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# THE USD VISTA

## VOL. 58 ISSUE 7

### NEWS

ASG budget released ..... 3

### OPINION

Editorial: Trump's COVID case ironic ..... 7

### FEATURE

Cropper Memorial Writer Series ..... 9

Spread: Womxn of Color Summit ..... 11

### ARTS & CULTURE

Art of protest ..... 15

### SPORTS

Caleb Ricketts profile ..... 17



"The Trader Joe's effect," Arts & Culture, page 13

Photo courtesy of Maggie Valaik

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# A Presidential debate debrief: A glimpse at 2020's first presidential debate

*As President Trump and former Vice President Biden took the stage, America was left watching one of the most dysfunctional debates in recent history.*

**EMMA VALDISERRI**  
ASST. NEWS EDITOR

The 2020 presidential debates have kicked off and it's safe to say the first one, like much of 2020, was unlike anything America has ever seen. The first debate between President Trump and former Vice President Joe Biden, took place on Tuesday, Sept. 29, at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. Chris Wallace of "Fox News Sunday" moderated the debate, though initially was reluctant to be a moderator, admitting in an interview with The New York Times that he had "never dreamt it would go off the tracks the way it did." Wallace is likely not the only individual who felt this way, as the debate dropped the jaws and struck the ears of many.

Preceding the debate, each of the candidate's families took their seats in an empty audience that would normally be filled with spectators. Trump's family ignored

the mandatory mask rule at the debate while Biden's family members were seen wearing face coverings. During the debate, President Trump even criticized Biden for always wearing a mask. Coincidentally, the President and his wife, Melania Trump, tested positive for the virus on Oct. 1.

USD students, through the USD Votes program in collaboration with the university's political science department, had the chance to participate in a discussion board of the debate through a messaging platform called Discord. The discussion served as an academic space where students and faculty could share their ideas or ask questions about the debate.

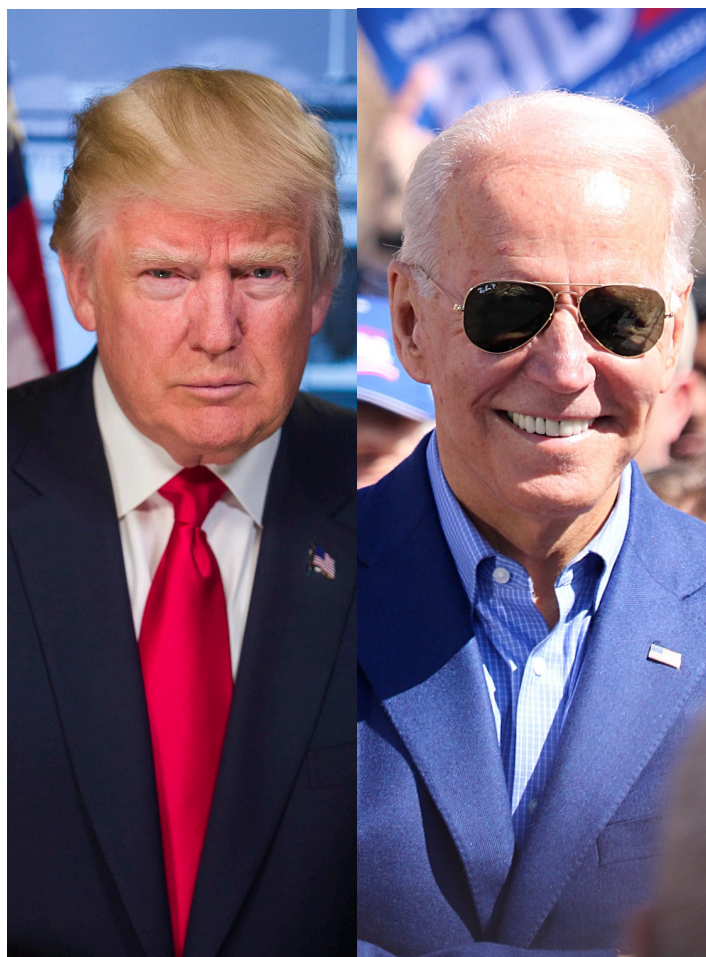
The debate itself consisted of six segments, all chosen and announced by Chris Wallace. The segments included President Trump's recent SCOTUS nomination, COVID-19, the economy, race, climate change, and

the heated controversy around election fraud.

Each segment was intended to allow each candidate two minutes to take their position on the topic at hand. It then was meant to transition into an open discussion. However, the debate was

overruled by constant interruption between the two candidates which distracted them from focusing on the very crucial and relevant topics at hand.

USD junior undergraduate, Natalie  
**Con't on Page 2**



Trump and Biden squared off in their first debate on Sept. 29th.  
Photo Courtesy of the Library of Congress Photo courtesy of beemergirl99/flickr



The Debate was moderated by Chris Wallace, and focused on healthcare, climate change, immigration, gun laws, racial inequity, the economy and reproductive rights  
Photo courtesy of Jorge Alcalá/unsplash

**From Page 1**  
Gubas, expressed her concern about each of the candidates' performance.

"(They) didn't say much of actual substance," Gubas said. "I feel like the level of discourse between politicians is getting less sophisticated and more about who can say the most one-liners that will appeal to their base."

Senior undergraduate, Kira Ford, as well as Gubas and some of those who participated in the Discord discussion, expressed their disappointment about how the debate was overrun by personal attacks.

"Watching the debate was like watching two children fight over who is the best," Ford said. "For example, President Trump brought up Biden's son, Hunter Biden's drug addiction, and Biden claimed that Trump is the worst president America has ever had."

Leading into the debate, the controversy around President Trump's recent Supreme Court Justice nomination, Amy Coney Barrett, to replace the

late Ruth Bader Ginsberg, triggered discussion around other topics like the state of healthcare in America and the future of women's rights.

When it came to COVID-19, President Trump named it the "China plague," and repeatedly claimed that if Biden had been in his position, nearly two million people would have died. On the other hand, Biden based his argument on the fact that Trump withheld his knowledge about the danger and rapid spread of the virus when it surfaced in February.

"Trump trying to make it seem like the coronavirus is not a big deal, even making fun of Biden for constantly wearing a mask is completely ridiculous," Ford added.

This segment also covered the reopening of the economy and the education system. Trump argued Biden would destroy the country and its economy if elected. In rebuttal, Biden claimed his priorities to lie in the safety of American people before returning the country to

a pre-pandemic sense of normalcy.

Since the debate, one of the major headlines has been about Trump's refusal to denounce white supremacy during the segment of race.

"When the moderator asked Trump outright if he was willing to condemn white supremacy and racist militias and Trump responded by telling those individuals to 'stand back and stand by,' it became even more clear to me how divisive and dangerous it is to have him in office," Gubas said.

The remaining segments about climate change, the economy, and election fraud brought forth little information about policy from Trump and Biden, and instead leaned towards chaos and personal accusations. In regards to voting, Trump expressed his concern about election fraud while Biden addressed the nation, encouraging them to go out and vote in time for the election.

Throughout this tumultuous debate, The New York Times ran a

livestream fact-checking database that exposed many of Trump's and a few of Biden's comments as 'false,' 'lacking evidence,' or 'misleading.'

One of Trump's false claims was when he claimed to have paid millions of dollars in income taxes, when in fact, the Times released his tax returns last week, revealing he paid a total of \$750 in federal income tax in both 2016 and 2017. One of Biden's falsehoods was when he said the United States currently has a higher deficit with China than ever before, when in reality, the nation's deficit with China has fallen as its trade deficit with the rest of the world is rising.

The vice presidential debate, between Vice President, Mike Pence, and Senator Kamala Harris is scheduled for Wednesday, Oct. 7. The next two presidential debates are scheduled for Oct. 15 and 22. However, considering Trump has tested positive for the virus, it is unknown as to how the following debates will proceed.

# ASG's condensed budget released to the public

*35% of the yearly funding has been dedicated to this remote semester*

**TYLER PUGMIRE**  
NEWS EDITOR

Associated Student Government publicly released their budget on Wednesday Sept. 30 to their website. This version of the budget is less comprehensive than the one that is officially voted on by ASG senators and

viewed at the meetings.

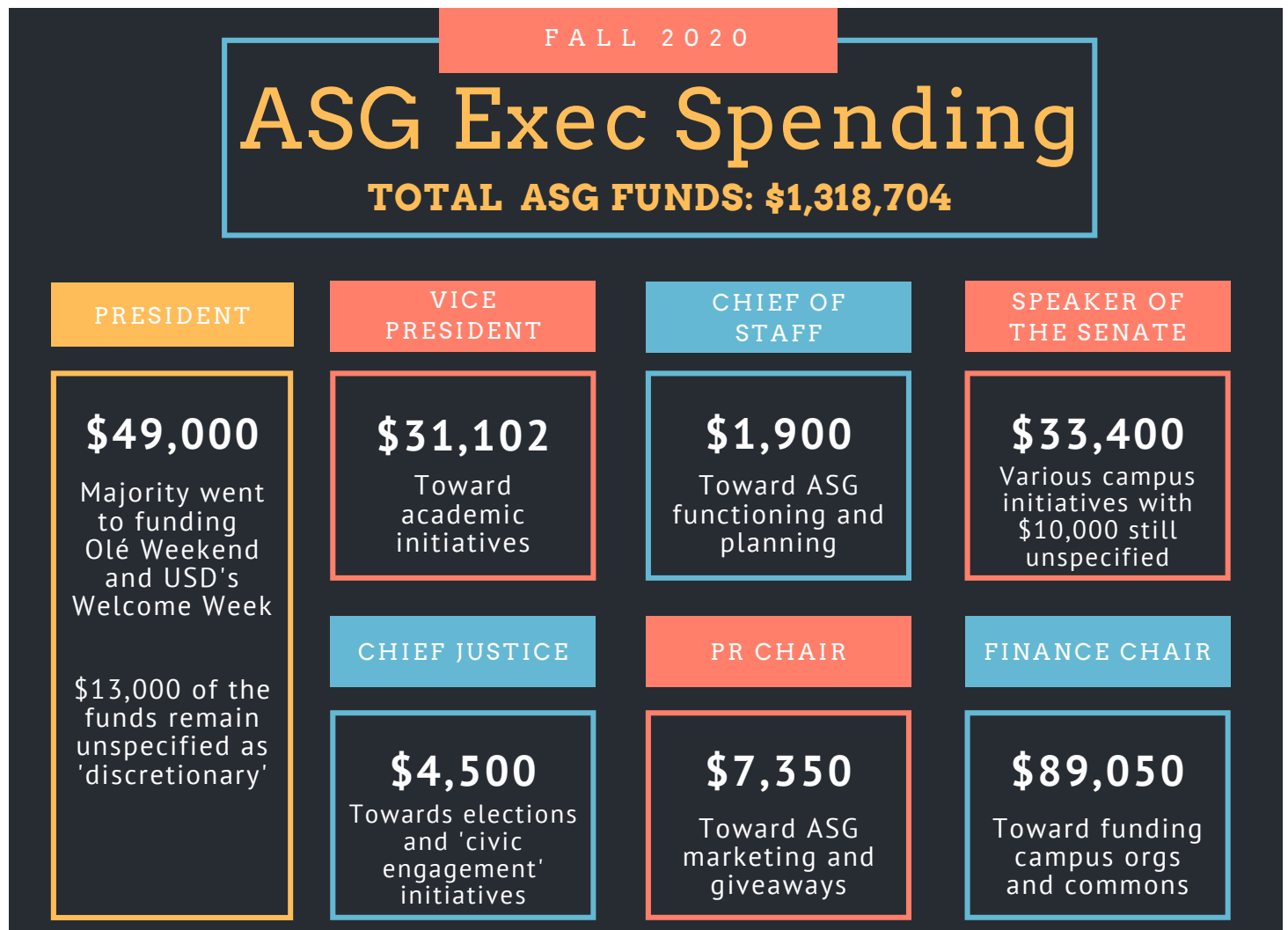
This budget was only voted on by executive members of ASG (President, Vice President, Speaker of the Senate, Chief of Staff, Chief Justice, Public Relations Chair, and Finance Chair). Typically, the budget is voted on by all elected members of ASG. The

reasoning was in order to streamline the process and maintain efficiency as senators were not elected until a few weeks into the semester.

Being in a global pandemic has shifted the focus on ASG's \$1,318,704 total budget that is funded by the Student Activity Fund — this amounts to

\$125 per semester for each student taking twelve units or more, which is included whether or not classes are remote or if students are living off campus. ASG's budget is also funded partially by revenue from an unspecified source and decreased from last year's \$1,438,777. The total for

**Con't on Page 4**



An overview of where ASG's Executive Board members spend their money.

**From Page 3**  
the fall budget came out to \$466,674.50; around 35% of total funds available for the year.

Comparing last year to this year, there has been a significant reduction in services provided and voted on. President Joey Abeyta decided to focus on Olé Weekend and welcome week — both of which were held remotely this year. The total for those two events was \$36,000, it is unclear whether or not that total was spent.

The Chief of Staff only dedicated \$200 to exec team bonding, a reduction from \$500 last year. There was also no money dedicated to the Holiday

Party or ASG Banquet in comparison to previous years.

Torero Program Board was granted \$225,000 but either has no specific allocations or it was not completely filled out, because they have no exact funding amounts.

An item that is missing from the budget — the item that President Joey Abeyta claimed to be his first goal if elected — is that of the College Readership Program, which was defunded last year to save \$12,000, less than 1% of ASG's budget. The College Readership Program allows access for USD students to the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, and the San

Diego Union Tribune.

This move has been criticized by some, such as junior Shane Wilson.

“It sucks that they didn't fund CRP, it seems like during an election year and a global pandemic that this would be the best time to have access to news that isn't just what I see on Twitter,” Wilson said.

For the centers and programs that ASG sponsors, there was nearly a \$20,000 increase in spending from last fall to now, coming from increases in the budget for student activities and involvement, and deciding to fund all of club sports in the fall semester.

While those two programs saw increases in

funding, there was a more than 80% decrease in funding for the Women's Commons from last spring. There was also less funding received by the Black Student Resource Center, the Center for Health and Wellness Promotion, and the Mulvaney Center for Community Awareness and Social Action.

Not included in the budget total, was the \$100,000 COVID-19 fund for students in need. ASG Finance Chair Cesar Manzo has not responded to an inquiry about the fund and how it will be distributed at the time of publication. Information will be updated as it becomes available



Many programs have seen reductions in funding this semester, such as the Women's Commons and the Center for Health and Wellness Promotion..

Tanner Claudio / The USD Vista

# San Diego soccer club 'Loyal' indeed

*By forfeiting two games in protest, San Diego Loyal SC takes strong and necessary stance against hate*

ERIC BOOSE  
SPORTS EDITOR

Last week, among the NBA Finals and baseball postseason, a second-division soccer team in its first year of existence made headlines by walking off the field. In doing so, they threw away a 3-1 lead in a game they had to win

***This was a team walking away in the middle of one of, if not the best performance of their entire season. And while it was unequivocally the right thing to do, the situation still feels very wrong.***

to stand any chance of making the playoffs. They were praised for doing so.

Late in first-half stoppage time, Phoenix Rising FC's Junior Flemmings reportedly used a homophobic slur against San Diego Loyal SC's Collin Martin. Martin is openly gay. The referee, arriving at the scene late, mistakenly thought Martin was calling his opponent gay and issued him a red card, leading to multiple chaotic minutes which resulted in this tense discussion between match officials and head coaches Landon Donovan (San Diego) and Rick

Schantz (Phoenix).

A week earlier, in Los Angeles, an LA Galaxy II player used a racial slur against San Diego's Elijah Martin, who is Black. Following the game, Loyal SC issued a statement declaring the team's decision to forfeit the 1-1 draw in protest of that racist act.

Before the Phoenix game, Donovan said that had he understood what was happening at the time in L.A., he would have pulled his team from the field that very moment.

After halftime, both Phoenix and San Diego took the field, but shortly after the referee blew his whistle to start the second half, every member of Loyal SC walked off the field in protest, forfeiting their 3-1 lead, and any chance of making the postseason.

This was different from players taking a knee at the beginning of a game. This was a team walking away

in the middle of one of, if not the best performance of their entire season. And while it was unequivocally the right thing to do, the situation still feels very wrong.

Clearly, Elijah Martin and Collin Martin were wronged. In neither moment was the player who abused these men reprimanded in any way. It is very easy to wonder what would have happened had Elijah or Collin not say anything about it. Surely, this is not the first time they have been targeted in a game, let alone their lives. How many times have players gotten away with being racist, homophobic, or

***As a fan of both this team and this game, I am hurting. It hurts to watch a team you support turn its back on a great victory, even when you know it was the right thing to do.***

otherwise hateful in a game?

However, it feels as though the entire San Diego team has been wronged. They forfeited not one, but two games in a row because of what an opposing player did. It seems especially unjust

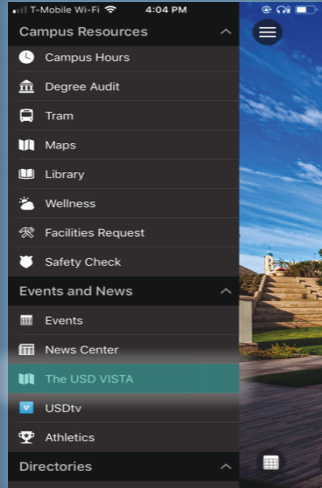
that the teams, who have sacrificed next to nothing despite their player being the one in the wrong, will both go on to appear in the playoffs, while Loyal's season is over. San Diego may have the moral high ground, but Phoenix and LA could finish their season with a trophy. It does not feel fair to do the right thing yet watch others be rewarded.

As a fan of both this team and this game, I am hurting. It hurts to watch a team you support turn its back on a great victory, even when you know it was the right thing to do. It hurts to watch teams seemingly get away with doing the bare minimum

after the fact. It hurts to watch the players you support be subjected to abuse because of their identities. It hurts even more to have every reason to believe it could happen again.

Let me be clear: the  
**Con't on Page 6**

Check out the USD Vista on the  
**MySDMobile app**



and visit the website  
**www.UofSDMedia.com**

An advertisement for writing an opinion piece. It features a typewriter in the background. The text reads: "HAVE AN OPINION? WRITE ABOUT IT". Below the typewriter, it says: "Send your Op-Ed to vistaopinion@sandiego.edu".

**From Page 5** racial abuse leveled at Elijah Martin, the homophobic abuse leveled at Collin Martin, bigotry, and hate in any form have no place in the game of soccer. They have no place in any sport, nor in any corner of our society. What happened to Collin and Elijah was plainly wrong and unacceptable. But while San Diego's players, coaching staff, and executives all deserve praise for how they handled the situations, they should never have been in those situations to begin with.

There are no winners here. You can praise San Diego, yes, but that is

not enough. There has to be action. By refusing to

***Social justice and sports have never been separate. That fact is clearer now than ever before. And we as fans cannot ignore things that we used to.***

participate in games where hateful words are spoken or hateful actions are done, San Diego Loyal is doing what it can to ensure that such hate is scrubbed out of the beautiful game. But they cannot do it on their own.

Social justice and sports have never been separate. That fact is clearer now than ever before. And we as fans cannot ignore things that we used to. You cannot support a team

without simultaneously supporting the values it

stands for; that line is now long gone. San Diego has made its values clear. In this reality, you have to consider what your club stands for and whether you stand with it. The Phoenix fans who called on the club to conduct an investigation in good faith were doing the right thing. The fans who swore to cancel their season ticket memberships in the heat of that moment were doing the right thing.

In fairness to Phoenix, the club is softening its originally staunch defense of the player, and they deserve praise for trying to turn the situation into a learning opportunity for players and staff involved.

San Diego Loyal's actions prove that sports are not just a game. Fans have to pay attention. We have to kick hate out of the sports that we love.

***The views expressed in the editorial and op-ed sections are not necessarily those of The USD Vista staff, the University of San Diego, or its student body.***



# An ironic October surprise

*President Trump's positive COVID test brings skepticism*

**BAYLYNNE BRUNETTI**  
ASST. OPINION EDITOR

On Tuesday, Nov. 29, President Trump belittled Joe Biden for wearing

***With these comments in mind, it is hard to feel bad for Trump. He continuously went against scientists and started an uprising of anti-maskers who fake letters from the Department of Justice "Freedom to Breathe Agency" to harass working-class people.***

"big" masks during his campaign, making a mockery of mask-wearing during a pandemic. Two days later, Trump tested positive for COVID-19. His negligence in not taking the coronavirus seriously has led to himself and others in the White House to become sick and has led to the deaths of over 200,000 Americans.

The October surprise is a news event that may influence the outcome of an upcoming election — particularly one for the U.S. presidency — whether deliberately planned or spontaneously occurring. This breaking news falls nothing short of just that: a surprise.

The most telling sign of the state of our politics is that some people are spreading a conspiracy

that Trump does not even have COVID-19. They speculate that this is a grand ploy to either draw out the election and reap the benefits of

free media coverage; or this is a way to downplay the severity of the virus since Trump has been condemned heavily for his leadership throughout the pandemic. Neither of these options are too far-fetched when it comes to this administration.

Going back to the facts — loose term — we know Trump has COVID-19. Either he survives the virus or he succumbs to the virus — as many other Americans have. If he survives, it will be due to receiving exceptional healthcare because he is the President. The fact is, Trump is an older male, overweight and has underlying heart disease. All factors that have led to COVID-related deaths — putting him in the same position as many older

Americans.

The difference is, he will receive some of the best healthcare. Whereas, many victims of the virus have not received that benefit. He has already been hospitalized, saying he is feeling better and back at the White House, though reports from other officials contradict this statement. Upon his release, Trump put his Secret Service and others at risk to do a motorcade to his supporters. Showing that this will be used as a

political pawn to downplay the severity of the virus. He has already gone on national television to take his mask off, putting his staff at risk. Perhaps, another recommendation for hydroxychloroquine will be on the horizon.

People have a right to find the irony in the fact that a president who is responsible for the deaths of many Americans is sick with the very virus he downplayed. He has held rallies with no

**Con't on Page 8**



Donald Trump must now take on the virus he has denied the severity of for months.

Photo courtesy of Library of Congress/Unsplash

**From Page 7** mask mandates, made a mockery of the CDC and our nation's top doctors and scientists. He has suggested outrageous things such as "injecting disinfectant," which he claims was a "joke."

With these comments in mind, it is hard to feel bad for Trump. He continuously went against scientists and started an uprising of anti-maskers who fake letters from the Department of Justice "Freedom to Breathe Agency" to harass working-class people. He encouraged xenophobia by calling it the "China-virus," which led to a rise in hate crimes towards Asian Americans. He failed the American people in his

leadership during this pandemic.

There are other developed countries who have done their part and handled the virus, such as Australia. They took quarantine seriously and

***You cannot claim that other countries are not comparable to the United States when it comes to population — they are. The difference is having a president who sought to divide instead of bring people together, who sought to make a mockery of the dead by hosting maskless rallies with no social distancing.***

did not have a leader who opposed masks and called the virus a "hoax". Trump has now switched his views to call the virus the "plague," capitalizing on the fear of Americans and leaving the world

with whiplash. This is not "fake news." You cannot claim that other countries are not comparable to the United States when it comes to population — they are. The difference is having a president who

sought to divide instead of bring people together, who sought to make a mockery of the dead by hosting maskless rallies with no social distancing. This is the same man who mocked Joe Biden on a

debate stage for wearing a "big" mask, whose party refuses to grant relief packages to families who are struggling because of this same virus.

I do not apologize for not feeling an inkling of compassion for a president who has left the country with no leadership during a pandemic. Instead, I direct my regards to those who lost their lives because of his childish leadership. I feel sorrow for those who lost their jobs and cannot feed their families. Those who lost family members due to inadequate healthcare. I do not feel sorry for the man who sits in his ivory tower with the best healthcare in the country who brought this upon himself.

No one knows for a fact whether President Trump actually has the virus. What we do know is that we are so used to lies and propaganda with his administration that it is not unfathomable to think this could be a political ploy. No one can know what will happen, this is the trauma associated with this administration and its instability. I am not fully convinced that this will be the final October surprise, but for the sake of the American people and this country, I do hope it is the last.



Over the past several months, Trump has dismissed the devastating impact of the coronavirus on the United States.

Photo courtesy of Carmen Rodriguez/flicker

# The Lindsay J. Cropper Memorial Writer Series welcomes Kiese Laymon, Ph.D.

*Kiese Laymon, Ph.D., an essayist and memoirist, is the second Black creative writer to be featured in the Cropper Series for this academic year.*

BRITTANY LANG  
FEATURE EDITOR

The USD English department, in order to commit themselves to the enduring work of anti-racism, announced that the 2020-2021 Lindsay J. Cropper Memorial Writer Series would be a celebration of Black creative writing exclusively. The department believes that literature has a unique capacity to remind us of the innate dignity of all human life and therefore, they have a particular responsibility to showcase the remarkable talent of writers from all walks of life.

On Thursday, Oct. 1, the Cropper Series welcomed Kiese Laymon, Ph.D., a writer who is critically acclaimed for his highly observant, perceptive, and often humorous essays and memoirs, for a craft talk and reading.

Laymon is a proud Jackson, Miss. native. He is an Oberlin College graduate and received his MFA in creative

writing from Indiana University. He currently holds the title of the Hubert H. McAlexander Chair of English at the University of Mississippi, and is the 2020-2021 Harvard Radcliffe fellow. Laymon also writes as a contributing editor for Vanity Fair and Oxford American.

Laymon is most well known for his bestselling memoir, “Heavy: An American Memoir,” which was awarded the 2019 Andrew Carnegie Medal for Excellence

in Nonfiction, the 2018 Christopher Isherwood Prize for Autobiographical Prose, the Austen Riggs Erikson Prize for Excellence in Mental Health Media, and was named by The New York Times as one of the 50 Best Memoirs of the past 50 years and one of the best books of 2018.

He is also the author of the essay collection “How to Slowly Kill Yourself and Others in America,” and the novel “Long Division” which defies the rules of genre. Laymon’s work has

a distinctive focus on the battle within himself of the personal versus the political, and discusses hard-hitting themes such as racial injustice, poverty, shame, and identity.

The Cropper Series commenced on Thursday with an introduction of Laymon from the director of the series, Brad Melekian, Ph.D.

Laymon began his discussion with a reading of “Heavy: An American Memoir.” The novel is about Laymon’s uneven

**Con’t on Page 10**



Kiese Laymon, Ph.D. is known for his observant, perceptive, and often humorous essays and memoirs.

Photo courtesy of Kiese Laymon

**From Page 9** and arduous path from boyhood to manhood, and eventually to a writer. The excerpt Laymon read was written about his formative high school years. He recounted events that transpired in 1992 shortly after the verdict of the Rodney King police brutality case was announced. In one particular scene he recited, Laymon described his mother trying her best to calm his anger.

*“The night of the Rodney King verdict you held me in your lap and you would not stop rocking for two straight hours. We watched L.A. burn as cameras showed a white man get pulled from a truck, getting beat up by black and brown men at a L.A. intersection. I hope you see what they aren’t showing’ you said, I want you to write an essay about what white folk feel tonight, I know they’re blaming us,”* Laymon recited.

The theme that Laymon sought to highlight while reading this excerpt is something he believes still holds true today — that Black reactionary anger is deemed as the ultimate menace even in times of great injustice and violence. The Black community is not allowed to have violent reactions

to their own persisting oppression, even after tiring all other peaceful efforts to advocate for equal rights and fair treatment.

*“I had only been alive seventeen years and I was already tired of paying for white folk’ feelings with a generic smile and a manufactured excellence,”* he read. *“I never heard of white folk getting caught and paying for anything they did to us and stole from us — didn’t matter if it was white police, white teachers, white students, or white randoms.”*

Laymon in this excerpt described in great detail how he didn’t want to have to teach white people how to treat Black people respectfully. His 17-year-old self had this persistent and ferocious anger that made him want to fight all of them and never lose to them again. Laymon wanted to take back what white people stole from Black culture.

*“I wanted all the money, the safety, the education, the healthy choices, the second chances — if we were ever to get what we were owed, I knew we had to take it back without getting caught because no creation on earth was as all-world as white folk at punishing the Black whole for the supposed transgressions of one*

*Black individual,”* he read.

“Heavy” discusses in explicit ways how white people have fashioned and constructed the enduring Black narrative that has been used to oppress, subjugate, and ostracize members of the Black community — to provide them with less and to suffer more.

*“Our ‘superpower’ I was told since I was a child was perseverance — the ability to survive no matter how much they took from us. I never understood how surviving was one of our collective superpowers when white folk made sure so many of us did not survive,”* Laymon recited.

Following his reading from “Heavy,” Laymon read a piece that he wrote that morning which is tentatively titled “We Will Know.” The piece explores pleasure and the notion of wanting to feel good during the COVID-19 pandemic. In it, Laymon recounts his meaningful interactions with essential workers and how these rare human connections and long periods of isolation provoked him to question the ways in which humans seek pleasure.

*“Like so many of my friends, my past eight months have been spent dodging death, mourning the dead, creating art, and loving Black people,”*

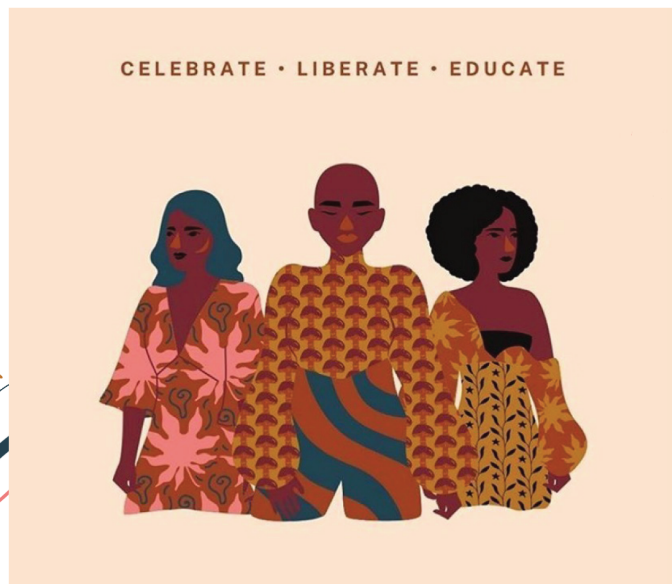
he read. *“I am unsure what to do, not so much with the absolute pain of isolation nor the rapture of revolution, I am afraid of and fascinated by how the pandemic has fundamentally changed my expectations of looking forward to responsibly feeling good forever.”*

This piece by Laymon echoed many of the themes that were present in “Heavy.” One line specifically highlighted his newfound identity which emphasized how much he has come into his own as a Black man and writer, despite the unrelenting anger he felt growing up in a society that does not value and protect Black bodies.

*“I am a Black southern writer — that is my one superpower,”* Laymon recited.

The initiative set by the Cropper Series this year was not solely made for the purpose of highlighting works that seek to unravel the prejudices that have been so deeply embedded into our minds and institutions. The series also wants to simply celebrate the diverse talent that exists within the creative writing community, in order to cultivate an improved collective understanding of the broad array of human experiences.

## Celebrating Womxn of Color



Courtesy of the USD Women's Commons

This past weekend the Women's Commons hosted the 2020 Womxn of Color Summit from Friday Oct. 2 to Saturday Oct. 3. The summit was created in order to give women a space of solace and feeling of community during these challenging times. The focus was on letting WOC play a central role in the transformation of a society that has never been designed to work in favor of them, through uplifting and encouraging one another.

The "x" in womxn is used to represent and validate the women whose experiences exist beyond the social norms of "womanhood." This breaks apart the standards of language created by the patriarchy and introduces a non-binary definition of what it means to be a woman. The use of "womxn" was essential for the WOC summit as over the two days of the event, the coordinators were seeking to amplify and celebrate the unique experiences and gender-diversities of Womxn of Color.

The message of the summit was to promote the idea that women are each divine beings who matter and have something valuable to bring to the table. The summit brought together all different kinds of women for the purpose of reminding us that we are never in this fight alone, and together we can bring about radical and necessary change.

The summit began with an acknowledgement of the land USD is built upon — the land of the Kumeyaay people — and encouraged those not in San Diego to acknowledge the land they reside upon wherever that may be.

The summit invited everyone involved to keep in mind some key questions throughout the event:

- ★ What does it mean to live in a post-colonial world?
- ★ What did it take for us to get here?
- ★ How can we be accountable to our part in history?
- ★ Whose knowledge gets to be named?
- ★ Whose knowledge gets honored (validated, legitimized)?
- ★ Whose knowledge gets erased?

Prior to the first session on Oct. 2, attendees were asked to reflect on their sharing intention — what they would like to contribute to the space in order to cultivate an open and honest environment, where everyone is able to leave having had an enriching and fruitful experience. They then shared this with the rest of the group towards the end of the first session so the intention was set for the following day.

The session on Oct. 3 began with asking the question of what is the next step once solidarity is achieved. Prior to the breakout session, the whole group discussed the following question:

**What is one commitment you can personally make to be in solidarity with Black folks at USD and within your own community?**

Attendees were then broken up into one of the three smaller breakout rooms:

1. Annabel Gong's workshop on the theme of "My Story"
2. Anjelica Cespedes' workshop on the theme of "How do we define community?"
3. Dr. Briseida Elenes and MaDonna Connors empowerment workshop which was a space reserved only for Womxn of Color

After the end of the summit, the attendees were then encouraged to write a reflection on their experiences in the breakout rooms on what they have learned, what they were feeling, and what they will commit to doing in order to continue to uplift and empower our WOC.

Spread by Tori Tanigawa/The USD Vista; Content by Brittany Lang/The USD Vista

# The Trader Joe's effect

*What makes Trader Joe's stand out as one of San Diego's best grocery stores*

ANNA VALAIK  
ASST. A&C EDITOR

“Even though we’re a chain, Trader Joe’s doesn’t feel like a regular grocery store. We’re like a toned-down vintage-nautical Whole Foods,” Mitchell Valine, a Trader Joe’s employee and a sophomore at USD, explained about what differentiates his workplace from its competitors.

Valine, and thousands of other local San Diegans, choose Trader Joe’s as their main grocery store. Any day of the week, at almost any hour of the day, one can find Trader Joe’s bustling with customers. It’s especially noticeable with the COVID restrictions as one often has to wait outside in a line just to get into the store. This cult following then begs the question; what is this Trader Joe’s culture, and why does it appear so prevalent in San Diego?

What sets TJ’s apart from other grocery stores is their friendly environment, unmatched customer service, and unique food items. From the moment you walk into the store, there is a laid-back feel created by the store’s aesthetic. Trader

Joe’s features interesting artwork and creative displays in every store, and each art piece is different depending on where you go. The store is bright, beaming with colors from the fresh vegetables, fruits, and flowers.

The aisles are chock-full of frozen and pantry items, with each one item given handwritten price tags and labels. The stores make sure to change their decorations with the seasons, too. Right now, one would find large boxes full of pumpkins and bats hanging from the ceiling, all in anticipation for Halloween. For these reasons and more, Trader Joe’s attracts a wide variety of individuals. Moms and college students alike frequent TJ’s because the store makes this shopping experience feel enjoyable rather like a chore. Instead, it becomes a pleasant outing to pick up food and a reminder that errands can be fun, too.

Max Donahoe, a sophomore at USD and Trader Joe’s employee, notes a similar friendly feeling within the environment.

“I think Trader Joe’s created a loyal following from the system of making a commercial grocery store



The petite pumpkin spice cookies are a fall favorite.

Taylor DeGuzman/The USD Vista

feel like a neighborhood market,” Donahoe said. “The store has a homey feel that everyone feels welcomed and invited.” There is nothing stuffy or pretentious about Trader Joe’s, and that is what keeps people coming back.

No shopping experience is complete at Trader Joe’s without one, but probably many, lovely interactions with the employees. When reflecting on working at Trader Joe’s, Valine and Donahoe both noted how their work environment is one that promotes hospitality and positivity.

“Right when we get hired, we learn pretty much everything there

is to learn about Trader Joe’s,” Valine said. “Part of our training is learning about the store’s values, some of which include integrity and hospitality. I don’t think you can find this kind of dedication to service anywhere else really.” Trader Joe’s cares for its employees, and in turn, the employees care deeply for their customers and making it the best possible place to shop.

Donahoe’s favorite part about working at TJ’s is interacting with the patrons. “Honestly, it’s the customers and seeing them enjoy shopping for their favorite goods at the store,” Donahoe said. “I

**Con’t on Page 14**



Get in the fall spirit and pick up a pumpkin next time at Trader Joe's.

Photo Courtesy of Maggie Valaik

**From Page 13** love hearing people say it is their favorite part of their day.”

Many stores, grocery or not, rarely focus so deeply on creating such a cheerful environment for its customers, let alone employees. Trader Joe's instills their values within employees from the moment they enter their workforce, and those values are always focused on making their space enjoyable for all. The employees are always willing to look for a certain item, do a price check, or give a great food recommendation, and they always look and sound happy doing it, even with their mask on. It's refreshing to see people genuinely enjoy where they work and it makes coming back to Trader Joe's even more worthwhile.

Trader Joe's knows their customer service sets them apart. Valine said, “I always get a compliment from customers saying they feel so welcomed at the store and that they think we're so nice.”

Trader Joe's, without a doubt, offers the most one-of-a-kind food products out there. Mostly everything they sell is Trader Joe's brand, giving them the freedom and ability to create what they want and what they believe their customers want. They source fresh fruits and vegetables, but where they really stand out is through their pre-made salad packages, frozen meals, and other ready-to-eat options. For those looking to shop on a budget or for those who lead a busy life, Trader Joe's is the place to shop because they cater to those particular shoppers.

For example, their frozen aisle offers vegetable mixes, protein options, and microwavable rice. They have Mediterranean, Asian, and caesar-inspired salad packs, perfect for a quick lunch or dinner meal. Most of these options are well under \$10. The budget-friendly prices are another perk. It's so easy to walk out of Trader Joe's with weekly essentials and only spend \$40 or so. That's almost unheard of at any other store in San Diego, a city where prices always seem inflated.

Trader Joe's doesn't stop there with food, though. Every month there always seems to be something new coming out. Among the crowd favorites includes everything but the bagel seasoning, cauliflower gnocchi, and joe-joe's.

Seasonal items time and time again catch people's eyes. Valine talked about his favorite item., Valine said, “If I had to choose one, I'd go with the butternut squash mac and cheese.” Valine said. “It's a seasonal item so we only get it in the fall. It's life-changing.”

Donahoe went for a sweeter choice: dark chocolate covered almonds with turbinado sugar.

“This is the perfect

chocolate snack bite, where you get a little bit of sweet and salty all in one,” he said.

Some other fall items people should be on the lookout for are the pumpkin pancake mix and pumpkin butter. Their seasonal items can put anyone in the mood for the upcoming season and holiday, even when it's sunny and 75 degrees in San Diego.

My favorite items include unexpected cheddar cheese, vegetable gyoza, fig & olive crackers, frozen chocolate covered bananas, and dark chocolate peanut butter cups.

Trader Joe's succeeds in many different aspects. They have it all: positive employees, interesting food choices, and a beautiful setting for people to enjoy their shopping experience. Customers and employees alike rave about the store, and it's not a coincidence everyone says this. Trader Joe's has purposely set out to create a neighborhood shop, and the employees hold up this standard perfectly. Whether it be fall, winter, spring, or summer, Trader Joe's provides enticing food options, and customers rarely leave without a perky smile and happy memory of your trip to the grocery.

# The Art of Protesting

*How the artwork of civil rights' activists has changed over the years*

**OLIVIA HUNT**  
ASST. A&C EDITOR

The role of art in confronting governmental and social issues is far from new, and the line between artist and activist is often blurred. From signs and murals to slogans and chants, creative minds have always been crucial benefactors of activist movements. Protest art is also, arguably, more dynamic than 'regular' art; an inextricable aspect of protest art is that it is ephemeral. Paintings on streets, signs, and walls typically do not last longer than six months to a year. The Black Lives Matter organization, for instance, has spurred beautiful, moving artwork since its founding in 2013, and artists' designs have progressed with the movement.

The stylistic choices and methods behind protest art are as deliberate as that of the curated art one would find in a museum. Los Angeles-based artist Nikkolas Smith, for example, purposely makes his protest art for the Black Lives Matter movement appear unfinished. His style reflects the unfinished

nature of the movement, and how its goals have not yet been achieved. Smith's predominant works are portraits of victims of police brutality, with his most recent portraits being of Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, and Breonna Taylor. In these works, Smith uses Photoshop to create a faux-oil painting paired with abstract elements. In an interview with Time Magazine he explained the thought processes and motivation behind his art.

"I don't like clean lines," Smith said. "That's a parallel to all these lives. They did not have a chance to see their end. They should still be living."

Smith's portraits are currently among the most widespread images of the BLM movement, and have been shared by the organization's Instagram account as well as that of Michelle Obama. His art has since been reprinted on numerous protest signs during BLM demonstrations and peaceful protests.

Current protest art has also borrowed from previous civil rights movements. One of the most prominent, and strikingly memorable

examples of this is the 1920 NAACP flag, flying from the window of the group's New York City headquarters. With a black background and white lettering, the flag simply stated: "A Man was Lynched Yesterday" — urging the people of Manhattan, as well as the nation as a whole, to pay attention to the racist murders happening across the U.S.

In response to the 2015 police killings of Black Americans Alton Sterling and Philando Castille, that flag underwent a two-word revision. New York City-based artist Dread Scott remade the flag with the words, "A Man was Lynched by Police Yesterday." On his portfolio website, Scott describes the history and

**Con't on Page 16**



A screenshot of Breonna Taylor portrait from Smith's Instagram Account.

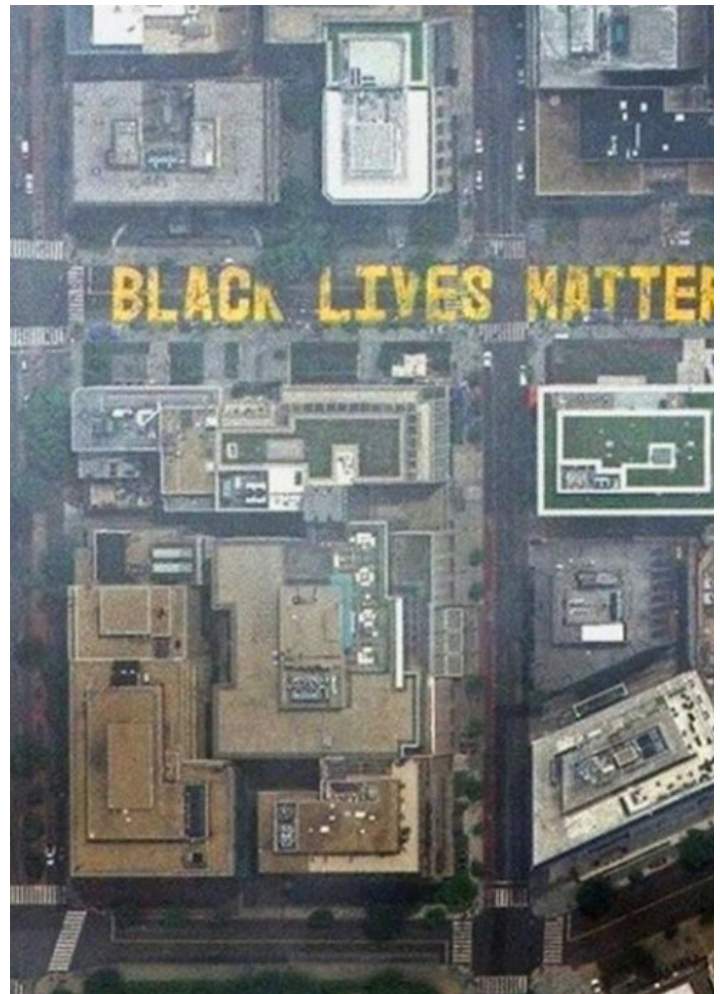
Photo courtesy of Nikkolas Smith





Dread Scott Art's post about police brutality.

Photo courtesy of Dread Scott



A large mural was painted on Hollywood Boulevard.

Photo courtesy of szeke/Flickr

**From Page 15** piece, which currently hangs outside the Jack Shainman Gallery in New York City.

Scott provides extensive context behind the original flag. On his website, he explains that, “during the Jim Crow era, Black people were terrorized by lynching — often public and publicized extra legal torture and murder of Black people. It was a threat that hung over all Black people who knew that for any reason or no reason whatsoever we could be killed and

the killers would never be brought to justice.”

The medium, a flag, on which the NAACP chose to write this stark message, reflects the threat of death and violence that ‘hung over all Black people.’ Scott, in his addition to this message, modernized the piece.

He draws a crucial connection between the flag’s original words and his revision.

“Now the police are playing the same role of terror that lynch mobs did at the turn of the century,” Scott said. “Like lynchers

in the Jim Crow era, there can be eye witnesses, and now even video evidence, and yet the police get away with murder. This artwork is an unfortunately necessary update to address a horror from the past that is haunting us in the present.”

A main characteristic of protest art is that it is temporary — collectively used and dispersed until a social justice movement’s goals have been achieved. Typically, protest art occupies a space for six months to a few years, and

is replaced or modified as a movement progresses. However, a recent Black Lives Matter mural in Los Angeles may have forever changed this aspect of protest art.

On June 14, a large mural with the words, “All Black Lives Matter,” was painted on Hollywood Boulevard with a permanent status in mind. The L.A. city council passed a motion to protect the mural, and to keep it as a lasting symbol of the Black Lives Matter Movement.

# Caleb Ricketts gets by with a little help from his team

*Toreros' catcher says people around him make baseball and life more enjoyable*

LEAH STEVENS  
CONTRIBUTOR

As a young boy growing up in Newport Beach, California, Caleb Ricketts knew he liked being active and a team member. Ricketts started playing sports at the age of four years old, and when he turned five, he started playing the sport he still loves today — baseball. While he is currently a sophomore and the catcher at the University of San Diego, Ricketts' career in baseball had an unconventional start.

"I was five years old playing t-ball, and I got hit in the nose with the ball, and then I quit for four years because I was scared to play after that," Ricketts said.

After that minor setback and a push from his parents to go back, Ricketts fell back in love with the practices, team dynamics, and the game itself. One of the most grounding factors Ricketts finds with baseball is his teammates. Waking up early for practices, having late-night games, and traveling the country with his teammates has given



Ricketts finished the shortened 2020 season with a .351 batting average, good for third-best on a USD Baseball team that won 12 of the 16 games they played.

Photo courtesy USD Athletics

him some of the best friendships that he knows he will never forget.

One of his favorite memories was a pair of trips to North Carolina, when his high school team won the same tournament two years in a row. The chemistry and energy of the group is something Ricketts will never forget.

When it comes to friends or teammates, Ricketts stated "Something I really admire about someone is someone who can listen to what I'm going through and still

treat and love me the same afterward. Also, someone who can make me laugh and bring happiness to my day."

Ricketts still finds that the best part of being a part of the baseball team are his teammates and their energetic team dynamic. However, he will admit that the commitment to baseball does get overwhelming. Trying to balance his schoolwork, his social life, and his sport can get tricky from time to time.

"The hardest part

about baseball is the schedule we have and time management," Ricketts said. "It can get exhausting, especially if you don't value the relationships with your teammates. That would make me want to stop playing because the schedule gets really tough."

It is truly the people and relationships — both family and teammates — in Ricketts' life that keep him motivated and energized.

"What makes me want

**Con't on Page 18**

**From Page 17** to keep playing baseball are the relationships I've made throughout the years with my teammates," Ricketts said. "The relationships are the most important thing, but I also love the game itself."

As far as the future, he does not know what is in store for him in baseball. Due to the

pandemic's trying times and the unpredictability of the sport, it is hard to say where he will end up. However, he does know no matter where he is, he wants to be like his dad, his greatest inspiration.

"One of the strongest influences in my life is my dad because he's extremely disciplined and works very hard," Ricketts

said. "He's had the same job for over 30 years, and he absolutely hates it, but it pays well, and he does it to support us which I really admire. Him getting through the week by doing stuff he doesn't want to do so we can go to school and have a good life is really inspiring to me, and it's something I want to do when I'm older."

Caleb Ricketts is driven by the people in his life who inspire him, who push him to be a better player, and who can make him laugh and have a good time with him. He finds happiness and purpose in life by forming tight-knit friendships and having a strong bond with his family and his turtle, Timmy Timmy.

## Eschool and esports

**USD Campus Recreation opens the door to billion-dollar world of competitive gaming with esports teams, tournaments**

**JOSHUA STRANGE  
CONTRIBUTOR**

Students have never had a better opportunity to gain followers and subscribers, or get school paid for while flexing their skills online, as revenue from esports reaches staggering new heights during COVID-19. Games like "World of Warcraft," "Call of Duty: Warzone," and "League of Legends" have hundreds of millions of concurrent viewers and players, a small part of the pie in a billion-dollar industry. Even USD is getting on board with the growing trend as this fall brings about a paradigm shift from physical sports to competitive esports.

"Esports" is the term industry experts are using to represent the world of competitive

online gaming. This environment hosts teams and leagues in which students or professional online gamers compete for huge prizes, bragging rights, and a chance to prove that gaming can be a professional endeavor.

The Torero Gaming Club, working with

***"I feel good about it. It is honestly a good direction and gaming is an equal playing ground for almost anyone."***

***- Mackenzie Zorn, USD sophomore***

Campus Recreation, created USD's official esports teams earlier this month and they are recruiting interested students. For more casual players or those looking to practice before applying for the official teams this semester, Campus Recreation will also be

offering remote intramural esports tournaments, on a variety of gaming platforms with awards and Amazon gift cards.

USD joins a growing list of campuses around the nation that are offering competitive esports teams. Following in the footsteps of big schools like UC

Berkeley and UC Irvine, which have been paving the way with their varsity esports teams, it is an exciting time to break into the industry.

"There are nearly 150 colleges in North America that offer (gaming) scholarships," Emily Rand, an ESPN

reporter for collegiate gaming, said. "College players at a scholarship esports program are like traditional athletes who go to college for their sports."

Last year tens of thousands of people watched live as ESPN hosted their inaugural collegiate gaming tournament in a coast-to-coast standoff, making careers and dreams come true for several young esports players.

Many of these gaming professionals use highlights and clips from their gameplay and post them to platforms like Twitter, TikTok, and Youtube. These social media influencers can generate millions of dollars through advertisements and paid subscriptions or get picked up by

**Con't on Page 19**



Competitive gaming has become more popular in recent years, with multiple tournaments taking place across a variety of different games.

Photo courtesy Florian Olivo/Unsplash

**From Page 18** professional organizations that contract them much like a professional sports team. USD sophomore Megan Cardiff, who has started dabbling in video creation, explained just how lucrative the market for digital creators is.

“The influence YouTubers have is insane...some have over 9 million followers and can make thousands for one brand deal,” Cardiff said. “The consumer market is shifting online, especially with COVID.”

Last year was an explosive phase for the

esports and influencer markets and COVID has certainly upped the ante by pushing activities like work and school into the online environment as well. “Fortnite,” a game

**“College players... are like traditional athletes who go to college for their sports.”**

often associated with dancing and memes, has offered over a quarter of a billion dollars in prizes to competitive players around the world since its inception. Last year alone it had a prize pool of over \$100 million and the

player who won the 2019 Fortnite World Cup took home a mind-boggling \$3 million in winnings. His videos have tens of millions of views on Youtube — and he is only

**- Emily Rand, ESPN**

17 years old. The game also hosts “Econcerts” with appearances from Travis Scott and Marshmello.

Competitive gamers are generating buzz much like top sports athletes and college recruiters are keeping their eyes

open. Sophomore Mackenzie Zorn, who plays “Warzone” with her older brother, is happy to see USD launch an esports program.

“I feel good about it,” Zorn said. “It is honestly a good direction and gaming is an equal playing ground for almost anyone. Intramural esports tournaments are a good choice considering the pandemic.”

With everything to gain and nothing to lose, this fall is shaping up to be an exciting time to try your luck and prove your worth in the virtual world.