Dear WORD readers,

Remember what the world looked like when you were a kid? If you’re anything like us, everything was a little more whimsical. Crayon in hand, magnificent landscapes filled your wide-ruled notebook. On each page, you would animate yourself as a royal and respectable ruler, sitting on a throne constructed of chocolate bars and Fruit Roll-Ups. In between maps of fantasy candy lands, there’d be dictionaries of made-up languages and diagrams of invisible creatures. You would drift off each night imagining your kingdom and the drama that would ensue. Nothing could limit your creativity—not even the edges of the pages.

So when did you stop seeing the world with child-like wonder? Somewhere in the mix of growing up, you began to ignore the creative vision your younger self woke with each morning. The world nudged you to grow up and to start taking things more seriously. You were told your dreams were fantasies, that there was no place for them in the “real world.”

This issue of WORD goes out to all the little versions of ourselves. The ones who didn’t stop writing and drawing, daring to dream a little bigger even when the world got scary. In these pages, we’ve written and created in bold color. Standing at the cusp of adulthood, we’re dusting off the paintbrushes of our imagination once again. Don’t be afraid to reclaim the throne of your story (you can even have an M&M candy crown, we won’t judge you).

WORD Editors-in-Chief, Janet Wang and Ashley Rusch

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NEW YEAR,
WORDS + ILLUSTRATION // MAHROKH CORNELIUS

A BACK-TO-SCHOOL MIX FOR IGNORING PPL IN THE ARBOR, GOING TO THE BEACH, OR JUST CHILLIN' IN UR ROOM

AIN'T THAT FUNKIN' KINDA HARD ON YOU
funkadelic, kendrick lamar, ice cube

WHIRLPOOL
kinokoteikoku

REASONS
built to spill

COMPACT OF ALL GOODBYES
Shahin Cornelius

NEVER BELIEVED
jacob pabalan

TELEPATÍA
kali uchis

U STAY ON THE PHONE
NEW PLAYLIST

STARSTRUCK
sorry

GUILTY
alex g

LOST IN MY DREAM
drugdealer

DARJEELING
fka twigs, jorja smith, unknown t

NEON PEACH
snch aalegra & tyler, the creator

LITTLE WING
jimi hendrix

A LOT'S GONNA CHANGE
weyes blood

Scan to listen on Spotify:
RECLAIMING COMMUNITY

The Return of IV’s First Centralized Gathering Space

WORDS // MAKENNA GAETA  PHOTOGRAPHY + DESIGN // NHUNG TRAN
MARKED BY SNIPPING a sapphire blue ribbon, more than 100 Isla Vista Community Center partners celebrated the arrival of IV’s first public gathering space in 2020—the culmination of 50 years’ worth of advocacy and activism.

But when the pandemic struck that March, only two months after the Community Center’s grand opening, its programming ground to a halt. Temporarily transformed into a housing site for an influx of houseless residents, uncertainty trailed the space’s original vision.

Nearly two years later, the Community Center is finding its footing once again.

Envisioned to cultivate unity amongst IV residents, the center champions unique event programming, beautification services, and an abundance of other resources to band college students and families alike. Users who reserve the Community Center for an event have access to all of the building’s features—including its kitchen, outdoor patio, and grassy area. The center is also paired with a smaller venue, the Isla Vista Community Room. Any IV resident can make a free reservation.

LOCALIZED COMMUNITY SPACE

For decades, challenges in securing the proper space and funding overwhelmed efforts to establish a community center within IV. Its 2020 opening marked a momentous occasion, embodying the resilience of community advocates who persevered despite historical setbacks.

But since IV was the only town in Santa Barbara County without a community center for nearly 50 years, there is discussion regarding what makes the IV center “special” when the Goleta center is still within reach.

According to Myah Mashhadialireza, a UCSB alumna who serves as the Community Spaces Program Manager, the city of Goleta has historically tried to isolate itself from IV, enforcing explicit boundaries between the college town and the larger city. Barney Brantingham, a writer for the Santa Barbara Independent, went as far as to label IV as Goleta’s “unwanted child” in a 2014 opinion piece. It is because of this separation that the establishment of IV’s own community center is so fundamental to the health of its residents. “Goleta and IV are very different. There are very distinct cultural differences. There are very distinct value differences. I think because we are such a unique and progressive community, we deserve a unique and progressive space that is local,” Mashhadialireza said.

Nearly two years later, the Community Center is finding its footing once again.

Myah Mashhadialireza, Community Spaces Program Manager
Accessibility is also an issue, says Marcos Aguilar, Vice President of the IV Community Services District Board (IVCSD). “There’s not always a bus route to make it to Goleta on time. There’s not always a car to share with your friends. It’s not the easiest bike ride,” Aguilar explained. “Bringing the Community Center closer to our neighbors makes everything more accessible.”

BUILDING FROM SCRATCH

Since opening once again in January 2022, the center is boldly reclaiming its space—determined to breathe new life into its once-abandoned walls.

Tasked with both revamping the Community Center and facilitating event planning is Mashhadialireza. “I saw this position and I felt like since COVID really cut my last two years [of college] short I wanted to give back to the community in some way,” she said.

While many of the Community Center’s board and staff members grapple with the bureaucracy of changes in management and other logistical obstacles, Mashhadialireza’s position focuses exclusively on engaging with the community and beautifying the space in the process.

“They just created the position. Nothing else really had it before. They told me, ‘We’re reopening the center again and it’s completely abandoned. Make it alive,’” Mashhadialireza laughed. “So, I hired a contractor to help me put some shelves in and I said, ‘We need some plants in here and we need some light. If you’re gonna go for this rustic vibe it needs to be a greenhouse’.”

Although the novelty of Mashhadialireza’s position enriches creative liberty in terms of quality event planning, she relies heavily on surveys that gauge what the people of IV want. “I want people to feel like they have control over what happens in Isla Vista, and that it’s not some big bureaucracy that they have no say in. I don’t know if people know this, but their tax money goes to doing fun events like these. It’s by the community for the community,” she explained.

For Aguilar, the Community Center is a “very important piece of the Isla Vista puzzle” that has been missing for a long time. Serving on the IVCSD, he works to enhance community engagement through localized public services and resources, using the center as an agent of positive cultural change within IV.

Aguilar is passionate about the center’s impact on the community. “I have a dream of the Community Center being a public forum space where people can come in and congregate and speak their voice. As we have more events and programming, hopefully, residents can feel like, ‘Oh, I can go in there and tell people what needs to happen,’” he said.
A SPACE FOR CONNECTION

Perhaps the most meaningful element of hosting communal events like a salsa class or an open mic gathering is to bridge the gap between college students and permanent residents. “It brings the average college-aged Isla Vista neighbor in greater connection with the rest of our neighbors, like families. We have tons of interesting classes designed for those other demographics that you don’t always think about as a resident unless you’re one of them,” Aguilar said.

It would be a lie to say that college party culture is not an integral facet of IV life—and it would be a lie to say that parents with little children growing up surrounded by it are unbothered.

That’s where the Community Center comes into focus. By providing opportunities for families to witness all that UCSB students bring to the table, the “party animal” stereotype softens, creating space for meaningful connection.

“While I want students to thrive and have a cool space to do all their interests, I also want it to be a place where families feel welcome. IV culture has a really bad reputation for being this party campus and yes, there are parties, but there’s so much more,” Mashhadialireza explained. “Having a space that’s dedicated to that builds such a beautiful, powerful community.”

Hosting fun events is important, but Mashhadialireza is careful not to reduce the space’s purpose to this alone. “We also support a lot of local nonprofits and empower small groups to take on big events. It’s a great place to look for volunteer opportunities and to look for services like CalFresh and mental health resources,” she said.

Both service members believe that the task at hand for the Community Center is to build the space with the tools it needs to blossom. “It’s always evolving because the people are always evolving, but the purpose and intention for the Community Center are the same. It’s just about bringing all these ideas that people have had for so long and letting them thrive,” Mashhadialireza said.

As the Community Center steadily gains traction in the wake of its unexpected hiatus, it has transformed into an emblem of communal strength and resilience. For two years, the pandemic crippled our ability to find solace in making new connections; it stripped us of the foundations that nurture all healthy communities. Today, on the brink of a new horizon, IV residents of all ages gather for Cuban salsa, morning yoga, and computer literacy classes. Parents, children, and college kids rejoice in the togetherness they were so long deprived of—the gift of IV’s first centralized gathering space. 

Marcos Aguilar, Vice President of the IV Community Services District Board
HEY, YOU. YES, YOU—with the long, dirty blonde hair, cystic acne, and crippling anxiety.

It’s me (you?) from the future, writing to offer you some friendly advice.

As a freshman, we lived with two girls in Santa Cruz Hall, Room 2222. Four years later, we’re graduating in June 2022 and turning 22 several months after that. So, in honor of all those 2’s, here are 22 things I wish I could tell you—my absolutely terrified, blissfully unaware freshman-year self.

1. You don’t know shit. Stop trying to impress everyone, nobody is paying that much attention to you. Sorry.

2. Do you actually want to be a Poli Sci major? See above.

3. Always bring your keys to the communal bathroom. Walking to the lobby in your towel to get a spare room key was only funny the first time.

4. When at a party on oceanside DP, always take a moment for yourself on the deck. As you try to make out the horizon between the endless sea and black sky above, breathe in the crisp ocean air. There’s nothing more grounding, comforting, and terrifying than staring out into the dark abyss.

5. Losing your virginity in a bunk bed isn’t so bad.

6. A Green Machine smoothie from the Arbor is not a real meal.

7. Savor Late Night at DLG while you can, before COVID takes it away. There’s
nothing like feasting on ice cream and lukewarm french fries at 10 p.m. with a group of friends that’ll likely disband within a year.

8. You’ll become a regular at Student Health. Let me save you some time—yes, it’s a UTI; no, you don’t need glasses; and TBD about the mold poisoning.

9. Drinking more water will not fix cystic acne. Get on Accutane ASAP. It’ll save you months of reading acne-related Reddit threads as bedtime stories.

10. The version of you that actually takes care of yourself is the most productive, selfless version of you. You may not meet her this year, or even the next, but I promise she’s waiting for you.

11. You can do anything you set your mind to. Except quitting coffee. You’re kidding yourself if you think green tea will cut it.

12. Making out with anonymous frat boys at parties is only acceptable if you steal their 2-ply toilet paper to bring back to the dorms.

13. Being late for the Amtrak every single time stops being cute. Actually, it was never cute to begin with.

14. When COVID hits (and hits again and again), don’t try to use it as an incubator for productivity. You’ll burn out quickly—and begin to resent a lot of what you’re doing. It won’t kill you to slow down.

15. Don’t date the local boy from Goleta. Enough said.

16. Trying to wash out pink hair dye without staining your shower and losing your security deposit? Look no further! Grab your compost bucket, line it with a trash bag, and hold your head over it. Now, call over your roommate to repeatedly pour small bowls of water on your hair until it runs clear. Too niche? Too bad.

17. Own your incompetencies. The growing pile of clothes on your desk chair does not define you.

18. Peeing in the streets of IV is always more rewarding (and impressive) than waiting for a bathroom. Claim it as your party trick.

19. There is nothing in this world that compares to pure, platonic love. Waking up to coffee already poured into your favorite mug. Not knowing whose toothpaste is whose (hint: it’s not yours). Cherishing the morning breakdown of last night’s shenanigans more than the night itself. This kind of love is beautiful. Hold onto it.

20. Call your mom. Call her again.

21. Just because you’re at “sunny UCSB” does not mean you have to be happy all the time. You’re going to have some of your hardest moments here, but you’re always going to come out stronger. Most importantly, you’ll learn to trust yourself.

22. 7/11 sells Marinara sauce. Thank me later.
WHEN SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS BECOME COMMON SENSE

Igniting the Conversation on Disability Justice

WORDS // JANET WANG
PHOTOGRAPHY // DYLAN BUCKLEY DELANEY
DESIGN // SUMMER HADDAWAY

EVERY MORNING, THIRD-YEAR Sophia Lee-Park takes the elevator down from her 6th floor San Joaquin Villages apartment and walks over to the Residential Life Office, on crutches, to retrieve her motorized wheelchair. Lee-Park’s disability inhibits her ability to walk independently for a prolonged period of time, and she’s found that this campus is less than ideal for students like her. In fact, she keeps a running list of infrastructure barriers at UCSB and in IV.

Lee-Park knows that the sidewalk lining Pardall Road is too narrow for her wheelchair, so she instead goes on the road, which is especially dangerous at night with limited lighting. She often has to plan ahead to attend social gatherings, as many of these events are inaccessible when they take place on the grass or at the beach. On campus, Lee-Park notes older buildings lacking automatic openers for heavy doors.

She pointed out the sign at North Hall that reads “Vision for Change,” a plaque dedicated to the student-led movement for ethnic studies programs at the building in the late 1960s. “What I find funny is that the building has a wheelchair sign that doesn’t have a button,” Lee-Park explained, laughing at the irony.

But Lee-Park isn’t the first to experience these access barriers.

ACCESSIBILITY HISTORY

In the late ’70s, UCSB began to increase campus accessibility in response to The Rehabilitation Act, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in federal and federally-funded agencies. Renovations included architectural additions designed for increased physical
diagnosis. Then, a DSP Disability Specialist consults with the student to determine services that help level the field in the learning environment.

As Director of DSP for the past 17 years, Gary White has overseen the program’s expansion, implementing new technologies, and increasing resources as student numbers grew during COVID-19. Currently, the program serves over 2,400 students, nearly quadrupling from when White started almost two decades ago.

White aims to support disabled students and their ongoing success at UCSB and after graduation. “For some of us, we may need a tutor ever so often. Some of us might need someone who’s going to write for us because we have lost some fine motor skills,” he said. “We want to be sure that everyone has the chance, has the ability, to meet whatever potential and whatever is inside of them.”

Beyond DSP, student-led efforts are spearheading the accessibility inclusion conversation on campus.

accessibility, from widening building doorways to lowering water fountains. But even as legal obligations pushed the university to address campus accessibility, one counselor for disabled students described the community as a “forgotten minority,” lacking adequate attention, according to the UCSB Disability Archives.

Since then, UCSB’s Administrative Services Division’s accessibility standards comply with state and federal law, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and University of California guidelines.

EXISTING ACCOMMODATIONS
From offering flexible testing services to American Sign Language interpretation in class, Disabled Students Program (DSP) provides academic accommodations for students impacted by physical or invisible challenges such as those to mobility, psychological well-being and learning. To receive DSP services, students must first obtain official documentation of their disability and formal medical

“The whole social justice model of looking at disabilities takes the term special out of accommodations. They just become common sense.”
“The fight for disability justice is the fight for queer rights and the fight for women’s rights and the fight for black people’s rights and the fight for brown people’s rights.”

FROM DISABILITY AWARENESS TO ADVOCACY

Shortly into her freshman year, Lee-Park started looking for a community of shared disabled experiences and joined the Commission on Disability Access (CODA). But Lee-Park soon realized that more was needed than the existing charity-based framework—instead, structural change was necessary to keep the community afloat.

“A lot of the projects, like having an accessible transportation system on our campus or having an awareness day, those ideas on an administrative level weren’t really getting done. Nobody on the board, at the time when I first came, identified as having a disability or as a disabled person,” said Lee-Park, who is now CODE’s co-chair. That’s when CODA evolved into CODE, the Commission on Disability Equity.

According to CODE’s mission, the addition of equity aims to empower disabled students, establish self-advocacy, and foster community-building. Third-year co-chair Marvia Cunanan explains that moving away from the philanthropy model incorporates disabled experiences and addresses social and systemic issues. “Equity captures the fact that there’s a diverse range of disabilities, and people treat and give attention towards all disabilities but leave underrepresented, invisibilized access needs unmet,” Cunanan said.

Now, CODE follows the “10 Principles of Disability Justice” developed by Sins Invalid, a disability justice performance project. Through this framework, the organization acknowledges that ableism—the discrimination against disabled individuals—is inextricably intertwined with issues of race, gender, sexuality, and class.

Lee-Park and Cunanan aim to establish CODE as a vehicle for driving systemic change, incorporating board positions
that reflect its mission. “We have just a more cohesive team that makes sense for the types of things that we want to achieve when it comes to having visibility on campus, creating systemic change, not just projects that don’t actually address the ableism at the root of the issue,” Cunanan explained.

Instead of merely awareness or charity events, CODE dives deep into the intersections of race and disability by hosting panels in collaboration with groups like UCSB’s Black Women’s Health Collaborative. CODE also fosters cross-disability solidarity through the Disability Community Care Space, a weekly accessible meeting space in the Student Resource Building.

INTERSECTIONALITY AT THE FOREFRONT OF JUSTICE

After third-year Jay Shreedhar stumbled upon CODE through a DSP Discord server, he joined as the Gender and Sexual Equity Outreach Coordinator. In his role, Shreedhar organizes collaborations between CODE and LGBTQ+ or women’s organizations, emphasizing the importance of intersectionality at the forefront of disability justice.

Shreedhar knows the struggle of feeling “disregarded” in an ableist world firsthand. On top of being disabled, Shreedhar’s queer identity causes him to feel like every day is a matter of trying to survive. “When you’re tired of being misgendered, the last thing you want to do is go to the grocery store and get called ‘ma’am’ at the register. For me personally, dealing with chronic pain, it’s even worse,” he said.

Shreedhar says that recognizing the intersections of marginalization—including sexuality and race—is essential to understanding CODE’s movement. “The fight for disability justice is the fight for queer rights and the fight for women’s rights and the fight for black people’s rights and the fight for brown people’s rights,” Shreedhar said. “It’s all connected.”

And for fourth-year Maureen Chavez, CODE’s Racial Justice Outreach Coordinator, fighting for disability justice means dismantling culturally formed expectations of achievement. In Chavez’s Mexican immigrant family, a success mentality was instilled in her from a young age. “If you’re not completely productive and you’re not always grinding, what are you doing?” she questioned, alluding to her family’s standards. In 2021, Chavez received an ADHD diagnosis, and her academic struggles suddenly made sense.

Since then, Chavez has begun the process of exploring her identity as a disabled Mexican woman and learning to ask for help instead. “My family taught independence, like do everything on your own because asking for help is the last resort,” she said. “There’s nothing wrong with people who are disabled, it’s just that society is not built for disabled persons... and if you’re marginalized, there’s more overlapping.”

Jay Shreedhar
REIMAGINING ACCESSIBILITY

Before administrators take the first step to take action—whether that’s renovating an existing building or implementing a new accommodation resource—they need to first listen to the voices that feel the burden of ableist decisions. For Lee-Park, that means prioritizing and making space for disabled experiences in decision-making.

“You have to give up your seat of whatever you’re doing, and be like, ‘What should we do to make it more accessible?’” she questioned. “It’s not that they should give you a seat at the table, they should give up their seat.”

The future of disability justice revolves around the concept of universal design—a world built on foundations of compassion and understanding. It’s a world where accommodations are second nature, where people don’t have to prove their difficulties to have their needs met.

“It makes so that a student with a disability doesn’t need to have an exam accommodation, because there are lots of ways that the student can demonstrate the knowledge that they’ve gained in the class,” White remarked, regarding the future of exam accommodations and flexible learning. “The whole social justice model of looking at disabilities takes the term special out of accommodations. They just become common sense.”
HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED adding a compost bin next to the pile of overflowing garbage sitting at the corner of your pristine Isla Vista kitchen? I’ll admit, inside my own home, we don’t empty our trash nearly as often as we should. Frankly, we don’t even have a recycling bin. The little effort we put into managing our trash takes a toll on our local environment and points to a serious concern concern for managing waste in IV—especially when it comes to food.

To combat food waste, the Isla Vista Compost Collective (IVCC) serves Isla Vistans by doing most of the dirty work when it comes to conscious food consumption, from collecting and creating compost piles to fighting food insecurity.

Sponsored by the Isla Vista Community Relations Committee, the IVCC provides composting services for more than 130 Isla Vista households. Since it was founded in 2017, the IVCC has collected over 50,000 pounds of compost, a number that is still steadily growing. In fact, the IVCC website notes that the organization has diverted up to three tons of food waste from landfills. According to a case study by the Community Environmental Council, Santa Barbara’s Tajiguas Landfill received about 22,744 tons of food surplus in 2017 alone. Unfortunately, this overwhelming weight of food waste is not only emitting harmful gasses into the atmosphere but also negatively impacting the local soil quality.

To bridge the gap between excessive food waste and local food insecurity, IVCC introduces composting as a way to promote conscious food consumption. “Create a plan when grocery shopping, shopping locally and just feeling good about where your food is coming from and promoting a circular food economy through fair trade and buying local as well,” said Chloe McKerr, the student director of Isla Vista Compost Collective. This circular system not only diverts waste from landfills but also helps support local gardens and fights food insecurity.
Originally associated with the Surfrider Foundation, IVCC emerged as a helpful guide for composting through various workshops and programs. Initially, composting can seem like an intimidating practice. “Composting can be a lengthy process that needs to meet specific requirements with specific ratios in order to break down those food scraps,” said Carly Marto, the Isla Vista Compost Collective program manager. But the heavy lifting is done by IVCC’s compost collectors, nicknamed “dirt riders.”

Here’s how it works: houses that sign up for IVCC’s services receive an orange bucket, which they are prompted to fill up with various food wastes according to guidelines provided. Then, every week, dirt riders come by participating houses to pick up the buckets of compost and distribute them throughout IV’s community gardens, churches, and the IV Food Cooperative. This service not only eliminates some of the excessive greenhouse gasses emitted from overflowing landfills, but it also represents an act of community—symbolizing having

“It is taking a step towards a more self-reliant community, one that is working to close our local food loops.”

Katherine McCabe collects household compost.
choice and agency in our food systems. “It is taking a step towards a more self-reliant community, one that is working to close our local food loops,” Marto said.

Composting and waste management also benefits those who struggle with food insecurity. As an unincorporated part of Santa Barbara County, IV faces similar issues of excessive food waste and food insecurity, pointing to a dysfunctional food system. IVCC tries to tackle this issue through a collaborative project with AS Food Bank: Food on Wheels. This quarterly program allows people to donate their non-perishable foods to local food banks. “We coordinate with houses we regularly compost with and we ask them if they have any food donations so it’s really easy to pick it up when we pick up the compost,” said Kat McCabe, a dirt rider at IVCC. This additional service is essential because many times people with excessive food don’t know what to do with them before they go bad. “A barrier in donating unused perishables for people is thinking about it and going through the effort of bringing it, so we facilitate that and make the process a lot smoother,” McCabe explained.

For IVCC, it’s important that the community educates itself on the importance of composting. They hope that IV residents will one day implement their own compost habits independent of the collective’s services. By providing an environmentally-friendly service to the IV community, IVCC’s love for our planet provides a glimmer of hope for a better and greener future.
SLOW YOUR FASHION THIS FALL
Thrifted, Upcycled, and Handmade Back to School Fits

PHOTOGRAPHY + DESIGN // LUCY HOLLEY
GREEN LIGHT ON ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION

MTD’S TEMPORARY SERVICE REDUCTIONS

WORDS // SAM PLASCIENCIA
PHOTOGRAPHY // LUKAS OLESINSKI
DESIGN // DYLON LASHER
**THIRD-YEAR JULIA** Makarov schedules her mornings and afternoons around making it to the bus stop on time. Access card in hand, Makarov’s walk to the local bus stop is easily accessible on Storke and Willow Grove—close to her university-owned apartment at San Joaquin Villages. When Makarov recently missed the bus by one minute, she wasn’t able to catch the next one for another half hour.

As early as January 2022, the Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District (MTD) has faced cancellations and delays, causing uncertainty for local passengers. While labor challenges have been a nationwide issue, a decrease in available transit operators has affected the Santa Barbara community. On April 6, 2022, the MTD published a press release detailing significant service reductions in service lines.

As a response to the bus operator workforce shortage, MTD General Manager Jerry Estrada explained that the lack of drivers would result in negative effects. “The reliability of our schedules is crucial and due to the current labor shortage, the temporary reduction of service is a necessary step,” Estrada wrote in the press release. As the MTD continues to recruit bus operators, the organization is met with continuous retirements and declines in available workers. “These temporary reductions will allow us the time to staff up appropriately and return to higher levels of service later this year,” Estrada explained.

At UCSB, the bus is a major mode of transportation that stands out among bicycle culture, skateboards, and electric scooters. Free for students with a valid access card, the MTD bus line offers several stops throughout Goleta and Isla Vista.

In just the first three months of 2022, a ridership report from the MTD revealed that 306,114 rides were taken by UCSB students. The North Hall outbound stop saw about 27 students arrive per hour, with a total of 206,038 individuals taking a ride during that time span. Bus lines offer rides from the UCSB area to a range of locations in Goleta and Santa Barbara, such as the Camino Real Marketplace, State Street, and Santa Catalina Hall. With just one swipe, over 42 transit routes, and 719 bus stops, the bus has proven to be an efficient way to get around. Now, the reductions put a large number of students who depend on the Santa Barbara MTD in limbo, searching for other methods of reliable transportation.

**When Makarov missed the bus by one minute, she wasn’t able to catch one for another half hour.**

**WHAT IS THE MTD?**

Since 1969, the Santa Barbara MTD has enhanced the mobility of residents, commuters, and visitors by offering a safe and environmentally responsible transit service, according to its mission statement. MTD’s Planning and Marketing Manager Hillary Blackerbery makes clear the district’s resilience to this matter. For about five years, Blackerbery has overseen route planning and scheduling along with managing the social media, branding, and media relations for the MTD. She expresses the challenge that the essential workers face as they keep things running, even though they have their own lives and try their best to remain safe. “It’s been sort of an honor to see how people have risen to the occasion and I’m not surprised. It’s always heartening to see the folks who work at the MTD really care about their job and what it means for the rest of the community,” Blackerbery said. Though the numbers of these essential workers have dropped immensely in recent months—from the peak of 140 to around
115 drivers—Blackerbery recognizes the dedicated team without a doubt.

In the planning department, Blackerbery has adopted a set of services that the MTD can handle with their current workforce. It’s proven difficult to reach a sustainable place for all riders to feel accommodated without putting the drivers on overtime. As a bus rider herself, Blackerbery understands the service limitations firsthand, and she’s committed to keeping the public updated. In the meantime, local residents struggle to adjust to the new and reduced times.

**IMPACT ON STUDENTS**

Makarov expresses how she relies on the bus almost every day to get to her destination, especially since the stop is across the street from her home. Due to the delays and new schedule, Makarov has waited on the bus bench several times so she could catch the next bus. “Maybe I’ll use a Bird if I didn’t want to walk, but I’d rather wait,” she said.

Similarly, third-year Zoë Witherspoon once found the bus the most convenient way to arrive on time for class. With just a short walk from her apartment to the Santa Catalina stop, Witherspoon still misses the bus by a couple of minutes. “I usually try to get to the bus stop 30 minutes before my class even starts. Sometimes, even before 30 minutes. It’s been really sad because I leave at 1:30 p.m. for my 2 p.m. class and see the bus leaves and then another bus doesn’t come until 1:50 p.m. I just have to figure out the best time to leave and try to catch one,” Witherspoon said, explaining how she schedules her bus rides.

**TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES FOR CAMPUS COMMUTING**

As a bike-friendly campus, it’s clear that the bus isn’t the only way students can get around. Commuting in other ways reduces traffic congestion, car emissions, parking troubles, and more. One way UCSB promotes travel resources is through the Transportation Alternatives
Program (TAP). The program serves those who primarily commute to UCSB by foot, bike, skateboard, and more. Specifically, TAP offers an array of services in order to accommodate various needs. TAP’s Program Manager Jamey Wagner facilitates the program with a primary goal in mind: green your ride. For those who want to learn more about the program, Wagner offers commuter consultations.

One popular transportation alternative is the vanpool. With over 100 users and 11 vans, this option offers a money-saving mode to arrive on campus for those who commute long distances. The vanpool functions as a large cooperative carpool that makes stops in various surrounding cities such as Camarillo, Lompoc, Santa Maria, Solvang, Thousand Oaks, and Ventura. Students, faculty, and staff are all eligible to use the vanpool program, subject to transportation availability. Another form of transportation that TAP offers is ridesharing—a real-time, dynamic process that allows travelers to connect with others when they are looking or offering rides.

These modes all enable commuters to get from one place to another if they find themselves inconvenienced by the reduced MTD bus schedule. While uncertainty among bus commuters persists, there are other alternatives provided at UCSB for those traveling extended distances. Of course, the one reliable source of transportation at UCSB will always be a bike. Picking up your rusty wheels once in a while to make your way to campus can become a resolution of sorts for those who rely on the bus. To green your ride means to plan ahead and look forward, especially to the students who live down El Colegio with a 10-minute ride to campus ahead of them. Although arriving red-faced and sweaty at your 9 a.m. isn’t everyone’s cup of tea—it’s something that students, especially here, are used to by now.
DEAR DIARY,

A REFLECTION ON MY PLACE IN ISLA VISTA

Feb 22, 2022

I’m too scared to admit this to anyone out loud, so I’ll write this letter to myself. I don’t feel at home in Isla Vista. The weather is always nice, I fall asleep to the sound of the ocean, and everyone around me is so happy. Why do I feel this way? I’d like to think it’s not because I’m a stick in the mud, like the people who complain about loud parties on Reddit. No offense to those who don’t like loud parties. Maybe the fact that I read Reddit posts regularly says something about me in and of itself. Whenever I walk on campus I feel like people can sense that I don’t belong here—my arms don’t swing with the tempo of my steps, I don’t know whether to look at my feet or straight ahead, and the wind makes my hair too frizzy. I’m adjusting it too often. Can anyone else sense my discomfort? I think they can. Maybe they can’t. I’m overthinking it.

March 1, 2022

I’m going to a party my friend invited me to on Friday. I’m supposed to dress up as a cowboy. Will anyone else be dressed up? It would be embarrassing to be the only one dressed up. I know I’ll want to leave as soon as I get there. I’ll go because I know I’m supposed to be having fun. Maybe I’ll get a few candid pictures with my friends and post them on Instagram so my high school friends can see that I’m having fun in college. It’s not true. The pressure of knowing that I should be having a good time makes it even harder for me to actually have a good time when I know that I’m not. I wonder if other people feel this way, or if it’s just me.
April 15, 2022
I find it hard to relate to myself anymore. Are my medications finally working? Maybe 75 milligrams of Zoloft hit the sweet spot for me. There’s no added pep in my step, but I’m not miserable all the time either. I’m...content? Or so I think.

April 18, 2022
I made it onto Hot Ticket today, the Instagram page that posts people’s outfits they wore to campus. It might be a slight form of voyeurism, but I’ll ignore that. It was definitely the highlight of my week—perhaps the extent of my legacy at UCSB. I’m hanging out with new people that I’ve always wanted to get closer to. I say this with caution, but I’m having fun. The all-encompassing feeling of discomfort in my own skin is fading. I’m letting go of the feeling that there is always a judgmental eye on me.

May 16, 2022
I think the judgmental eye was just my own. I’m learning how to accept myself. There’s no shame in being introverted, in not always “cliquing” with everyone I meet. Maybe I don’t necessarily know who I am yet, but I also don’t think that I need to know. I don’t resent IV the way I used to. It’s finally getting warmer. I do my homework sitting on the lawn instead of shutting myself inside all day. Even the occasional gloomy day doesn’t come with that empty feeling anymore. It’s fine if I’m the only one dressed up at a party. Because you know what? I love being extra. The longer days bring me this feeling that I can take things slowly, that the day won’t escape me, leaving me feeling like I’ve wasted it. I finally feel at ease. Things are alright.
HAIKUS OF

ILLUSTRATION + CURATION + DESIGN // HALEY WALKER

Just took a midterm
Dinner at Carrillo hit
I go to sleep now
— Simone

The sunshine greets me
With warmth, is this not “the life?”
Wait, do I have class?
— Danny

On each modest lawn
Roomates become carpenters
Forging deepest bonds
— Sam

Every meal is shared
Under blue skies, free as birds
Laughter ringing clear
— Sam

Yucky earth walkers
I do not understand why
You should wash your feet
— Amy

Ocean waves crashing
Deja Vu? Or go back home?
Pre-gaming DP
— Alvin
Acorn park art sale:
The thrifter finds the crafter.
She will make him love.
— Mira

Wine drunks flock below
My balcony as I watch.
Tour de Franzia.
— Caleb

The starving student
prays to the orange lightning.
God rides a scooter.
— Mira

Peering through mountains
Warmly brimming nostalgia
Morning sun rises
— Joshua

The crystal ship sits,
Anchored as I’ll be. In time
I will swim to it.
— Caleb

Picnics by the shore
Divisions melt in the surf
Moonlit parties glow
— Sam

ISLA VISTA
A seemingly ordinary, eight bedroom gray house sits at the center of the 66 block on Abrego Road in Isla Vista. While its weathered exterior may fail to catch the eye of an everyday passerby, a bustling community exists within—the collective of Isla Vista’s Faux-Op residents.

COOPERATIVE LIVING IN ISLA VISTA

In order to understand the Faux-Op, we’ll need to begin with an overview of Isla Vista’s well-known Housing Cooperative system. Back in 1976, a group of UCSB students formed the Santa Barbara Student Housing Cooperative (SBSHC) out of concern over high rent costs and poor living conditions in Isla Vista. Today, there are five student housing co-ops within the SBSHC in Isla Vista—all of which strive to offer low-cost housing regardless of gender, race, social, political or religious affiliation, according to the SBSHC website.

Although the Faux-Op isn’t affiliated with the Housing Cooperative, it still operates like a traditional co-op in its structure and reasonable pricing. However, affordability isn’t the only thing that brings students to the Faux-Op—many are drawn in by the sense of community it provides.
WHAT'S A FAUX-OP?
Known as the “Faux-Op” or “the Faux,” this communal living house has been operating for 11 years. Members of the Faux-Op share the responsibility of keeping up the house, setting and enforcing house rules, and holding each other accountable to complete their assigned chores. Each member is assigned a specific chore each quarter—cooking dinner, grocery shopping, cleaning the bathrooms, and cleaning the kitchen, to name a few. In exchange for rent payment and completing their chores, the Faux-Op provides home-cooked dinners and groceries throughout the week. New members are brought in through an application and interview process which cycles throughout the year.

DAILY LIFE IN THE FAUX
Like any home, the Faux-Op has established traditions and routines passed down over the years. One well known tradition is “bean night,” an open mic night held at the Faux-Op, where members and friends sing, tell jokes, and share poetry while they eat pots of beans cooked by members of the house. Other traditions include blowing in a conch shell to signal dinner each night, hanging out in the garden, and making art together.

“Sure, yeah, there will be people in the kitchen naked, but not everybody.”

Until recently, the Faux-Op appointed a president every six months voted in by members. In an effort to make the Faux-Op more democratic, the president position was replaced with a few mediators responsible for handling conflict and settling disputes in the house. In addition to the mediators, there’s a myriad of other roles: a finance manager, chore manager, and a house coordinator who’s in charge of recruiting new members. House meetings are held every Sunday to discuss how the house is running that week.

Jack Bocheff, a fourth-year student at UCSB, joined the Faux-Op when he transferred to the university in the midst of the pandemic. He recalled the application for the Faux-Op being “a bold disclaimer that it’s a little chaotic,” asking questions like, “Are you comfortable living in a clothing optional household?”

Yes, you read that right. Arguably the most unique aspect of the Faux-Op is that it’s clothing optional—a custom meant to encourage body positivity and acceptance. “Sure, yeah, there will be people in the kitchen naked, but not everybody. I knew that coming in,” said Kendall James, a fourth-year student at UCSB who lived at the Faux-Op this past year.
CREATING A COMMUNITY HOME

Bocheff says the social element of the Faux-Op is what initially attracted him to the idea of becoming a member. “I wanted an immediate social outlet and friends immediately available, and the Faux-Op provided that,” Bocheff said.

In the five months Bocheff lived there, the eight bedroom house had around 22 people living in it. To say the least, the adjustment to living with so many people was far from easy. “It was a dramatic shift for me...there’s a diverse group of people; you’re exposed to people of different cultures and experiences. It was interesting getting to experience different energy levels in my immediate living space. It was jarring,” Bocheff said.

Despite its challenges, Bocheff says living at the Faux-Op has opened his eyes to a different side of the UCSB community. “It made me feel like there’s a greater amount of diversity at UCSB,” Bocheff explained. The Faux-Op doesn’t require members to be students, so members range from age 18 to some in their 30s. “One of the better things is getting that ‘people experience’ and your tolerance changes and you become more knowledgeable about how to interact with people. I made lasting relationships for sure and met people who are now role models,” Bocheff said.

James said that at the Faux-Op affected her sense of belonging at UCSB. “I think what initially attracted me to the Faux was that it was a safe space for queer people, and that’s not something I necessarily have found at UCSB,” she explained. James said that prior to living at the Faux-Op, she was involved in Greek life, where she felt a great deal of discomfort surrounding her sexuality. In contrast, the Faux-Op provided an inclusive space. “The Faux is a very queer space, and that was a really nice thing to have, being in a house where being queer is the norm,” James said.

Students in Isla Vista today carry the same housing concerns as those who started the Santa Barbara Student Housing Cooperative back in 1976. Over the years, the Faux-Op’s goal has always remained the same: to provide an affordable, community-oriented housing experience that is a safe space. If you want to join a community of open-minded people in an exciting cooperative living experience, you know where to find Isla Vista’s Faux-Op.
YOU DON’T JOIN MUJER, YOU ARE MUJER

Creating Latinx Cultural Space

WORDS // CHLOE KIMMEL
DESIGN // VEDA GUJRAL

ANGEL PONCE WAS THE FIRST of their family to go to college. Now a fourth-year at UCSB, the Art and Sociology double major reflects on the added social pressure of transitioning to college as Latinx. “There were so many obstacles to overcome,” said Ponce, whose parents’ families emigrated from Nicaragua and El Salvador. “It was very difficult for me to process on top of being a brown-presenting person.”

For Ponce, finding community through MUJER (Mujeres, Unidas, por Justicia, Educacion, y Revolucion) was essential as they navigated UCSB for the first time. All students come to campus searching for community, but for Latinx students, this can mean the difference between feeling supported and disregarded during their time in college.

CREATING INTENTIONAL SPACE

For Yuriko Chavez, second-year Chicana/o Studies major and secretary of MUJER, culture shock at UCSB came as a big surprise during her first summer on campus.

“At home, I really didn’t think twice about identity in that same sense,” Chavez said. “I think that was kind of the
biggest culture shock, realizing this is what it means to be a brown body. You stand out just by existing.”

MUJER strives to create a social safety net for Latinx students who may otherwise feel ostracized at UCSB. Members hold weekly meetings at El Centro Arnulfo Casillas, a communal meeting space that has long served various Chicanx/Latinx activists and organizations on campus. Every Thursday, students gather to discuss their unique experiences and emotional well-being in an affirming space.

The mission statement of MUJER promises to increase the recruitment and retention of Latina women in higher education, as well as support the mental and physical well-being of the group’s members through various programming.

Conference recruited 200 local Latina high school students to participate in workshops and receive mentorship from MUJER members, according to MUJER’s club documents.

EMBRACING INTERSECTIONALITY

MUJER’s decades-long legacy at UCSB has historically evolved to the needs and ideas of its current membership. Back in 1974, MUJER emerged from a larger Latino campus organization called El Congreso. Female-identifying students recognized the need for a space to focus on the unique needs and experiences of Latina women, who face additional gender and racial barriers to professional success. From there, MUJER began organizing to motivate and empower young Latinas,

“When other people in this space were being vulnerable and comfortable taking up that space for themselves, it made me feel like I could do the same.”

“We’ve had so many different types of workshops, discussing gender binaries, healing through art and poetry, discussing impostor syndrome, and also navigating microaggressions,” Ponce explained.

MUJER also provides resources for Latinx students who are first-generation or come from low-income families. “We’re able to create the kind of support systems that students need to be able to move through a four-year institution,” Restrepo said.

Beyond UCSB, MUJER’s influence extends well into the surrounding community. Through events and conferences with local high schoolers, the organization introduces younger Latinx generations to college opportunities. Between 1995 and 2019, The Mujercitas hosting rallies under Storke Tower, and planning educational conferences for local Latina high schoolers, according to MUJER’s official club documents.

“So often when resources are being allocated, when organizing is happening, very often the needs of people that are marginalized by gender, at that time, specifically women, weren’t being met or even addressed,” explained Isabella Restrepo, graduate student and advisor for MUJER.

Shining a light on intersectional barriers is a major facet of MUJER’s work, and one element the organization’s members are especially proud of. Emely Hernandez-Vega, a fourth-year Political Science major and the club’s technical coordinator, values MUJER as a compassionate community
space for all Latinx identities.

“It’s really central, maybe it’s a little bit unsaid too because we all just come together and we all just kind of immediately acknowledge our intersectional identities,” Hernandez-Vega said.

MUJER is intentionally designed without a hierarchical structure, fostering unity and trust among members through horizontal leadership. This sense of closeness is enhanced by centralizing the ideas and experiences of each member—ensuring that nobody is overlooked or forgotten. For Ponce, MUJER stands out as a space on campus that actually lives up to its promises.

“I’ve been in other Latinx organizations, and it almost feels like we’re centering white supremacy, in both professionalism and networking and navigating academia,” Ponce said. “But we’re community-oriented. It’s not about the individual. It’s about how we uplift each other and continue to do that work.”

A COMMUNITY-ORIENTED SAFETY NET

The power of community and vulnerability have a profound impact on members of MUJER. For Ponce, MUJER has served as an essential safe space for growth and healing through her most difficult moments at UCSB.

“When I had participated in events and different discussions at MUJER, there were topics about trauma and self-love and all of these different types of healing,” Ponce said.

Decades of community work have culminated in a safe, stable environment here at UCSB, where Latinx students can lean on a support system and benefit from the collective acknowledgment of MUJER members’ lived experiences.

“That’s something that I’m really grateful for that I discovered in MUJER,” Ponce said. “I felt like when other people in this space were being vulnerable and comfortable with taking up that space for themselves, it made me feel like I could do the same.”
WORD MAGAZINE
INT 185ST, THE CREATION OF THIS MAGAZINE

This issue of WORD: Isla Vista Arts & Culture Magazine is brought to you by the student artists and writers in INT 185ST and its partner SEAL campus organization. We welcome new writers, designers, photographers and artists from all majors.

MAGIC LANTERN FILMS
FILM/MEDIA 119ML, ISLA VISTA FILM EVENTS

Magic Lantern Films teaches the ins and outs of film programming using the IV Theater as a lab. Students gain experience in budgeting, publicizing, researching, theater management, and curating, culminating in the execution of screenings that come out of students’ own pitches.

IV LIVE!
THEATER 42/142, PR AND ON-SITE EVENT MANAGEMENT

Experience promoting and producing weekly Improvability comedy shows along with additional live performances in Isla Vista. Learn backstage and front-of-the-house skills. Explore public relations, advertising, and production management in this real-world setting.

[Not Necessarily]
SHAKESPEARE IN THE PARK
THEATER 194A, GROUP STUDIES IN ACTING AND DIRECTING

Spring Quarter only
Experience theater by acting and producing it. Students rehearse, act, create costumes, sets, and finally perform their work during the final week of classes. All majors welcome!

For more information, go to our website:
https://ivarts.ihc.ucsb.edu/ or email: ich-ivarts@ucsb.edu
My Thoughts During All-Nighters
// PRIYA RAMESH

Is too little better than none?

Palms’ pressure on eyes
ease strain, but fingernails
remind of waived relief.

Crying is lost time.

If open eyes push limits,
how could I meet
conditions for sleep?

I can’t keep doing this.
Consequences meant to
educate action, I resent
learning through pain.

How is it already 6?

How could I lose pace
when body pays the price?

When will I stop living
off naps between deadlines?

Regret is a luxury
I will pay for later.

my long lost soul
// WENN ORTUNO-CORTEZ

my long lost soul
seeks redemption
for that I have been condemned
to this utter fixation
to discern the embrace of the soil
that runs below me.

my roots search for the warm earth
to only find dullness
since my lines are foreign
to this garden of a forest.

my bloodline rushes
through the Rio Grande
and the caress is that of rocks
that only hold me for a second
until they let me drop
to the unstoppable cry of the ocean.

my time is that of wind
and my tree can only stand for so long
because there is nothing left
no one left.

because I cannot stop the wind
because my roots do not have a face.

because it is time.
Blood line
// MAREN REED

send me a message
waxing crescent
of nurturing
blood ministry
mother moon is tough
not like mother mary
with precision
weed out feelings
into the space
between my body
down where the heart resides
in a current with everyone like me
a stream that stings
blood orange
born with years of pain
already within
I did not seek
born from life and love
to seek this love
I don’t look far
all the lives
I let die
all the deaths
I let live
I trace to my womb
where everyone has something to say

learning numbers
// YAN LEI

one to two and two to three
I loved connect the dots
when I was a kid

and now
I have it with me
through your back
your shoulders
and your face

as if paper refreshed to soft skin
and the ink was running out
I pour in a mix of orange and blue
in replacement

some compare them to constellations
but to me
they’re fun
a reminder to my young heart

that you are what I dreamt of

Morning Dove
// SASHA SENAL

my eyes:
a wound
undone
by your quiet

when—a mourning dove
weeps beside
like spring’s sheath

a melody sears
under our breath

as we learn to sing along
- Raccoon
- Bong
- Shovel
- Hummingbird
- Mask
- Skateboard
- 7 red solo cups
- Wetsuit
- Broken mirror
- Hanging shoes
Isla Vista’s Comedy Crew

Every Monday Night At

Rockfire Grill, a diverse group of Isla Vistans congregates on the outside patio around an open mic. The audience packs tightly under the warmth of the fires of tall patio lamps, eating and drinking amidst the noise of overlapping chatter. As comics take the stage, jokes about anything from failed relationships to racial relations prompt laughter from attendees throughout the night who sit with their chairs turned to face the mic.

Standing by the microphone are the designated weekly entertainers—a group of comedians from Laughology, UCSB’s stand-up comedy club. Between sets, audience members converse and laugh with the comedians (even when their punchlines don’t land). Through the clapping and cheering, it’s clear that Isla Vista’s support for local comics is unconditional.

One of Laughology’s board members and performers is Chris Williams, a transfer and non-traditional student at UCSB. Being a part of Laughology was an integral part of finding a community for Williams—both as a student and as a comic. Growing up, Williams would always watch stand-up comedians on TV. From a young age, he knew he wanted to be one, but was too scared to chase what felt like an impossible dream. After being pushed on stage at an open mic in Goleta, Williams hasn’t stopped cracking jokes since. “I always tell people, comedy is what I do first and school is what I do second,” Williams said.

Having performed both in LA and IV, he believes there’s something very unique about the comedy audience in our small Santa Barbara community. “There’s a sort of higher brow, elevated way of thinking that comes with being at a great school and people who are looking for social change,” he said. “You get that dynamic of party people who will laugh at a good sex joke and
people who will be really quiet when you say something offensive.”

For Laughology president Jack Scotti, his favorite part of comedy is writing jokes. “My goal isn’t to be some big famous comedian,” he said. “I don’t care if I’m the one that makes someone laugh so much as if what I [wrote] made someone laugh.” To Scotti, there’s no feeling in the world like writing a joke, testing it, and seeing it bring people joy.

Scotti feels that Laughology is important because of the need for more comedy in Santa Barbara. There are only two open mics in the area beside theirs, and Scotti wants to bring comedy to not just students, but other Santa Barbara locals. Williams shares this sentiment, which has even led him to start his own production company—Let Loose Comedy—which hosts comedy shows in downtown Santa Barbara. “I think that was a way for me to give back to SB and honor my time here at UC Santa Barbara,” he said.

According to Williams, comics look at the world from a different perspective than most. Approaching cultural incidents from an often negative or unexpected point of view, comedians look for a take that can be uncomfortable for people to think about. Being able to make people laugh about something uncomfortable makes comedy a great vessel for thought. “Comedy can unlock a place that people don’t always want to go in their mind,” he said.

This quality is true not only for stand-up but also in the world of improv. Cian Martin, a longtime member of UCSB’s improvisational comedy troupe, Improvability, views improv as a kind of puzzle. “It’s seeing what we have in front of us and what else is true of the world,” he explained. “What’s an interesting twist is that people don’t see it coming, but it makes full sense.”

Martin doesn’t think of himself as a comedian. Instead, he sees doing improv more as playing games and telling stories on stage. “If people laugh, love it, that’s the goal,” he said. “But for me, it’s just fun.” Martin never planned to participate in any kind of theater in college, having grown up with parents highly involved in the field. Through a serendipitous twist of fate and an overheard conversation about Improvability, he ended up becoming a member in 2019, and has been doing weekly Friday night shows ever since.

The pandemic took a toll on the team, with team members reduced from eight to three by the time things began to return to normal. It was questionable if the team would even survive, according to Martin, who says that “Zoomprov” was extremely difficult. A lot of what Improvability does relies on moving through physical spaces and active audience participation, both of which were hard to achieve online.

Improvability was far from alone in its virtual retention struggles. During the pandemic, all Laughology activities came to a screeching halt. The club was essentially left dormant until the end of 2021. Scotti has been leading the effort to return Laughology to its former glory ever since.
As of Spring 2022, Laughology is very small, with around 10 active members, according to Scotti. One of the hardest parts of running the club has been retaining members, and he says the future goal is to focus on recruitment.

Ultimately, what kept Improvability going through it all was friendship. By making sure that the members were friends first, the team dynamics followed naturally, Martin said. His favorite part of Improvability is the ensemble of student performers, who spend countless hours together both preparing for shows and just hanging out. “We genuinely just get along so well,” Martin said. “Having that trust and camaraderie and knowing onstage and off, whatever you do you will be supported. You will be loved.”

Improv in itself is inherently a vulnerable activity. Comedic performances and skits are based largely off of audience suggestions, which are impossible to predict beforehand. “You can’t think ahead,” Martin explained. “Aspects of yourself will come forward whether you want them to or not.”

This vulnerability requires the team members to build so much trust onstage that it readily transfers offstage. Martin believes that doing improv requires active listening, building things up rather than tearing them down, and a willingness to give everything you’ve got and try your best at all times. For Martin, Improvability has given him the confidence to do things he might not otherwise do. “It’s because I know, ‘Hey, I improvised a three-act space odyssey with no preparation,’” he said. “I can give a presentation on a book I sort of understand.” Especially after doing improv on Zoom, Martin feels everything else is easier in comparison.

For Teagan Hart, a fellow member of Improvability, one of the best parts of the art is that you can’t mess up. As opposed to performing a play where you have to know your lines, there’s nothing you have to know beforehand when doing improv. “It’s very creatively freeing,” Hart said. “You can literally do anything you want.”

It’s also impossible to recreate. “You only do it once and it’ll never be the same again...That’s kind of what makes it magical,” she said.

Hart believes improv isn’t just limited to those on the team. “Everyone does improv,” she said. “There’s no script for this conversation, but we’re doing just fine. Every day is improv.”

Comedy can mean a lot of things to a lot of different people in IV. Maybe it’s a form of entertainment for audience members at open mics on Monday nights or improv shows on Friday nights. It could be a chance to test out new jokes for the first time, express yourself on stage, or find a community of people to riff off your jokes and help you tell funnier ones. Either way, the comedy scene in Isla Vista and Santa Barbara is guaranteed to keep laughter alive. “If you’ve ever even thought about doing comedy, you should do it,” says Williams, “[IV is] the perfect place to do it—such a supportive atmosphere.”

“There’s no script for this conversation, but we’re doing just fine. Everyday is improv.”
I Grew up on Tales of Isla Vista. My mom graduated from UCSB in 1990, followed by her brother a year after. When I came home after the first year, I was bombarded with questions from her, my uncle, and family friends about what the campus was like now: Do they still sell sausage rolls in front of the library? Is there still a pub downstairs from the student union? Does KP still throw fundraisers at the base of Storke Tower?

Honestly, it annoyed me. Every time I answered “no”, it felt like I was letting them down for missing out on an important part of The UCSB Experience. It felt like their memories eclipsed those I was making myself. Yet, when returning back to campus as a COVID-fearing, mostly homebound, party retired fourth-year, I found myself wondering the same types of questions: Do the new students still play die? Are they still counting seven when they hit the wine bag? Are there freshmen still being woken up at 3 a.m. by someone screaming “Fuck FT” as they drive by?

Originally, I planned to investigate the manner. I did the research, I interviewed UCSB students of all ages on the biggest traditions of IV—the good, the bad, and the ugly. It would be a nostalgic level letter, a chronicle of the Gaucho’s greatest hits graciously titled: “What Comes After Six Again: The loved and lost traditions of Isla Vista.”

But it turns out the interviews don’t always tell the story you’re looking for. Whether I asked people about their favorite traditions or parts of IV culture, almost no one brought up any local customs big enough to be named. Even older students who had known of newer traditions didn’t seem to hold the same reverence for them as my mom or uncle had for theirs. Most of the largest traditions from the last decade—Fight Night, Floatopia, the Undie Run, IV Loop – have fallen out of popularity.

So then what does everybody nowadays remember Isla Vista for? What will I reminisce on ten years from now, deep in the annals of corporate nepotism, when I meet a fellow alumnus by the water cooler? If not by thunderous screams of seven,

The burritos aren’t what make Freebirds at 2 a.m. special.
Of course, people talked about the parties. My interviewees also mentioned the diversity in comparison to their hometowns, the friendliness of fellow students, and the opportunity to be so close to their friends. However, those things are true for most college towns, and there’s enough that’s been said about the never-ending parties of Isla Vista. I have plenty of fond memories of Friday nights, but I wanted to know what people treasured beyond the die and day drinking. Plus, not everyone I talked to went to parties, and others didn’t always like the culture that surrounded them. Most importantly, when I asked my interviewees what they would like to preserve for future students or what memory they’d miss the most, almost all of them mentioned the surrounding nature, beaches, and sunsets.

And I know, that is far from a satisfying answer to all the lost traditions of old. The beach has always been here and if anyone was asked to describe UCSB, “close to the beach” would probably be the second answer after “party school.” Yet, the beach, the bluffs, and the sunset views are a contrast to the rest of Isla Vista. This 1.8 mi square of land lets us be close to our friends, the thin walls leak sounds of life that never leave you lonely, and on any night you can be shoulder to shoulder dancing with strangers if you wanted to. But for the times you don’t, the sunset offers a reprieve from everything else.

Part of why the beach seems to be distinctly special is that it’s so separate from the people of Isla Vista. Even the interviewees that didn’t necessarily like the culture here, still said they would miss the surrounding nature. Whether it’s Goleta Pier, Franceschi Park, Campus Point, or Lizard’s Mouth, the nature around here is a beautiful place to go to be alone with yourself or alone with others. Even on the days that there are dozens of other people at Sands, when it hits 7:30, that view of the sunset feels like it was carved just for you.

And yeah, I wouldn’t necessarily call finding any piece of greenery outside of the 6x11 street grid of Isla Vista a “tradition” per say, but I would call it memorable. Some students said that their favorite moments were from just going on drives with friends, getting food at night, or watching movies with their housemates.

What will I reminisce on ten years from now, deep in the annals of corporate nepotism, when I meet a fellow alumnus?
Maybe my mom is so fond of all of those old traditions because they stood out from the humdrum of everyday classes. They’re moments of escape that we give names to so they can feel unique and be shared with future generations.

Some traditions may not be as strange as gathering on the sidewalk with dozens of others to watch a roach infested box spring turn to ash, nor will the local park pop-up shops go down as a cultural staple, but they are special to us because we feel like they are. The burritos aren’t what makes Freebirds at 2 a.m. special (the nachos might be though). It’s the bike ride under the street lights, the laughs you have with your friends after sitting down, and the freedom to forget what will happen in the morning that can make the moment feel irreplaceable.

Maybe these musings on tradition are just the anxious words of this departing senior. I didn’t think much about making memories in my first two years at UCSB, but when I came back to IV after COVID, I couldn’t help but feel like I had missed out on something. Two quarters later that feeling has somewhat faded away.

My favorite memories of Isla Vista are smoking and sleeping over in the dorms on Thursdays, listening to music and looking at the sky from the top of the parking structure at the SRB, and hosting hotpot in my living room with camp burners. Those moments don’t all have names to be called by, nor will they make any top ten list of UCSB traditions, but I hope they’ll hold up in my head when I think about the time I spent here. No matter how small, specific, few, or brief our moments are, I hope we all have a few that are worth remembering in the future.
YOU REALLY SHOULD HAVE BEEN HERE YESTERDAY...

PHOTOGRAPHY + DESIGN // DYLAN BUCKLEY DELANEY
Starring:
Trey
Evan
Ben
Isabel
Christy
Janna
Alex
WHAT IMPRESSED YOU most when you entered Isla Vista for the first time? For me, the answer is food. All on one street, there’s Woodstock’s Pizza, Deja Vu, Sushiya Express, Kaiju, and Su’s Bowl, to name just a few. Over the past few decades, restaurants have changed their locations, names, and owners. However, when years pass, the moments spent in college and the times spent hunting for food in Isla Vista may strike your mind. Deep inside, you may find out that you still remember those one or two restaurants in your heart. Indeed, individuals have a special bonding with specific restaurants in our community, and some of their stories are pretty intriguing. As for me, I’ve developed an unexpected bond with one particular restaurant and its food, giving me a space for community and a taste of home.

When I stumbled into Lao Wang for the first time in Fall 2019, I didn’t know what to expect—but it certainly wasn’t a sorry excuse for my favorite dish. I’d just arrived on campus and, after getting my student ID, my peers suggested we eat lunch nearby in IV. After searching through the town’s limited selection of Asian cuisine, we eventually decided on Lao Wang.

When we arrived, I skinned through the menu to happily find my favorite dish—Malatang, a common type of Chinese street food hotpot. It took me back to my hometown in Nanjing, when I’d go study at the downtown library before eating at Yang Guofu Malatang nearby. The traditional restaurant selling Malatang has shelves of vegetables, meats, fish balls, noodles, and plenty of toppings. The customers would line up and choose some raw food to fill their plastic bowls. Then, they’d hand the
plastic bowl to the cook, choose a soup base, and wait for the dish to be served.

So, it really surprised me when I first came to Lao Wang. There were no shelves, no plastic bowls, and no cooks to ask for your choice of soup base. The only thing available was a menu that listed a minuscule selection of choice of food, soup bases, and drinks. They do not offer wide Vermicelli, instant noodles, or crab sticks—all components I’d typically associate with Malatang. I asked my peers, “Who will eat malatang in this way?” I thought I would never go back to this place. But ironically, it became the restaurant I visited most during my college years.

After class, I’d ride my pink bike across the campus and stop by the restaurant for a quick meal. I remember the time when I finished research in the lab and rushed to Lao Wang, the moment when I Facetimed my family on the oak table outside. One day, I said goodbye to my peer after class, only to run into her five minutes later at none other than Lao Wang. To say the least, the restaurant has given me a taste of home away from home and a place for community and connection.

Another reason I always gravitated to Lao Wang is the limited selection of Asian food in Isla Vista. The lamb soup, spicy dry pot, and steamed buns in Su’s Bowl are really nice, but the owner sets the price too high. Who will spend 16 dollars to get six buns? Kaiju is good—the Hainanese chicken bowl once offered large amounts of chicken and sauces, but they changed their menu last year. They now only serve boxed meals. Mojo is another gathering place for my friends and I. We will have cups of honey jasmine green milk tea, and open up our laptops. For the whole afternoon, we will spend hours studying, drinking, and eating—all in great company.

I won’t proclaim the Asian food in Isla Vista to be good, but the truth is that it’s been with me for a long time, flaws and all. Three years have passed, and now I am approaching the end of my undergraduate study. I am about to leave this little town filled with various cuisines and restaurants, but the stories associated with each of them will stay with me, not the meals themselves. I believe that many others also have similar experiences with the food here. These stories will let us remember our community and our lives in Isla Vista.
LIKE MOST ISLA VISTANS, the most exciting part of my weekends is catching up on missed sleep. However, I typically make an exception to my weekend sleep schedule for the Camino Real Marketplace Farmers’ Market in Goleta, which stays open until 2 p.m. every Sunday. I’m always sure to bring the essentials—some cash, my go-to tote, reusable containers, and a couple produce bags. On the short drive to the market, my housemates and I keep the windows down as we blast oldies from The Sylvers. After making a quick stop at Anna’s Bakery for coffee and fresh donuts, we make our rounds through the booths, slowly and leisurely, as we wait for the caffeine to take effect.

Without fail, the market livens my slightly hungover self with live instrumentals and the soft exchanges between vendors and customers. As we head to the end of the market, there’s no shortage of fresh produce, honey, jams, oils, jewelry, handmade bags, and crocheted tiny cacti. All of these items are sourced within the Santa Barbara area, drawing in locals each week to support Central Coast farmers and artisans. As I toss the remnants of my maple bar in the trash, I look over at the left side of the street, which holds a color gradient of greens and fresh vegetables. On the north side, a saxophonist sets a backdrop to a toddler’s dance moves, her family smiling and bopping along.

A banner reading “California Coast Naturals” catches my eye, hanging over a booth with neat rows of olives in jars. The booth’s vendor, Craig Makela, explains that the title is also the name of his orchard in Santa Barbara County, abundant with olives, mandarin, peaches, limes, avocados, and other fresh produce. Makela has been farming for 44 years and was eager to answer any questions I had about his growing processes, as well as his experiences as a vendor. In fact, I was surprised to learn that he is a “dry farmer,” meaning no water is used outside of Mother Nature—a title that took 10 years to achieve. For Makela, one of the most notable aspects of the
Market is watching crowds grow as eating habits have changed to accommodate more health-conscious lifestyles. “It’s an ever-growing and popular market because people are turning away from pre-packaged foods,” Makela said, describing the growing popularity of the Farmers’ Market he’s witnessed in the past decade. “They’re looking for fresh food, and for things that are handmade or homegrown.”

Continuing on our journey down the rows of stalls, I stop by the booth run by Ebby’s Organic Farm. Lorena Iniguez and her husband grow fruits and vegetables on a rotation for the deposit of micronutrients year-round in order to avoid the addition of artificial fertilizers. “We are old school. We don’t grow with technology. We don’t use fertilizers. We grow very clean,” Iniguez said. Farming organically and without added nutrients requires strategic planning and extensive knowledge of the local environment. One of the best parts of the Farmers’ Market is the ability to ask farmers directly about their growing practices and the variety of ways they achieve their goals.

If the appeal of avoiding fluorescent grocery store lights and tight aisles isn’t enough, the Farmers’ Market allows customers to combat industrialization typically associated with food and artisanal goods. The market grants me the reassurance that I do not need to compromise my environmental beliefs to buy fresh produce. Buying locally supports systems that advocate for community engagement and sustainable practices across the area, as well as supporting the extremely hardworking individuals and families who allow us to consume consciously. When I go to the Farmers’ Market, it’s more to me than buying my produce for the next week or so—it helps me feel better about my consumption practices as I am supporting fellow community members.

Iniguez advises customers to educate themselves on agriculture before attending the Farmers’ Market. Many customers complain about costs directly in front of those who are selling produce to them, she says. “They don’t have any clue about how to grow lettuce, a strawberry. They don’t have any idea how long it takes, how much water, anything—to have beautiful produce like this,” Iniguez said. This market would not be possible without the work of Iniguez and others, which is something I keep at the forefront of my mind during my visits. The vendors are always eager to share their knowledge, and all my questions were greeted with kindness and a desire to inform, whether it be on sustainability practices, their own experiences, or information on their specific goods.

As I leave the Farmers’ Market, my tote bag filled with herbs, olives, kale, and strawberries, I’m admittedly ready to roll back into bed. As I doze back to sleep for my mid-morning nap, I drift off with a revitalized appreciation for the Farmers Market and all the people who make it possible.
IN THIS EDITION of UCSB Eats, I’m searching for the best dining spot on campus to put this urgent dispute to rest. Sure, you can’t expect dining halls to be of Michelin star ranks, but at least the food is edible and accessible. On a scale from 1 to 5, I’ll be ranking dinners from three main dining halls: Carrillo, DLG, and Portola. I’ll be weighing the meal’s taste and the dining hall’s overall ambiance to determine the ultimate winner—a prestigious award unlike any other. So, follow me through these pages to see that despite the horror stories, the late-night stomach aches, and the “I could only eat bread because everything passes through me” complaints, the dining halls are not bad ... or at least, we hope so.

DAY ONE: De La Guerra (DLG)  
3.5/5 STARS

My first stop was DLG, located between the San Nicolas and Santa Cruz Residence Halls. Upon entry, I was bombarded with hustling crowds and an energetic atmosphere.

First up on the plate was the fried chicken with a side of potatoes and corn. For this dish, I had to remind myself to never judge a book by its cover, as the execution of the meal could have used some improvement. Although the fried chicken could have been crispier and the flavor of the chicken and potatoes was quite promising, both fell short. The saving grace of this dish was the gravy. Whatever seasoning the chicken and potatoes lacked, the gravy compensated for.

Following the chicken was the beef curry served atop a bed of warm rice. The curry flavor was present, but not overpowering. Each bite was filled with dancing curry and ginger flavors, quite the lovely pair, and the dish had just the right amount of spice.

I tried the carrot cake to end the meal, which to my surprise, was among the best carrot cakes I have tasted in my career. The cream cheese frosting was not too sweet, and my tastebuds were left with a warm cinnamon flavor—indeed the embodiment of sugar, spice, and everything nice.

After my meal, I give DLG a rating of 3.5/5 stars. While the dining halls are always bustling, DLG’s ambiance was a tad too chaotic for my liking and the seating arrangements had me hurdling over backpacks and skateboards, especially risky when carrying plates of food. Nothing was exceptionally bad, but nor was it memorable. Thank you DLG, but onto the next.
“For this dish, I had to remind myself to never judge a book by its cover...”

De La Guerra (DLG)

Carrillo

Portola
DAY TWO: Carrillo
4.5/5 STARS

This dining hall is conveniently located near the Manzanita Village and San Rafael dorms. Depending on what time you arrive, you could get lucky enough to experience a chill and easy-going ambiance. But if you come during rush hour, prepare to wait in line to enter, choose your meals in a rush, and speed-walk your way to the bakery for the last slice of decadent chocolate cake. For example, upon entering the hustling dining hall, bread was quite literally rolling. Regardless, Carrillo has far more chill vibes than DLG from the get-go.

My main plate consisted of fish with a vibrant pesto sauce, scalloped potatoes, and garlic zucchini. Because I had a lot of flavors to unpack on one plate, I'll break down each component. First, the pesto sauce was too salty for my taste, but the fish helped balance it out. Next, the garlic zucchini could have taken the win altogether, despite being a small side dish. The zucchini's sweetness was marvelously paired with crispy garlic. Last on the plate were the potatoes. These potatoes were layered—and I mean absolutely smothered—with cream and cheese, so the lactose intolerant and faint-hearted should beware. Alas, do not let this description mislead, for the taste of this side dish does not live up to its appearance. The creaminess was nice but the potatoes were bland which is unfortunate because I sensed so much potential in this side dish. Disappointing, but the show must go on.

I chose the black forest cake for dessert, which consisted of airy, tasteful vanilla frosting, chocolate cake, and strawberry jam filling. Altogether, this was a solid cake, as the tartness of the strawberry jam filling was soothed by the creamy vanilla frosting.

Overall, I give Carrillo 4.5/5 stars. This meal certainly had its ups and downs, but the dining hall's welcoming ambiance made up for tonight's faults as I left my table content. Thank you, Carrillo, for this enjoyable evening and meal.

DAY THREE: Portola
4.75/5 STARS

Portola, the furthest from the campus of the three dining halls, was the last stop to mark the final round of UCSB Eats: Dining Hall Edition. I was immediately taken aback by the large windows, natural light, and view from the dining rooms. The seating arrangements were spacious, and the presentation of the food was impeccable. Out of the three, I must say that Portola takes the win for presentation and ambiance thus far—but now let's get into the food.

The first contender of the night was the lentils and rice bowl. The bowl was garnished with parsley, which added a flavorful touch. Raita was served on the side, which balanced the warmth of the lentil soup, and small chunks of cucumber provided a refreshing and delightful surprise in each bite. I was in flavor town with all these components working together seamlessly. Beautifully executed.

With much anticipation, I began the main course: the tandoori chicken served with a side of rice topped with green onions and tandoori sauce. The chicken was tender and still retained a nice smoky flavor. Altogether, the flavors were good, yet I was left unsatisfied. Getting a bite of all three components: the rice, tandoori chicken, and green onions was indeed a delight, but something was missing...
sais quoi. Do not fret, it was nothing salt couldn’t fix—but after the success of the other dishes that night, I was expecting something greater.

To end the night, I savored the chocolate chip banana bread pudding. Admittedly, I am not the biggest fan of bread pudding, but for the sake of the art, I shall put my judgments aside. The banana flavor was prominent, but not overbearing. The caramelized edges of the bread pudding and the hints of chocolate wonderfully lingered on my tastebuds. The dessert was more bread than pudding in my opinion, but it was nonetheless a dessert to remember.

At the end of the night, the view from Portola, its spacious tables, and the meal itself left me more than content, thus receiving a whopping 4.75/5 stars.

AND THE WINNER IS...

After endless taste tests and much consideration, I can finally assure you that the winner of this edition of UCSB Eats: Dining Hall Edition is... Portola Dining Commons! While it is the furthest of the three, the dishes were divine, the view was amazing, and the ambiance was extravagant, making the commute all worthwhile. Congratulations to the winner and my compliments to the chefs.

Looking back at my time as a dining hall connoisseur, this is the main takeaway: always trust your gut... literally. But in all honesty, enjoy your time eating at the dining halls before you’re forced to cook your own meals. Until then, bon appétit, and see you next time on UCSB Eats! W

“Always trust your gut... literally.”
Hot coffee is overrated. If you are like me and you plan on being fully Iced for Life, here are seven reviews of local coffee shops that will help you find enlightenment. Personally, I like a splash of half & half and sometimes I get crazy with a little oat milk, whatever it may be, you can’t go wrong if it is served over ice.

**STARBUCKS**

I don’t think you can accurately compare iced coffee without acknowledging Starbucks. If you get it without sweetener (they call it “classic”) you can’t find a more reliable iced coffee. It’s not sweet or bitter, it actually tastes like coffee, and it’s EVERYWHERE—my go-to, comfort iced coffee. **10/10**

**BAGEL CAFE**

Bagel Cafe has what I like to call “coffee beverage.” It has some hint of vanilla that seems to have been added during roasting. The flavor is subtle, but it can be too sweet. When you are hungover and need something mild to ease you back to reality, Bagel Cafe is the place to go. Not to mention, they have good bagels as well. **6/10**

**CAJE**

Caje has a nice, mellow cold brew. Not overly bitter or smooth, and it only gets better once the ice starts melting. Best of all, it doesn’t make you want to lay down and run at the same time. When you need something a little stronger, I highly recommend Caje. It also features a nice patio that’s great for conversation and people watching. **7/10**
Dean

Dean is an incredibly nice coffee shop with an amazing patio. Totally Instagram-worthy. An excellent place away from campus to study, go on a date, or bring your parents. That being said, their cold brew is pretty bland. Maybe the batch I got was off and it had too much water in it. Bonus points for plenty of parking. 5/10

Dune

Dune has a slightly bitter, yet strong cold brew. They have three locations, the one next to Target is convenient, but their Anacapa Street location has a roastery on site and lots of outdoor seating. I would go to Dune to grab coffee with a friend. It's good, just not something I would find myself craving. 7/10

Lighthouse

I have to be honest, the cold brew at Lighthouse is overly bitter and way too strong. I guess if you need something that will keep you up all night because you procrastinated on that paper all week, you should try a Lighthouse cold brew. If not, get an iced latte. 3/10

Handlebar

I really enjoy Handlebar. It can get busy, but they have the perfect cold brew and an amazing bakery. Their cold brew is flavorful, not bitter, and doesn’t give you the jitters. I love the outdoor seating at the De La Vina location, and you can sit inside at the bar while they roast beans. Hands down, Handlebar is the best coffee in Santa Barbara. 10/10
WHERE DO ALL THE LOST THINGS GO?

WORDS // JOSHUA RUBOW
ILLUSTRATION + DESIGN // DANIELA GOMEZ

IN A COLLEGE TOWN as lively as Isla Vista, one can’t help but notice all the funky items that bring the beachside oasis to life. An old mattress. A rusty Lime scooter. A large inflatable floatie. With the vast assortment of objects listed on Free & For Sale, it’s evident that many of them get lost—catapulted on a tumultuous journey far from their original owner. Some days, it seems like personal items vanish into thin air, never to be seen again. So, at UCSB, where do all the lost things go?

I found the answer in a 15x15 foot space: North Hall’s room 1131. Take a step inside, and you’ll find large metal cabinets stacked on the perimeter, housing cleaning equipment and enough tools to build a house. The items are stored based on their value, size, and most importantly, their category. The room contains neatly organized boxes atop an L-shaped desk, creating a temporary home for a pristine hat, a valuable notebook, and a precious, perfectly dented water bottle. If you happen to lose one of your belongings on campus, a fellow Gaacho most likely brought it to the Lost and Found.

The man behind the organized chaos is Phil Esau. He is in charge of the Lost and Found/ Evidence sector of the UCSB Police Department. Esau spends his days collecting, distributing, and donating the items which make their way into UCSB’s Lost and Found. Once a week, campus faculty conduct a thorough campus sweep, scouring every nook and cranny, every dark and bright corner on our campus for any item that seems abandoned. Once a belonging is brought to Esau and correctly filed, Gauchos are able to venture into the Lost and Found to collect their items.

When I entered the Lost and Found to greet Esau and ask for an interview, I noticed a distinctly curious, yet confused look on his face. He kept composure for a minute—then upon making subtle eye contact, we both shared a laugh before starting the questions. The laugh derived from the shared thought of why someone might write a story on the Lost and Found in the first place.

“Why is the lost and found so important?” you might ask. Well, if you ask me, I could go on and on about how you
there are actually two Lost and Founds on campus: one in North Hall, and one in Davidson Library. The library location can be located on the first floor of the Paseo at the Services Desk in the UCSB Library.

Each object found in the home of all lost things has a unique story, whether the item was washed ashore from another part of the world or found in the movie-like streets of Isla Vista. No two items have the same life span or story. Next time you are looking for your misplaced item, head to the appropriate Lost and Found location. If you happen to lose your item at the Library, venture through the west entrance of the Paseo and stop at the Services Desk. But if you believe you left your notebook, computer charger, or knitted crew neck on the vast yet unique campus of UCSB, be sure to greet Mr. Esau while politely asking him for your lost item. Accidents happen, and people lose their most valuable treasures on a daily basis. There is no need to panic when you understand that the majority of establishments have essential facilities such as Lost and Found. Worry should be based on the average merit of your fellow community, and coming from a certified Gaucho, I can assure you that you’re in good hands.

A prominent page on Facebook called UCSB Free & For Sale is another tool for retrieving lost items and reuniting them with their owners. This page, used by a little over 21,000 Isla Vistans, is a tool for selling items community members no longer have a use for. To maintain a level of efficiency, this page has a few rules: 1. Do not post rants, and 2. Do not post apartments/rooms for rent. Lost items, however, are fair game—so much so that some might call Free & For Sale the virtual Lost and Found of UCSB.

If you find yourself in the position of recovering a lost item, you should know...
OKAY LADIES, NOW LET’S GET IN FORMATION

Kickin’ It With Women’s Field Hockey

WORDS // ITZAYANA GONZALEZ  PHOTOS // BRENTON HASLAM  DESIGN // NHUNG TRAN

WHEN THE WHISTLE BLOWS, the sound of trudging cleats begins on the turf bristles. Jersey wrinkles form as rising arms wipe off fresh perspiration. Players call out from across the field as one struggles to keep their eye on the ball. One moment, the ball is just outside of the box, then in less than a second, it’s in the back of the net. The whip of the ball scoring a goal is followed by ecstatic, celebratory sounds and clinking hockey sticks like they’re champagne glasses. These are the melodies of UCSB women’s field hockey.

It begins with 11 players on each team. A mix of strikers, defenders, and goalies. Common passes include corner throws, and players sometimes take penalties. Sound familiar? “Basically it’s soccer with a stick,” said third-year striker and midfielder Jessica Morris, who has been playing since she was twelve years old. But, just like any athlete can attest to, it all begins in training—long before the whistle blows.

Typical workouts for these ladies focus on strength conditioning, but the fun part comes during practice.

“We do drills. Some are individual skill drills like lifted passes and stick and ball exercises to move more freely with the ball. Then we do more dynamic teamwork drills like attacking drills, practicing how to get around a defender, and practice matches,” Morris explained. These sessions last around two hours and are as often as three to five times a week, working around the players’ class schedules as well. But when game day arrives, it’s a whole other story.

Saturdays are for matches. Some of these days consist of mini road trips, piling into cars and blasting Taylor Swift to get into that game day mentality. Games are located up and down the West Coast and in our own backyard, but one thing remains constant: the Gauchos cheer. “1,2,3 Gauchos!” is heard loud and clear before every game without

“…We do more dynamic teamwork drills like attacking drills, practicing how to get around a defender, and practice matches”
fault. Some players even have their own rituals, including third-year center back Erin Stringer. “I have to touch everyone else’s stick with mine before we huddle,” she said, for a touch of good luck.

Games can be tough, as it is both a physical and mental match. When you’re having a bad day on the field, the feeling of possibly letting your team down can be overwhelming. While this can be a downside, the girls know they have each others’ backs. “That’s the best thing about team sports, you have ten other people helping you,” Stringer said. “I get in my head, that’s why we do these things in training and practice with the team. Also so you have a good bond with them and they can help pick you up. We’re a very close-knit team.”

The bonding these girls have is evident in their resilience, match after match. From playing against UCLA, Claremont McKenna, and UCSD, these girls give it their all. They even play against co-ed teams—how badass is that?

These girls love to play field hockey and want to share it with the rest of the student body. “It’s so nice to have students come. The games are a great atmosphere, great environment, and just really fun to watch,” Stringer said.

Show some Gaucho spirit and check out a field hockey game or two this season. W

Erin Stringer (left), Jessica Morris (right)
UH-OH

HAS THIS EVER HAPPENED TO YOU?

ILLUSTRATION + DESIGN // DYLAN LASHER
1. Cut around nodes

2. Root in water

3. Plant and give to friends
FLIRTING WITH THE FLESH
A HORROR FLICK RENAISSANCE

BALANCING BETWEEN a source of taboo and a subject of fascination, the concept of cannibalism has long been flirted with across culture, making its reemergence in contemporary cinema fairly unsurprising. However, where cannibalism was previously the ultimate symbol of savagery, appearing in gruesome 1980s flicks like “Cannibal Holocaust,” contemporary movies are leaning towards a different kind of cannibal—one that is sophisticated and charismatic.

In the thriller “Silence of the Lambs” (1991), Hannibal Lecter marked a departure from previously barbaric antagonists and established a world where cannibals can be morally ambiguous. Hannibal brought a refined element to the material, introducing a scenario where digging into a carefully prepared human brain
(with a side of caviar and figs) is a sign of class. According to Hannibal’s underlying suggestion, if you can just divorce the act from the shocking intentions, there is an elite appeal to eating people.

“Fresh” (2022) also explores the idea of an unironic upper-class attraction to cannibalism, marrying horror with satire in an unconventional take on modern dating culture. Just as Noa, the film’s heroine, is ready to give up on dating following some less-than-successful encounters, things start looking up when she and Steve have a meet-cute in the fruit and veg aisle of the supermarket. Steve seems perfect, and Noa wearily lets her guard down, sharing intimacies over cocktails and letting her BFF in on her newfound fling, eventually agreeing to go away with him for the weekend. This is where things take a uniquely disturbing turn. In a nightmarish scene, Noa wakes up chained to a bed to find that Steve—rather cheerfully—plans on harvesting her flesh for his extremely wealthy clientele. Though we assume she will escape, the slow-burn nature of her predicament and the gradual maiming she is facing up to create an “edge-of-your-seat” quality for the rest of the film.

Like “Silence of the Lambs,” “Fresh” explores the economic antagonism that exists between the rich and the poor—but with a side of misogyny. Running a niche business that caters to the “1% of the 1%,” Steve satisfies the abominable desire of the rich, no matter how depraved it may be. Women are literally cut up, objectified, and consumed by the patriarchy—represented by Steve and his elite clients.

Cannibalism has never had more of a cultural reach in modern horror than it does now, and class antagonism is just one of many underlying themes. Both “Raw” (2016) and “Jennifer’s Body” (2009) take a different approach, one in which cannibalism is reclaimed as a form of female agency, and animalistic desire and feminine monstrosity are metaphors for sexual awakening. “Fresh” is the opposite of this trend—the man is the primary aggressor, and though the woman expresses some agency in fighting him off, her morality is left in pieces.

The “social thriller,” a term coined by director Jordan Peele, aptly describes contemporary horror movies. They seem to draw inspiration from classic horror movies but are less narrative-driven and more artistic, intensifying psychological underpinnings and thematic metaphors. The “social thriller” signifies a departure from “camp,” perhaps to be taken more seriously in contemporary media and devises its horrors around socially charged subjects that make us uneasy—issues like racism, class inequalities, and misogyny.

Although cannibalism may not be an immediate threat, its subtext is inherently loaded with our shared fears and unrest, enforcing the idea that the true terrors are waiting for us once we leave the dark cinema and re-enter civilization.

If you can just divorce the act from the shocking intentions, there is an elite appeal to eating people.
Recipes for

PHOTOGRAPHY // SUMMER HADDAYN + ADAM BAGUL
DESIGN // SUMMER HADDAYN

green tea
chamomile tea
lemon ginger tea
time juice
boiling water
film Soup

spice up your film photography
with this experimental technique!

wine
cranberry juice
lime juice
all purpose cleaner
boiling water

* soak film for 24 hours,
rinse & let dry for 1-2 weeks,
develop!
UNDER ONE ROOF, four thin plaster walls join at the corners to make up the typical residence in Isla Vista. Inside, rooms are neatly divided, each adorned with one rectangular window which looks out onto the building that stands opposite—almost always a reflection of the flat, white wall we stand behind ourselves. Accommodation in IV is gridlike and boxy, but one house, completely lacking a flat facade, stands as the exception.

Nicknamed the Dome House, the spherical home sits on the 68 block of Isla Vista, fenced in by a wall of intertwining Red Trumpets, Morning Glories, and evergreen bushes, protected from the street by a garden of shrubbery. With an exterior of dark brown wood shingles and triangular windows, the inside follows suit. Curved walls and pine paneling are seen all throughout, spiraling into the central staircase that ascends to the non-traditionally-shaped bedrooms and towards the pentagonal skylight: a geodesic dome house, the pinnacle of the 1970s reimagination of suburbia.

It was the beginning of the 1970s and UCSB student Mike Hoover had a different vision of the future of IV housing. It was a time of protests and bank burning, and what started as a personal desire to escape the dense housing landscape of IV
then turned into the desire to revolutionize student housing. As a Geology student with knowledge of construction from past summer jobs, Hoover had just the right experience to begin the construction of his Isla Vista dream home.

Today, Hoover remains in the Santa Barbara area as a retired man, with grayed hair from years of work in geology, construction, and hydrology throughout the West Coast. He sits behind the desk of his downtown office and flips through a sizable scrapbook titled “Dome House” as he tells the story of how he came to build the iconic Isla Vista home in his twenties.

Originally from Covina, California, Hoover lived a childhood of chasing animals around the ranch by his home and playing football. It was his dedication to football in high school that granted him a scholarship for his first year of college. With the help of the scholarship, cheap tuition, and a loan issued by the Bank of America as an attempt at community outreach following the burning of the bank, Hoover gathered enough money to purchase the corner lot in IV where the Dome House would later come into fruition. “I knew I wanted to build a house and I knew I was gonna stay in Santa Barbara if I could, and the big thing back then were geodesic domes,” Hoover explained. “It looked like it was gonna be cheaper and we thought we were gonna build student housing.”

While taking a year off from grad school in 1973, Hoover worked with his friend George Duechley to begin the construction of the house. While Hoover had some experience building and designing homes, the two friends pulled formulas for the dome from a book Hoover calls “Dome Book” by the architect, Buckminster Fuller—the “guru” of geodesic domes. With tents rented from the UCSB Geology department and a porta potty for a bathroom, Hoover and Duechley camped out on the lot during that winter of ’73 until construction finished and they could move their beds indoors. “I remember my tent floor was like a waterbed,” Hoover recalled. “I had an actual waterbed in the tent and my stereo, so I was a happy guy, but it wasn’t the best for bringing dates home.”

Besides the usual partying, 1970s IV made quiet living difficult as a result of the riots that broke out in succession after students burned the bank on Embarcadero Del Mar. “The cops were pointing guns at you, and tear gas. I just wanted out of that part of IV,” Hoover shared, explaining why he chose to build his house on the 68 block of the neighborhood. It was quieter, and more residential, making it an appealing location to invest time and money in.
That was the plan: to finish the dome, then buy more land over by Isla Vista Elementary and build 20 more. “That was our goal, to build a little student housing complex,” Hoover said, then going on to recount the annoyance he felt towards the close quarters and loud nights that substandard IV housing forced upon him as a student. Hoover’s dome community was meant to provide an alternative.

By the sight of the lot by Isla Vista Elementary that still stands empty today, it’s clear that Hoover never got to fulfill his dreams of improving IV housing. “They [UCSB] took the cheapest way out and the apartments look terrible,” Hoover commented about the current state of IV. He credits his change in plans to the difficult reality of building geodesic houses. Triangular panels and custom-made windows were difficult to fit together and as a result, leaks were and still plague the house. Retrospectively, Hoover knows how he would fix the constant leaks, but back then, he admits that they “saw no way to keep the water out.” While the geodesic design of the Dome House is emblematic of the 70s, it is not very practical in a modern, rectilinear designed world.

Hoover finished the one-of-one house just six months after breaking ground and moved in with four other housemates. With his group of fellow students and high school friends that resided at the Dome, Hoover thankfully didn’t have any real roommate horror stories to share. Not too dissimilar from the lives of Isla Vistans today, Hoover spent most of his off time as a student surf fishing, playing frisbee at Dog Shit Park, and the other usual vices of 1970s college students. All of which Hoover jokes is “just like what I do now.” He surfed too, having grown up by the water in LA County, but Hoover stopped going out into the water as much once he got to IV. The oil spill of 1969 left Coal Oil Point, well, oily—a nightmare for wildlife and surfers alike.

After residing in his DIY house for six years, Hoover sold his home in 1979, which remains under private leasing to this day. As he sits in his Santa Barbara office decorated with maps of California’s Central Coast, Hoover understands that his time in Isla Vista had to come to a close, even after investing so much labor in the Dome House at only 20 years old. “I think I’m over the nostalgia of buying it back,” he admitted. “It’s like having your firstborn child go to jail.” Today the home is worth over 10 times more than what Hoover sold it for.

Nevertheless, Hoover still dreams of fixing up the house with a new roof, better-kept landscaping, and changing the walls so that every kid has their own room again. But the truth is that buying his house back would require a large sum of money and a reinvestment of passion, the latter of which Hoover does not seem to lack.

Maybe there is a different reality where Hoover never had to sell his beloved Dome House. One where Isla Vista is neighbored by a community of geodesic domes, homes that are devoid of the conventional four-wall structure and that are cared for by the landlord as if they were made by his own two hands.
WITH A GROAN OF FATIGUE, I bent down and took off my dirt and dust covered boots before entering the house. I dropped my pack in front of the closet and slowly closed the door leading to the garage behind me. My camouflage fatigues, stiff with dried sweat, fell to the ground, as I undressed in the laundry room. I walked upstairs, excited for my favorite part of coming home after a drill weekend in the field: a shower. Most college students dread the end of the weekend, but as an infantry Marine in the Reserves, there is always one Sunday evening a month that I welcome. Tomorrow I would have to work, or study for my classes, but tonight I would rest and relish being clean in my soft warm bed, and that was more than enough for me.

I had previously expressed to my girlfriend my love of the long-awaited shower after days in the field training. She would typically reply, “That’s great babe,” or simply smile and nod. However, one day she asked a question: “So, do the showers when you’re with the Marines just have low water pressure? What’s wrong with them?” I let out a chuckle, but then I felt surprised, because I realized she wasn’t kidding.

“There are no showers,” I replied, while laughing, “Where would they be?” She furrowed her brow and she smiled slightly. She was interested and amused, but definitely far more confused than anything else.

“In the building you guys stay in when you’re in Camp Pendleton?” she said slowly, as if searching for the answer. I was stunned by her response, but only briefly. This shouldn’t have been such a surprise; after all, how could she have known? Hearing her imagined picture, it occurred to me that I had never explained what a field operation looks like or consists of. I used to make vague statements like, “We’re going to the field this weekend and doing squad attacks.” It was unfair of me to expect her to understand exactly what it was like. She told me that she pictured us waking up in beds and getting ready for the day in bathrooms. However, I had never told her that reveille meant cold early mornings emerging from a sleeping bag that lay on a thin foam mat on whatever earth was beneath our boots. I had never explained that the field was not a literal field. Nor did I explain the common features of every field operation, like the rows of neatly arranged packs in a platoon formation in the dirt or the camouflage netting that provided the only source of shade when there were no trees present. At no point did I tell her that the phrase “Give me five!” wasn’t a request for a high five but instead an urgent cue to start sending Marines to help with whatever task needed to be done. She wouldn’t
understand the relief in taking off a flak jacket after running a live fire range. The slight decompression of your spine when its weight is off of your shoulder or the cool sensation when even a light breeze hits your sweat drenched blouse are feelings she’d be able to picture, but, not having experienced them, she couldn’t fully grasp them.

I explained to her that there were no showers and there were no buildings and that we used baby wipes to clean ourselves. Watching others get grossed out was already funny, but especially in this case, because not showering in the field had become so normalized to me. I could have gone on for hours, days, and weeks recounting these experiences to her, but it wouldn’t have been enough to make her fully appreciate the discomfort involved or the mindset it required. That didn’t bother me, though. She wasn’t supposed to appreciate these experiences. She didn’t need to. She wasn’t a Marine. The pain and discomfort from my time in the Marine Corps are essential to the pride I feel.

They are a badge of honor that remind me that this isn’t for everyone, and they bring me closer to my brothers and sisters in arms who do understand. I am proud to do things that my classmates could not be paid to do, to possess the mental fortitude for the lifestyle that the infantry demands. I am proud to be a Marine.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Adam Bagul is a Marine Corps veteran, currently serving in the Marine Corps Reserve as a rifleman squad leader. Adam is in his fourth year, studying History of Public Policy and Law.

ABOUT THE SIERRA HOTEL

“Sierra Hotel” represents writing from participants in UCSB’s creative writing workshop for veterans and military dependents. The workshop, which began in 2012, provides the students to write about military experiences as they study the craft of non-fiction. To read more work from UCSB student veterans and military dependents, visit Instant Separation, a Digital Journal of Military Experience from the University of California: www.instantseparation.org. W
1. College Night!
2. Go up Store Tower
3. Throw a party!
4. Land Shark
5. Eat at every place in LV
6. Go on Hot Springs mine! 57'
7. Go on a picnic &
8. Woodstock's Pitchers
9. Precious flight 7/21

To do with your besties

IV Bucket List

Illustration + design: Mauna Sophia Hungarian
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1. The "Loop"
2. Stargazing @ cliffs
3. Take senior pics
4. Eat @ Freebirds after dayglo
5. Learn how to surf
6. Bowling night @ Zodo's
7. Live band show
8. Paint a die table
9. Sunday bagel cafe
10. Skinny dipping
11. Mountain party
MOVIES ON THE BIG SCREEN
EVERY FRIDAY AND MONDAY
NIGHT AT 8:00 PM
AT THE IV THEATER
$5