Sweepstakes, Music Effect Sweepstakes, Visual Effect Sweepstakes and Overall 4A/5A/6A Division Tournament Sweepstakes.

The band's final competition saw the Vikings receive a silver medal and win the Music Effect Caption Sweepstakes at the Southern California School Band and Orchestra Association 5A Division Championship Tournament.

"This was the most consistent group that I have taught at Samohi since 2012," McKeown said. "Their weekly improvement led to a historic finish and has set a new standard for our program moving forward. I am also a proud parent of a senior in the band, Connor, so that makes this year even more special."

The marching band was rewarded for their exceptional year with a new trailer, welcomed onto campus for the first time in March. The trailer, built by Oklahoma-based company Clubhouse Trailers, will serve as home base during band competitions and keep intact the more than \$300,000 worth of equipment involved in each trek.

"It's fit so that the equipment will be safely transported and not bashing around in there and (get) damaged, and so the kids were excited," Whaley said. "Kids and the parents didn't believe it until they actually saw that it was really here at Samohi ... now that it's here, the kids are super excited about the marching band season in the fall ... this will serve kids for another 40 years."

Another area where Samohi shined this year was in the orchestra, as 15 Samohi orchestra musicians were chosen to participate in the California Orchestra Directors Association Honors Orchestras concert in December. The students were selected through a blind audition in instruments like violin, string bass, viola and cello.

"Our student musicians have such passion and commitment to their music studies,"

Samohi Principal Marae Cruce said. "We are very proud of our Samohi programs, our directors and these students who are very deserving of this tremendous honor."

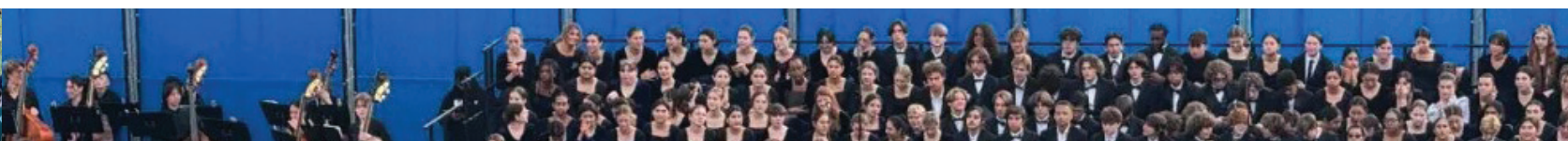
Orchestra honors were also given this year for the Samohi Theatre Pit Orchestra, which won the prestigious 2023 Jerry Herman Award for Best Orchestra in a high school musical. Nominated twice before, this is the orchestra's first win against Los Angeles high school competition, selected for the Samohi Theater Department's production of "The Drowsy Chaperone."

"I'm very excited for the students in the orchestra," Samohi Pit Orchestra Director Terry Sakow said. "They put in a lot of work to make sure the productions are successful. The success of the pit orchestra is the result of our great district music program. All orchestra members are able to perform the musical at a high level because of the training they receive from district music leaders."

The Samohi jazz bands took part in a unique opportunity this year, a months-long mentorship from Grammy Award-winning jazz bass icon Stanley Clarke. In the fall, Clarke began a mentorship for Samohi and Santa Monica College students as part of BroadStage's Artist in Residence program, culminating in concerts at Barnum Hall and the John Adams Middle School Performing Arts Center.

"In the recent past we have suffered the loss of many of our important cultural spaces and creators," Clarke said. "This presents a crucial moment for our city and for the future of the arts in general ... exposure to the arts at the highest levels is paramount to the spawning of the future of culture and the arts."

The Samohi bands had a serenading sendoff for seniors in May, taking part in the band program's annual "Pops" concert featuring highlights from movies, video games and popular music history. The band program's successes in 2023-24 included a multitude of awards from voting bodies like the Southern California School Band & Orchestra Association and the California All-State Music Educators Conference, as well as the wind symphony's trip to Seattle over spring break to participate in the WorldStrides Heritage Festival, winning a coveted Gold Rating.



MORE THAN A SPORT: GUNG-HO GAMERS CONNECT THROUGH CLUB



While this has been an extremely successful year for Samohi athletics, perhaps the most exciting contests from this school year didn't take place on a field or a court.

Instead, some of Samohi's fiercest competitors traveled to maps like Icebox and Sunset within the virtual realm, displaying awe-inspiring skill at the video game "Valorant" for the SAMO Esports team. The squad of nine students met during Monday lunch sessions to practice their skills in the first-person point of view shooting free-for-all, then convened on Wednesday evenings in the Innovation Building computer lab to face off with other schools. Tasked with defeating the best high school teams of the Pacific Time Zone, the SAMO unit embraced teamwork and aptitude to take third-place in the High School esports League's West division during 2024 spring Gold Bracket action.

"Valorant" itself is a local creation, crafted by Santa Monica-based Riot Games, who aided SAMO in its quest by donating 10 optimal gaming computers, monitors, keyboards and mice for the computer lab. Esports President Max Bernstein said the equipment is a cornerstone in expanding the Innovation lab into spaces like video production, but for now, mowing through the competition remains the goal.

"I think (esports is) really good for the school and a lot of other stuff ... my experience with eSports and generally with this team is I've been helping manage everybody, and I've been trying to make sure we're playing games on time and playing with other schools," Bernstein said. "I think it's gonna be really good in the future, and I think (that) this has been a pretty good year."

Video games became a key bonding point for many during the COVID-19 pandemic, including Samohi's Joshua Mahmoudiani, who told his family that he could make friends at his new school by playing games like Valorant and "Super Smash Bros."

"My cousin and I (didn't) really talk that much, but we really only talk now because of video games," Mahmoudiani said of the value of gaming. "We played video games together and got really close over quarantine ... one of my friends moved to a different country (but) we can still play video games together ... so (I play) video games to still connect with people."

That connection isn't just a social skill, it's a necessity to make it through the best esports players out there. During competitions where not everyone on the roster can be present in the computer lab, the team rapidly communicates through phone calls and Discord chats, and the gelling allows the

squad to take down more experienced players.

"People don't think esports is sports, (they think) we're just playing games, but you still have to work hard and improve," Mahmoudiani said. "Valorant, for example, you can be really good, but if you don't have good teamwork, you'll still lose, just like all (other) sports."

SAMO Esports aims to put games on the same plane of importance as popular athletic endeavors, as the experience of competitive gaming brings true sports fervor typically reserved for professional playoff bouts.

"It's really interesting and exciting to see," Esports advisor and Samohi language teacher Veronica Garcia-Hecht said. "I think (they) are so comfortable in there in the moment, (but) my heartbeat starts going fast (watching them) ... when it says 'sports,' yeah, it gets your blood pressure going ... hands are sweaty ... you can feel it. It's really exciting."

Garcia-Hecht signed on as advisor after seeing students tap into their interests and how the movement taps into the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion priorities of the school.

"It gives students who would normally not have a spotlight (a chance), I think it's important to give everybody an opportunity and a voice," she added.



PBL, CO-TEACHING OFFER DIVERSE METHODS OF STUDENT LEARNING



Samohi's diverse learning methods were on full display during the 2023-24 school year, including another strong year for the school's Project-Based Learning (PBL) Pathway.

At Samohi, PBL students participate in internships and engage in interdisciplinary projects aligned with their interests, receiving a Samohi diploma alongside real-world experience upon graduation. PBL students' various interests were broadcast to friends and Samohi staff on May 30, as the pathway unveiled its "PBLxTalks" speaker series.

The "TED Talk" style video project was the culmination of a Senior Thesis Project, where students created a project of their choosing that helped an identified community. Students created and presented an official project proposal and pitch, implemented their project, then shared their findings via the videos.

"Over the last four years, I've had the privilege of seeing (students) grow in terms of their interest ... they changed a lot along the way, as most young people do, and that's really what our program is about," PBL Senior Advisor Amy Tsang said at the PBLxTalks event at Barnum Hall. "Finding who you are, what you're interested in, (and) continuing to build that."

A total of 13 students presented their projects at the event, showcasing the different paths they took to achieve their goals. Senior Giovanni Banda taught others about the history of Santa Monica through an internship at the Santa Monica Conservancy, creating a walking tour for students that went through the historic Shotgun House in Ocean Park, historic Dogtown and other landmarks.

Other students branched out to social media, such as Nefertari Perez Figueroa, who created the S.T.I.T.C.H. inclusive fashion campaign aimed at creating change through the body neutrality movement. Figueroa's main audience for the campaign was middle schoolers, who often feel insecure from mental and physical changes coming during that life period.

"What I've come to realize is that with the pressure of society to look a certain way ... these feelings of insecurity get pushed even more, and (students) feel very overwhelmed during this time," Figueroa said. "Because of this, I'm pushing to help students focus on values that are ... mindful about what the body can do instead of just how it looks."

Other multimedia-inspired projects included Veniamin Marholin's video game he created for Generation Connect, a lifelike simulation of Santa Monica that rewards players for good behavior. Students also took to the scientific realm for their projects, including Felix Boulton's internship focusing on battling lung disease at UCLA Health Sciences Lab, and Livia Herman's time in Curacao constructing artificial corals and cleaning existing ones.

"Through collaboration and inclusivity, we can work towards solutions that to only preserve our planet, but also respect the diverse needs and perspectives of all (species)," Herman said of her PBL experience.

Samohi's vast methods of education were also highlighted this year in the special education realm, including the successful co-teaching program. At the school, co-teaching takes place when two teachers, a general education teacher and a specialized academic instruction teacher, collaborate on instruction in an inclusive general education class for students who are placed per individualized education plans.

One pair of Samohi co-teachers is gen-ed instructor Roshni Mejia and special education teacher Jason Daglis, who alternate between several co-teaching methods depending on the day and lesson plan. Their Samohi class is unique by including "executive functioning lessons," setting up students on how to compose emails and different workforce-related skills.

"What's great about (co-teaching) is that if someone is presenting information and not everyone understands what's being discussed, it's always helpful to have another perspective in class," Daglis said.

MALIBU SENIORS OFF TO PROMISING FUTURES



Photos by Linh Snyder

MALIBU: The Malibu High School Class of 2024 graduated on June 11, as 102 seniors were sent off to their respective futures, including 85 percent of the class who are heading off to higher education. From the class, 66 seniors are headed to a four-year college, 21 are going on a two-year track, and 15 have other plans including one senior going into the military. Nearly half of prospective college students are staying in-state, including three headed off to USC and 10 enrolling in Santa Monica College. Out of state universities for the 2024 class include University of Colorado - Boulder, the University of Oregon and the University of Montana. Two graduates are going international, enrolling in the American University of Paris. In total, \$51,000 in scholarship money was given out to the 2024 class.



TEAM MARINE CHANGES SAMOHI HISTORY WITH ENVIRONMENTAL EFFORTS



A powerful group of environmental stewards have permanently altered the course of Samohi history over this school year.

Samohi's Team Marine, an environmental activism group dedicated to rising up against climate crises, were instrumental in shaping Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District (SMMUSD) policy in 2023-24. In the fall, the group was able to persuade the SMMUSD Board of Education to approve of a districtwide Climate Literacy Resolution, followed by pushing a switch to 100% clean renewable energy in the district across the finish line in the spring.

Under the direction of Life and Environmental Sciences Instructor Benjamin Kay, Team Marine's accomplishments wouldn't have made such an impact without senior leadership, including the smart and

tenacious trio of Maya Williams, Emery Cunningham and Willa Ross.

"In 18 years, we've had maybe a smaller handful of teams that have really moved policies and kind of helped change culture, and I'd say that this is one of those dream teams that are leaving a legacy (and) indelible impression," Kay said of his 2023-24 team.

Team Marine's Climate Literacy Resolution was approved by the board on Nov. 2, 2023, a statement asking for the district to support "age-appropriate discussions" regarding climate topics in elementary schools, along with enhancing curriculum in secondary schools to go more in-depth on climate issues across content areas and beyond the science classrooms.

The resolution asks teachers across the district to commit at least one lesson per semester on a climate topic through either a social, economic, political or science lens.

The document is an extension of a district sustainability plan passed in March of 2019, another accomplishment tied to Team Marine.

"I'm super passionate about the advocacy that we do, and I think it is so crucial to start with the younger generations that are gonna have this planet long after we're gone, and so it was really important to me to help support this getting through ... I think just seeing that kind of unity in the community was really, really beautiful," Ross said.

The resolution idea has been around for a few years now, with Cunningham stating this year's Team Marine drafted a resolution under the guise of "what should students learn and know about climate change in order to deal with it." Before heading to the board, the senior leaders had to get various stakeholder committees on their side, something Williams was "glad" to go through in order to know "exactly" what they wanted a resolution to be

districtwide.

"There's still a lot of work to be done in terms of implementation and training teachers and making sure that students are actually benefiting from (the lessons), but I think that once it is fully implemented, it's going to make a big difference, and I'm excited to see how that impacts sustainability in Santa Monica," Williams added.

Later in the year, on May 1, the district hosted a "Plugging In" ceremony at Samohi to commemorate a switch to renewable energy sourcing, a feat completed with strong backing from the activist group. Williams initially came to the SMMUSD board in early 2023 with a petition of over 800 signatures from students and community members calling for a switch back to renewable sources, after the district previously ran on 100% green power

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through the Clean Power Alliance (CPA) from March 2019 to March 2020.

Now partnering with CPA to run on 100% renewable energy once more, the Samohi ceremony featured speeches from Williams and Cunningham, as well as commendations from Santa Monica City Council for the environmental specialists. Ross stated that her first time speaking in front of the SMMUSD board was during the renewable push, feeling intimidated at first but was supported by Williams throughout the endeavor.

Together, Team Marine worked with stakeholders like SMMUSD Sustainability Manager Austin Toyama and CPA officials to craft a plan accepted by the board.

"To have the celebration was just so awesome, because you got to see even more people who were involved in the culmination of all of this hard work that went back years, and it was just really nice to be able to celebrate something that went really well this year," Ross said.

Williams noted that the community support made the switch an "organic process," a process that could be a spark for other educational institutions.

"This is a model, and if we could just replicate what these students have done and pushed for ... (in) other school districts, could you imagine the power and the effect in reducing carbon footprint? ... my hope is that eventually other school districts will see what Santa Monica has done," Kay said.



The senior trio will each be moving onto higher education, with Ross attending Scripps College in Claremont, Williams heading to UC Berkeley and Cunningham attending the

Ivy League's Yale University.

"It feels good to come away from it all, (it's) mostly, in the sense, complete, we've accomplished a lot and done a lot of the

things (we) had to do ... I'm most proud (to) find a lot of collaboration inside Team Marine," Cunningham said.



Maya, Tia, Mira, Nico, Anton, Abe, Jules, Dash, Ajax, Jasper, Daine, Mari, Gaby, Meghan, Livy, Rowan, Maggie, Jade, Marina
Not pictured: Phoenix, Summer, Tuesday

SQUADS OLD AND NEW MAKE MAJOR IMPACTS ON 2023-24 ATHLETICS



From new programs making an instant impact to established squads embarking on deep playoff runs, Samohi athletics took locals on a wild ride in 2023-24.

Success arrived nearly as soon as students arrived on campus in August, as the debuting Samohi Girls Flag Football program kept up the heat throughout the fall months. The Lady Vikings, coached in its inaugural season by Ramsey Lambert, finished 16-3 and became Ocean League champions with an undefeated 8-0 league play stretch.

The 2023 fall season was the first to be officially sanctioned by the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF), meaning both Lambert and his players needed to work out the kinks in the flag football rulebook. Working as a true unit, the Lady Vikings excelled thanks in large part to senior co-captain Isabella Sanchez, who was nominated for the LaDainian Tomlinson High School Player of the Year Award by the National Football Foundation.

"It's kind of cool that me and all these other girls are a part of (this), and

hopefully girls in the future will look to us," Sanchez said. "Not just be thankful, I just hope everyone can build off of what we've done, because ... I can just see how much [the sport is] gonna grow."

The boys football team had its own set of triumphs, finishing 9-5 and advancing to the CIF Southern Section Division 9 championship game. Though the Vikings lost a tough 29-27 battle against Rio Hondo Prep in the finals, the team was in a handful of instant classics, including a 33-27 overtime playoff win over Santa Ana within a swath of fog.

Senior leaders also pushed the Samohi squad, including All CIF-Southern Section selections Caden McCallum, Griffin Seals, Jayden Montanez and Mason Oliva. McCallum was a two-way force for the Vikings, racking up 1,604 yards and 24 touchdowns on the ground while also leading the team in tackles (108).

"For me, it meant more than just

representing our school, but representing our city, and that was as a football team one of our mottoes of the year, representing our city," McCallum said.

Other playoff appearances in the fall season included the boys water polo team and the girls volleyball team. Both units were bolstered by their respective senior standouts, Darragh Flanders and Emersen Werger, who will be moving onto the college ranks at Pomona Pitzer College in Claremont (Flanders) and the University of Denver (Werger).

"It was super cool to be a part of a sport because the volleyball program is such a community, Werger said of her time at Samohi. "Even now, when the season is done, walking around campus and seeing everyone is rewarding, to have such (a) little family on campus."

Flanders, who now holds the record for most career goals in Samohi water polo history, was able to

be coached by his father Matthew with the Vikings.

"He's been playing since he was 10 (and) it's been great to watch him," Coach Flanders said of his son. "I played water polo, his mom played water polo, his uncle played water polo. It's a water polo kind of family, so he's got the pedigree."

Individual sports had accomplishments in the fall as well, ranging from Phoebe Benun's run to the CIF State Meet in cross-country to the Lady Vikings golf team securing its first victory in years. The golf unit, anchored by seniors such as Kara Best, were finally able to put together a roster with the size and skill to compete on the course.

"That was really exciting for us, because before, we didn't really have a lot of players in the past years," Best said. "It's my last season, so it was nice to get a win."

The winter months brought playoff appearances for the Vikings basketball and Lady Vikings soccer squads, with key seniors including basketball big man Anton Berge-Wells and soccer standouts Cassie Bibby and

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ATHLETICS

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Samantha Possell. The Vikings hoops team finished 16-13 before dropping its opening playoff contest to Westlake, while the 9-9-2 Lady Vikings were ousted in its inaugural playoff bout against Harvard-Westlake.

Possell, a multi-sport athlete also competing in tennis, loved how her senior year transpired with close friends. Possell will be attending the University of Texas at Austin, while Bibby has committed to join the college soccer ranks at USC.

“(Samohi) soccer was really cool because it was a reunion for a lot of the players,” Possell said. “We had all played on (youth soccer) teams when we were little, and then we went separate ways for club teams, but we all got to play together in high school. It was so much fun and a really cute way to end my soccer career.”

Also in team action during the winter were Vikings boys soccer along with Lady Vikings water polo and girls basketball. On the individual front, a trio of Samohi wrestlers (Oliva, Alicia Lewis and Arata Sakamoto) competed at the CIF Masters Meet in February, with Oliva taking fifth place in the Blue 285 division.

Arguably the highlight of the spring was the Vikings baseball team’s run to the CIF Southern Section Division V championship game, eventually falling 4-1 to champion Chino Hills. The Vikings were anchored on the mound by senior Jackson Klein, who mowed through batters to the tune of a 10-2 record with a 0.62 earned run average and 101 strikeouts in 79 innings of action. Klein also joined the ranks of California’s top hurlers early in the season, throwing consecutive no-hitters for the Vikings.

“(My career) was always the feeling of representing something bigger than yourself,” Klein said. “You were representing the city. You had the whole city behind you.”

A balanced lineup carried things offensively, made up of a mix of junior leaders like Brady Satinover and Isaac Liberman to senior presences like Bobby Munoz and Spencer Levin. Levin, who called his teammates his “best friends” and “like brothers,” also credited the Vikings coaching staff for the 21-8 season.

“I think the support of the coaches and the time commitments they had to teach us and show us what we need to do and giving us

opportunities was very helpful,” Levin said.

Team athletics in the spring also featured playoff appearances from the Vikings boys lacrosse team and Lady Vikings softball squad, as well as spirited play from the boys volleyball and girls lacrosse units. Though the boys volleyball team didn’t make postseason competition, the class of 2024 was sent off with three monumental tournament-style victories, including defeating the highly-ranked Sanger Apaches.

“My time as a student-athlete at (Samohi) was an overall positive and rewarding experience,” volleyball senior Maceo Gifford said. “I met a lot of new friends through sports and got closer with the athletic community.”

On the track and in the swimming pool, individual athletes shined during the spring season, such as a select group of Samohi track and field standouts that competed in the CIF Southern Section Masters Meet. At the meet, Benun finished just outside the top 10 in the 1,600-meter, while Reign Snowden competed in the shot put finals. The team of Benun, Cleo Topp, Maeko Gross and Matilde Martinez finished sixth in the 4x800 relay.

In the pool, both Chase Douglass and Jackson Nessel competed in the CIF Southern Section Division 2 championships, as both the boys and girls units bonded throughout the year.

“The team was amazing and supportive, we all had each other’s backs and got really close, and worked really hard to do (well),” senior swimmer Genevieve Slavonia said.





CONGRATULATIONS HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS! CLASS OF 2024

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GRADS SAIL INTO THE FUTURE IN SAMOHI CELEBRATION

Once the Samohi Class of 2024 is done with its graduation ceremony, the real party starts on the "seas," an all-night adrenaline rush for students and parents alike.

Beginning at 9:30 p.m. and going until 5 in the morning, the 2024 Grad Nite celebration on the "S.S. Viking" serves as a healthy way for seniors to get out their post-graduation energy, focusing on dancing and activities on the Samohi campus instead of potentially dangerous endeavors elsewhere.

"We love this event because it is so amazing to see the kids, to celebrate the kids ... but (as) an adult, what we really like about this event is that it keeps kids safe on what is (one of) the most statistically dangerous nights of their lives ... we really believe in this event," Nicole Faries said.

Faries had previously volunteered as part of the 33-year tradition, but had "no idea what it entailed" when she became co-chair three years ago alongside Santa Monica-Malibu

Unified School District Board of Education President Jennifer Smith. Planning for the event involves procuring donations all year long, gaining funding from organizations like Santa Monica City Council, Rotary Club of Santa Monica and Santa Monica Elks Lodge #906.

The donations are critical as costs for Grad Nite have ballooned from around \$100,000 before

the COVID-19 pandemic to about \$140,000 now, due to inflation and rise of material costs. Funding also goes toward scholarships for families who can't afford a Grad Nite ticket, making sure all students "find a way" to Samohi.

"The more we use on materials, the less we can give to kids, so that's why we want more community support," Faries said.

Once adequate funding has been received, an "army of

volunteers" show up at the Samohi tennis courts for three weekends of constructing the Grad Nite set.

"There are lots of people who showed up and pushed up their sleeves and (went) to work," Faries added. "Now we're in the building phase again where we're educating families about Grad Nite and we're trying to get more and more younger parents to volunteer."

Faries has been involved in her own children's Grad Nite twice now, in 2019 and 2021, and always has a "mix of feelings" about the senior sendoff.

"It really (is) just a rush of a variety of feelings, of pride, a little bit of sadness, and definitely joy because it's a happy occasion," Faries said. "When you graduate from (high school), it's your first big milestone ... you're kind of going out into the world. It's (also) really exciting as a chair ... we don't get tired until after it's all over ... we're on adrenaline and we're definitely feeding off the kids' energy."



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where do we go now?

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- DUBLIN CITY UNIVERSITY (IRELAND)
- ESCP BUSINESS SCHOOL (FRANCE)
- MCMASTER UNIVERSITY (CANADA)
- UNIVERSITY OF LONDON (ENGLAND)
- UNIVERSITY OF ROEHAMPTON (ENGLAND)
- UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS (SCOTLAND)
- UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO (CANADA)
- MCGILL UNIVERSITY (CANADA)
- UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH (SCOTLAND)
- UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW (SCOTLAND)

washington

- UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON (SEATTLE)
- WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY (BELLINGHAM)

montana

- MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY (BOZEMAN)

oregon

- LEWIS & CLARK COLLEGE (PORTLAND)
- OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY (CORVALLIS)
- UNIVERSITY OF OREGON (EUGENE)

california

- BIOLA UNIVERSITY (LA MIRADA)
- CALIFORNIA COLLEGE OF THE ARTS (SAN FRANCISCO)
- CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (PASADENA)
- CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE (LOS ANGELES)
- CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, CHICO (CHICO)
- CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, DOMINGUEZ HILLS (CARSON)
- CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON (FULLERTON)
- CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH (LONG BEACH)
- CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, MONTEREY BAY (SEASIDE)
- CALIFORNIA STATE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY, POMONA (POMONA)
- CALIFORNIA STATE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY, SAN LUIS OBISPO (SAN LUIS OBISPO)
- SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY (SAN DIEGO)
- SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY (SAN FRANCISCO)
- SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY (SAN JOSE)
- CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY (ORANGE)
- DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA (SAN RAFAEL)
- EAST LOS ANGELES COLLEGE (MONTEREY PARK)
- ELECTRICAL TRAINING INSTITUTE (COMMERCE)
- LOS ANGELES COLLEGE OF MUSIC (PASADENA)
- LOS ANGELES TRADE TECHNICAL-COLLEGE (LOS ANGELES)
- LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY (LOS ANGELES)
- NAPA VALLEY COLLEGE (NAPA)
- OTIS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN (LOS ANGELES)
- PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY (MALIBU)
- POMONA COLLEGE (CLAREMONT)
- SAN DIEGO CITY COLLEGE (SAN DIEGO)
- SAN DIEGO COMMUNITY COLLEGE (SAN DIEGO)
- SAN DIEGO UNIVERSITY (SAN DIEGO)
- SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY (SANTA CLARA)
- SANTA MONICA COLLEGE (SANTA MONICA)
- SCRIPPS COLLEGE (CLAREMONT)
- SMITH CHASON COLLEGE (LOS ANGELES)
- STANFORD UNIVERSITY (STANFORD)
- UNIVERSAL TECHNICAL INSTITUTE (LONG BEACH)
- UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY (BERKELEY)
- UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, DAVIS (DAVIS)
- UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE (IRVINE)
- UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES (LOS ANGELES)
- UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, MERCED (MERCED)
- UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE (RIVERSIDE)
- UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO (SAN DIEGO)
- UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA (SANTA BARBARA)
- UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA CRUZ (SANTA CRUZ)
- UNIVERSITY OF REDLANDS (REDLANDS)
- UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO (SAN FRANCISCO)
- UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA (LOS ANGELES)
- WEST LOS ANGELES COLLEGE (CULVER CITY)

nevada

- COLLEGE OF SOUTHERN NEVADA (LAS VEGAS)
- COLLEGE OF SOUTHERN NEVADA (CLARK COUNTY)

utah

- BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY (PROVO)
- UNIVERSITY OF UTAH (SALT LAKE CITY)

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arizona

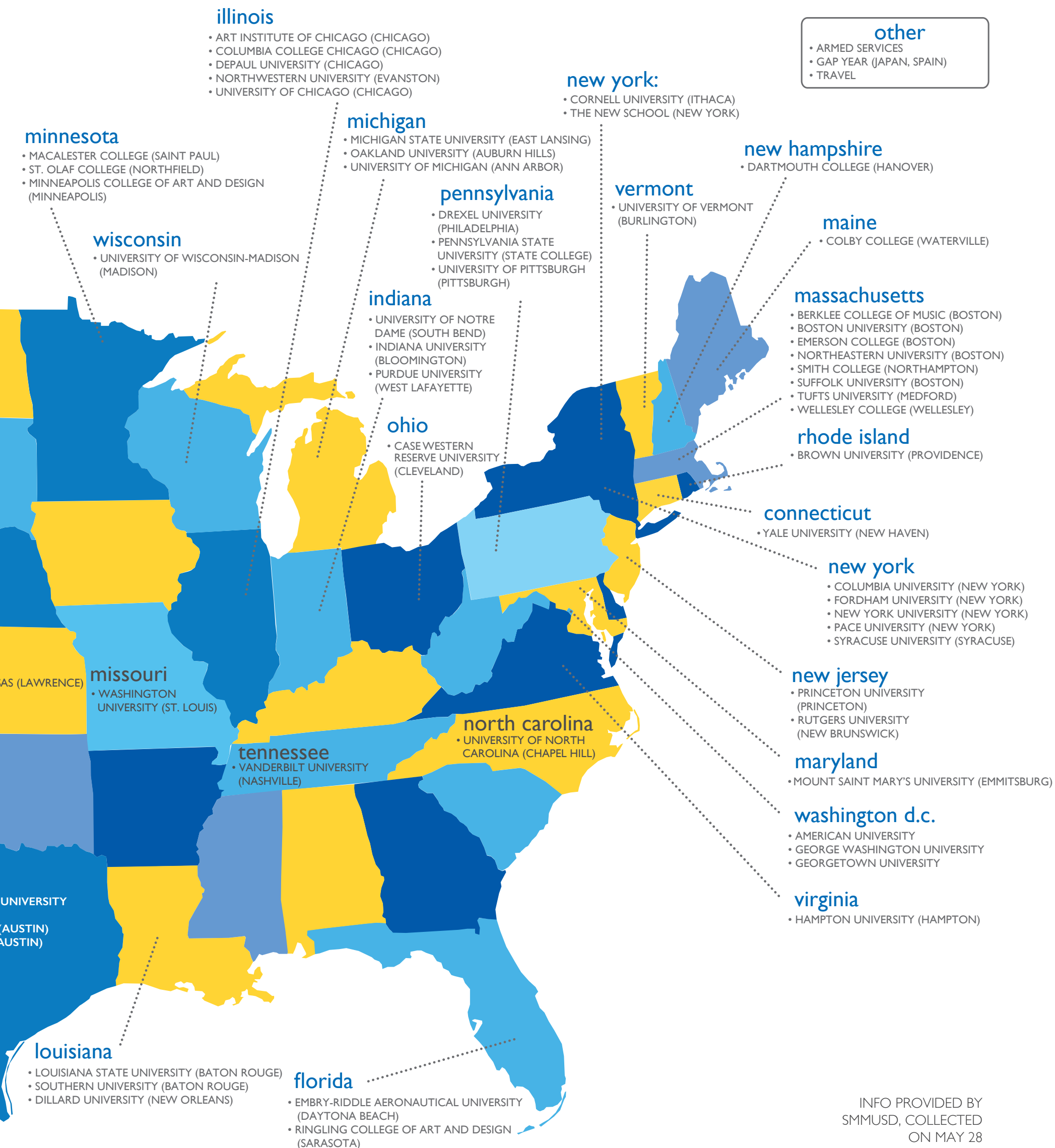
- ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY (TEMPE)
- UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA (TUCSON)

texas

- SOUTHERN METHODIST (UNIVERSITY PARK)
- UNIVERSITY OF AUSTIN
- UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

hawai'i

- UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MANOA (HONOLULU)



a map of senior destinations for fall 2024

Santa Monica High School 2024 Graduating Class

Arman Abadi
Kayvon Abadi ■
Nezeli Petra Aceves
Daniel Fernando Acosta
Margaret Sheng-Jie Adams-Mao ●
Dominick Domitilo Aguayo
Eleanor Ahdoot ■
Amitis Akbari
Zoe Noelle Alexander ●
Ella Brooke Allen
Norah Roxana Allshouse
Hawene Chaka Alomayehu ●
Christian Alberto Alvarez ◆
Katherine Nathaly Alvarez
Peony Anand
Alexander Pasqual Andrews
Oliver Scot Angus
Jasmine Magdalene Arana ● ◆ ◆ ☿
Mason Hudson Arditi ● ■ ◆
Diego Sebastian Arevalo Mota
Brooke Elise Aron
Mayolo Erminio Arroyo
Bitannia Demissie Asfaw
Joaquin Augustus Auger
Deniz Delayla Ayrik
Cy Backen
Luca Cameron Campos Bainbridge ◆

Phoenix Ray Baker
Julian Anthony Baltazar
Giovanni Anthony Banda ◆
Julian Ming Bao
Alexander Robert Barbato
Charlotte Juliana Barrett
Brianna Gabriela Bautista ◆
Bianca Elizabeth Bazyler
Genevieve Golan Bazyler
Taryn Annette Wong Beck ●
Lucas Johannes Beekman ◆ ■ ◆
Ryan Behzadi ◆
Jesse James Bengoa
Mattan Zohar Benisty
Lilly Madison Bennett ◆
Haley Renee Bennett Riehl
Anton Emil Berge-Wells ●
Bruno Florian Bernacchi ◆
Leo Joseph Bernal
Shane Keith Berner
Milo Celeste Bernini ● ■ ◆
Kara Jai Best ● ◆
Mussie Yonatan Beyene
Miles Sebastian Bhattacharya
Cassie Hannah Bibby ● ■
Lucas Andrea Bidart
Sean Bryan Binder

Malin Rufus Bird
Adam Marley Bloom
Seth Dallas Bohuslavizki
Charlotte Isabel Boisvert
Grace Elizabeth Boktor
Alexandria Aline Borrero
Uma Akriti Bose
Tricia Bou Khalil
Felix Woodson Boulton ● ◆
Luca Bove
Chaplin Adam Boyd
Eva Naomi Brewster ●
Martin Alexander Brown
Dylan Roxie Bodhi Bruce
Skutr Elija Witenstein Bruno
Madeline Mackenzie Bryce ◆ ● ■ ◆
Isabella Lena Buccola ● ◆
Violeta Stella Buitrago
Liam Kempton Bumiller
Cienna Alicia Burgos ◆
Ryann Elizabeth Burrows
Dashiell Henry Burton ◆ ☿
Gregory Nathaniel Bustamante
Zoe Lisseth Caceres ●
Lucy Callaghan
Riley William Callahan ◆ ☿
Jimena Campos

● Centennial Recognition Medallion ■ Potential National Honor Society ◆ Sealbearer ◆ Biliteracy State Seal

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Mycah Skye Carney	Angel Cooley-Knotts	Oscar Emiliano De La Torre ✦ ✧
Gabriela Carrillo	Quentin Steven Corbel	Soraya Braylenn De Leon ●
Brianna Irene Casillas ● ✦ ✧	Tara Shapnick Corcoran ✦	Camille Sansorre De Regil
Manuel Castagna ✦	Jesse Gilberto Coria III ✧	Talib Elijah Debose
Justin Matthew Castillo	Jasmine Emily Cortez	Isabella Mya Del Castillo ✦ ✧
Andrea Castro	Marley Amai Cortez	Ramon Alejandro Del Castillo Aparicio
Daniel Adan Castro Lopez ✦	Kyra Anne Coulam	Alasia Amani Dennis
Gabriel Jung Ceguerra ● ✦ ✧ ■ ✧	Sophia Rose Crasnick	Chase Robert Douglass
Amelie Ann Chabot	Sierra Winona Indigo Crawford	Sage Wallace Douglass
Adam Chabouh	Antoine Michael Cruz	Benjamin John Dreifort ●
Isabelle Nora Chambers	Alessandra Belen Cruz Rivera ✦	Willow Evelyn Driver
Ethan Augustine Chang ●	Rosa Maria Cruz Rojas	Julia Aleksandra Drozd
Atrina Charmchi	Andrea Anahi Cruz Santiago ✦ ✧ ✧ ◀	Oliver Drake Dubose ■
Delmoris Alexander Chavarria ● ✦ ✦	Brenda Paola Cruz Santiago ✧	Mia Sirianni Duilio
Rosio Chavez-Perez ✦ ✧	Jason Daniel Cuellar	Brooklyn Sky Duncans Thompson ●
Dylan Hamilton Cheah ●	Emery Vidal Cunningham ● ■ ✦ ✦	Natjedah Durand ✦
Ryan Alexander Chen ■ ■	Antonio Curiel	Lola Jean Edwards
Rowan Lily Cheng McIntire ● ✧	Djibril James Curley ✦ ✧	Carl Egert
Emmy Catherine Chopra ■ ■	Breauna Michelle Curry	Nicholas Augusto Eggleston
Alexander Louis Clark ■ ✦	Evan Abraham Daghighian ●	Samuel Evan Eichholz ✦
Callum Alastair Clark ✦	Gabriela Danielyants	David Willard Ervin ● ■ ✦ ✦
Ethan Devakul Clark ●	Cameron Cohen Davidson ●	Leonel Escobar
Miles Attila Clark	Samuel George Davidson	Daniel Escobar Lopez ●
Rakia Fa Clark	Jarred Jarrard Davis	Ethan Nhilsson Espana
Samantha Si-Ming Clark ●	Victoria Davis ●	Iyza Trinidad Espinoza
Thaice Kiona Clark	Janelle Nyomi Davis-Dill	Jazmin Morena Estrada

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Joseph Rakhamim Farzam ●
Paul Joseph Fay ✦
Isaac David Feinberg ✦ ✦
Robert Joseph Feinberg
Kate Ashbury Feinman
Marianna Isabella Fickbohm ■
Charlotte Cleary Finch ✦
Lena Flack
Darragh Amato Flanders ●
Mia Elena Flores
Jasper Thomas Ford
Leilana Lee Ford
Niko Yakov Hunting Foster ◆ ■
Clarissa Alexis Franco
Dylan Leo Pham Franey
Alexa Danielle Frcek
Armand Alexander Frcek
Jade Stewart Furukawa ● ✦
Andrea Kyung-Joo Gaeta
Dylan Vaughan Galperin ● ✦
Alexis Catalina Galvan ●
Isabella Garcia
Isabella Viviana Garcia
Joseph Christian Garcia
Lily Garcia ●
Logan Anthony Garcia

Rebekka Isabella Garcia ◀
Sergio Garcia ✦
Vanessa Garcia
Juan Carlos Garcia Bautista
Uziel Garcia Manuel ✦
Ryan Garcia Santiago
Josephine Frederique Suzanne Gelinas ● ■
Riley Shepard Geller
Katie Monique Germaske
Clemente Manuel Gerscovich
Jadon Youssef Ghermezian ✦
Andres Gibson
Maceo Che Gifford
Maya Riela Gillerman-Quigley ◆ ✦
Verena Rose Ginsburg ◆ ■ ✦
Sienna August Goetz
Ritchie Davey Gomez
Carlos Narciso Gomez De Dios
Aliza Belinda Gonsalez
Alexander Jonathan Gonzalez
Ashley Alexis Gonzalez
Bethzy Nicole Gonzalez
Luisa Yareli Gonzalez
Marissa Lauren Gonzalez
Ruben Andrew Gonzalez
Victoria Grace-Marie Gonzalez ✦
Violet Jasmine-Marie Gonzalez
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Carlos Antonio Gonzalez Melchor
Cameron Daveed Gorbani
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Clarissa Stephanie Gority
Shane Christian Gorman ●
Vincent Michael Gormley
Jonathan Victor Gorosh ✦
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Daniel Alexandrov Gospodinov
Nia Iordanova Gospodinova
Lukas Greblikas
Alexander Thomas Green ■
Caden Shawn Green
Justin Michael Green
Maxine Ryan Grossman ●
Adrian Guembes
Gong Gur Hadad
Kaylinn Valerie Gurgu
Alejandro Jose Gutierrez
Gabriela Calise Gutierrez
Ajax Solomon Haendel
Zoe Marie Haggart ✦
Hope Augusta Hamilton
Tia Lam Hansen
Max Nicolas Harrison ✦ ☿
Ryland Haynes Hawkins
Kamora Imani Hawthorne

● Centennial Recognition Medallion ■ Potential National Honor Society ◆ Sealbearer ✦ Biliteracy State Seal



Santa Monica High School 2024 Graduating Class

Aubrey Hayes
Luke Ryan Hayes
Luke Crispin Hecht ● ✦
Lucas Austin Carrillo Hekimian
Mary Dryden Helgoe
Holden Sexton Hendrickson ●
Cherysh Diamante Daimija Henley
Livia Drew Herman ● ■ ✦
Xailoh Xavier Haley Hermosillo ●
Isabell Maria Hernandez
Rachelle Isabel Hernandez
Saul Hernandez ●
Anthony Hernandez Coronel
Alexander Hernandez Flores
Angel Francisco Hernandez-Quinonez
Nancy Gabriela Herrera
Oliver James Higginson
Sage Elizabeth Hightower
Casper William Holden ■
Ellie Maria Holmstrom
Spencer John Hotch ●
Grace Taos Houari ✦
Melina Hourai
McKinney McHugh Houston
Emma Kate Howard
Hayden Vaughn Howard
Jesse Joseph Howard ●
Payton Skye Hudson

Isabel Hudson-Monforte
Marco Alonzo Huerta
Amelie Jolie Hughes ● ■
Bethan Marie Hughes
Remo Humar
Stella Clara Hutchison ✦
Adrian Ibarra ✦ ⌘
Mia Inocencio
Semaj Ndimele Inyama-McIntyre
Nida Emily Jakeliunaite
Milana Janabayeva
Aysel Ping-Guang Minnie Oyman Jang
Sara Jenabzadeh
Brandon Troy Jenkins
Diego Johnson ✦ ⌘
Sofia Mahalia Johnson
Tyler Osiris Johnson
Victoria Stanislawa Jozkowicz
Hugo Diego Juarez
Fausto Carlo Kachadoorian ✦
Michael Kahler
Abraham Giorgio Cristiano Karaan
Troy Cela Karma
Oliver Richard Keeves
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Jackson Harper Klein
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Christopher Michael Kozusko ✦
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Henry Morgerman Lawit
Kyla Joy Marin Lee
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James Mei Leigh
Matthew Alan Leon ✦
Pearl Heart Levi
Judah Levin ✦
Lia Joy Levin
Spencer Kramer Levin
Daniel Chen Levine
Alicia Sky Lewis ✦
Rickell Alanae Lewis ● ✦
Alexandra Maya Liberman
Eric Donovan Lima ● ■ ✦
Kai Yoshimoto Lindsey ● ✦
Sarah Rosal Linowes ●
Daine Christian Lira

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Luca Leo Manuel Lombardo
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Mason Hopper Lopata
Riley Jolene Lopata
Cesar Lopez
Emily Sophia Lopez
Hayden Christopher Lopez
Ivan Lopez ✧
Jasmine Isabelle Lopez
Juan Pablo Lopez
Kiara Donaxii Lopez
Nataly Valerie Lopez
Priscilla Chevelle Lopez
Savannah Suri Lopez
Yareli Aurora Lopez
Selena Mia Lopez Garcia
Atreyu Joachim William Lucas ●
Te'A Victoria Lucasan
Kadin Hasan Luongo
Silas Baxter Lynch
Himani Machhaal ● ✧
Liam MacMahon ✧ ☿
JaydreK Andre Villamater Magsano ●
Tuesday Lili Mahdavi
Lukas Joseph Maher
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Kenaan Tesfaye Mamo
Valentina Leonora Manco
Lucia Antonia Maniquis
Vincent Ry Manjarrez ☿
Bethzy Citlali Manzo
Lucia Bond Manzur
Sergio Alexander Marcial ✧ ☿
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Lizette Carolina Martin
Aimee Milagro Martinez
Aleris Kassandra Martinez
Brenda Martinez ☿
Citlali Monzerath Martinez
Jennifer Maya Martinez
Mario Martinez Cruz
Dulce Natalia Martinez Mateos
Matilde Martinez-Navarrete ● ✧ ✧ ☿
Anaya Kalani Pamela Mason
Gracie Kathleen Mason-Firth
Joia Amelia Masee
Sara Masso
Laia Mayne
Amir Mazloomin-Jahromi ●
Michael Minh McCaffrey
Caden Atticus Croft McCallum ● ■
Matthew Finn McDonald
Nicolas James McDonough

Isis Soleil McDowell ●
Fayre Eireny McKenzie ✧ ■ ✧
Connor Luke McKeown ● ■ ✧ ✧
Joseph Grayson Wagner Mead-Cunningham
Natalie Lorene Mead-Cunningham
Meghan Nicole Jett Meadows
Mason Wolter Mehring
Yecenia Melchor
Emily Vanessa Melendez
Edgar Alonso Mendez Hernandez
Gisele Natalie Merida
Troy Jacob Meshekow ●
Alex Richard Meyer ✧ ■
Alyssa Abigail Meyer ✧
Michael Rogers Michalski
Ana Luiza Maya Milk ☿
Lucas Marcelo Milk ☿
Amit Millstein ✧
Aidan Clyde Milner ● ✧ ✧
Leo Samuel Mindlin ✧
Kennedy Arden Mitchell
River Japheth Mitchell
Sarah Elizabeth Moeller ● ■ ✧
Naomi Mogollan Reyes ✧
Andrea Nicole Molina ●
Maya Belen Monarrez
Jayden Marco Montanez ●

● Centennial Recognition Medallion ■ Potential National Honor Society ✧ Sealbearer ✧ Biliteracy State Seal



Santa Monica High School 2024 Graduating Class

David Montes	Jonah Arthur Nielson	Nefertari Itzel Perez Figueroa ❄️
Naibe Montes ❖	Jennessy Angeline Nieto	Milo Widmyer Perkins
Kenyah Olivia Moore	Sanjay Singh Nieves-Gimbel	Perla Emily Perry
Elena Zara Morales	Destin Thirawee Nikkel	Bibiana Licia Peterson 🟢❖❖❖❖❖❖❖❖❖❖
Jade Alexandra Morales 🟢❖	Nurit Noik	Bruno Picazo Martin
Jesse Morales	Nathan Norman	Ava Rose Pink ❖
Mariana Moreno Morales ❖	Diego Isaac Romero Oberman	Nicole Touran Pirooz ❖
Alexander Isaac Moses ❖	Elizabeth Ann O'Brien	Olivia Katherine Pirrone
Christopher Elijah Kaine Mullins	Gavin Lynwood O'Cain ❖	Loren Nathaniel Pohl
Alia Fernanda Munoz	Samantha Karolina Ochoa	Víctor Francisco Polo Capó
Kassandra Elizabeth Munoz	Delaney Anne O'Dea 🟢❖❖❖❖❖❖❖❖❖❖	Antonio Maximo Ponce De Guzman
Robert Elias Munoz	Melanie Alejandra Ojeda ❖	Samantha Ellen Prophet Posell 🟢
Gabriela Noelia Muñoz Del Pozo	Mason Michael Oliva	Grace Yolanda Prieto 🟢❖❖❖❖❖❖❖❖❖❖
Paula Alejandra Murillo 🟢❖❖❖❖❖❖❖❖❖❖	Juan Jesus Olivera Martinez	Cyrus Asahi Pruneau ❖
Aidan Timothy Murphy	Sadie Lu Olmos	Claudia Puig Alvarez
Jacob Dylan Myrow	Julia Orsolini 🟢	Margaret Lin Purcell
Chris Dylan Martinez Naelgas	Benjamin Leo Ostrovsky	Allison Stacy Pushagua Flores ❖
Theo Edward Naessens-Dowling	Yaseen Harvey Oumanchar	Gary Frey Quiros III
Mikael Elliot Najera	Marcos William Outland	Charles Burchett Rabin
Derek Ray Napier	Evan Michael Oxman	Freesia Aaliyah Rahhali ❖❖❖❖❖❖❖❖❖❖
Valentina Jane Navarro	Jessica Marie Padilla	Jack Obazele Rainsford ❖
Nika Nazarizadeh	Arnoldo Enrique Paniagua	Angelica Rubi Ralac Hernandez ❖
Christian Davon Nettles Jr.	Freddy Romo Paniagua ❖	Sebastian Ramirez
Declan Wilder Ney ❄️	Georges Aime Thomas Paris	Ashley Michelle Ramos Melchor
Bella Christin Nguyen	Brian Joon-Woo Park	Hannah Rafaella Rand ❖
Liv Kyra Nicholls ❖❖❖❖❖❖❖❖❖❖	Makena Susan Parker	Cameron Phillip Ravare 🟢
Violeta Nicolas	David Perez	Giavanna Alby Reidy 🟢

❖ Potential Sealbearer ❖ Immersion Medallion ❄️ Project Based Learning Graduate ◀ Young Collegian

“IT IS WITH A HEART FULL OF JOY THAT I CONGRATULATE THE CLASS OF 2024.

As you embark on your new journey, please know that you carry your community & family’s hopes and dreams with you. You are the embodiment of our greatest contribution to the future. Go forward & display the greatness that we know is inside of you.

Congratulations CLASS OF 2024
Ericka Lesley
Chair:
The Santa Monica Rent Control Board
The Santa Monica Black Agenda



Santa Monica High School 2024 Graduating Class

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Anastasia Gates Rho
Kelsey Marie Ritchie
Elana Jolie Rivera
Giuliana Fey Rivera
Pablo Liam Rivera Clark
Olivia Yzabel Rizzo
Cohen Lee Roberson
Emmanuelle Robert-Larkin
Jasear Kurron Roberts
Flynn Rodriguez
Steven Alexander Rodriguez
Wendy Rodriguez Diaz
Paola Jaylinn Rodriguez Naranja
Mary Elizabeth Rogers
Marina Atacama Rojas-Alexander
Sydney Sophia Roker
Viankah Sierra Romo
Melody Monira Roohani
Daniella Jade Rosenberger
Willia Rebecca Ross
Mila Jet Rudgard
Gabriela Ruiz
Guadalupe Ruiz
Charles Von Rusler
Oliver Sawyer Russell
Thalia Audrey Ryf
Josie Lynn Sader

Yelena Samuelovna Sahrai
Emily Salas
Jocelyn Pricilla Salazar
Lisbeth Vanessa Salazar
Elias George Salem
Lucas Frank Salmaggi
Daniela Andrea Sanchez
Isabella Leandra Kedward Sanchez
Michelle Nicole Sanchez
Noe Sanchez
Alexis Sandoval
Orlando Calzada Sandoval
Natalie Saucedo
Sydney Amaris Schaffer
Ryan Lucas Schatzow
Katherine Claire Schell
Giorgia Rae Schindler
Elizabeth Joy Schmelzer
David Eli Palmer Schuh
Josie Rose Schwartz
Griffin Day Seals
Taylor August Segorski
Lila Noelle Sencio
Alise Xitlali Serna-Fischer
Roberto Manuel Serrano Ramirez
Alan Bennet Shaaban
Sienna Anoop Shah

Sherwin Shahrabi
Rae Shane
Winston Angelo Sharpe
Clarice Alexandra Shimahara
Jules Omar Shobaki
Sidney Oliver Showrai
Katherine Scarlett Sievers
Vera Anne Silva
Satomi Mabel Sinder
Graham Morris Slater
Walker Paul Slavich
Genevieve Rose Slavonia
Megumi Miyake Rosinski Sloan
Grace Amelia Sloca
Hannah Isabella Smith
Jeremiah Daniel Smith
Noah Jeremiah Smith
Sawyer Ashley Smith
Skye Miyoshi Smith
Sophie Jane Smith
Theodore Philip Smith
Elizaveta Sergeyevna Snisarenko
Reign Elan Patryce Snowden
Daniel Solano
David Andrew Solis Valdovinos
Victor Zihao Song
Nikki Soroushyari
Roberto Sosa

Centennial Recognition Medallion

Potential National Honor Society

Sealbearer

Biliteracy State Seal



Vincent,
4 - Time First Team All-League
2021, 2022, 2023, 2024
4 - Time CIF Tournament Competitor
2021, 2022, 2023, 2024
Well played!

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Santa Monica High School 2024 Graduating Class

Kyle Emanuel Spiteri	Sara Emiko Ty	Jared Halley Wendel-Oliver
Flaminia Stafoggia	Sebastian Cole Tyner	Emersen Isabel Werger
Loren Paige Staples	Esme Maeve Urbaniak	Zinnia Alani Weybright
Elizaveta Sterlyagova	Severn Jerzy Urbaniak	Brody Brown Wilkes
Sofie Shoshana Stern	Giorgio-Ross Georgiev Ushev	Aliyah Edna Williams
Chloe Hannah Stevelman	Aydin Attila Uzun	Dashiell Ryder Williams
Elliot Alan Storey	Brandon Anthony Valdovinos	Jamila Janissa Michelle Williams
Sylvester Storstein-Norgaard	Shane Holden Valla	Kirra Maunganui Williams
Tyler Alston Strang	Clara Albright Vanden Bosch	Maya Alejandra Williams
Brody Isaiah Strauss	Paco Michael Vandenbrook	Taylor Alexandria Witt
Marina Strube	Nathan Vasquez Santiago	Kidus Amare Woldegiorgis
Jordan Carlson Stuart	Itzel Ivana Vazquez	Azeliya Kassahun Woldemariam
Donovan Stuhlmuller	Jose Emilio Vazquez Camarena	Axel Maximilian Wolfe
Luke Ian Suchet	Alexander Oscar Verdugo	Maryamawet Wondwossen
Jacob Barnet Sussman	Brianna Yamilet Vergara Ramirez	Hannah Xu
Zachary William Swerdlow	Devin Alexander Villanueva	Justin Jiaming Xu
Sophia Ann Symmons	Alberto Villaseñor	Emi Yamamori
Marcus Ferrer Tambago	Angela Aurora Sixta Villaseñor	Gabriel Jaroslaw Yamin-Danielak
Sasha Aiko Tan	Hector Alexander Villegas	Elizabeth Kathryn Yesilevsky
Joshua Jia-Ming Tang	Franki Isabel Vitalich	Yishak Kebede Yetemgeta
Benjamin Ephraim Telanoff	Ernesto Christopher Vivanco	Jingyan Yu
Eyuel Dereje Tesfaye	Mira Desai Wagabaza	David Zhao
Emmaline Clare Joy Thorpe	Cassidy Jin Ju Walther	Hugo Johannes Ziegler
Alissa Torres	Dashiell Joseph Wasson	Arame Zohrabyan
Nikolas Eduardo Torres	Ava Yael Waterstone	Daria Zolotovska
Melanie Gabriela Trujillo	Jaden Earl Watkins	Nicolas Benjamin Zortman
Andrea Reyn Tryggvadottir	Elliot Jack Wechsler	December Graduate: Blake Thomas Rugh

✦ Potential Sealbearer ✂ Immersion Medallion ✨ Project Based Learning Graduate ◀ Young Collegian

Congratulations to

Alise Xitlali Serna Fischer

Class of 2024

So proud of you!
Going to SDSU in the fall



Daine Lira

Class of 2024
Born and raised in Santa Monica
Attended Mt Olive Pre school
Jon Muir for K -1st
SMASH 2-8
SAMO 9-12



Daine attended SAMO, played on the water polo and swim teams for all 4 years of High School. During his senior year, Daine received the SAMO Renaissance Athlete of the Year Award and a SMASH Scholarship Award at the Scholars & Honor Recognition Event. During his last semester of High School, Daine qualified and was accepted into the LA County Open Water Lifeguard Academy sponsored through the LA County Fire Department. He completed a rigorous 10 week probationary elite program which culminated in a Graduation Ceremony honoring the LA County Lifeguard Academy Class of 41. Daine accomplished all of this while maintaining a high GPA and participating in several AP courses all 4 years at SAMO. He will officially be an active LA County Lifeguard this summer serving the community at nearby Lifeguard towers throughout Santa Monica Beaches. Daine will attend SMC and plans to transfer to UCLA for Business Administration.
We are extremely proud of you Daine!! Love Mom, Dad & Danielle

Community for Excellent Public Schools (CEPS)

Congratulates all the graduates and wishes them all the best for the next steps in their lives! Your futures look bright with a quality education from SMMUSD behind you.



CEPS

Is dedicated to the preservation and betterment of public schools in the Santa Monica-Malibu School District. For two decades CEPS has successfully campaigned for increased local funding, generating over \$35 million annually in extra operational revenues for SMMUSD. We have also advocated for bond measures to build the facilities required for 21st century instructional needs.



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Classifieds

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HISTORY OF SAMOHI

The storied history of Samohi began in the 19th century, continuing to thrive well into the 21st century thanks to constant renovations and additions.

Before Samohi proper, there was the Sixth Street School built on town lots between Oregon Avenue (now Santa Monica Blvd.) and Arizona Avenue, which opened in September of 1876. Serving as the only public school in the Santa Monica area, students traveled on means such as horseback to attend classes. Under the leadership of then-principal W.W. Seaman, the first students received diplomas at Santa Monica High School in 1887, however, the first class to traditionally graduate with a four-year course of study (known as "The Immortal Five") was in 1894.

In 1897, the first school bond issue approved a \$15,000 building program for Lincoln High School, between Arizona and 11th St., which opened in the spring of 1898, the same year the Sixth Street building stopped occupation by high school classes. The site was eventually occupied by Madison School until the late 1900s. In December of 1910, a resolution was adopted by the Board of Education declaring an election for a \$200,000 bond issue, establishing a high school on Prospect Hill between 4th and 6th Streets and between Michigan and Fremont Avenue (now Pico Blvd). Prospect Hill was selected as the Samohi site for its topographic features and midpoint location between invested parties.

On April 11, 1912, a gala ceremony solidified the new cornerstone of Santa Monica education, with three buildings erected at the beginning. The formal dedication of the new school took place on February 23, 1913, and Frank W. Thomas was elected as the first Samohi principal with an enrollment of 450 students and staff of 23 teachers. The following year, more than a dozen teachers were added to staff to meet the needs of increased enrollment, while the school's first gymnasiums were built.

The following decade saw the addition of the Memorial Open Air Theatre in 1921, a dedication of Samohi students who took part in World War I, as well as the addition of the Library Building (now English Building) in 1924. The 1930s saw a devastating earthquake in the area in 1933, requiring extensive campus remodeling and modernizing that forced students to attend classes in tents. Renovations were completed in 1938 alongside construction of a 1,400-

seat auditorium, Barnum Hall, named for W.F. Barnum who served as Samohi principal from 1914 to 1943.

In 1952, Santa Monica City College left its location adjacent to Samohi, leaving an opportunity for Samohi to acquire the campus. The school's Science and Technology Buildings were built on the former college site. The next major construction projects were completed in 1969, those being an Olympic-sized natatorium and an enlargement of the Greek Theatre to a seating capacity of 3,558. The beginning of the 1970s saw the completion of the new Language and Library Building.

Things were relatively silent on the construction front until 1993, when \$20 million in Proposition ES funding came to Samohi, going toward making buildings accessible under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Construction efforts with the funding included building new science labs, renovating the Technology building, enlarging English classrooms and the first phase of Barnum Hall restoration. Another \$20 million of construction efforts came in 2001 from Proposition X, completing projects like expansion of Language and Music buildings, finishing Barnum Hall restoration, updating the student cafeteria and adding up-to-date landscaping to the Science Quad.

The City of Santa Monica and the City of Malibu voted to approve a bond measure in 2007 aiming to prepare Samohi for the century to come, with the measure helping to build a synthetic football and soccer field as well as provide renovation to Sealy Field. In 2015, the school introduced the 68,000 square-foot Innovation Building to campus, boasting 21 classrooms and 15 science labs with state-of-the-art equipment.

Samohi's latest addition, the Discovery Building, opened in August 2021 with 42 classrooms for classes in English, mathematics, science, language and life skills. The area also includes an outdoor rooftop classroom, student cafeteria and Olympic-sized swimming pool.

Additions to the Samohi campus are still ongoing, including the Exploration Building and Gold Gym, which broke ground in January of 2022. Both projects are anticipated to be completed this summer. The school currently holds over 2,800 students and is taught by a diverse staff in a variety of school houses and subject matter.



CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



You may be one of an exceptional group of over 50,000 people throughout the world. If you graduated from Santa Monica High School, the answer is a resounding YES! Whether you just completed your graduation ceremony at Samohi with the Class of 2024, or you are one of our grads from the 1940's who still communicate with us, you are special. Thousands of you are members of the Samohi Alumni Association, and if you are not a member, you should join our ranks, to open that communication with other Samohi grads.

Among Samohi's alumni from classes dating back to the first graduates of 1891, are famous luminaries from many walks of life, including astronauts, award winning actors, directors and producers, a Nobel Prize winner, a mountain climber, an advisor to President Barack Obama, poets, musicians, artists, heralded athletes, writers, and journalists. Our alumni have also earned praise as beloved local business leaders, teachers, plumbers, electricians, architects, prominent politicians, pioneers of advancements that will profoundly affect your lifetime, and more. Each Viking has contributed to making our world brighter in some way.

The Samohi Alumni Association began in the fall of 1988, with the production of the

first edition of the Viking News by co-founders Linda Gray '64 and Rena McKinzie '91. The SAA, incorporated in 1991, serves the alumni and current students through its tax-exempt corporation. The mission of the SAA is to connect our thousands of alumni with our current students and bond past with the present, all leading to great futures. The SAA is committed to the values Samohi represents - Sincerity, Maturity, Honor, and Service (SMHS.)

The SAA provides information to alumni and current students through sponsorship of school related activities, its website www.samohialumni.org, Facebook at www.facebook.com/samohialumni/, and The Viking News, distributed several times a year to members by email and mail. We award scholarships and financial aid to current students at Santa Monica's only public high school, sponsor campus preservation and beautification projects, and honor Samohi Hall of Fame, Distinguished Alumni and Spirit of Samohi awardees. Our Board of Directors is drawn from Samohi's over 50,000 living graduates, and we welcome all alumni interested in serving our school's proud heritage to become members and board members. To join or for more information, email samohialumni@gmail.com.



Members of the Class of '24 are entitled to a FREE year of membership in the Samohi Alumni Association. Sign up via the website below.

www.SamohiAlumni.org

ACADEMIC PURSUITS LEAD TO DESERVED HONORS FOR SENIORS



The Samohi Class of 2024's academic accomplishments have continued to put the school on the national map, while setting themselves up for bright futures by achieving scholarships through their classroom prowess.

Samohi was once again recognized amongst the top high schools in the nation, ranking 850th nationally in the 2024 U.S. News and World Report listing of the country's public schools. The list also ranked Samohi 120th out of 2,616 California high schools, based on factors like college readiness, reading and math proficiency, reading and math performance, underserved student performance, college curriculum breadth and graduation rates.

"This achievement reflects the dedication of our educators, staff and administrators in preparing students for success in both higher education and their careers," Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Superintendent Dr. Antonio Shelton said of the honor. "Congratulations to our school teams and students for their hard work and visionary spirit."

The tireless work of this year's seniors were celebrated on May 21 at the Class of 2024 Senior Scholarship and Honors

Program, handing out a bevy of awards to aid seniors in their higher educational pursuits. Over \$125,000 in scholarship funds were given during the event, which scholarship coordinators stated were "a symbol of the opportunities available to all students during their years at (Samohi)."

Collecting a plethora of honors and scholarships at the event was senior Mira Wabagaza, who will be heading to Brown University on a biochemistry and molecular chemistry path. Wabagaza received awards such as the African American Parent Staff Support Group Scholarship, the Chien Family Challenge to Lead Scholarship and the Samohi Alumni Association Scholarship.

"(Samohi) has so many opportunities and so many different classes that you can take," Wabagaza said of her high school experience. "I think just the amount of choices (is great), the counselors really help you take all the classes that you want to take ... they (give) so many opportunities."

Another opportunity Wabagaza took on was the chance to be the student member of the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Board of Education, something she called important to be "the liaison" between the board and the student body.

Taking advantage of academic pursuits also applies to senior Maya Williams, who received honors like the Dean Memorial Scholarship in Life Science, the JAMS Science Magnet Scholarship and the Marks Hispanic Scholarship. Williams, who will be attending Cal Berkeley for environmental science, has been incredibly active as a co-captain of environmental group Team Marine, and was pleased that Samohi allowed her to branch out in so many directions.

"(Samohi) has a very wide selection of AP courses and lots of clubs with very diverse interests," Williams said. "So it's very easy to find something that you're passionate about and to be able to just do work in something that actually interests you."

Several of the senior honors were handed out to groups of deserving students, such as the California State Seal of Biliteracy, which recognizes students who have attained a high level of proficiency in languages outside of English. A collection of 100 hard-working seniors were also awarded Centennial Medallions, with students nominated by faculty and staff for their accomplishments and growth over their four years.

Receiving both of those honors was David Ervin, who will be attending the University

of Michigan for aerospace engineering. Ervin stated that his Samohi education allowed him to find what interested him, exploring paths that he initially wouldn't have thought of enjoying.

"I took Physics One AP and Physics C Mechanics AP, which I really loved, (and) I really began to love (that) I took these classes because I found them interesting and I ultimately started to really enjoy physics, which brought love to STEM fields in general," Ervin said. "So I knew I wanted to work in an industry relating to that, and the problem solving skills that I (gained) in those classes really made me interested in engineering as a pathway."

Another senior heading to Big Ten Conference country is Ajax Haendel, who will attend Northwestern University to focus on mathematical methods in the social sciences. Haendel was commended in May with recognition in the National Merit Scholarship Program, as well as receiving the SMASH PTSA Alumni Scholarship.

"At (Samohi), my education meant learning to enjoy learning, not just learning to get good grades," Haendel said.



Building a Cleaner Future for Santa Monica

As the climate crisis worsens, the urgency to reduce emissions and transition to clean energy solutions increases. Santa Monica has partnered with QuitCarbon to provide a free service that helps homeowners convert to climate-friendly, electric systems for heating and cooking.

QuitCarbon's free, expert guidance makes it simple and affordable to get fossil fuels out of our homes. QuitCarbon has helped thousands of homeowners with planning, installation, and rebates on upgrades like heat pumps, mini-splits, induction cooking, and EV chargers. QuitCarbon is the only ENERGY STAR® partner providing free assistance with clean energy upgrades.

What's at Stake

This initiative could have a huge impact. Gas-powered water heaters, furnaces, and other appliances can be replaced with electric counterparts, reducing Santa Monica residents' fossil fuel pollution. Consider the following:

- It is possible to reduce your emissions from heating your home by up to 93% by replacing a gas furnace with an air-source heat pump.
- Using a heat pump water heater instead of a natural gas water heater can reduce a home's total emissions by 49%.
- Heat pumps are 2-4 times more efficient than gas furnaces and their

efficiency continues improving with technology advancements.¹

The City's partnership is also timely, since statewide regulations are phasing out gas appliances. California's Air Resources Board voted to ban the sale of new gas furnaces and water heaters beginning in 2030. The Southern California Air Quality Management District is developing standards for zero emission equipment, which would phase out gas appliances installed in new buildings beginning as early as 2026 and would require zero NOx appliances in existing buildings when an appliance is replaced beginning in 2029 or later depending on the equipment type. (These policies are not yet finalized.) Santa Monica homeowners can easily and cost-effectively prepare for this transition by working with QuitCarbon now.

¹ Silicon Valley Clean Energy (SVCE)

"Making clean energy home upgrades is complicated and confusing. That's why we provide simple, money-saving guidance at every step of the way, at no cost to the homeowner," said Cooper Marcus, QuitCarbon's Chief Quitter and CEO.

Marcus is also quick to point out that "quitting" is about far more than slashing emissions; it's a matter of safety and comfort. "Electric-powered upgrades improve indoor air quality, comfort, and

safety compared to gas appliances," he said. "Home gas appliances create more NOx pollution than our cars and power plants – and gas stoves produce more cancer-causing benzene than cigarette smoke!"

Engaging the Community

As part of the partnership, QuitCarbon will conduct outreach campaigns to educate Santa Monica homeowners about home electrification and enroll them in QuitCarbon's concierge service.

Homeowners are guided through each step of the process by QuitCarbon's unbiased energy advisors, who develop customized upgrade plans, connect them with vetted local contractors, and assist with rebate applications and bid reviews.

During the campaign, QuitCarbon and the City will track data to better understand common objections and barriers to electrification. This will inform future policies and efforts to make residential electrification equitable and accessible throughout Santa Monica.

Interested homeowners can learn more about the process and incentives for making the switch to clean energy in an upcoming webinar organized by the City of Santa Monica and QuitCarbon.

Free registration is here: [https://www.eventbrite.com/e/a-practical-guide-to-electrification-in-santa-monica-tickets-](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/a-practical-guide-to-electrification-in-santa-monica-tickets-914742528527)

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Sparking Change Together

Our community can – and must – take the lead on climate action. The City of Santa Monica's latest initiative, in partnership with QuitCarbon, embodies this spirit of change. By partnering to put clean-energy homes within reach, we're empowering Santa Monicans to build a healthier and more sustainable future.

For more information, visit www.QuitCarbon.com and <https://www.santamonica.gov/process-explainers/how-to-electrify-your-home>.

“

Making clean energy home upgrades is complicated and confusing. That's why we provide simple, money-saving guidance at every step of the way, at no cost to the homeowner.

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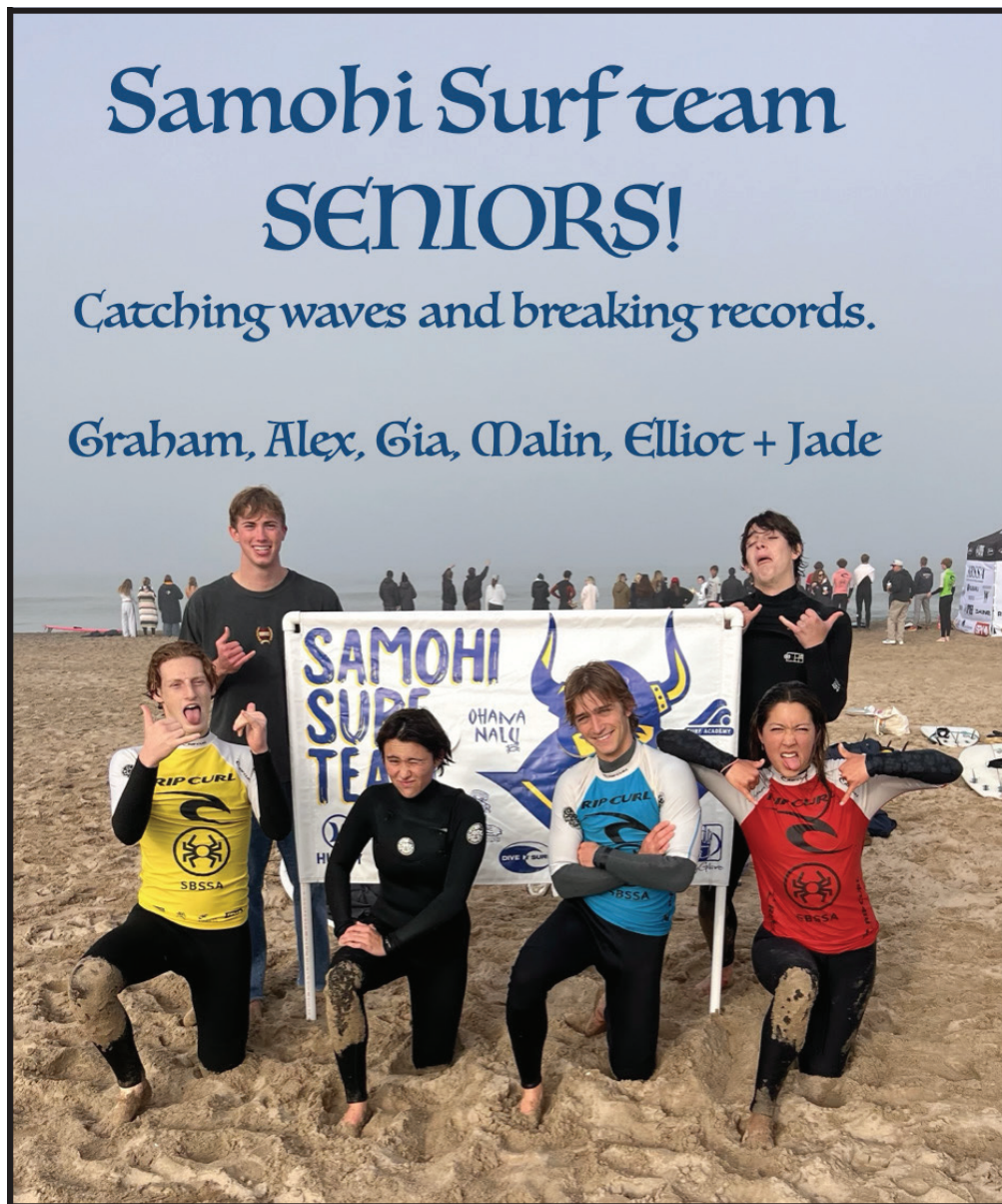


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YOU AND THE CREW.
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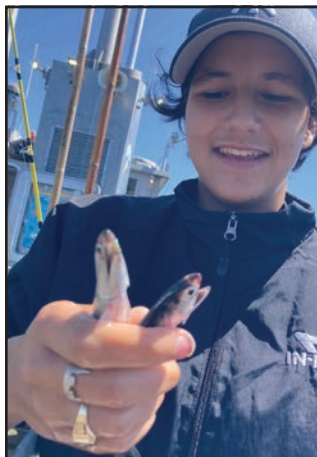
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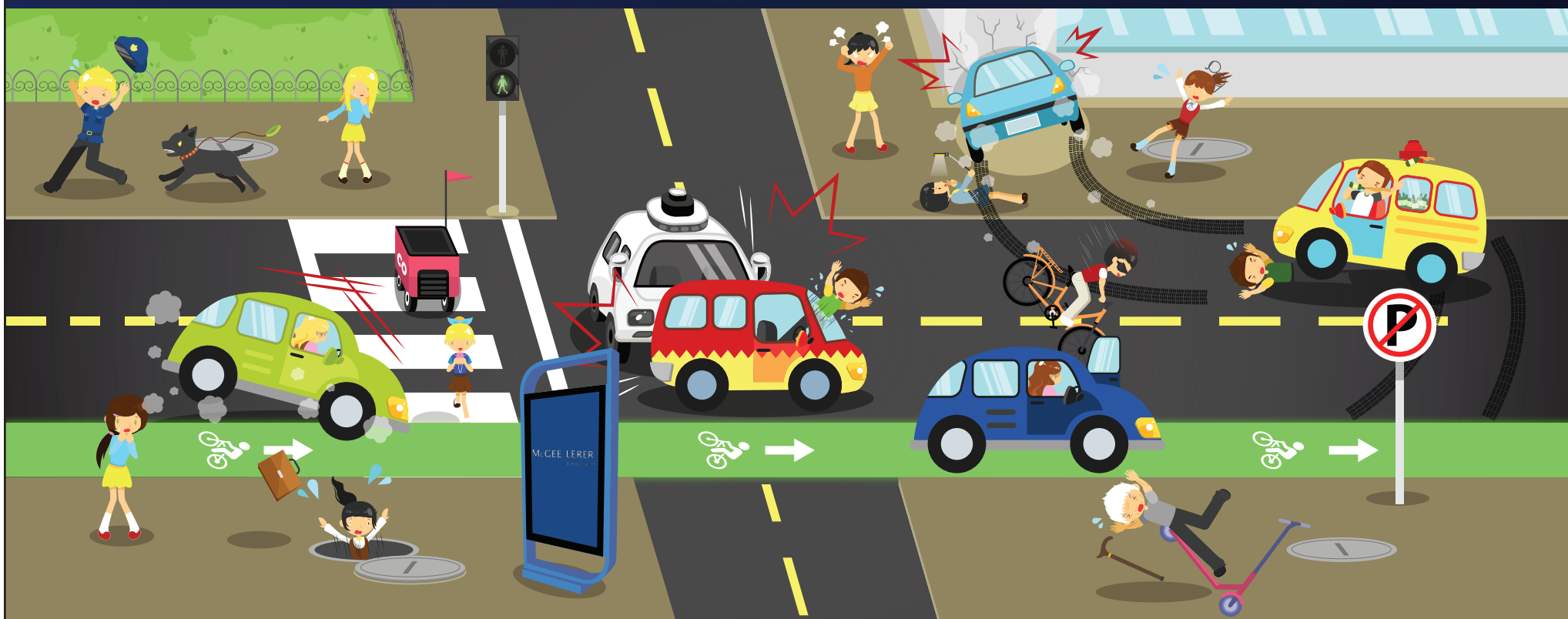
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