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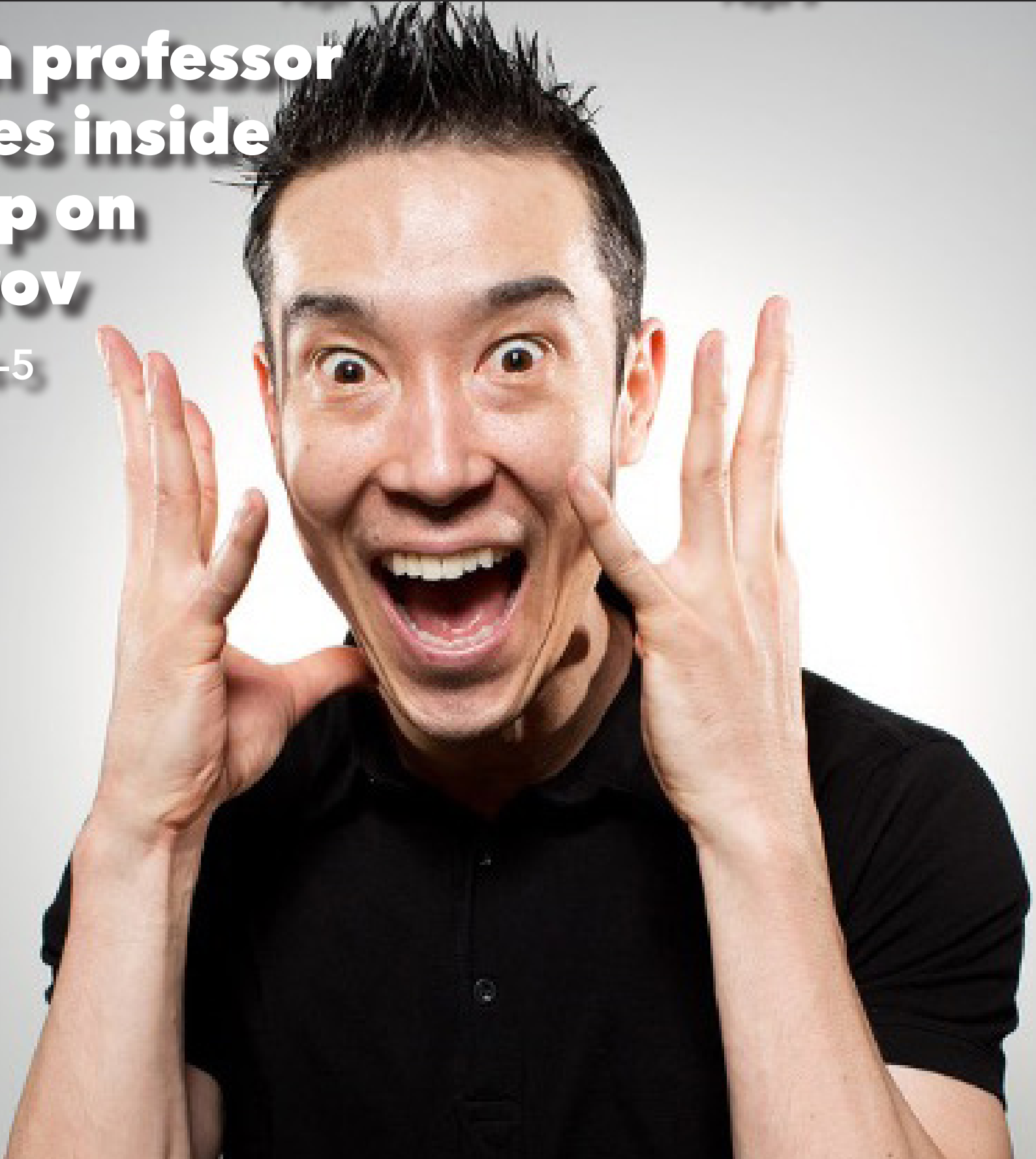
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WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT LPC CAMPUS AND CLIMATE

New grant emerges for a free electric vehicle

By Lizzy Rager
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Per September's week-long record-breaking Las Positas College's latest effort to promote campus-climate solutions is a push for students and teachers to drive electric. To help with that transition, the school is promoting Bay Area Quality District's new grant program, Clean Cars for All, on its website.

According to the LPC 2019 Climate Action Plan, 80% of the school's total emissions are from students and teachers commuting to campus. The report stated that 68% of students and faculty drive to school alone. To help curb this statistic, LPC is hoping more of its students switch to electric cars.

This new mission continues the school's climate consciousness, which formalized into an action plan in 2010. The updated version, released in 2019, set the goal for LPC to have total carbon neutrality, or to produce zero emissions, by 2050. The last 10 years have produced noteworthy improvements towards that goal, according to the Climate Action Committee director, Kaitlyn Dickinson.

The perennial goal to reduce the school's carbon footprint has produced a number of changes on campus, such as the solar panels in parking lots.

The Climate Action Committee, implemented by Chabot and Las Positas College, sets out to educate and foster more collaboration between campuses on environmental issues. It has created an internship program for students to learn how different sectors are affected by the environment and industry-specific solutions.

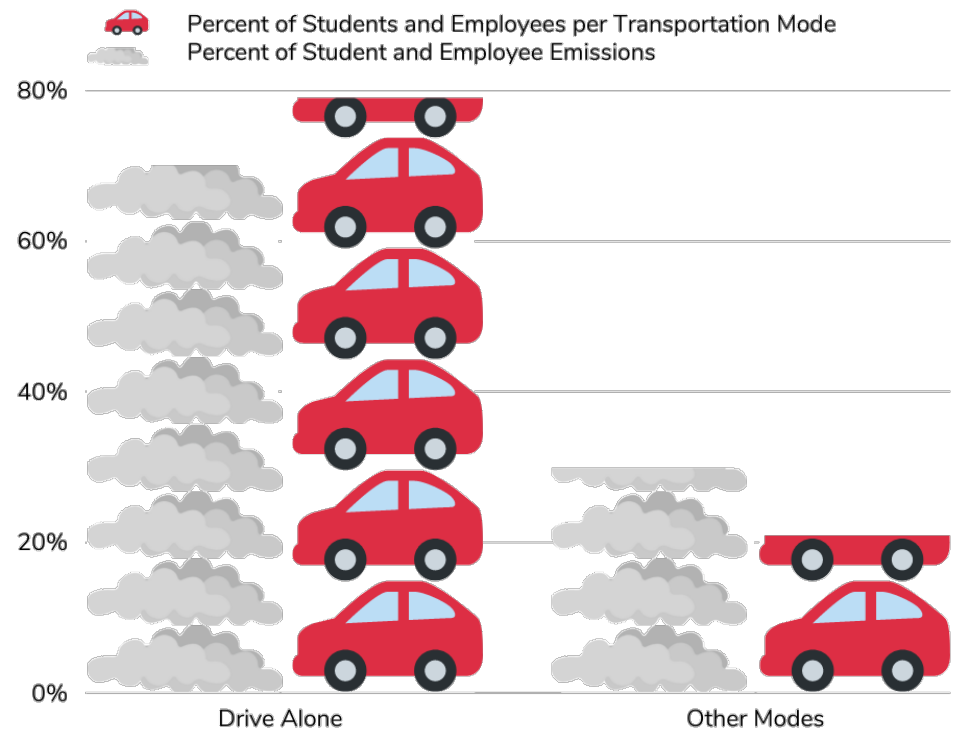
Climate Action also wrote a \$50,000 grant to replace all single-use dining ware on the Chabot campus and kickstarted LPC's first-ever Earth Week last spring semester.

"We must address biodiversity loss, fossil fuel extraction, land use, resource scarcity and much more," Dickinson said.

However, "Transportation emissions in the United States are the biggest source of emissions. It makes up 27% of total emissions."

The Clean Cars for All grant allows applicants to trade in their old gas cars for up to \$9500 to use towards hybrid or electric vehicles, also known as EVs. To be eligible for the grant, one must live in a highly polluted community, fall into a specified income bracket and have an operational vehicle from 2005 or later. Livermore is one of the eligible communities.

For students interested in the grant, LPC professor of automotive technology Brian Hagopian explained, "Hybrid means a power supply that is usually coming from an engine." The difference between electric and hybrid is



Data collected from 2019 LPC Climate Action Plan
Infograph by Lizzy Rager

where the power supply is.

For electric vehicles, power is contrived from a local power source, like solar panels or a coal plant, to charge the electric battery to the point where the vehicle can run on the battery alone.

The primary disadvantage of EVs is how many miles it can travel compared to gas cars. However, the cost is nowhere near the average gas per gallon, which would need to be \$1.60 per gallon to be on par with EV kilowatts per hour cost.

Kilowatts per hour is the common billing standard for EV charging. When electric demand is high, like in midday, the billing is more expensive. Though if the vehicle is charged off peak, like at midnight, it is cheaper and does not put as much tax on the electric grid.

"However clean the electricity mix is from the grid is how clean the electric charger is," said Dickinson.

According to Dickinson, EVs are cleaner overall than gas cars because they produce far fewer emissions over the vehicle's lifetime.

However, lithium-ion batteries, which power electrical vehicles, are made from rare Earth materials that are dangerous to mine. There are also concerns over how the batteries will be recycled.

"Once electric vehicles are retired, their

batteries can be used as stationary storage for renewable energy. The materials in the batteries can be recycled and reduce the need for mining new materials" Dickinson said.

As the future gears toward all electric and hybrid cars, the number of public chargers should keep up.

According to Hagopian, the 14 chargers on campus are not currently sufficient for student and faculty demands.

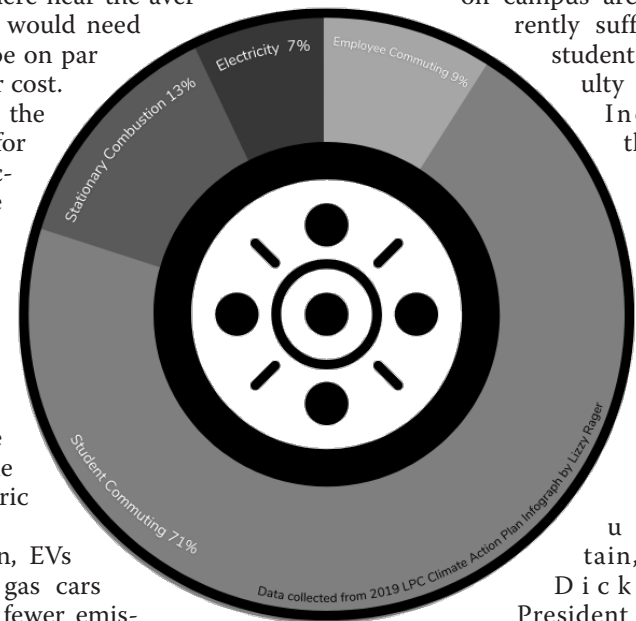
Increasing the number of chargers on campus is one of LPC's 2019 climate action plan goals.

Though uncertain, said Dickinson,

President Biden's recently signed inflation

reduction plan—worth \$369 billion—could help Las Positas fund its climate projects.

For now, students can take advantage of Clean Cars for All until grant funds are exhausted.



Data collected from 2019 LPC Climate Action Plan Infograph by Lizzy Rager

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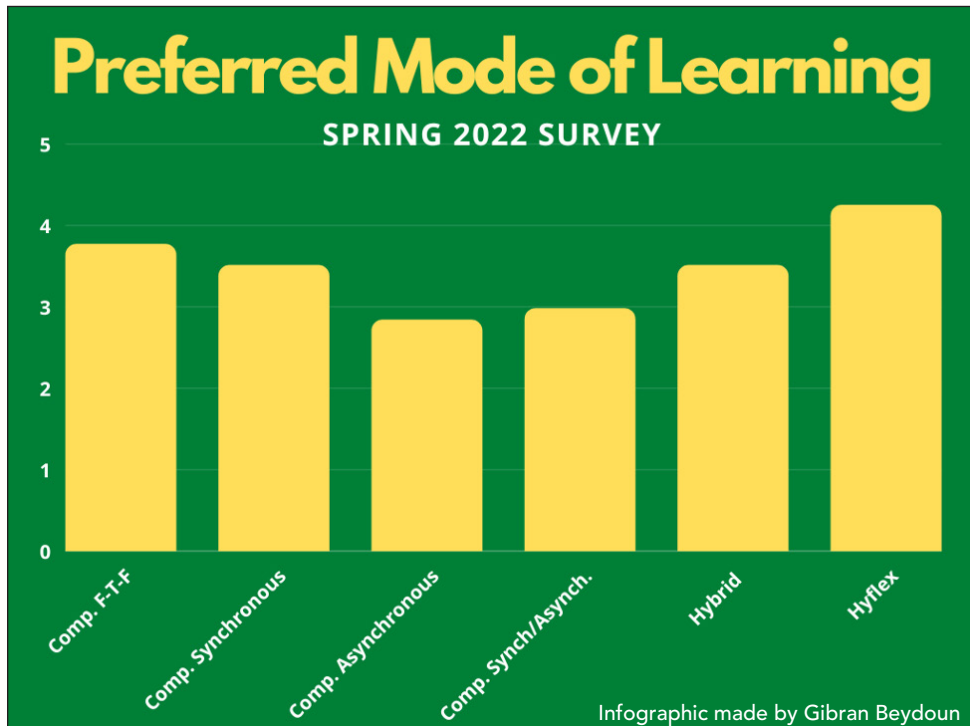
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THE EXPRESS
PODCAST NETWORK

Hyflex classes prove to be the more favorable option for students



By Gibran Beydoun

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A new way of teaching classes has established itself at Las Positas. Hyflex, or hybrid-flexible, classes have started to become common practice this year.

Hyflex classes allow students to attend classes in-person or through Zoom depending on their personal circumstances. If a student can't come to class for any reason, they can still attend and contribute to their classes via Zoom.

While participating in-person, one may hear a student who's taking the class from outside the classroom, whether it be at home or at a coffee shop.

For those exploring the more flexible option, they are able to see and hear their professor and classmates as they navigate the classroom.

Hyflex's main purpose is to adapt to the current ongoing effects of the pandemic.

Considering how COVID-19 displaced many families, the option to livestream class from any location will encourage students to maintain their studies.

To collect data regarding just how many students found hyflex essential, a survey was conducted for students who attended hyflex classes in the spring of 2022. 92 of the 106 participants took one hyflex class that semester, 13 took two hyflex classes and only one student took three hyflex classes.

75% of the participating students liked their experiences when taking these courses. Almost the majority of students felt very connected with the content of the classes and their professors.

When asked why, most of the participants explained that they liked the freedom that hyflex offers and that they prefer in-person over asynchronous classes because it favors their circumstances.

Santoyo is a student who attends politi-

cal science professor Joanna Tice Jen's hyflex class through Zoom.

Due to a family member being immunocompromised, Santoyo cannot physically be in class, so hyflex has proven to be beneficial for her situation.

"I'm super grateful for the flexibility that hyflex classes have given me," Raquel Santoyo, a first-year LPC student, said.

"It's great to be in control of my education by taking Hyflex. I'm able to decide when and where I am able to attend class."

Similarly, Jen accounted for having a positive experience both when training for hyflex and teaching it. As hyflex classes were promoted, faculty members were trained in-person, through Zoom or they were able to watch the recordings if they couldn't attend.

"My personal experience has been very good," Jen said.

"The one hyflex class I'm teaching has one person on Zoom and the rest of the class come in person."

Jen said, in a way, she taught hyflex before she was trained how to do it. "Last semester, I told people I will run a zoom meeting in the class even while I was teaching in-person," Jen said.

Though Jen shared sunny dispositions regarding the modernized style of teaching, not all staff agree.

According to Jen, she's heard from other faculty members about their bad experiences with hyflex courses. Students would stop coming to class in-person when they are able to, and by the end of the semester, there's very few students who come in-person and the rest are on Zoom.

Though hyflex classes give students more mobility, faculty don't have the same privilege.

Unlike students, faculty members can't host classes from home and would have to cancel classes until they recover from their personal and health situations.

"Flexibility is a two-way street," Daniel Cearley, an anthropology professor, said.

"We can extend that flexibility to every-

one else like 'Okay, this week, we're online' and it raises more flexibility for us because we can still have our content on Canvas."

Ultimately, Cearley is still debating about officially teaching a hyflex class, though he took the hyflex training to see if it would be right for him.

In addition to the lack of flexibility given to faculty, professors also have trouble acknowledging all of the different types of audiences they are teaching to. To curb this issue, faculty members have to manage different strategies and methods to include all audiences and keep them in class.

"It is extra work because I have to set up all this extra technology and then I forget about the students on Zoom," Jen said.

"I look at my notes, my presentations and I don't see their faces on Zoom."

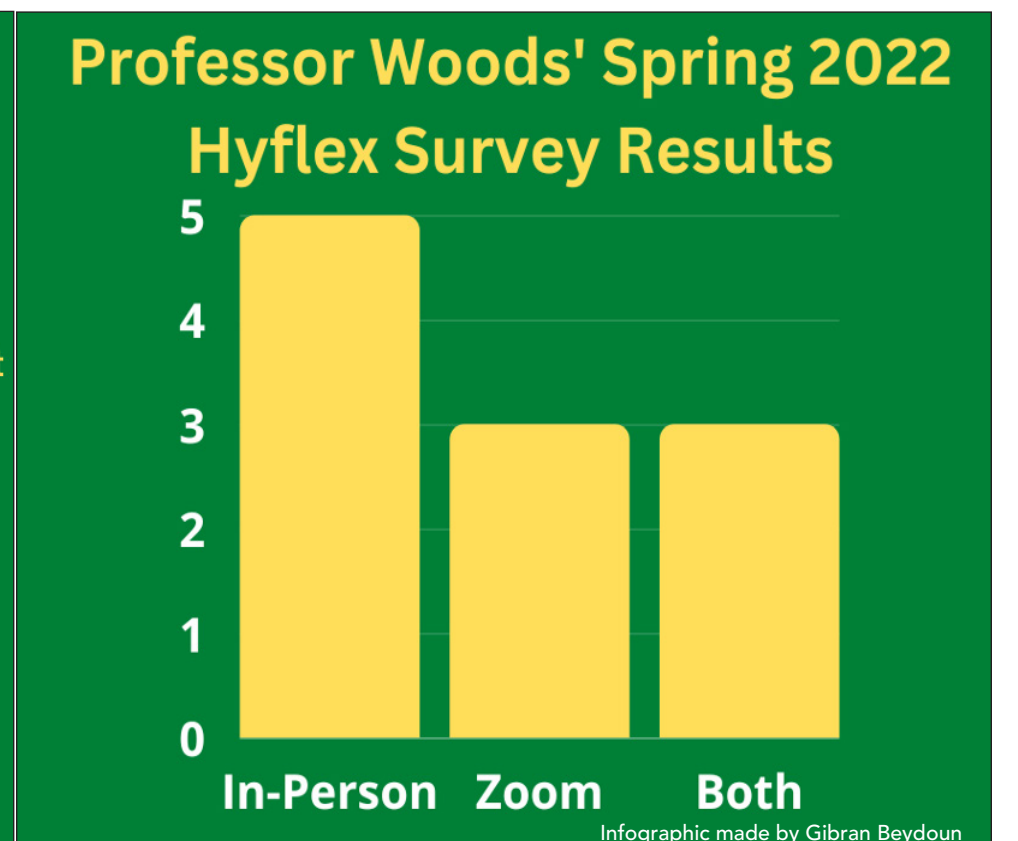
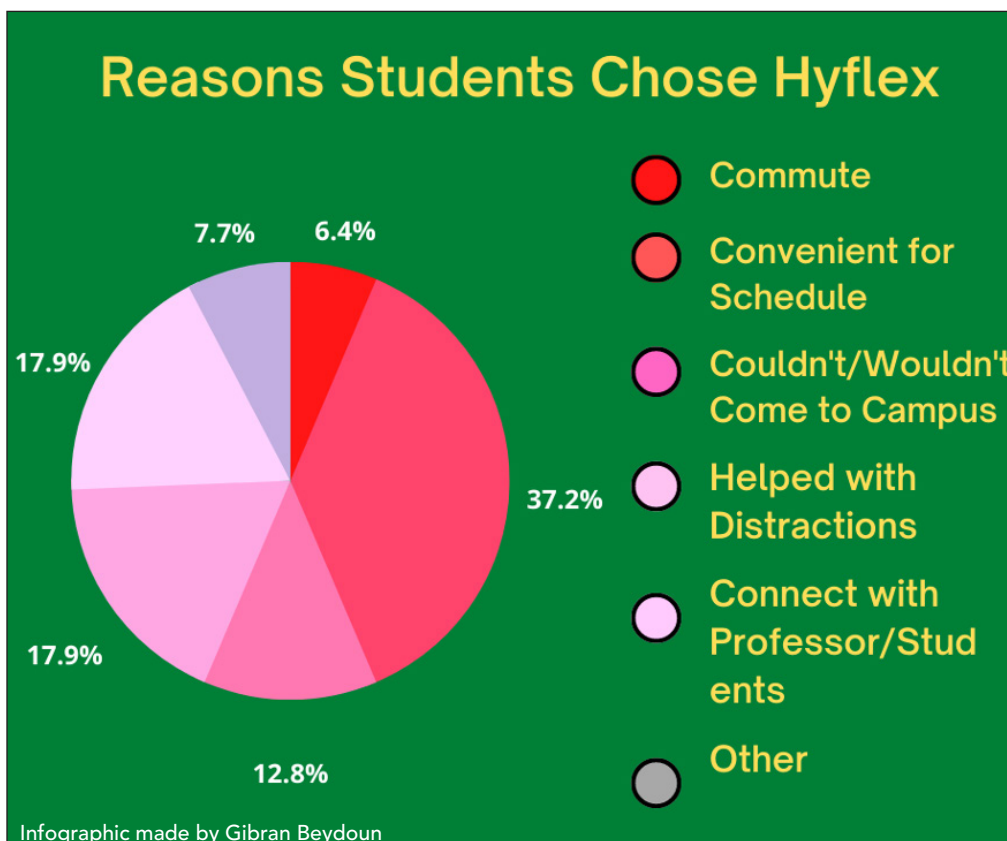
Jen argued that it's difficult to have the passion, emotion and humor that she normally brings to class, especially when teaching synchronously in which students may have their cameras off.

"You have people in class, so it's very easy to overly focus on them," professor Daniel Cearley said. "At the same time, you have to recognize that there's people who are going to view the recording later on."

The cost of equipment is another element for professors conducting hyflex courses and meetings. That remains a barrier for both professors and students.

"You have to invest a lot in technology, both on the school side and student side, and those still remain barriers," Cearley said. "We know that during the pandemic, students came onto our campus and parked in our parking lot just to get a good internet connection."

While professors and students may experience obstacles with hyflex classes, the feedback shows that most students will consider taking hyflex classes in the future, as the convenience and effectiveness facts may be attractive to prospective students.



'When performing, there is a drug-like effect:' LPC

By Sophia Sipe

@SOPHIASIFE

LPC's own longtime math professor Bobby August Jr. has always felt a knack for theater. From elementary school plays to the big screen, August's experience in the acting world has allowed him to learn the good, the bad and the ugly. This fall, students are offered a chance to be let in on his official trade secrets with the launch of a new improvisational, or unscripted, acting class led by August.

In any facet of life, knowledge is power. Despite the ditsy stereotyped roles and the dumb blonde jokes, Hollywood is no different. August's teachings about reality behind the director's clapboard gives aspiring actors a leg up that could potentially propel them to similar career levels.

From playing the role of an esteemed child lawyer in a second-grade production, to being directed by Spike Lee in a film shot for the popular video game NBA2K16, August's career path has proven to be special.

That said, his passion started out much like the beginning of anything and everything— a kid with a dream.

"When I was growing up with my family, we rented movies and had pizza on Friday nights. I was just thinking about how great it was for us to get together and have a common ground. That was the initial seed of 'Oh, what is this movie thing and how can I be apart of it?'" August said.

Eventually, he soon realized that his dream wasn't so far-fetched.

"When I was in second grade, I was in a play. I remember playing a lawyer and putting my hand in my pocket in this powerful stance and I gave this speech. Afterwards, everybody was telling my mom how good I was. That was probably the initial thought of 'Oh maybe I'm a good performer then,'" August said.

As he grew out of his adolescence, August pursued math by day and acting by night. It wasn't until he was approached to do improv in an effort to become a better actor that he fell in love with unscripted acting.

"Somebody said, 'You know, if you want to be a great actor, you should take improv classes.'"

"A great actor, for instance, is pretending to hear something for the very first time and responding for the very first time. They already know what's going to happen on stage, they know all the lines and all the cues. In improv, you are literally hearing something for the first time and responding. It's actually even more real than acting ever could be. And that blew my mind." August said.

"In one of my first improv classes, I thought 'Oh wow, this is amazing,' and I really fell in love with it." August said.

In 2009, August and a group of friends, soon known to be 5 Play, performed at various improv venues at least once a month. Collectively, they rehearsed out of living rooms until they reached a turning point and opened their own venue in 2011, called Made Up Theatre.

"That was when we were like 'Okay, this is the real deal, we're performing and people are coming to pay for us,'" August said.

Meanwhile, his newfound education and passion for improv allowed him to shape up in his math lessons, as he was able to be more engaging and entertaining despite teaching an otherwise mundane, analytical subject.

Naturally, all of August's dedication paid off when he received the opportunity to be led in a role by Spike Lee in 2016. That isn't to say there wasn't enormous pressure weighing on August's shoulders.

"I go in and audition for Spike Lee and end up getting the gig. On the day of the shoot, I go in and there's a guy in front me. The first guy goes, and he's not doing well



Sophia Sipe/The Express

Bobby leading his weekly improv class using on-the-spot prompts.

because we all got new lines, and Spike Lee fired him on the spot. There was pressure, pressure, pressure."

In spite of being featured in a Superbowl commercial, numerous indie films and a television series, August acknowledged the entertainment industry isn't always fast-paced.

"When actors first really dive into it, it's so adrenaline inducing. And then you hit a point where it becomes a little difficult. Everything becomes stagnant for a while. It's a tough gig because most of the time you're not working. You're auditioning all of the time and getting rejected all of the time." August said.

Much like the rejection aspect of acting, there are always cons to every profession. Though fame is marketed as glamorous and glitzy, it's hardly the sort.

"I think it tends to be a very specific story. It's usually a white family in a white world, and that's the majority of the stories that are told."

- BOBBY AUGUST JR.

On top of an already slim number of opportunities for people of color, there are fewer spots available to all actors in general.

"It used to be that all the shows were filled by actors, but now all the shows are like Survivor or Big Brother. That hurts actors a little bit because they don't need the training, they just need millions of followers on TikTok to be famous." August said.

The competitiveness alone makes it difficult to withstand the industry, however other issues such as misconceptions can also be problematic.

"A lot of nonactors think acting is just memorizing

lines. It's so much more than that. The amount of time, effort and energy it takes to create a character and what actors put themselves through to get to that specific place is a lot more than memorizing lines."

Ultimately, his passion remains catching fire despite all of the pitfalls.

"When performing, there is a drug-like effect. When you perform and do well and get adoration and you get to lose yourself in a character for a few hours. Or if it's comedy, hearing people laugh is kind of a drug." August said.

In addition to the emotions evoked, acting has allowed August to connect more with others and find refuge.

"A lot of actors find their second family. They get you in a way your sister, brother, mom and dad don't get you." August said.

Students of August can expect to find the same sense of unity and community. According to second-year student Megan Samuli, the class has given her just that.

"I really like the class a lot because it encourages you to be very social, build confidence and make friends. Considering that we've been sheltered for so long during the pandemic, you're able to come out of your comfort zone a little bit." Samuli said.

On a similar note, August's advice to aspiring actors relates to the same idea— building relationships and having a support system is important

"Find your group that's going to uplift you, take care of you and go through your ups and downs with." August said.

Most importantly, August harnesses the love he has for his career to keep himself going, though the work may be tough.

"You have to do it for love. If you're doing it for fame or the adoration, it's not going to work."

professor tells all about the entertainment industry

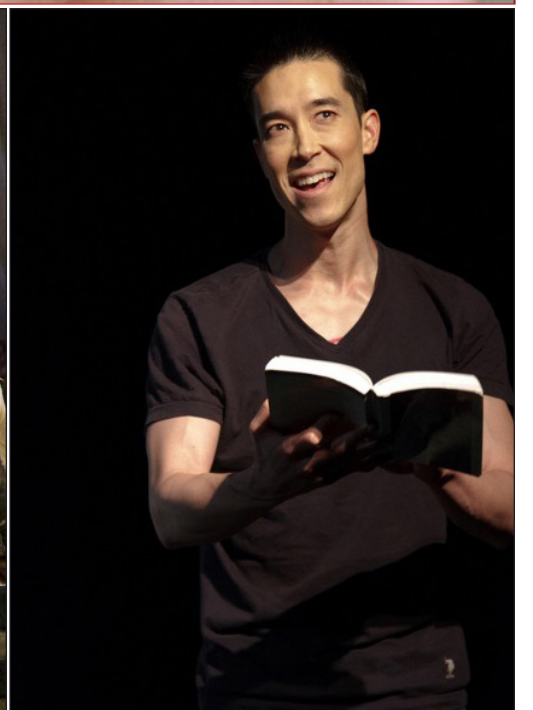


Image courtesy of Bobby August Jr.

August performing in various productions, including *My Mom Says I'm Better Than You* (bottom right), a one-man show he both starred in and wrote.

Hawks put a new head coach at the helm



By Jacob Fogelstrom

@JACOBFOGIE

The Hawks have started their first season back at 0-6, but the record doesn't represent the overall growth of the team. The Hawks started the season losing the first set 25-7 three straight times but as the sets went on, the matches got closer. The Hawks would then go on to losing the following two sets by an average of nine, far less than the 25-7 losses of 18. It's been a season of celebrating small victories so far for the Hawks' with their last match coming one set short of them getting their first win. Sophomores Rachel Dayton and Sophia Kim have led the way for the Hawks' with 27 and 30 kills a piece, leading the team by a large margin.

In the Hawks' first game in four years, they got welcomed back to the scene with a 0-3 sweep by Diablo Valley College. Fast forward two weeks. Fourteen sets later. The progress was showing up. Wins and losses are the ultimate

results. But in the case of Las Positas, trying to re-establish its women's volleyball program, progress of any kind matters. So, on Sept. 16, when they found themselves in a five-set dramatic game against West-Hills Leemore, it didn't matter that they eventually lost. How close they came to winning was proof they're headed in the right direction.

Hadenfeldt's task is big. She needs to build a program. The Las Positas women's volleyball program was established in 2018. But after the inaugural season, the program went dormant for three years.

Now it's back, starting from scratch. Leading the way is a coach with seemingly all the tools to build a proper foundation. Hadenfeldt is local. She was a high school volleyball star who made it to the highest level of college volleyball. She has coached for over a decade. The Hawks' athletic department is banking on her vast knowledge, her ties to the area and her ability to relate to athletes to get the volleyball going full steam.

The emphasis for Las Positas sports is on development and the signs point to them having landed a keeper. She's been at clubs around the Bay Area for over a decade, which figures to help with recruiting. This is phase one of what the school would like to become a formidable volleyball program in the region.

"I love seeing the progression of players' skill development and character," Hadenfeldt said.

"Sports have always been a major part of who I am and helped me to succeed in all areas of life."

-JAMIE HADENFELT

"Being able to give back and mentor athletes, to equip them with the tools and mindset to be their best selves is extremely rewarding. I enjoy seeing players grow in their confidence and push themselves to achieve great things." Hadenfeldt said.

The Hawks have started their first season back at 0-6,

but the record doesn't represent the overall growth of the team. The Hawks started the season losing the first set 25-7 three straight times but as the sets went on, the matches got closer. The Hawks would then go on to losing the following two sets by an average of nine, far less than the 25-7 losses of 18. It's been a season of celebrating small victories so far for the Hawks' with their last match coming one set short of them getting their first win.

Hadenfeldt's long-standing playing career took off at Benicia High School and the Golden Bear Volleyball Club. Hadenfeldt played all four years of high school, receiving multiple Division I scholarship offers, tallying three Junior Nationals open division appearances in her three seasons at the club.

At the end of her high school career, Hadenfeldt took her talents to the University of Connecticut. Hadenfeldt quickly became an accomplished player for the Huskies, earning numerous accolades at Connecticut, one of the most prominent schools in America for women's sports programs.

Hadenfeldt has experienced success everywhere her career has taken her. For the last 16 years, she has been on the sidelines as coach.

Hadenfeldt has been coaching volleyball since 2006, starting her coaching career at her alma mater Benicia High School. Hadenfeldt coached the women's junior varsity team in 2006 and was promoted to women's varsity head coach in 2007. Hadenfeldt went on to win nine Diablo Athletic League titles in an incredibly successful decade.

After her successful stint at Benicia, she accepted larger roles at The Athenian School and Monte Vista High School from 2017 to 2021. During the offseason, she began coaching club volleyball around the Bay Area, including Golden Bear Volleyball Club and Red Rock Volleyball Club. Most recently, she worked with the NorCal Volleyball Club, coaching high-level athletes who have participated in multiple Junior National tournaments.

"I welcomed the opportunity to start coaching," she said, "because I couldn't imagine my life without being involved in sports."

HAWK SQUAWK

Women's Soccer

In Sept., women's soccer had three wins, three losses and one tie, accumulating 12 conference points.

Tiana LaFleur scored two goals tied with Marisa Marquez who also scored 2.

Men's Soccer

In Sept., men's soccer had four wins, two losses and one tie, accumulating 19 conference points.

Edwin Zabala scored 5 goals and Griffin LaFleur trailed close behind with 4.

Women's Volleyball

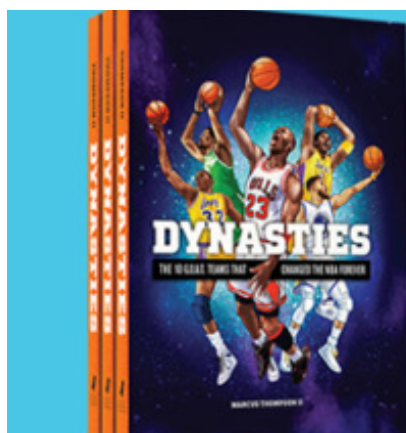
In Sept., women's volleyball had six losses, accumulating 145 conference points.

Sophia Kim scored 42 points, and Rachel Dayton scored 36 points.

Men's Waterpolo

In Sept., men's waterpolo had seven wins and four losses accumulating 129 conference points.

Patrick Aiello scored 19 goals, and Ross Brown and Kyle Young tied for second with 17 goals.



DYNASTIES

A look at the history of the NBA through the lens of legends.

“ Marcus Thompson is the perfect voice for a book like this. His style is so conversational, you just want to grab a blanket, curl up and get comfortable. ... Once you get started, you're hooked. ”

Michael Lee
The Washington Post



LPC Actors Conservatory boasts a successful program

By Lizzy Rager

@RAGERLIZZY

The Las Positas College Actors Conservatory, also known as the ACLPC, has just launched its guinea pig cohort into the world of performing arts, whether they transferred into four-year institutions or went directly into the acting industry. With a certificate from the Actors Conservatory, you can do both.

According to the program director, Titian Lish, the Actors Conservatory is a “two-year dedicated training program for people who are interested in either pursuing a career in acting professionally or love it as a hobby and want to get training.”

“We want to make space for those people to be able to come back and have a second act in life where they get to do this other part of their identity,” Lish said.

Compared to the other college acting conservatories, the ACLPC advertises an up-to-date and encompassing performing arts education at a very low price. Many people cannot pursue a creative passion for the sake of financial circumstances. According to a 2017 New York Times survey, 53% of 20 year-olds pursuing creative fields receive financial aid from their parents, versus 47% of careers relating to science, technology, engineering and math. On the other hand, only 29% of students pursuing agriculture, construction and retail receive parental aid. Overall, pursuing a creative field is not a viable financial prospect, which is why many individuals turn away from it.

However, the theater arts education offered at the community college level makes those dreams affordable. According to 2020-2021 yearly tuition costs for Las Positas, in-state students spend an average of \$1,168 on tuition. Considering how 40% of students receive state and local grants worth an average of \$2,254, conservatory students pay slightly above average tuition, around \$1,936-\$2,016 per year.

“It feels fiscally irresponsible to force students to pay a ton of money to get better at a passion,” Lish said.

In addition to its modest cost, the conservatory has no audition process, making it stand out among typical conservatories. As Lish puts it, to have to audition into an actors conservatory is, at its fundamentals, gatekeeping. To apply to LPC’s program, one must simply fill out an application and take a conservatory readiness class.

That said, Lish noted how “you had to be able to have a large amount of financial resources and be really good at this thing already.”

ACLPC began as a project dating back to 2017. Lish noticed a trend of students in theater classes wanting a streamlined path to pursue acting seriously, which culminated in the idea of a conservatory environment, as she remembered her own college conservatory experience valuably.

“In a conservatory environment, you work with a specific group of students, typically called a cohort, and take all of your classes with that cohort. Instead of taking science or math class in an acting conservatory, you take acting in history and things that are relevant to your devel-



Image courtesy of Titian Lish

Students perform the High Fidelity musical in the Mertes Center for the Arts on March 18. Students from the Actors Conservatory played leads in the performance. Actors Conservatory graduate Colin Fitzmaurice played Bruce Springsteen (center).

opment as a performing artist,” Lish said.

Lish then began to interview recently graduated students who transferred to universities, some with conservatory programs, or who were already working in the industry. She researched other colleges around Las Positas and California and what they were offering, alongside training programs in Los Angeles, New York and Seattle. To create the conservatory, new classes had to be created and existing ones readjusted or even removed. Such new classes included Shakespeare, Stage Combat, Acting for the Camera, Voiceover and even a class for the Business of Acting, in which students could learn how to work with agents and file taxes.

There is only one other community college actors conservatory in California: the Pacific Conservatory at Allan Hancock College. Lish says, “I felt really inspired by their program. They had a lot of success bringing students in to do 2-year training and then going out working professionally or taking those credits and transferring to a four-year.”

In the Bay Area, there are over 400 theater companies. With such a bustling theater culture, it’s surprising there was no affordable conservatory program in Northern California before Las Positas implemented it.

Although Las Positas is small in comparison to four-year universities, the conservatory is just as rigorous. The University of California and California State University transferable curriculums are finely tuned to encompass acting, musicality, movement and business in the performing arts. Though, in order to incorporate each subject, conservatory students keep busy.

The first semester entails the most rigorous schedule as an introduction to the conservatory lifestyle. Students are required to take 16 units, which is near the

maximum units you can take as a full-time Las Positas student.

In the words of Colin Fitzmaurice, a conservatory graduate, “The first semester eliminates those who can’t handle it.”

The two-year plan schedules classes from Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. through 4 p.m. Overall, the first year of the program sets up the foundation for solid acting skills, while students showcase their knowledge in the second year. In their second year, students are required to perform in two to three productions and an end-of-year showcase for Bay Area directors.

Second-year students are more likely to realize their potential and push themselves further. Many of the cohort students were leads in school productions, like “Peter and the Starcatcher” and “High Fidelity.”

The first cohort of the Actors Conservatory, consisting of eight students, graduated in the spring of 2022. Liva Langer, a student who was part of that graduating class and transferred to UC Santa Barbara as a theater major, commends the program,

“I think what’s most valuable about the Actors Conservatory is you’re not getting taught by people who don’t understand what the industry is like. These are people who are currently working in the industry, whether they’re acting or directing.”

As Langer acknowledged, students get an accurate and realistic picture of what the acting industry will be like when they graduate, which is especially important for finding an agent or joining a union. On top of that, they have opportunities for networking in the theater world.

What was more invaluable than the conservatory resources—audition opportunities, free tickets to shows and discounted professional headshots—according to the cohort graduates, was their learning expe-

rience. The quick and relentless schedule of the conservatory, such as having to go straight from a sweaty fencing class to acting for the camera, is reflective of the real acting world, where one is constantly pushing themselves.

“People underestimate how much action it takes to do an acting career. It’s physical and mental. I’ve been told by the end of a scene you should be out of breath,” Langer said.

The conservatory would not be able to provide for students if it wasn’t for its faculty, in particular, Titian Lish. Langer was connected to the Las Positas Barbara Mertes Scholarship through Lish and now her UCSB tuition is fully covered by the fund.

“Lish really cares about her students and goes out of her way to help them. She helped me find ‘my best actor.’” Fitzmaurice said, who is transferring to CSU Long Beach as a performing arts major.

Dyan McBride, who teaches most of the Las Positas theater classes alongside Lish, has helped students tremendously as well.

“McBride helped me a lot with my singing capabilities and understanding that you’re always acting, especially when singing,” Fitzmaurice said.

Aside from McBride and Lish, the guest professors brought into the conservatory classes introduced new perspectives to the craft. Guests included a stage combat professional from the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, actors in the Bay Area and other performing arts specialists. Conservatory graduate Matt Bessiere saw improvement with help from several of these guests.

“I’m much more confident in audition situations and a lot more prepared to present myself as professionally as possible,” Bessiere said, who is pursuing acting in LA.

As the program becomes more popular, Lish intends for more classes and cohorts to be offered. Piloting this fall is a mental health program specifically for theater students. This includes a monthly chill and chat series and drop-in mental health counseling that works in the conservatory schedules.

“It’s hard to be in an industry like performing arts where you’re putting yourself out in front of people all the time and then be vulnerable,” Lish said.

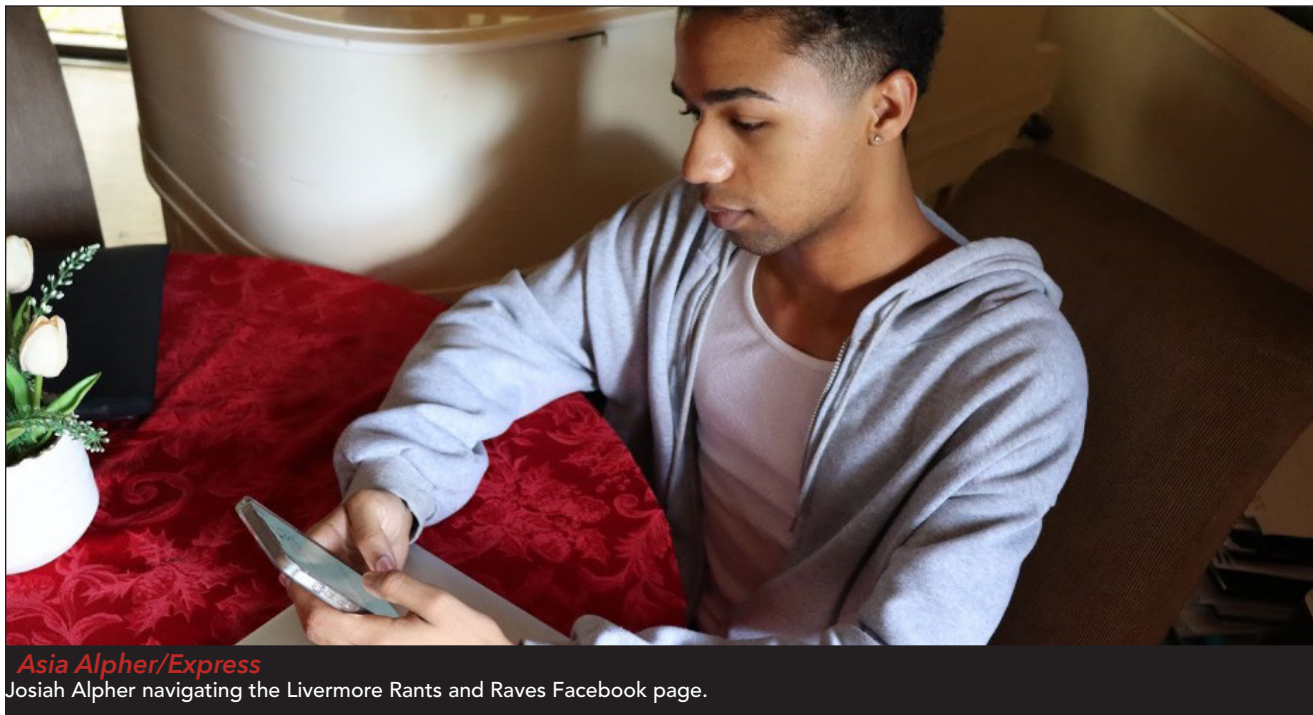
All in all, Langer, Bessiere and Fitzmaurice all agreed that if they had to enter the acting industry now, the Actors Conservatory had fully prepared them.

“It was definitely hard work, but there were those rewarding moments of ‘oh I finally nailed that scene’ or ‘I just went to that audition and because of that class I took, I did so much better.’ Those are the things that make you realize ‘oh I really needed to suffer through that class to learn about myself and my work ethic,’” Langer said.

Students can still apply for the conservatory but there is limited time. Applications for the 2022 incoming cohort are accepted no later than Aug. 23.

“I believe everybody has the right to access the ability to learn. If we remove that access, who’s to say we’re not removing great artists from our industry,” Lish said.

Win some and lose some on Livermore Rants and Raves



Asia Alpher/Express
Josiah Alpher navigating the Livermore Rants and Raves Facebook page.

By Asia Alpher

@ASIAADANAE

Livermore Rants and Raves, also known as LRR, is a local Facebook page known as an epicenter of drama. Ultimately, it's what most older adults consider as their social media. Livermore Rants and Raves is about Livermore residents who want to complain or give praise regarding businesses and organizations.

From learning new spots to eat in town, to finding live music, the platform offers a plethora of uses for its members. For those who use the platform for good, the page can be a great place to connect and become closer to those in town. However, not all aspects of the site smell like roses.

Ultimately, the negative posts can cause problems within the community and start drama between folks who tend to stir the pot. In addition, the negativity provides a basis for division and catalyzes internet wars between neighbors.

Oftentimes, there are disagreements, fights and controversies that form as a result of posts which proliferate hate. Even though there are positives, the cons may outweigh the benefits.

According to Dr. Marie Mesmer, who is a psychology professor at Las Positas, the page encourages community awareness.

"I use the page for multiple uses, such as restaurant recommendations and the safety of what is happening around town," Mesmer said.

Community awareness aims to increase the city's knowledge of available programs and services. It gives insight, background knowledge and information on what the people are looking for.

Jim Kovarik, another member who's been using the site for several years, relates to Mesmer on that level.

"I use LRR to voice my opinions, give accolades when they are due, find events, restaurants and places to go around the immediate area and beyond," Kovarik said. Other members, such as Terri Bush, share the same positivity and love for the page.

"I find that it's a hub of information. From power outages, strange sights, sounds, tastes, best tacos and live music, there's someone who knows or can point you in the right direction. There can be a bit of bullying that takes place. The moderators work overtime to try and keep all members following the rules," Terri Bush said.

Though the platform has proven useful, the dark side of the page is not all that it's cracked out to be. Out of the astonishing 30,000 Facebook members in the group, one could only assume the extent of its patrons' gossip and opinions. The question begs itself— how far do middle-aged men and women go on the heinous streets of the internet?

Livermore Rants and Raves is crawling with members offering their two cents on issues that don't concern them. One slight inconvenience and the page morphs into a dog-eat-dog world.

Like everyone else, I initially thought it was just a friendly Facebook page that older people use to complain or rave about popular places to peruse in town. Soon enough, I discovered it was much more than that.

Essentially, it can be a place in which anyone with a device has a platform to voice their opinions. Though many controversial posts end in arguments and feuds, it's a risk that people are willing to take a load off their chest. Clearly, some people say what's on their minds and have no problem with the repercussions.

"I do like the drama at times..." member Katy Goddard Escott said.

However, Goddard isn't alone in that regard.

"Nothing like having struggling people living in the richest part of town! This will make it more friendly like SF City and downtown Oakland... wow Livermore City is growing up!" Adam Sadowy said.

That said, the page and its admins uphold specific rules to de-escalate such disagreements. According to admin Monia Pezzi and Suzy Tee, members are not allowed to bully others. I guess that homeless people are not considered victims on this page, considering that odd rant about their placement in Livermore.

Member Liz Pugh Voisen ranted about how Tips and Toes 2, located in downtown Livermore, royally screwed over her daughter during her nail appointment.

According to Voisen, the lady grabbed her daughter's hand, and intentionally ruined her nails, so she could then return her money to her daughter and tell her to go somewhere else.

The lady cut her daughter's actual nail and broke her skin. "Vivian, the nail tech, grabbed both of her hands so aggressively I almost wanted to choke her but I kept composed. She cut my daughter's nail up high on one side and it hurt her. My daughter didn't wince, she then discarded her hands and said 'I give you the money back and you can go somewhere else' We were shocked and horrified by this treatment!"

I feel as though this page creates a space where people can speak freely, most times without consequence. It amazes me at how bold people can be, and especially how inconsiderate as well.

In finding out all of the tidbits on this page, I think it is safe to say that I am grateful to never go to a dog park, or nail salon downtown again.

EXPRESS YOURSELF

What is your favorite aspect of back-to-school season?



“Honestly, just studying with friends and seeing people. I like that.”

– Izzy Zallas,
Business



“The environment that the campus provides. It's friendly and fun.”

– Gustavo Garcias,
Business



“I was most excited about joining clubs, attending school events and having better interactions because being online made me feel very disconnected and distant.”

– Isabella Gallardo,
Business Marketing



“Meeting new people, being able to join clubs and meeting my teachers in-person.”

– Mikiah Aubert,
Communications



“Getting the experience of college and making new friends.”

– Jocelyn Arias
Business Management