

# THE KNIGHT TIMES

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**About Us**

SOCES Media is a fun, student-led environment that has three branches: yearbook, newspaper, and broadcasting. We bring updated news to SOCES students, whether it's coverage on sports, VAPA concerts, or more!

SOCES Media was originally created in 2018 with the addition of the newspaper and yearbook to our school campus. Now, we've grown to include broadcasting, which brings updates and stories to our student population through videos.

Our goals include progressively moving toward a digital format for our newspaper, promoting other club events and fundraisers through our social media pages, and informing our 4-12 population of important issues in our community.

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**LETTER FROM THE EDITOR**

I'm pleased to announce that this issue marks the release of the first official magazine edition of The Knight Times. After months of hard work (thank you so much for your amazing Adobe Indesign skills, Jeremy) and deliberation, we've finally finished working on this four-month-long project. Our goal is to focus more on graphic design and the artistic side of journalism and communications. With the help of talented students like Sofia and Natalie, we've compiled stories of kids doing inspiring and amazing work around campus.

In this issue, we've highlighted the junior president candidates, academic decathlon, and our school's Black Student Union. We hope that you enjoy taking in the work of our amazing photographers and artists in the next few pages. If, however, you decide that you want more content, visit [socesmedia.com](http://socesmedia.com) and support our program!

- Pattarin Khajornchaikul





***SOCES  
ON  
THE  
RISE...***

**USA**



**UNITED STATES**



***The team poses for their win at Nationals 2024!***



# ACADECA ACADECA ACADECA ACADECA

By: Anya Vaiman '26

The SOCES Academic Decathlon team has yet again established itself as the LAUSD champion for the second consecutive year. On Saturday, on the 24th of March, in East LA, the Regional Competition Awards were presented to over 40 schools in the district, with board members and the Superintendent of LAUSD present. The team amassed 40,392.4 points out of a possible total of 60,000 and was crowned with the Superintendent's Trophy by Alberto Carvalho. Nationals, the ultimate event for aca-deca, took place in Pennsylvania this year. There, they competed head-to-head with teams across the country.



Math, Science, Art, Economics, Essay, Speech, Interview, and Super Quiz. Last year, the team placed first in LAUSD and eventually made their way to Nationals in Texas.

On April 27th, Nationals for AcaDeca took place in Pittsburgh. Your AcaDeca team placed 4th in their division with teammates Sarah Kovalev, Nathan Ark, Rose Ortiz, and Kavidu De Silva placing in categories such as art, math, and science. "I'm so proud of the team and it's great watching all of our hard work pay off," Sarah K. commented on her success at both Regionals, State, and Nationals.

This year's topic, which the students have been studying extensively, is Technology and Humanity, with focuses on Neuroscience, Computers, and Science Fiction Films.

The SOCES team has consistently proven their academic strength and success at smaller competitions such as Scrimmage (where team members are determined) and Regionals (where they tied for first place in the Super Quiz event.) This year's JV team, which supports and assists the competing team, consists of Isabella D, Spencer D, Henry G, Maxim K, Amelia M, Russell M, Eva P, Ruben S, and Kristen W. JV members Kristen, Maxim, Amelia, and Russell won additional medals at the Regional Competition.

Both the students and Mrs. Gordon feel proud of their accomplishments at Nationals and are determined to grow and improve their scores next year. Mrs. Gordon shared that she considers the team to be a "tight-knit family" because of all the hours they spend together at practices and competitions.

SOCES

HAS

NEVER

FELT

STRONGER

Led by teacher Mrs. Gordon, the competing team is composed of Decathlete Captains Nathan Ark and Jaylen Patel, Sarah Kovalev, Kavidu De Silva, Eva Karamanoukian, Luke Bula, Luke Leung, Rose Ortiz, and Jericho Milrad. Team member Sarah Kovalev was named the Top Scorer of the SOCES team and also ranked the third-best scorer in LAUSD.

The competing team is categorized into three categories: Honors, Varsity, and Scholastic, which are separated by GPA ranges. Over the course of the year, the academic decathlon team studies and competes in categories such as Literature, History,



A photograph of four students standing on a concrete staircase with a grey metal railing. The railing has a perforated metal infill. The students are arranged in a line, descending the stairs. From top to bottom: a woman with glasses and a grey sweater, a woman in a blue 'SOUTH STATE' t-shirt, a woman in a light green top, and a man in a blue t-shirt. The background shows a brick building and green trees under a clear blue sky.

# THE JUNIOR



# CANDIDATES FOR THE CLASS OF '25





# Brief Introductions of the Candidates for President of the Junior Class

By: Mariam Torosyan '24

Taking on Class President is a great opportunity to learn to be responsible and to learn leadership skills at a young age. In a small poll run by SOCES Media, we received responses from the junior class about potential candidates that they had in mind. After an interview with some of these juniors, we got to see what some juniors consider an ideal president, and what candidates plan on doing as class president.



*Mardiross Boyadjian*

Mardiross Boyadjian, a popular candidate says, “A big issue in my class is that it’s not united and people do not really like each other. I would like to

change this.” Mardiross explains that his primary goal would be to create a more friendly environment. “Discrimination is a big thing and these divisions drag us all down. It’s affecting us all. I feel my responsibility will be to end this and the hatred. If I’m elected I will do whatever I can to achieve this goal.”

Another group of candidates, Spencer Diep and Julianna Babayan, state, “We hope to motivate students and look for different opportunities and expand their knowledge. We want to encourage unity since we’re a diverse school and especially since it’s going to be our last year. We also want to organize fun events because school often seems stressful, so organizing events is important to us. High schoolers should all be able to have fun.”



*Julianna Babayan*



*Spencer Diep*



# Brief Introductions of the Candidates for President of the Junior Class

Alyssa Hernandez, another junior who wanted to run for Class President states, “I would like to have a clear vision and set goals for making senior year the most enjoyable for everyone.” She says that she would do this by “communicating effectively and making sure that everyone knows what is happening.”

Alyssa also says that she wants to focus on including the senior class’s opinion on certain



*Alyssa Hernandez*

activities or plans. “Another thing I would like to focus on is the prices of senior activities. I would want to focus on fundraising as much as possible to be able to make senior activities

more affordable.” When asked about how she felt that most juniors wanted her as a president, Alyssa said “I was pretty surprised that I got most of the votes. I had other people in my mind that I thought would get voted.”

Hailey Frait and Kayla Chavez, another popular set of candidates who are co-running for Junior Class president state, “We think if we were to win we are planning on doing what the majority wants. And we would want more student participation. We want more people to chip in and involve our whole class’s opinions.”

Hailey and Kayla also mention that since Ms. Morales is the sponsor, their primary goal would be to make everybody succeed in high school.



*Kayla Chavez*



*Hailey Frait*





# PIN

# &

# RIBBON

On February 10th, the Class of 2028 celebrated the halfway point to culmination with Pin & Ribbon, an annual ceremony to congratulate all the hardworking students that are on track to culminate later this Spring. With Glenn Hall looking good and the kids looking even better, it was safe to say the event was a success. Mika Mertz, a student that attended, says "I loved the speeches, and the food was surprisingly decent for what it was. The room was set up really nicely, and I love that everyone took it seriously and got dressed up. It was really fun!" 8th graders had the chance to take pictures with their friends by the "starry night" themed back-drop that created a fun environment as breakfast was served.





# CELEBRATE



At the event, there was also the announcement of superlatives, where eighth graders nominated their fellow classmates for roles like “Best Dressed,” “Most Likely to Go Viral,” and “Best Personality.” This whole event was put together by the eighth grade sponsors, Mr. Smiley and Mrs. Massingill, along with the eighth grade Pilot Committee. Emily Carbajal, a member of this committee says that “Pilot Committee was super fun to work with, it was a great community to be a part of, even though we all had very strong opinions and had to figure out how to work together. But staying after school to set up and getting to work together and actually make something was super cool, and I enjoyed it.” Great job, 8th graders! We can’t wait to see you culminate!





# CELEBRATING DIFFERENT SHINING KNIGHTS

*While navigating the journey of high school, these four Knights have demonstrated success outside of the classroom in their own unique ways, proving that there's more to high school is than just tests and assignments. Read about their accomplishments!*





# CELEBRATING DIFFERENT STUDENTS, AMANDA CROCKETT '24

By: Samantha  
Briones '24

**Q: What is your passion and how long have you been passionate about it?**

A.: I've been cooking for as long as I can remember. It started with my grandma and it kind of carried over. I joined the cooking club back in 7th grade and the C-CAP kids ran it, so I've been practicing for that since then.

**Q: What is C-CAP?**

A: C-CAP stands for Careers through Culinary Arts Programs. It is a non-SOCES-run culinary competition that we have trained for from September until now. The first competition was on February 3rd and then if you



made that, there was another competition for only seniors on March 3rd.

**Q: You got pretty far in the competition last year.**

**Would you like to comment more on that?**

A: Last year I got to be a part of the top ten juniors. Sadly, I did not make it to the top two, which got to go

to New York, but I did make it that far and was the only one at SOCES who finished.

**Q: Are you planning on pursuing culi**

**nary after you graduate high school?**

A: I really want to double major in nursing and culinary because I'm passionate about both.



# Celebrating Different Students, Isabella Medina '24

## *The Captain of the Girl's Basketball Team*



**Q: How long have you been playing basketball and what made you want to try out?**

A: I've been playing basketball since my sophomore year, so that means I'm in my third year right now. At first, I wasn't really that interested in basketball, but I thought that it would be kind of cool to do. My senior friends at the time introduced me to it and I thought that it would be fun to join a school sport. After sophomore year I just kept coming back to basketball and wanted to know more about the game. I ended up developing a passion for basketball.

**Q: Either academically or socially, how do you think you've benefited from playing?**

A: I became more outgoing because I used to be really shy. Basketball has allowed me to come out of my shell by talking to people and just being involved in something. In a team, you have to learn to communicate and work together.

**Q: Are you planning on involving basketball in your life after high school?**

A: I want to go to CSUN. But maybe I'll join the basketball team in college if I'm good enough.

**Q: Anything else you would like to add?**

A: I'm really proud of my team and how far we've come because we've been working really hard, practicing from Monday to Saturday. Almost every single day. I'm just really proud of where we've come from to now because at first, we needed some work but now we've gotten really far. I'm just really proud of everyone.



# CELEBRATING DIFFERENT STUDENTS, CHRISTIAN PALACIOS '24

## *Tri-M Vice President and French Horn Player of Wind Ensemble*

**Q: What made you find your passion in music and how long have you been pursuing it?**

A: It first started in the school band because it's like a family. It's really fun playing with other people. The best thing is getting to see how happy music makes the audience feel. You can share emotions with others without even saying a word. I've been playing French horn for five years and I've been in the SOCES band for six years. I started playing when I was in 6th grade on trumpet.

**Q: What are you doing right now to pursue music?**

A: I study at a music school downtown called "Colburn School." I take lessons there, conducting and music theory classes, and I play in a quintet and orchestra there. At school,



I'm in the Wind and Jazz Ensemble. I know a little bit of piano and I can still kind of play trumpet.

**Q: Can you give me a rundown on how**

**you came to play for Colburn School?**

A: In the summer of 9th grade I won a \$250 scholarship that I could use for

private lessons and my instructor at the time helped me apply to Colburn. I started going there in May of 10th grade where I won an \$8,000 schol-

arship that pays for everything the school offers. My tuition is free because of the scholarship.

**Q: What are planning on doing after high school?**

A: I'm going to major in French horn performance and get my master's. After that, I hope to audition for a professional orchestra.

**Q: Any exciting events happening?**

A: For All of January and February, I was flying across the country for auditions and then in April I'm going to be going to Nashville, Tennessee to play with the Nashville Symphony. At SOCES, we went to San Francisco in March and we have a bunch of festivals coming up.





D I E G O

R O B L E S





By: Ashley Maldonado '24



Even when people tell you there isn't hope, you can always prove them wrong. Sophomore Diego Robles is a sophomore who loves to play basketball. He was introduced to basketball at a very young age by his father. What makes Diego's story so different is that he was born without a hand. Despite his disability, he is someone who doesn't give up even when seen differently.

During his freshman year at Granada Hills High School, he dedicated his entire summer to making the school's team. Unfortunately, he didn't get much playing time. He was given a second chance when he transferred to SOCES, and he took his opportunity in stride. Diego stated, "What really inspired me was just to show myself anything can happen as long as you put dedication into it."

"What inspired me to not give up and to push was just myself." For a student who has been doubted all his life when playing basketball, he is very tenacious and pushes himself to prove people wrong. When things get hard there is only one way, which is up. "God also pushes me to keep going as he is one who gives his toughest battles to his toughest warriors," Diego said in an interview.

If you are nervous to talk to Diego, don't be. Diego added, "I'm like anyone else. I have the same hobbies, the same interests, and do not be afraid as I'm just a human." If you see Diego around campus, take some time to get to know him. And make sure to go and support our SOCES Knights Boys Basketball team!





# BLACK STUDENT UNION





# BLACK HISTORY MONTH



By: Samantha Briones '24

As January came to an end, the Black Student Union club worked diligently to prepare for Black History Month. BSU planned several different events such as assemblies, field trips, service learning opportunities, fundraisers, you name it!

February is dedicated to paying tribute to and celebrating Black culture, identity, sacrifices, and way of life. As we celebrate Black History Month, the world may also take the time to learn more about Black history because it is essential to our national

***"We have an assembly coming up for Black History Month to go over black culture and educate students about it. "***

**-Tierra Terrell**

history. SOCES is immensely proud of the diversity of its students because it is important for fostering creativity, innovation, empathy, and social cohesion.

BSU presidents Tierra Terrell '24 and Sarah Michaels '24 and Event Coordinator Sydney Frank '24 were in charge of planning and executing the activities

that BSU had during Black History Month. Here's what Tierra had to say regarding the plans.

"We had spirit days coming up, where we collaborated with leadership. We held a fundraiser at one of our club member's family restaurants in Sherman Oaks! Lastly, we will have a field trip in either April or May to UC Riverside.

However, it will only be available to the Black Student Achievement Program (BSAP) students. If you are a BSAP student interested, communicate with either Ms. Morales, Sarah Micheals, or me."

In addition to Terrell's preparation planning, Sydney explains, "For the Black History Month assembly, we had many

people participate and awarded these participants service learning credits." Helping out with the assembly was an excellent way to earn service learning credits, which are required to graduate.

BSU's end goal for the month was for students to be more educated and knowledgeable on Black Culture because BSAP students make up a small percentage of the campus' population. Black History Month allows them to make their voices heard. If you are interested in joining BSU, make sure to show up to their meetings every Tuesdays during lunch!



# BLACK HISTORY MONTH

## A STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

By: Canyon Marasigan '24

To get a closer behind-the-scenes look at the work these amazing students are doing, we interviewed Tierra Terrell and Sydney Frank. Both are 12th grade students. Tierra has attended SOCES since 4th grade, is a Virgo, and her favorite color is pink. Sydney moved to Los Angeles from New York City. She's able to play the saxophone and the guitar.

### Q: What does Black History mean to you?

**Tierra:** To me, Black History means going over my culture and being able to remember all of the things that my previous ancestors have done for me to be able to be where I am currently.

**Sydney:** I think it's a month of celebration of culture and a month of awareness for people who don't know a lot about Black culture. It's a great opportunity for Black people themselves to be celebrated or recognized as well as allowing non-black people to learn more about our culture and gain more insight and even maybe have appreciation for us.

### Q: What's your role in BSU?

**Tierra:** I'm the co president alongside Sarah Michaels and I look over BSU and I help plan events.

**Sydney:** I'm the event coordinator of BSU. I'm in charge of putting together events like Black History Month or little side events that we do like fall festivals.

### Q: How do you contribute to this club?

**Tierra:** I do a lot for this club. I plan meetings, I mark attendance, I help create events for all to enjoy, and I try to bring a safe place at SOCES for all Black

students.

**Sydney:** I contribute my perspectives to this club. I try my best to come up with as many new ideas for our events, our spirit weeks, and whatnot.

### Q: What overarching goals do you have for BSU?

**Tierra:** I hope for Black students to be able to feel safe and comfortable here at SOCES. I want them to be able to stand up for themselves when it comes to someone being racist or saying something that they disagree with or aren't really comfortable with hearing. I also want more students to know more about Black culture as well as Black history and overall being more educated on the topic.

**Sydney:** I really hope to make BSU a bigger deal on campus. I feel like we don't really get that much participation when it comes to BSU and I really think that SOCES needs a bigger and more impactful BSU to help change the culture of this school

### Q: What makes this chapter of BSU unique? (our BSU compared to other schools)

**Tierra:** I would say compared to other schools, our BSU is a lot smaller and so we're able to get to know one another on a closer level than others may be able to.

**Sydney:** I think what makes our BSU unique is that we have a very small population of Black students on campus so I think due to the size of our small population, us coming together in one club and talking about our experiences makes it a new perspective, a new voice that people probably haven't heard before and things like that.



# *SOCES LEADERSHIP*







*ASB reflecting on what has been accomplished and what envisioned for the following year*

By: Sophia May '24

As ASB looks to recruit new members for the incoming 2024-2025 school year, let's see what two of our current leadership officers—Sarah Michaels and Angela Acosta—have to say about Leadership's past, present, and future plans!

**As President for the 2023-2024 school year, have you managed to accomplish all the goals you set for ASB?**

Sarah: I never expected to accomplish all my goals but I think I managed to achieve a lot of things with the class. More than anything, I was able to experiment with new ideas

with the help of Mr. Jocz's creativity. Although some of my goals were unfortunately never accomplished, I am still proud of what the class and I have achieved.

**What plans did you strive for? After all the time you've spent as president, would you go about accomplishing your goals via a different way if you had the chance to do it all again?**

Sarah: Most ASB presidents would agree that our main goal in mind is to simply bring more spirit to the school and create a better sense of unity across all grades through our events. I'd be more willing to ask for help from others and

establish a more organized method of communication.

**Do you think you made a lasting impression on ASB and the student body with your leadership?**

Sarah: This year especially, I realized that a lot of the preparation behind events is often overlooked and it's hard to leave a lasting impression on the student body when they don't get the full image of what we have to do. However, if our work were acknowledged by more or new students this year.

**What do you hope to see be accomplished by next year's leadership?**

Sarah: Next year, I hope that the leadership officers will produce events that

will move on with time and can become a part of SOCES traditions.

**Do you have any advice for the 2024-2025 ASB Cabinet?**

Angela: To the future 2024-2025 ASB Cabinet—make sure to look out for your fellow ASB members. Be comfortable with the fact that things won't always go as planned but constantly find ways to improve!

**How have you contributed to the success of ASB's 2023-2024 year?**

Angela: I think that throughout this year of ASB there was so many successful changes within the class and I feel that my role in publicizing things this year on the social media accounts was a great success in informing people on what is happening

around campus.

**Are there any goals or plans you had/have? What was accomplished?**

Angela: This year my leadership goal was to bring a positive spirit to our school by trying new things. We had some great successes like the Open Mic events we have organized. For the upcoming year my plan is to keep getting people involved in campus activities. I believe we need more ways to show everyone that school can be fun!

**If you return to ASB for the 2024-2025 school year, what do you hope to accomplish with your fellow members?**

Angela: When I return to ASB next year with my fellow ASB members, I hope to accomplish collaborating together with clubs and sports. Working together can bring new ideas and help us achieve our goals more effectively!

*“Our main goal in mind is to simply bring more spirit to the school and create a better sense of unity across all grades...” –ASB President Sarah Michaels*



*“We need more ways to show everyone that school can be fun!” –Historian Angela Acosta*





W i N T e R  
F O R M A L

Everyone  
STUNNED  
at the  
dance



WINTER FORMAL 2024  
took place in the  
Encino Banquet Garden  
on January 26th.



*Queen*

*King*

