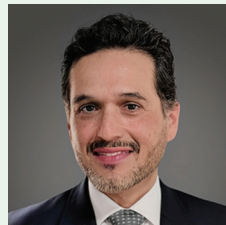


New President named for Evergreen Valley College by unanimous vote
SEE PAGE 8



Reporting recognized
San José Spotlight receives prestigious honor from Santa Clara County
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San José announces site for first safe sleeping site in city history
SEE PAGE 8



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SEPT. 20 - OCT. 3, 2024 ■ VOL. 41, NO. 20

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Tam Truong, a candidate for the District 8 San Jose City Council seat, speaks during the January 2023 appointment hearings. File photo.

San Jose cop running for office to stay in race despite administrative leave

By Brandon Pho
San José Spotlight

San Jose police sergeant and City Council candidate, Tam Truong, has been placed on administrative leave amid allegations of mortgage fraud. He said he plans to continue his campaign for elected office.

Truong, who's worked in law enforcement for two decades and is running against incumbent Domingo Candelas for the District 8 San Jose
See COP, page 9



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Sikh annual walk with Holy Book welcomes thousands to honor the meaning of Sikhism

Annual procession through Evergreen to promote awareness and understanding of sacred writings; residents are invited to attend the Holy embrace of Sikhism the world over

By Kevin Larsen
Special to the Times

Thousands of people are expected to participate in a procession, hosted by San Jose Gurdwara, honoring and promoting awareness and understanding of sacred writings in their Holy Book. The annual event will be held in Evergreen Valley Sunday, Sept. 29th, the float traveling from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The Holy Book is treated as a living Guru and carried in the procession on a very special raised platform with a canopy. The Guru Granth

Sahib is covered with beautiful cloths called rumalas (protective cloth covering).

Before the float begins its procession, a beautiful prayer is presented by respected priest, Mohinder Singh Bajwa of the San Jose Gurdwara who is always praying and loving towards all with his reassuring voice and command of knowledge.

The float procession will leave the Gurdwara at approximately 11 a.m. and follow a new route to return back at 3 p.m. (please see full page ad in this issue).

Route Information

The float will move along Gurdwara Avenue towards Aborn Road. Then the float will turn right to progress down Aborn and then left on Ruby Ave. where it will proceed to the Evergreen Village Square for a 30-minute performance. Then, it will progress back onto Ruby Ave.

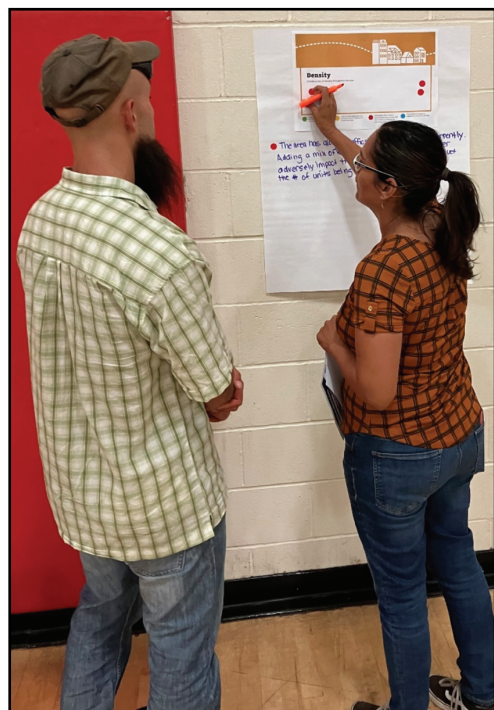


The Holy Float travels around Evergreen Valley with thousands walking along. Ever so carefully the Holy Book Guru Granth Sahib Ji is brought outside from the prayer hall and put on the float to travel the Evergreen neighborhood.

and then move right to travel on Aborn Road and then left upon reaching Gurdwara Avenue to go back to the Gurdwara where it began. Continued complementary snacks and soft beverages will be offered and of

course, all are invited to join.

Singing begins as soon as the float attains its walking speed journey around Evergreen Valley from Aborn Road to Ruby Ave. then back up
See HOLY BOOK, page 3



On August 8th a Community event marked the last of many public events for the Pleasant Hills Golf Course redevelopment project. The event was well attended by more than 100 people.

Pleasant Hills land development soon to be presented to San Jose City Council

By Kevin Larsen
Special to the Times

Tables and chairs were neatly set up and refreshments served. Information tables were set up corresponding to station walls where people could converse and post with felt pens their personal view on separate guidelines for the Pleasant Hills Golf Course redevelopment project plan.

The majority of all public meetings and community input with the first presentation to the San Jose City Council for approval was concluded in August of 2024. This is the basic start of the process of development for the previous Pleasant Hills Golf Course area.

On August 8th a Community event marked the last of many public events for the Pleasant Hills Golf Course redevelopment project. The event was well attended by more than 100 people.

The East Valley Family YMCA located near the site allowed use of the large space of the basketball court. Tables and chairs were neatly set up and refreshments served. Information tables were in place with corresponding to station walls where

people could converse and post with felt pens their personal view on separate guidelines for the overall plan.

The consultant with PlaceWorks company, David Early spoke to the crowd and reviewed the important process of the meeting and the purpose of gathering views and suggestions from the community to gain input on key principals. Their website states, "PlaceWorks is a 100% employee-owned planning, design, and environmental consulting firm. As our name suggests, we're all about places and how they work—geographically, environmentally, functionally, aesthetically, and culturally—but we're also passionate about how we work, both as a company and with each other."

Here are the guiding principles of the Mt. Pleasant development project:

- Development pattern and uses
- Community amenities
- Circulation improvements (pedestrian, bike, personal vehicle, bus, rail, etc.)
- Placemaking and urban design concepts
- Affordable housing

See PLEASANT HILLS, page 6

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Please note: I have not and will not be verifying or investigating any information supplied by others.

Times Local News

Holy Book

Continued from page 1

the elevated Quimby Road to the starting point of the world famous San Jose Gurdwara. Throughout the world, when each Gurdwara is built, a special copy of this Holy Book is sent from the Golden Temple in India to become the centerpiece of the prayer hall.

This annual procession includes the singing of sacred writings of the major tenant seen on the side of the float which states, "God is one." If one reads or listens to these scriptures in this Holy Book, it is suggested one cover their hair in respect. Such cloth head coverings are neatly folded for public use at all Gurdwaras. Each day at the San Jose Gurdwara, as one enters the prayer hall, the words are read aloud and also shown on an electronic display in English, Punjabi and Hindi as the scriptures are sung.

Guru Nanak

This Sikh religion was founded by 16th century poet and composer Guru Nanak who wrote much of his revelations and teachings in the form of poems, which he sang. He was the first spiritual leader of the Sikhs and traveled to many countries to share knowledge. By listening to God, over the centuries eight more sacred spiritual leaders created this Holy living book of words. Then one day, it was deemed forever completed to stand alone as its own spiritual leader to form the bedrock of understanding for all Sikhs in offering guidance to all subjects with its wise, powerful, Holy words.

Annually, the San Jose Gurdwara honors this scripture by bringing it out under the open sky from the prayer hall. It rides on a special float that wheels around the neighborhood to honor and welcome its knowledge to all who wish to partake! One of the major tenants seen on the side of the float is that "God is one." Often the road leading up Gurdwaras in cities and towns throughout the world bestows that name.

Sukhdev Baniniwal offers blessings for everyone

Leader, Sukhdev Baniniwal states, "Sikhs believe in the concept "Sarbat da Bhalla" meaning "blessings for everyone." We welcome all people of all cultures and religions to our celebrations. Today we celebrate our sincere beliefs which are sacred to us. Our community helps anyone in need with the concept of "Wand Kay Chakna" meaning "Share with those in need." The purpose of this walk is to celebrate those concepts taught by Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Also, I wish to thank the Evergreen community for how gracious and giving this community is, which rhyme with our con-

cepts."

Complimentary food served

Before walking with the float, the Sikhs and other members of the community partake in eating delicious freshly cooked complementary vegetarian hot foods served under outdoor canopies. The Gurdwara complimentary food in the Langar (kitchen) is always available, 365 days of the year to which all are welcome. This worship and community center acts as an oasis of prevention of hunger for many in the Evergreen community which eases the minds of the needy while also supporting the neighborhood and beyond in many other pressing important areas of need.

Poetry is sung

All along the way children sing special hymns called kirtans in which the words float in the air. Kirtan means "singing the praises of God." Most are shabads (meaning "The Word,") from



These young five and six years olds walked four miles with the Sikh float in Evergreen Valley last year.

annually all over the world. The event commemorates the anniversary of the installation and creation of the spiritual book referred to as the Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

Sikhism is rooted in oneness and love and encourages a life of servitude and spirituality. In Punjabi, the word "Sikh" means "disciple", and central to the faith is the relationship between the Sikh

and his master, who guides him through the teachings and writings of the 10 Gurus contained in this Holy Book. Holy teachings in this book (Garanth) offer a roadmap of how to live a beautiful Godly life.

Nagar Kirtan: singing divine hymns

"Nagar" means "town or neighborhood," and "Kirtan" describes the singing of Shabads (divine hymns). Nagar Kirtan (this walk) that are celebrated by the Sikh community in Evergreen Valley as happens too

the Guru Granth Sahib (Holy Book). The words are set to traditional musical scales called ragas. The Guru Granth Sahib Ji is poetry combined with wisdom and guidance which when recited and sung and understood, is said to offer great wisdom.

The Sikh religion stresses the importance of doing good over getting too absorbed in ceremonies and rituals. It's a belief that to lead a good life, one must work hard and live honestly, treat everyone equally, serve others, be generous to the less fortunate, and keep God close in the heart and mind at all times.

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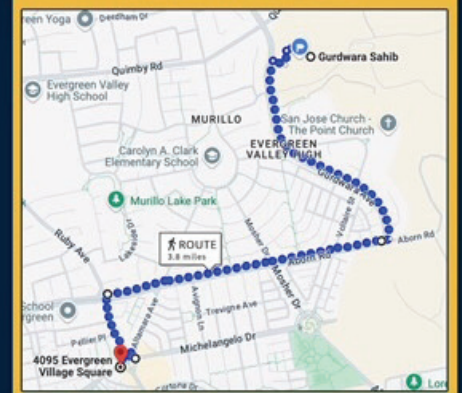
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Times **Community Notebook**

San José Spotlight receives prestigious honor from Santa Clara County

By Annalise Freimarck
San José Spotlight

The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors has commended San José Spotlight for its commitment to providing accurate and critical information on issues affecting county residents.

The commendation, presented on Monday by Supervisor Otto Lee, recognizes this news organization's dedication to empowering residents, boosting transparency and igniting civic engagement. The honor covers San José Spotlight's work over the past five years since its 2019 founding, including comprehensive homelessness coverage, in-depth reporting on the fight to keep Regional Medical Center open, coverage of a potential San Jose city worker strike over higher wages and its coverage of the 2021 VTA mass shooting.

Lee said San José Spotlight has strengthened democracy in the county since it began covering the community. Santa Clara County commends organizations and individuals who do something noteworthy that benefits residents.

"Through its vigilant and steadfast commitment to San Jose and the surrounding areas, San José Spotlight has uplifted marginalized voices, holds power to account and paves the way for change," he said at the Monday meeting.

The commendation adds to this news organization's other recognitions, including the



The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors commended San José Spotlight. Photo by Jen Morrow.

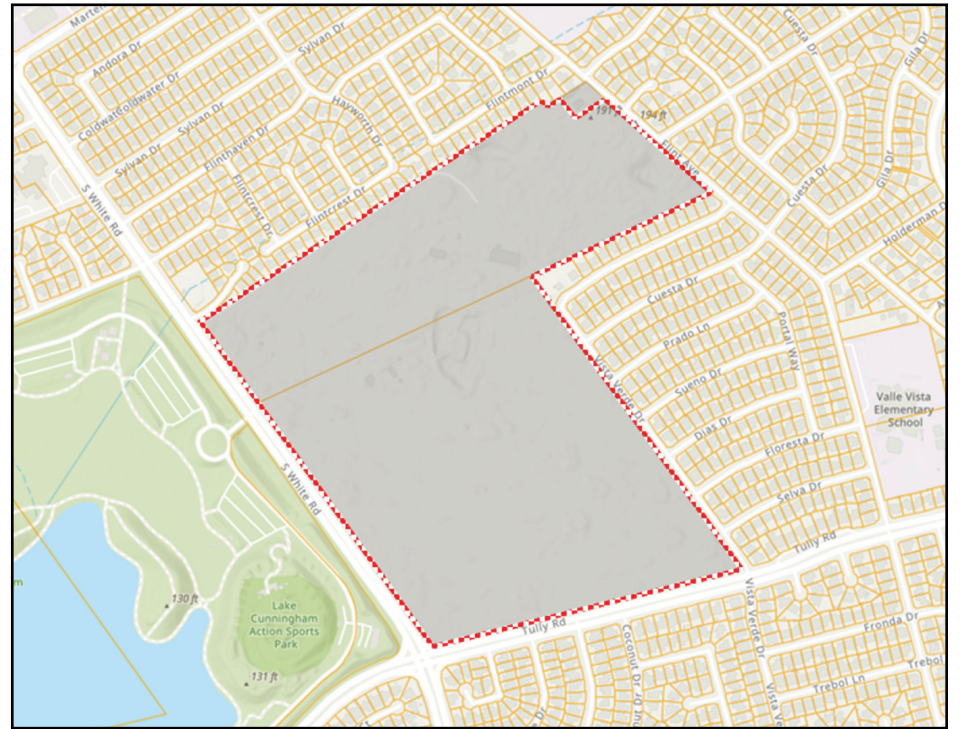
prestigious James Madison Award for its successful lawsuit against San Jose and former Mayor Sam Liccardo, who is now running for Congress, for violating state transparency laws and improperly withholding public records. San José

Spotlight also won four first-place awards this year in the annual California Journalism Awards for covering stories such as a San Jose police union office manager hit with drug smuggling charges and the effects of the Silicon Valley Bank collapse on everyday business owners and nonprofits.

Moryt Milo, San José Spotlight editor, said the organization remains dedicated to its mission of providing fearless journalism that disrupts the status quo by sharing vital community stories.

"We will be out there every day covering the stories that matter, telling the stories that go untold and reinvigorating our community and their engagement because we strongly believe that reporting the news, especially local news, is a fundamental cornerstone of democracy," she said at the meeting.

San José Spotlight is the region's first non-profit newsroom covering San Jose, Sunnyvale, Santa Clara, the West Valley and the county.



Pleasant Hills is located at 2050 and 2079 South White Road (northeast corner of South White Road and Tully Road).

Pleasant Hills

Continued from page 1

- Job creation

The audience expressed their comments by writing their views on specific items (on wall posters) to help shape the important future development. Felt pens were used to write on poster board areas. Each station had key knowledgeable event persons to assist and help attendees.

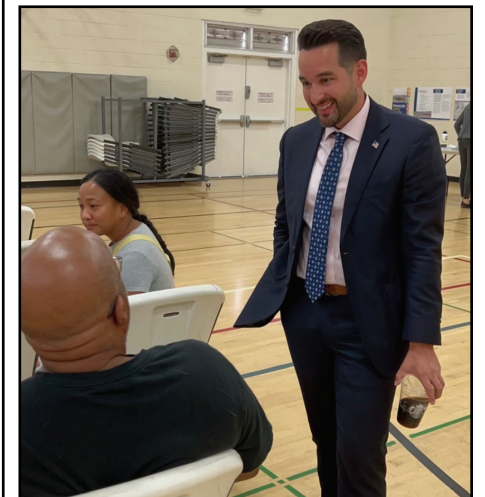
Ample time was given for each audience member to discuss issues with local leaders, including City Councilmember for District 8, Domingo Candelas. Candelas spoke earnestly to all who visited on a variety of topics. He and others facilitating the project were accessible and made a great deal of effort to communicate to all attendees.

Candelas stated, "I am proud of a diverse and inclusive community engagement process for the site of the former Pleasant Hills Golf Course. The insights and feedback City staff and our consultant team Placeworks gathered from neighbors will be instrumental as they finalize the guard rails for what a positive potential future development should be. I look forward to seeing the final guiding principles reflecting the community's valuable input and our commitment to thoughtful development and genuine engagement."

Mt. Pleasant School board trustee president

Derek Grasty was welcoming to those at the event stated, "Tonight was a good gathering of community members. They were able to provide some input into the Pleasant Hills development. We are hoping our suggestions will be taken into strong consideration. I want to give recognition to all community members for providing their time to suggest ideas for this effort!"

Editor's note: To read more on this project go to the San Jose City website at <https://tinyurl.com/7tauanun>



San Jose City Councilmember Domingo Candelas answers a question from a local resident regarding the Pleasant Hills Redevelopment project.



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Times **Local News**

New President named for Evergreen Valley College

Following a nationwide search, **Dr. Vinicio J. López** (inset) has been named the ninth president of Evergreen Valley College (EVC) upon a unanimous vote by the San José – Evergreen Community College District (SJEC-CD) board of trustees.



A first-generation college student who began his higher education journey as a community college student himself, López has almost 25 years of experience as a community college faculty member and administrator.

After serving as an English as a Second Language faculty member, López, a native Spanish speaker, transitioned into administration where he currently serves as vice president of instruction at Skyline College in San Bruno, California.

“Throughout the search process, Dr. López demonstrated a deep commitment to our District’s core values of opportunity, equity, and social justice,” said Dr. Beatriz Chaidez, SJEC-CD chancellor. “We are very fortunate to have someone with his breadth and depth of experience and skills to serve as the next president of Evergreen Valley College.”

In addition to his current role at Skyline College, López has experience overseeing student affairs, non-credit and workforce education, dual enrollment, and international education programs, among others. His prior administrative experience includes serving as senior international education officer and dean of the Mission Campus for San Francisco City College. He has also served as dean of the Le-Jao Campus for Coastline College

in Fountain Valley, California. “I am humbled and excited to be joining Evergreen Valley College as the next president,” Dr. López said. “EVC is one of the premier community colleges in California and I look forward to working with my new colleagues among the faculty, classified staff, and administration to continue that commitment to excellence.”

At Skyline College, Dr. López is recognized for his collaboration with all stakeholders and constituency groups in order to create and implement initiatives that promote a student-first campus.

“Dr. López illustrated a deep commitment to serving and partnering with our most vulnerable students,” said Tony Alexander, SJEC-CD board of trustees president. “He understands how to foster an inclusive and welcoming learning environment that is informed by the lived experiences and voices of students and he is passionate about mentorship and the development of a future generation of leaders. The board of trustees is confident that Dr. López will be a great president for EVC.”

Among his other duties at Skyline, López is co-chair of the Enrollment Strategies Committee—a successful collegewide collaboration between students, classified professionals, faculty, and administrators—where he led development of a five-year enrollment management plan to increase student enrollment, retention, and completion.

“I would like to thank the board of trustees, Chancellor Chaidez, and the search committee for placing their confidence in me,” López said. “I look forward to working with all campus constituent groups to serve our students and help them reach their academic and career goals and to create a culture where students feel their dreams are our dreams.”

López holds a Doctor of Education degree in

educational leadership, administration and policy from Pepperdine University; a Master of Arts degree in Education from the University of Phoenix; a bachelor’s degree in history from University of California, San Diego; and an associate degree in social and behavioral sciences from Miramar College.

López is scheduled to begin in his new role as EVC president on September 16.

San José announces area for first safe sleeping site in city history

Located along the Coyote Creek, the site will bring relief to neighbors, restore Watson Park, and help City meet environmental mandate

By **William Bellou**
Publisher

The City of San José just took a significant step toward establishing a safer, managed alternative to unsheltered homelessness at 1157 E Taylor St.

This location was selected from eight potential sites that the San José City Council unanimously approved for further analysis in June of this year. If the location continues to prove suitable, it will be the first safe sleeping site to open in San Jose, likely in early 2025.

“Last year, we did a clean-up at Watson Park, and the conditions were shocking—a greenspace that should be open and available for all was covered in human excrement, filled with debris and overrun by shopping carts. We can’t allow our public spaces to fall into squalor any more than we can allow our homeless neighbors to live in it,” said San Jose Mayor Matt Mahan. “This area



will be the first to see the benefits of this new solution to homelessness—one that will preserve our park and protect it from re-encampment. We’ll be working with the neighborhood every step of the way to ensure this solution benefits everyone.”

In this year’s budget, the City Council voted unanimously to allocate dollars toward the creation of several Safe Sleeping Sites with the capacity to serve a total of 500 homeless people currently living on the streets of San Jose or along one of the City’s many waterways.

“I’ve lived in San Jose for several decades, witnessing the increasing plight of people living in the streets, the creeks, or anywhere they could find,” said Jeff Levine, a local resident and spokesperson for the Roosevelt Neighborhood Association. “I applaud and support 100% the City creating safe sleeping sites. Our neighborhood understands that solving homelessness requires all neighborhoods throughout the City to be supportive of plans to get people out of the creeks, highway overpasses, streets, parks and into supervised housing.”

The magnitude of the homelessness crisis has affected the health of City waterways, and this initiative is a part of broader budget investments designed to maintain the City’s stormwater permit and comply with the Clean Water Act by reducing pollution in the rivers and creeks that flow through San José—88% of which is attributed to unmanaged, unsheltered living conditions along these waterways.



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Times **Local News****Cop***Continued from page 1*

City Council seat in November, was sued last year for allegedly defrauding an escrow officer with the Orange Coast Title Company, which allowed him to ditch his mortgage and collect nearly \$540,000 from the sale of a home.

“This matter has been settled through a civil proceeding, which is the appropriate venue. There is no evidence that I intended to mislead anyone.” – Tam Truong

“The employee has been placed on administrative leave for a personnel matter,” a spokesperson for the department told San José Spotlight.

Truong said the Santa Clara County District Attorney’s Office filed a complaint against him.

“This single-count complaint filed by the district attorney’s office represents nothing more than an allegation. It is based on a misunderstanding of all the facts in this case,” Truong told San José Spotlight. “This matter has been settled through a civil proceeding, which is the appropriate venue. There is no evidence that I intended to mislead anyone. What we have here is a rush to judgment and an effort to criminalize innocent conduct without a full understanding of the facts.

The district attorney’s office filed this charge against me on the eve of the election, depriving me of sufficient time to clear my name through the judicial process before voting begins.”

Truong said he has an “impeccable record of public service.”

“As someone who immigrated to this county from Vietnam at a young age, I believe in the rule of law and in our justice system. I am grateful for the overwhelming support from colleagues and members of the community who know me for my integrity and the strength of my character,” he said.

He said he trusts the justice system to clear his name.

“I have not committed a crime, and I plan to continue with my campaign,” he told San José Spotlight.

Sean Webby, spokesperson for the Santa Clara County District Attorney’s Office, declined to comment on a potential criminal complaint. Officials with the Santa Clara County Superior Court didn’t respond to requests for comment.

The insurance company’s lawsuit claimed Truong “used his position of trust and authority as a SJPD Police Officer to fraudulently convince” an escrow officer that a lien on his property could be removed from a preliminary title document, according to court documents from last year.

The complaint filed against Truong in Santa Clara County Superior Court in September 2022 said he showed the escrow

officer documents from his 2015 Chapter 7 bankruptcy to help convince her the lien was eliminated from his home on Plumstead Way in San Jose. After defrauding the escrow officer in January 2021, the complaint alleges Truong conspired with two others to sell the Plumstead home in July 2021.

Truong’s actions resulted in the sale going through as if he owned the title of the home outright, without any liens, the complaint said. Rather than pay back his mortgage with the money from the sale, he is alleged to have pocketed the cash and later reinvested it in another home.

San José Spotlight last year also reported that Truong at one point owed more than \$30,000 to a former employee of his private security company, Training and Protective Services, which he started in 2012 to offer private patrols for neighborhoods just as the city’s police force was hemorrhaging officers due to Measure B, a 2012 ballot measure that slashed retirement benefits for police officers. Truong supported the controversial measure in his 2012 council run.

In a wage theft case filed with the state labor commissioner in 2014, one of Truong’s employees, Kevin Halverson, claimed he worked nearly 1,700 hours in the first half of 2013, but was paid for only a little more than 500 hours.

Following a hearing and testimony from Halverson and some of his coworkers in early 2015, the labor commissioner ordered Truong to pay Halverson \$34,071

in wages, damages, interest and penalties. Truong’s company dissolved a short time later.

In early 2015, the San Jose Police Department suspended Truong’s department-issued outside work permit, which the department uses to monitor officers’ business interests separate from police work, while police leaders considered whether it was a conflict for him to profit from the department’s short staffing problems.

Truong is once again running for the same seat he sought through an appointment process in 2023.

Candelas, who was ahead of Truong in the March primaries, said he’s reserving judgement on his November challenger.

“I’m going to let the process run its course. My focus as councilmember for District 8 remains the same: keeping our community safe, cleaning our streets and parks and creating stronger neighborhoods,” he told San José Spotlight.

Mahan said that while he awaits the outcome of Truong’s case, he’s withdrawing his support for him in the District 8 race.

“This is a serious charge that requires a fair, thorough and timely investigation,” Mahan told San José Spotlight. “While I understand Tam Truong has stated he is innocent of this single charge, that must now be determined through our judicial system. Given these facts I am withdrawing my endorsement until such time as this case is resolved.”



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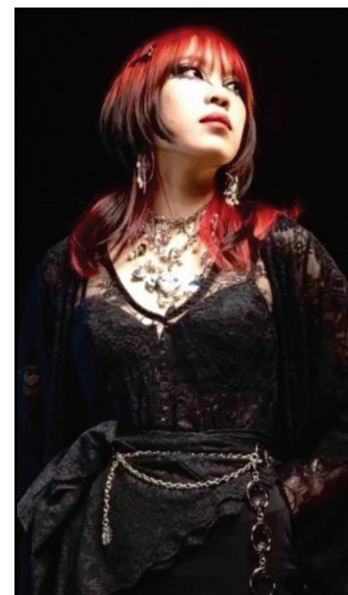
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Tiffany Vu of Evergreen Valley has been named to the Dean's List at Rochester Institute of Technology

Vu named to Dean's List at Rochester Institute of Technology

Tiffany Vu of Evergreen Valley has been named to the Dean's List at Rochester Institute of Technology for the spring semester of the 2023-2024 academic year. Vu is a 3D digital design major.

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Village Square Branch Library (4001 Evergreen Village Square San Jose, CA 95135). (408) 592-7562
Pastor Shelia Sapp "Worship Service and Dinner" (Community Room) 10/29/23 at 3:00pm. "Bible Study" (Group Study Room) every Saturday at 12:00pm
OUR MISSION: Evangelizing our community and the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ. OUR MINISTRY: Training ministers on how to use their love for God to reach those in need of His love. OUR PASSION: Transforming lives within our community with God's love.

followers of Jesus Christ. Through worship, study, fellowship and outreach, we strive to nurture and grow a strong faith community of believers, a family of all ages, where each member feels welcomed, loved, valued and empowered to serve. Children are especially welcomed and cherished as an important part of God's family.



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"As-Salaamu-Alaikum" the English meaning is "Peace be upon you".
Q) What is Islam, who are Muslims, and what is the Quran?
A) Islam is a faith and way of life. Islam began in the 7th century. People who follow Islam are known as Muslims. The Quran is the Divine book that guides Muslims to

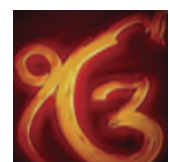
practice Islam. "Hufazik Allah Waeayilatak" the English meaning is " May Allah (swt) protect you and your family". Please visit our website to learn more.



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God is One
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Rab Ik Hai

SAN JOSE GURDWARA
3636 Gurdwara Ave. San Jose, CA 95148

The word Sikh (see-kh) means "disciple" or "student." A Sikh is a practitioner of the faith founded in the 15th century by Guru Nanak in Punjab of old British India. A Guru who is a "teacher" or "enlightener" completes the relationship of teaching and learning. Sikhism is monotheistic and stresses the equality of all men and women. Sikhs believe in three basic principles; meditating on the name of God (praying), earning a living by honest means and sharing the fruits of one's labor with others. Currently there are close to one million Sikhs living in the USA and Canada and 25 million Sikhs living around the world. Sikhism is the 5th largest religion in the world. At the Gurdwara (House of God) in San Jose we welcome all. We pray daily for peace and prosperity for everybody in the world. Come to visit and enjoy Langer (food) in our kitchen which is open 365 days of the year and serves complementary vegetarian meals. We also encourage you to enter our history room

on site and walk the beautiful grounds. Learn more about us and community events we sponsor by visiting our website; <http://www.SanJose-Gurdwara.org>

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and marginalized of San Jose. Our Pre-school is the only Catholic Preschool offering quality family oriented service in the Evergreen and Silver Creek areas. Our Chapel, Gathering Hall, Parish Office, Mission Center, Parish Gift Shop, Memorial Garden and Preschool are all located at 5111 San Felipe Rd. Please come join us to worship at one of the following times and locations:
St. Francis of Assisi Chapel: Saturday 5:00PM, Sunday 8:30 AM, 10:30 AM, 12:30 PM, 4:00 PM (Mass in Vietnamese), 6:00 PM Youth Mass
St. Francis of Assisi Gathering Hall
Sunday 9:00 AM, Sunday 11:00AM, Igbo Mass - Second Sunday of the month 12:30 PM
Mt. Hamilton Grange - 2840 Aborn Road
Sunday 9:30 AM
The Villages Gated Community (Cribari Auditorium) Sunday

8:15 AM
For more information, please call or visit us at the Parish Mission Center open M-F 9:00 AM -12:00 PM; 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM. Come join us and share your presence with us so that together we may grow and share our gifts to help build God's Kingdom!


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