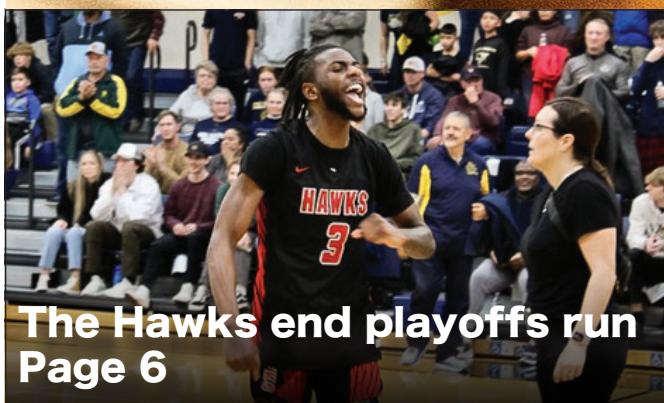




Trustee censured for behavior says LGBTQ+ is against his religion

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LPC ranked #1 California community college

Intelligent lists Las Positas as the best community college in California and #6 nationally

By Gibran Beydoun

@GIBRAN580MSCM

Every weekday and weeknight, Students walk the campus of LPC striving toward their goals. Of its diverse community, there are veterans, recent high-school grads, retired seniors, international students and more. Despite its vastly different demographics, all students have one thing in common. A desire to learn.

And they couldn't do that without the support of professors, administrators and a wealth of resources.

LPC was ranked No. 1 on Intelligent's list of best California community colleges on Feb. 14, 2023, for the first time ever. Intelligent is a website that provides unbiased information about higher education institutions for students to make informed decisions about their future.

LPC received a score of 97.84 on Intelligent's score of the campus, just 0.04 points over second place Irvine Valley College of Irvine, Calif.

LPC was recognized for its performing arts program, degrees and certificate programs, academic values and the diverse student body on campus. Intelligent also praised LPC for being a sanctuary campus for undocumented and international students.

Dyrell Foster has been president of LPC since Feb. 10, 2020, two years after the college last had an official president. Foster was a Riverside County College administrator before the Chabot Las Positas Community College District approved a three-year contract with Foster.

"When I started as President of LPC in February of 2020, little did I or anyone else know that a global pandemic would soon disrupt many aspects of our everyday lives, including how we work, learn and interact with each other," Foster said.

When the pandemic forced everyone into lockdown and safe distancing, it also meant educational institutions had to teach virtually rather than in-person. Since then, as restrictions have been lifted and more students have returned to campus, LPC's persistence to help students continues to shine through its difficult moments.

"We handled the unforeseen, devastating interruption with hard work, determination, collaboration and respect for one another," said Foster.

Foster said that this honor gives recognition of the efforts and dedication by everyone on campus.

"I'm happy for our outstanding faculty, classified professionals, administrators, students and our tri-valley community. The recognition has put a spotlight on all the great academic and educational programs as well as the wonderful student support services available at LPC," Foster said.

According to Foster, their work is not done and this is only the beginning. The commitment to provide an inclusive learning environment, that is also equity-focused, that offers educational opportunities and support for students is ongoing each and every day.

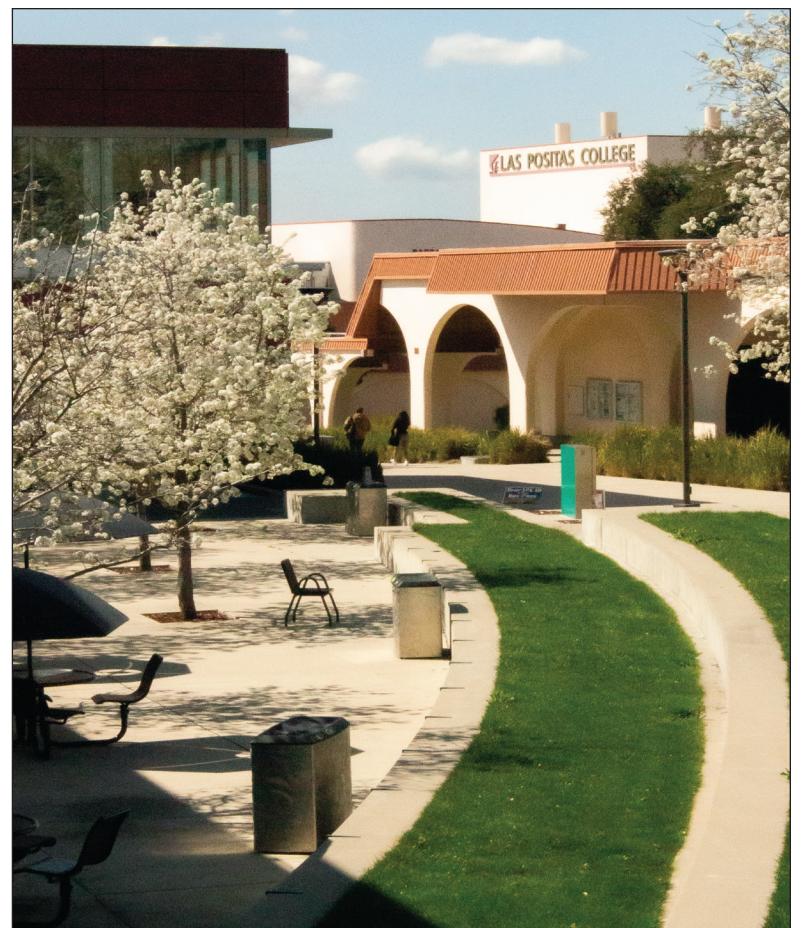
LPC is also bringing new buildings to its campus that will provide new classrooms, support and tutoring services and another building for Agricultural Sciences Horticulture. It is part of LPC's pursuit to provide students with resources and infrastructure to help them succeed.

To help students who aren't able to attend class in-person everyday, LPC started offering

Hyflex courses in 2022, giving students the option to attend in-person or online via Zoom.

Being ranked the top community college in the state is an honor not just to LPC, but its local communities.

"What's more important than rankings is the actual student experience and the pathways to success that LPC affords its students," Foster said.



GEORGIA WHITING/THE EXPRESS

Las Postias College quad March 16, 2023. The college won No.1 for best California community college in a 2023 Intelligent ranking.

Former LPC VP named new Foothill College president

By Peter Zimmer and Brandon Byrne

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Kristina Whalen, the vice president of Academic Services, is departing Las Positas College to become the president of Foothill College. Since 2019, she has worked at Las Positas for a total of three years. As VP, she supported around 450 students and employees and oversaw instructional programs like career education.

Prior to arriving at Las Positas, Whalen had previously worked at the City College of San Francisco as a vice chancellor of instruction, enrollment management and instructional support services.

She obtained her undergraduate degree in socio political communication from Missouri State University, a master's in rhetoric and public address from Florida State University and a doctorate in speech communication from Florida State.

Whalen was eventually chosen from a pool of three finalists in a national search organized by a 16-member committee of staff, students, faculty and administrators.

"I wasn't sure that I ever wanted to be a college president," said Whalen. "But I then went to Aspen Institute and I participated in their competitive Rising President's Fellowship."

Coworker Timothy Druley shared a positive experience working with Whalen.

"She (Whalen) has always been a leader and has pulled people together to get projects completed, which I really appreciated," said Druley.

Additionally, Elizabeth McWhorter has expressed similar sentiments that Whalen exhibited impeccable leadership in her department at Las Positas.

"Whalen inspired our team members to build and work together, innovate and request support when needed and wholeheartedly encourage professional development."

In her new role as president at Foothill, Whalen will be receiving a starting wage of \$249,559 a year in her new position.



GEORGIA WHITING/THE EXPRESS

Kristina Whalen listens to colleague at a CLPCCD board meeting in Dublin, CA, Feb. 21, 2023. The former LPC Vice President will become the new Foothill College president in this month.

Professors discuss Black art

LPC faculty acknowledges the importance and marginalization of African American art in American history

By Landon Jansen

@LANDONJENSEEN

It's in the American language. Film. Literature. Poetry.

Contemporary authors Colson Whitehead and Brit Bennett wrote mid 20th century novels "Harlem Shuffle" and "The Vanishing Half." Artist Barbara Jones-Hogu created "Unite."

Black expression is everywhere in America's history. But it isn't lent the same love in college curricula, much less K-12. There isn't a shortage of great historical Black art either, like "Their Eyes Were Watching God," by Zora Neale Hurston, which pointed out racial disparities during the Harlem Renaissance.

But Hurston's work, which depicted dialogue in rural African American dialects, was condemned by early 19th-century critics for being "improper," leading her to not gain acclaim until centuries later.

Black professors and faculty and Las Positas want to bring art from voices like Hurston to students. In light of Black History month, from Feb. 1 to March 1, professors say it is important to understand the marginalization of African American works.

"Black history is important to talk about because it's American history," said Jerry Bailey, adjunct professor in the business department.

Bailey is a part of the Black Education Association, or BEA, and is available as a resource to students, despite whether or not they may or may not take his classes.

"A lot of times in the past, Americans—the bigger society of America—have disregarded or not highlighted how African Americans have been impactful here in the U.S. and so it's part of our story as Americans. America is the mixing bowl," Bailey said.

Black History Month, celebrated all year, gives Americans an opportunity to learn about our collective history.

"When our ancestors were enslaved, we were stripped from our culture, our language, our families and a piece of our history is not taught in the standard history books. Kids growing up from

K-12 typically don't get that history," said Celestine Wright, senior counselor assistant and BSU advisor.

Black History Month shouldn't be the only time to talk about this history.

"It's important at least having that one month, and it doesn't stop there, but at least dedicating that time to educate as many people as we can about black culture," Wright said.

Learning from others and other available resources about Black history is important to counteract the neglected state of modern American history.

Although the slave trade, among a few other things, is more commonly covered in modern curriculum and art, a large portion of Black history is not usually included.

Many artists of past eras were unable

"Elvis is celebrated as one of the most amazing musical artists of the 20th century, and he stole his style, sound, and even his lyrics. (They) were taken from black artists and he made a ton of money," Bailey said.

The Black Cultural Resource Center features a large sum of artwork to inspire, empower and educate. There are two faceless art pieces, with no author, posted near the entrance. They probe observers to interpret them uniquely. They also indicate a changing era in which authors are less afraid of plagiarism.

The twin pieces offer inspirational affirmations and powerful emotions, and both works feature unique twists such as the female with music in her hair.

"Elvis stole his style, sound, and even his lyrics. (They) were taken from black artists and he made a ton of money."

— JERRY BAILEY

to even claim credit for original works designed to express history and emotion.

"It's really interesting to think about the works of art as far as African American contribution here in the U.S. and their ability to monetize their art. I think whether it's been music, literature, or dance, African Americans have largely not been able to monetize their art," Bailey said.

Little Richard, Willie Mae "Big Mama" Thornton, Richard Berry, Bob Marley and Eric Donaldson are all examples of African Americans who got ripped off.

"Artists create these beautiful works of art and they are plagiarized or hijacked. Another culture or community or group of persons are actually able to monetize and get ownership of the artistic expressions," Bailey said.

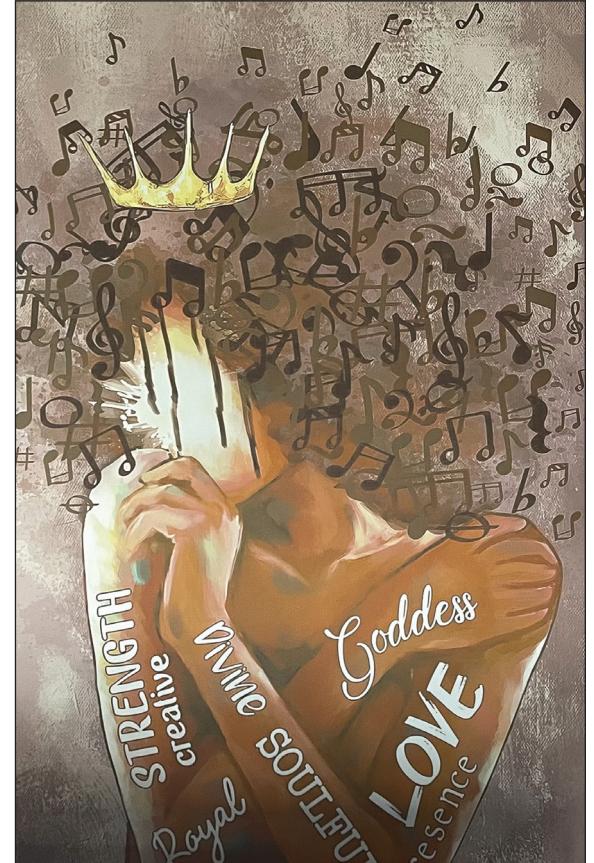
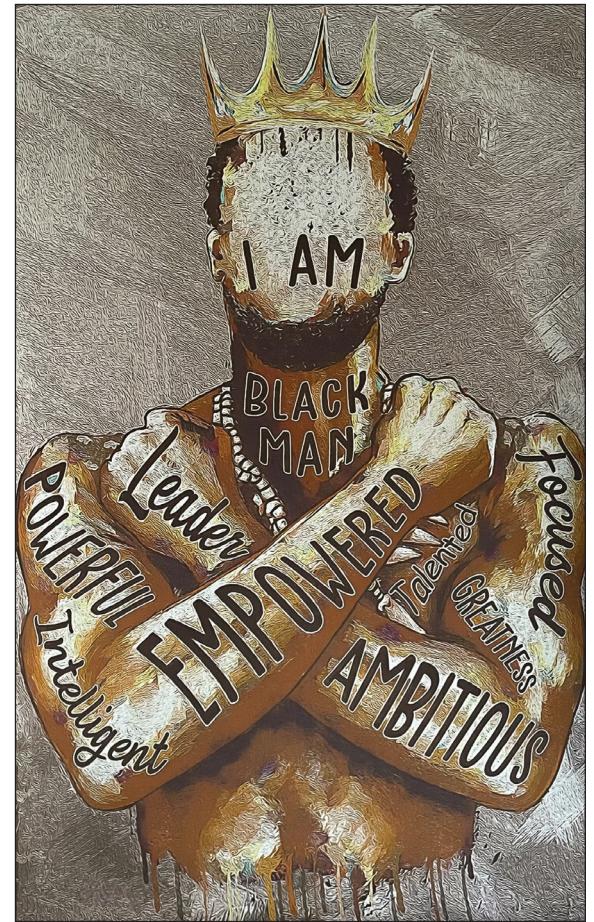
In fact, many famous idols such as Pat Boone, Elvis Presley, The Kingsmen, Eric Clapton and The Rolling Stones, among many others, stole the works of African American individuals.

"When we were enslaved and taken then we began to lose our identity and we began to be mixed with this and that. You have to do your DNA to really see who you are. So now it's faceless, you're faceless because you don't truly have a true identity, because we are African Americans...That created us to be strong," Wright said.

Las Positas offers many resources for students to learn more about Black history. These include, but are not limited to, the Black Cultural Resource Center, the A2Mend club, the Black Student Union club and the library resources.

The Black Cultural Resource Center is a study and work center simultaneously being the home base for the Black Student Union and A2Mend, both being African American clubs.

The library is another safe study center and stage for poetry with many other works of literature and poetry credited to Black authors.



ARTIST UNKNOWN

The "I Am" paintings are displayed in the Black Cultural Resource Center. March 9, 2023, Livermore CA. The art is purposefully anonymous.



KICKING & STREAMING

WITH GEORGIA WHITING

Your perennial quest for something to watch stops here.

LPCEXpressNews.com

CLPCCD trustee Luis Reynoso goes pub

At a February board meeting, Reynoso was censured by the di



GEORGIA WHITING/THE EXPRESS

CLPCCD trustee Luis Reynoso defends himself before the vote for his censure at the Feb. 21 district meeting in Dublin. His presentation lasted 40 minutes

By Lizzy Rager

@RAGERWRITER

A month ago, author Stanley K. Ridgley posted a New York Post article on LinkedIn. He quoted a passage from the article about a North Korean defector who compared “woke U.S. ideology, education” to the tactics of the North Korean regime. Yeonmi Park defected from her homeland as a teen and wound up a victim of human trafficking in China before eventually becoming a citizen in the U.S. Now she is speaking out against “woke culture.”

It would make sense for Ridgley to post this. He is the author of “Brutal Minds: The Dark World of Left-Wing Brainwashing In Our Universities.”

One of the people who liked his post? Luis Reynoso. Ten days before he would be censured by the Chabot-Las Positas Community College District board, he was declaring his support for the anti-left agenda.

His social media activity began the trustee drama that’s been going on for months. His social media activity also makes it clear he wouldn’t go away quietly.

After being censured by the district’s board on Feb. 21, the saga continues for Reynoso. The public reprimand for his social media posts from six months ago — which offended students and members of the board and college community for what was criticized as anti-transgender messaging — seems to have prompted Reynoso to double down on his position.

As a result, the price he’s paying keeps increasing.

Reynoso revealed in a Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) article he lost his full-time teaching position at a local Hayward high school after his most definitive statement yet that he wouldn’t support anti-LGBTQ+ students. Initially, after the social media posts and in the run-up to the censure, Reynoso opted not to declare his support for students from that community. He would only say he wasn’t targeting a specific community. But in an interview following the censure, Reynoso declared his religious beliefs prohibited him from supporting members of the LGBTQ+ community.

“They demanded I apologize to show support for LGBTQ. I refused,” Reynoso said in a CBN article published on March 2. “I am a Christian, and it is against the word of God to support that type of lifestyle.”

Regarding his original “Apples and Bananas” post on LinkedIn from late September, Reynoso said to CBN News: “I wanted my followers to be aware that the world has gone upside down, and the liberal media tell us that what we see is not what it is.” He commented on another anti-trans post and an anti-abortion post after receiving backlash.

Now, there is no question that the Chabot-Las Positas Community College District has a trustee in Reynoso, elected by the Hayward jurisdiction of the district, who has vowed not to be supportive of a particular demographic of students.

“The assumption all along,” said Sarah Thompson, president of LPC’s Academic Senate, “that he was

just sort of politically, politely discriminating, pretending like he wasn’t discriminating. And now it’s just much more plain-spoken, his position.”

What the board deemed as Reynoso’s failure to uphold its stated priority towards “Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility” seems likely to continue. Reynoso believes his free speech is being violated. He and his supporters believe he is being attacked by a liberal agenda aimed at his religious beliefs.

Meanwhile, his fellow board members, all six of whom voted to censure him, see his behavior as a violation of a trustee’s commitment to be supportive of all students.

How does this saga end?

“Everyone can always be reelected, right?” Kyle Johnson, who formerly served as student government president at Las Positas, said in a phone interview with The Express. “That’s the whole point of Democracy, it gives people the opportunity for the people to elect whoever they want.”

“That’s really going to be up to the people of Hayward, and we need to make it known exactly who he is and what he stands for. And if they’re comfortable electing someone who is going to attack the building identities of students, then that’s who they choose to elect. And we’ll have to look into that when it comes.”

The Reynoso drama reached what felt like a crescendo last month when — after four months of meetings, advocacy efforts and investigations — he was censured by the board. It was a scene out of a cable news drama, one reminiscent of the national political landscape and not a small local school matter in suburban Dublin.

Tom Wong, a Hayward politician who in December lost his bid for the Hayward Unified School District board, had two cameramen posted inside the board room. Wong was there in support of Reynoso.

Before the meeting, a Reynoso supporter passed out disparaging flyers. One featured board president Tim Sbranti with an Asian woman. The other featured Congressman Eric Swalwell with the same Asian woman. The salmon-colored flyer with Sbranti read, in black letters at the bottom, If you see a Communist spy, you are an American Patriot. Both flyers were disparaging of Asian women, according to Stella Del Rosario, an instructional assistant for the LPC English department.

Wong, an avid defender of Reynoso who spoke with him on News Max, came with a videographer, photographer, public relations manager and others. Also, his email was included on a pro-Reynoso flyer posted on social media before the meeting. That flyer also included photos of Sbranti and Swalwell with the Asian woman, labeled on the flyer as “Chinese spy Fang Fang.” Wong denied that he worked with Reynoso.

“We have reasons to believe that the president, Sbranti, is somehow compromised and that the Chinese government might have influenced him,” Wong said in an interview with The Express. He added that he believes the government wants “to push their agenda in school curriculum and their way of thinking in socialism and capitalism” since it is “highly suspicious and out of character for this to happen.”

Nearly all 50 seats in the boardroom were filled when the meeting began. A white male, about 5-foot-9 with gray hair surrounding his balding head, stood up from his chair near the front of the room. He wore a dark blue blazer, broad and loose on his shoulders, and a bright red vest over a light blue collared shirt — a stark contradiction to his slouchy light blue jeans.

Public with beliefs on LGBTQ+ community

District board in a 6-1 vote for failing to uphold DEIA principles

He dressed like he wanted to be seen. He shouted like he wanted to be heard.

“You guys ganged up on a Mexican!” he bellowed loud enough to drown all other chatter. “You are all racist.”

The Mexican he was referring to was Reynoso, of course. The “gang” he was calling “racist” was the board of trustees. They voted 6-1 in favor of censure for not exemplifying the district’s ideals. Reynoso didn’t abstain and was the only vote against it.

Reynoso’s censure does not mean he is fired from his position as trustee, to which he is elected. But it strains his relationship with other board members and presumably some members of his constituency.

“What struck me about a lot of his supporters is that they didn’t seem to understand why they were there,” Thompson said. “Some of them seem to be under the impression that he was being fired, or that he was being kicked off the board...and that the entire censure against Reynoso was because of a meme, not because of ongoing disrespectful behavior. So they seem to be a very ill-informed group of people.”

During the proceedings, he was given a chance to clarify his support for LGBTQ+ communities. But he did not. An ad-hoc investigative committee, headed by trustees Hal Gin and Linda Granger, formed at a November meeting, presented their findings that Reynoso failed to defend his posting, accept any responsibility for his conduct, acknowledge support for the LGBTQ+ community and disparaged openly gay trustee Harris Mojadedi for crying at a November meeting.

Also, the committee said, Reynoso failed to uphold his promise to district chancellor Ron Gerhard that he would contact the students who commented on his posts.

“Today, we prove that love always wins,” student Hayden Sidun said during the public comment portion of the meeting. “We prove that acceptance always wins. We prove that inclusion always wins. But most importantly, we prove that hate never wins. We prove that bigotry never wins.”

The censure seemed to be the end of the matter. Those who disagreed with Reynoso’s actions were happy with the board’s actions.

“I am so proud of the district for really stepping up here and maintaining a positive learning environment,” Johnson said. “While all this is continuing, they’ve made sure that despite one of the trustees being so openly transphobic and homophobic, they’re ensuring a safe environment.”

But the reprimand seems to have toughened

Reynoso’s resolve. He has no shortage of supporters backing him.

Reynoso has a track record of responding to controversy by digging in his heels. According to the East Bay Citizen, in 2021, he was removed from his position as Hayward Unified School Board, or HUSD, trustee for attempting to serve on the CLPCCD board of trustees at the same time. Before his removal, he held up a sign reading “they will not let me speak” during a Dec. 17 Hayward Unified School Board meeting. He wasn’t invited to the closed session section of that meeting because they were deliberating his conflict of interest. After his removal, he implored Latinos to protest the action.

He called for protest on the eve of his February censure meeting.

Reynoso, elected in 2020, will be up for election again in November of 2024, should he choose to try

to retain his board seat.

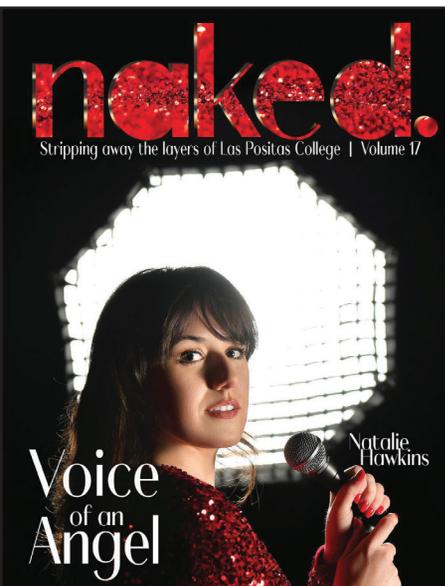
“Elections,” Thompson said, “particularly at this level, are kind of tricky because most voters pay attention to big-issue things or big offices like mayor. Oftentimes, the smaller offices, like trustee for the community college district, folks, either, kind of get lazy and just vote for the incumbent, or they will belong to organizations that are advising them to vote one way or the other. And so the best thing that we can hope for is most of the big organizations — you know, the union, that sort of thing — advocate for his opponent. That might make a difference. So I think the campaign would have to be pretty extensive to really get the attention of Hayward voters right in the smaller elections, like the Board of Trustees.”

No, this isn’t over yet.



GEORGIA WHITING/THE EXPRESS

On Tuesday, Feb. 21, audience members observe public comment at a CLPCCD meeting. The public comment section lasted for over an hour and was highly predicated on the subject of Reynoso’s censure.



Naked 17 highlights a rising star with its new edition

By Peter Zimmer

@PETERJZIMMER

The 17th edition of Naked magazine is now available at several kiosks on campus.

Founded by journalism students in 2007, Naked strips away the layers and tells the stories important to the college community with provocative writing and compelling photography and illusions.

This magazine features a standout performer Natalie Hawkins in an in-depth profile by Sophia Sipe and Jude Strzemp.

The magazine also featured in Naked includes features about animation by Gwen St Clair, the conflict in streaming by Lauren Cavalieri and the newly formed Cheer Squad by Brandon Byrne and among others. Staff Member Peter Zimmer wrote two articles: a tribute to Eric Jones, son of Professor Ernie Jones and a feature focusing on how LPC Nurtures burgeoning writers.

“I’m so proud of the Naked Magazine team for the work we’ve put into this Magazine. I hope readers enjoyed this edition as much as we have,” said Editor in Chief Jude Strzemp.

Hawks triumph through trials

By Nathan Canilao

@CUP1DCO

Hawks' coach James Giacomazzi's list of accomplishments at Las Positas can take up every line of a college-ruled notebook.

An elite eight appearance, most conference wins in school history and coaching all-state players are just some of the many accomplishments that will be put on his office walls.

But this season might have been his biggest milestone.

Although they lost in the Sweet 16 of the California Community College Athletic Association state regional playoffs, the Hawks 2022-23 season was defined by the team's ability to overcome adversity. On the road to their deep playoff run, the Hawks have faced many hiccups and tribulations which include player suspensions, injuries and a no spectator rule that kept fans from cheering from attending the games.

But what came as a result of these difficulties was opportunity. Giacomazzi was forced to go deep experiment with different lineups and strategies just to keep the Hawks afloat.

Several players stepped up this season to become leaders of the team, both on the floor and in the locker room.

"They're a resilient bunch," Giacomazzi said. "We've had to pivot a lot with different things and circumstances. And we just kept going, so we couldn't make excuses."

Sophomore Jordahn Johnson was the Hawks best player throughout the season. He finished in the top 25 of all California JCO players in points, rebounds and blocks per game.

The big man from Mountain House averaged 18.6 points and 11.6 rebounds per game and was named to the All-State team this past week.

One of the Hawks best players throughout the season was Jaden Phillips. The freshman guard averaged 11.2 points per game on 42% shooting from behind the arc.

On Jan. 20, Phillips was involved in an altercation after a game against Foothill College which resulted in him being suspended for the rest of the season, according to Isaiah Victor.

His loss was a big blow to LPC as he was one of their best two-way players throughout the season and was now off the team completely.

But as the Hawks did all season, they stayed resilient.



BRIJAE BOYD/THE EXPRESS

Evan Johnson attempts a layup while surrounded by defenders at West Valley College on March 4, 2023. Johnson led the team with 18 points per game during the season.

Sophomore Isaiah Victor stepped into the role of LPC's main perimeter threat. Victor averaged 17.2 points per game on 45.1% shooting from the field while also playing in every game this season.

In the final six games of the season, Victor averaged 21.6 points per game and often took on the assignment of guarding the opponent's best player on the defensive end of the floor.

LPC entered the playoffs as the No. 13 seed in the NorCal Regional tournament. They were heavy underdogs coming into the postseason as an already depleted team lost one of their top players.

In their first game, the Hawks hosted Diablo Valley College, a team that defeated them at home by nine points earlier in the season.

In a back and forth game, LPC snuck away with a 84-79 win.

In the second round, the Hawks traveled nearly three hours to face No. 4 seeded Yuba

City College. The 49ers were riding a 16-game winning streak and breezed through their conference.

In the second half, the Hawks rallied from a nine-point deficit to beat Yuba and pull off the biggest upset in school history as they defeated Yuba 79-76.

After the win, a joyous LPC squad was ready to march their way to another Elite 8 appearance.

Their next matchup: No. 5 seeded West Valley College.

After learning about a Sweet 16 matchup against West Valley College, Victor said, "It's our revenge tour right now."

In their Sweet 16 matchup against the Vikings, the Hawks battled, but fatigue and injuries played a big role as the Hawks fell short in Saratoga 88-75.

Despite the tough effort, Johnson felt that the season did not go the way he planned.

"I will say that this season, especially compared to last year, it was definitely a disappoint-

ment for me," Johnson said. "But I think myself, Brandon (Fisher), Isaiah (Victor), that's two years now that we had successful trips (to the Sweet 16)."

Through all the adversity, the Hawks pulled through to have a pretty successful season. Despite the loss toward the end of the season, no one would have expected the team to make it this far into the playoffs while playing with just six or seven players on most nights.

Giacomazzi showed that even with a short rotation, the Hawks were able to get it done on both ends to get them to the Sweet 16.

He said he hopes this season will be a stepping stone into the future.

"I think we got a good class potentially coming in," Giacomazzi said. "We're excited about people that we're working with, and that we're talking to and I think, really, the lights are still bright. We're really excited about what's the future."

HAWK SQUAWK

Basketball

WOMEN'S TEAM

The women's basketball team ended the season on Feb. 17 with a record of 3-24 and they went 0-10 in their conference.

Top scorers of the season (points per game):
Ranaye Manu: 17.1 PPG
Monique Cavness: 14 PPG
Semaj Steen: 8.8 PPG

MEN'S TEAM

First team all conference Jordahn Johnson led our Hawks all the way to the NorCal Regional Final on March. 4, losing 88-75. The hawks ended the season with a record of 19-12 while going an even 7-7 in the conference.

Top scorers of the season (points per game):
Jordahn Johnson: 18 PPG
Isaiah Victor: 17.2 PPG
Jalen Patterson: 14.9 PPG

Swimming

2023 De Anza Invitational

At the De Anza Invitational on March 3 the women's team placed 3rd out of 8. The men placed number one. 7 of the athletes placed first in their events, along with four relay wins.

WOMEN

The Women took first in the 200Y relay (2:01.68) and also in the 200Y free relay (1:52.19). Stellar performances from Samantha Dorn who won in the 200Y free (2:09.28) and Ashley San in the 400Y IM (5:06.03).

MEN

The men took first in both the 200Y relay (1:42.62) and the 400Y relay (3:47.62). Marcu Holunga had a great day winning three of his individual events, the 200Y free (1:51.47), 1650Y free (17:03.27) and the 200Y fly (2:06.09).

Hawks guard gets exactly what he wanted

Isaiah Victor nearly left LPC for a bigger role, but stayed and became the leader he envisioned

By CJ Flores

@CJ_MCANFORES

Isaiah Victor walked the length of the court, his Hawks 11.6 seconds from victory, and stepped to the free throw line with his eyes focused on his feet.

He lifted his head to practice his shooting stroke with no ball, trying to remember his form — that's when he realized the other players lined up around the paint were gone. A Diablo Valley player fouled out, giving the visiting Vikings 30 seconds to make a substitution. So Victor stood at the free throw line. Alone.

At that point, he had missed five of his eight free throw attempts, including his last two, giving enough reason for doubt to enter. But this is what he wished for. This is what he wanted. He didn't transfer because he was told he'd get these moments. He had to deliver now.

He wiped the sweat from his face with his white home jersey, adjusted his shorts, relying on routine to work out the nerves. As the other players gathered back around the lane for the free throws, Victor went through one last shooting motion before receiving the ball from the referee. He inhaled deeply. The weight of his teammates' hopes were on his shoulders, in his hands.

"At that moment in time, I really want Isaiah at the line," LPC men's basketball coach James Giacomazzi said.

"I think you can almost throw percentages out the window a lot of the time late in the game...We had the ball in the right guy's hands at the right time. It didn't surprise me when he made them."

Both free throws were pure, too. Victor didn't come close to missing.

His free throws did more than just secure the 84-79 win over Diablo Valley College. They proved his accountability. They validated his dependability. Those two clutch shots showcased, to his teammates and to himself, the value of his dedication and the relentless commitment to being the go-to star for his team. Victor made sure the Hawks lived to fly another day.

Little would anyone know Victor sat on the bench his first season. In 2022, the Hawks saw great success, finishing 27-3 and landing a top-eight team spot. But Victor averaged just 7.4 points per game as a sixth man off the bench.

That season ended with disappointment. The Hawks made it to the state tournament, and Victor finally got some more playing time. But they lost their first game to West Los Angeles. Victor felt he had more to give. To the game. To a team.

That loss was the "lowest of lows" for Victor.

In his mind, he should've been on the floor more. He should have had the ball in his hands more. It was an empty feeling, knowing they lost and he still had more to give.

"Of course," he said, "I felt like I was the best player out there. As a hooper, you have to have the mentality of being the



SHABNAM GHAZI FAKHR

Isaiah Victor checks into a game against West Valley on Dec. 7, 2022. The guard averaged a total of 17.2 points per game.

best. Even if I'm not on the court, I think I was the best player."

If he couldn't be that at Las Positas, he may as well leave. He was going to transfer. Somewhere. Go somewhere else where things would be easy.

The day after the elimination, Giacomazzi called him and reaffirmed Victor that he was their guy. It was his time.

"As soon as we lost in the elite eight, he called me," Victor said. "Reassured me and kept up with me every day since then."

Ultimately, he decided to stay with Las Positas. Here, he was assured more minutes, more shots, more responsibility. It was time to take charge of his team.

He has to keep delivering. Every shot, every decision, could make the difference in Las Positas getting back to the state tournament. Now, as the Hawks head out on the road to face No. 4 Yuba College, they need him more than ever.

"Having the trust of my team," Victor said, "means the world."

Isaiah Victor nearly transferred because he wanted more opportunity. He stayed at Las Positas. Now he has it.

Victor took it seriously. Every day in the off-season, he worked on his craft. Spending countless hours in the gym, meditating to strengthen his mind, reflecting on what kind of leader he wanted to be.

This was the dedication and determination that would come in clutch for Las Positas. They'd need every ounce.

For his sophomore season, hardship came almost immediately.

"So if you want to go back," Giacomazzi said, "we had lost three guards the week before school started — one of them at 8:30 p.m. the night before school started — that were starters on last year's team. They got scholarships and that's what we're about — we want to get our guys' scholarships. But I didn't know they'd be going so late. And so when you lose three guards that you are counting on, it makes it a little bit of a challenge because of our depth. So these guys were asked to do even more than what I anticipated them to do."

Victor went from not playing enough to barely being able to come out of the game due to a lack of players in the rotation. It only got worse after the incident at Foothill College.

A fight broke out involving players, faculty and fans. Spectators would be banned from the next four Hawks home games. Freshman guard CJ Ward and sophomore guard Jaden Phillips were suspended. Ward has been allowed to play in the playoffs, but Phillips is permanently suspended.

Phillips was a key guard, starting 15 of 20 regular season games. He averaged 13.8 points, 5.5 rebounds and 2.9 assists in 20

regular season games and led in a three-point field goal percentage (42.2).

"I feel like it did affect us," he said about losing Jaden Phillips. "We had to adjust to it...So now without him, we continue to adjust."

The Hawks lost 3 of their final five games, all without fans, and finished the season 17-11. That didn't help their seeding — No. 13 out of 24 teams in the NorCal Regional bracket.

All these challenges and hurdles in the way of Las Positas became part of Victor's responsibility. Would he rise and step over them? Or would he crumble? That's a question he faces every situation and every game with this team.

He finished the regular season averaging 16.4 points — more than double his average from the previous season — and ranked 14th for the most three-pointers in the state. Then, in the biggest game of the season, the first-round playoff matchup against Diablo Valley, he scored 30 points.

He'll need another big game on Saturday. Yuba College is 26-2 this season after going 11-0 in conference games. They'll be big-time favorites as one of the best teams in the state. The 49ers are a physical team who scores a lot of points and makes it tough to catch up once behind.

Three years ago, Las Positas visited Yuba in the first round of the playoffs and were beat handily. But that was a completely different roster.

"It'll be a hostile environment," Giacomazzi said. "They have a great crowd. A lot of local support for that team. So it's gonna be interesting to see how we respond. I don't know if we've been to a game yet where we walked in and it's like everybody's yelling at you, and telling you all kinds of things."

This environment and stakes motivate Victor. He wants to be more physical and put himself in positions to score. He'll have to make shots, create shots and defend at a high level. And he may not come out of the game, so he'll have to power through fatigue.

"It's going to be a great matchup for us. We are the underdogs, expected to lose. It's our game to play," Victor said.

He never seemed more ready for the task of leading the Hawks than in the win over Diablo Valley.

After the Vikings' final shot missed on Wednesday, and the buzzer sounded, Victor immediately flexed and let out a thunderous roar. Then another. Then another.

This is what he said he was ready for. This is what he wanted.

"I'm a lion," Victor said. "A lion resting was me in the season. But it's playoff and I'm amplified. Dominant...There's very little you can do to keep the lion from what he wants."

The regional playoffs begin Feb. 22 at a location to be determined.

EDITORIAL

Not all LPC Scholarships are awarded each year Scholarship requirements are too specialized

Only 14 of the 80 LPC exclusive scholarships are available to most students.

Many students want to apply for a scholarship, and the Las Positas website lists 80 LPC exclusive scholarships in total. However the majority of students find that they are only eligible for a few of the them.

Of the scholarships only 19 are available to the majority of the student population. Even these require a GPA ranging from 2.0 to 3.5; and five requiring a financial need. 34 are for veterans or dependents of veterans. The rest are restricted to students that meet certain criteria that can range from completing a fencing class, to being a STEM major, to transferring to a four year school.

LPC scholarships are funded by donations, to which donors set the criteria for the scholarship. The LPC Foundation solicits and handles these donations.

“The donors know what area of the

college they want to donate to and the donor sets the criteria for the scholarships.” Kenneth Cooper, President of the Las Positas College Foundation, said.

Though most scholarships have multiple applicants to choose from, some scholarships have no applicants, meaning no money will be awarded. These particular scholarships get no applicants because they are too specialized.

“The scholarships are too restrictive for part time students, particularly ones that are major related,” Brittain North, a sophomore STEM major said.

One of these specialized scholarships requires you to have taken a fencing class, which has not been offered at Las Positas in the previous 2022-23 school year. Another requires you to be a math tutor employed at the LPC tutoring center for at least two semesters. Furthermore, students who might be eligible for such scholarships

aren’t aware they exist.

Lydia Penaflor, Financial Aid Scholarship Coordinator, says the financial aid office is trying to reach students who are eligible for the limited scholarships so there are more applicants.

“The Financial aid office will contact the groups of students that meet the requirements of the scholarships that few students applied for by contacting the instructors in those areas,” said Penaflor.

According to Evelyn Andrews, the Veterans Center Coordinator, 22% of the available scholarships are for veterans only, as most donors have ties to the US military and can decide the criteria. However, the percentage of veterans scholarships is higher than the population of veterans on campus. About 150 of the 450 veterans attending LPC receive VA educational benefits, which include paid-for tuition and a \$3117 monthly housing allowance.

The problem is that the criteria for many of the scholarships is too restrictive, leaving out many deserving students. Of 6800 students at LPC, over 1600 qualify for the Promise Grant waiver which is given to students with low income. There is a large need for scholarships for these students, but adding requirements like only being available to one major, limits accessibility.

The Las Positas Foundation should work with the donors to change the scholarship criteria so more students would be eligible. Though some donors have a fixed idea of who they want scholarships to be available to, the foundation should be stricter with what criteria donors can set. Scholarships should be available to most students based on merit and financial need, not only those that meet strict criteria.

Black students share their experiences at Las Positas

By Brijae Boyd

@BBOYD_EXPRESS

Black history month is over. But what about the rest of the year? Las Positas’ black students are here year round. Listen to what they have to say.

At Las Positas, only 4% of the student population is Black, according to a 2022 spring census. Resources like the Black Cultural Resource Center, or the BCRC, and Umoja seek to support and help this group, yet struggle to attract them. The BCRC struggles to find staff and can’t stay open for many hours. Black students at LPC note their struggles amidst these issues. Brittanie North has attended Las Positas for over 3 years. Majoring in biology, she dedicated a lot of time to her

undergraduate studies at Chabot and Las Positas.

“In the beginning I joined quite a lot of clubs. I joined the chemistry club, Alpha Gamma Sigma Club. That’s how I started getting involved on campus,” North said.

She ran into trouble receiving assistance for her math and science intensive major. AB 705, a bill that requires you to wait six months to retake class tests, stopped her from succeeding.

“At first it was very hard, but thankfully, I did have my mom,” North said.

“My mom showed me how I could defend and advocate for myself by writing reports, and I found that was the best way for me to release a lot of the emotional pain.”

She remembers having troubles with

certain faculty members.

“They lacked interpersonal communication skills and training to help a student like me, from a different background,” North said.

Sophomore business major and men’s basketball player Evan Johnson also noted that administration has room to grow in how they treat black students.

“As far as administrators go, they’re just going to have to be more accepting, I can’t control their kindness,” Johnson said.

Johnson also has to worry about getting support as a student athlete.

“As a student athlete I do feel I receive the support we need, but the bare minimum. All the provisions were necessities, nothing special besides the trainer who just does their job,” Johnson said.

Many resources Las Positas offers are not common knowledge.

“I didn’t even know about (LPC) EOPS until my mom just was like, ‘Okay, you’re doing this...’ “It wasn’t until I took initiative to ask about what was on campus, that I got more involved,” North said.

Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) is a program that assists students disadvantaged by social, economic, educational or linguistic barriers in getting the resources they need to succeed.

However, both Evan and Brittanie have high hopes for the future of Las Positas’ outreach efforts to Black students. “The BCRC will assist the Black students, but the students have to be willing to receive the help,” Johnson said.

EXPRESS YOURSELF

“ Are LPC scholarships representative of the student population? ”



“ Yeah sure...Not really (I haven’t looked at the scholarship website) because I don’t qualify for any so I didn’t bother. ”

– Lateeta Raseolvulu
Psychology



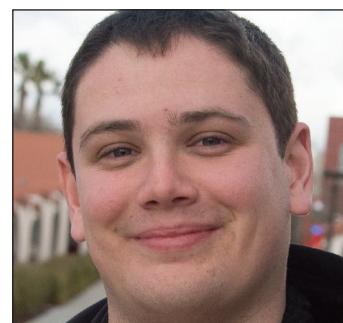
“ I haven’t looked at them quite yet... It’s mid-term time so I’ve been totally focused on that. ”

–Neal O’Conbhui
English



“ I only submitted a FAFSA so I don’t know. ”

–Andrea Patin
Engineering



“ I haven’t looked at any. I work for Starbucks and that’s not a scholarship (the college program) it’s a joke. ”

—Erik Caufield
Engineering



“ I think so...I have (applied to a scholarship). It’s the Chabot-Las Positas college one. ”

– Jahdd Haad
Kinesiology