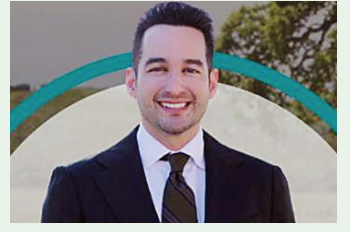


Philharmonic Orchestra's 2024-25 Spring Concert, featuring Young Artist Competition winners to be held March 8  
**SEE PAGE 10**



City Council passes resolution reaffirming commitment that anyone, regardless of immigration status, has the right to feel safe  
**SEE PAGE 4**



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# Evergreen Times

FEB. 21 - MARCH 6, 2025 ■ VOL. 42, NO. 5

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**Tara Mandrekar**, the associate director at Ourmedia, talks to Evergreen Valley College students on how AI skills are valuable for future employment.

## What is AI?

*Tara Mandrekar presents a talk on AI at Evergreen Valley College*

Recently, San Jose native Leigh High and UC Santa Barbara graduate Tara Mandrekar spoke on the benefits of AI and how the industry and comfort level around AI are constantly changing.

The talk was sponsored by Hawk Gaming and CEO Daniel Tabata and AI Officer Elikem Arthur.

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## San Jose roller rink ends its run at Eastridge

By Vicente Vera  
*San José Spotlight*

Roller skaters are about to take their last turn around the Aloha Roller Rink in Eastridge Center, with the location closing next month after six years.

Aloha Fun Center owner Liz Ruiz said the San Jose roller rink had an incredible run at the mall after what was supposed to be just a short stint as a pop-up venue. There was always a possibility the roller rink would be replaced by another business at Eastridge Center willing to pay more for the space. Although its last day is Feb. 23, Ruiz is searching for a new home.

"The pop-up was only supposed to be a two-month deal, but the community response was so enormous that the mall said, 'We think you should stay,'" she told San José Spotlight. "It was never a long-term contract so we knew the day would come where they'd find someone who can pay market-rate (rent)."

The space is about twice the size of what the Aloha Roller Rink needs, Ruiz said, describing her relationship with Eastridge Center as a "sweet-heart deal."

Eastridge Center general manager John Petersen



The Aloha Roller Rink closes on Feb. 23 after six years at San Jose's Eastridge Center. Photo by Vicente Vera.

said Aloha Roller Rink has been a fantastic addition to the mall over the past seven years.

"A new business will be opening later this year in this space," he said. "This new business is not currently prepared to make a public announcement at this time, but will do so in the near future."

Aloha Roller Rink first opened in 1977 as the Aloha Roller Palace on Blossom Hill Road before closing in 2014. Ruiz fell in love with skating at the Aloha as she played roller derby for the Silicon Valley Roller Girls about 10 years ago. She said she wanted to save the business from closing because San Jose residents love recreational activities that bring people together like roller skating — and need a place to do it. In 2015, Ruiz

revived the business as a pop-up at various locations, putting on events such as Roosevelt Roller Hockey. Then in 2018, mall operators approached Ruiz to re-open and it has lasted for six years.

Roller skating among dozens of people Thursday, Jaelynn Martinez said she's made new friends at the Aloha, and the regulars have built a community around the rink. She said she would have to travel to Santa Cruz to the next closest roller rink without the Aloha.

"I was here every day during the summer and I still come out twice a week," she told San José Spotlight. "Everyone's in their own groove or learning new moves, but we're all here to

See ALOHA, page 6

## This San Jose nonprofit helps Californians get back on their feet - through bicycles

By Zayna Syed  
*CalMatters*

People who have spent time in jail can learn how to repair and sell bikes if they get into a cohort program for Community Cycles of California, a San Jose-based nonprofit that helps people who typically face barriers to employment develop business skills.

The nonprofit gives 10 people who are "justice-involved" the opportunity to learn how to run a business. Many of the participants are also veterans or have been homeless in



**Robert Peters**, 47, a program participant, services a bicycle at Community Cycles of California in San Jose on Dec. 13. Peters was referred to Community Cycle Software California by a program director at the Recover Café as part of the requirements of his treatment court orders. Photo by Jungho Kim - for Calmatters

their past, according to Colin Bruce, who co-founded the nonprofit with a friend, Cindy Ahola.

Participants spend about 40% of

their time in the classroom completing various workshops and trainings and 60% of their time rotating jobs within the shop, such as mar-

keting, accounting, office management, retail, bike repairs and building bikes.

What's new about the program, Bruce says, is it's able to offer a 40-hour work week for the six months it runs. This is different from similar workforce development efforts, which typically offer 20-hour or so gigs or limited services, such as résumé help. When Bruce and Ahola first started Community Cycles in 2017, they partnered with outside organizations who had a similar part-time model. But around 80% of participants left the program for full-time jobs.

"These are people that need every penny they can get to keep the roof over their head and pay for food," he said. "They left to go be short order cooks or a security guard or something like that. And rightly so, because they were working part

See BICYCLES, page 6

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Times News

## The right to feel safe

By Domingo Candelas

This week, the City Council unanimously passed a resolution to reaffirm our commitment that anyone, regardless of immigration status, has the right to feel safe in the city where they live, work, and worship.

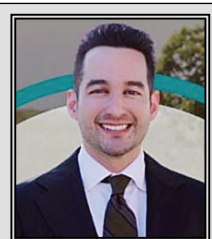
Every resident should be able to trust their local government and feel confident in their public safety officers. Fear and uncertainty should not cause our residents to be disengaged or disconnected from their city. There isn't a single community member that should be afraid to call 9-1-1, seek healthcare services, or go to work/school.

As the Councilmember for District 8, I want all of my residents to feel safe calling my office because that is how we uplift our community and build stronger neighborhoods. Our community members are at the core of the work we do. They are the ones that let us know what's going on in their neighborhoods and which issues are important to them.

We, as a City, are standing by our immigrant communities during this time because they help make this City great.

There is much work to be done, but together we are stronger.

It is my pleasure and privilege to serve as your City Councilmember.



**Council Report**  
Domingo Candelas,  
District 8 Councilmember

## San Jose Youth Symphony to hold auditions for the 2025-26 Season

The San Jose Youth Symphony (SJYS) will be holding its annual general auditions for the 2025-2026 Season.

The auditions will be held on Thursday afternoons (March 27th & April 3rd) and Friday afternoons (March 28th & April 4th) between the hours of 4-9 p.m. Saturday auditions will be held all day (March 29th & April 5th).

All student musicians are welcome, ages 8 and up, who play orchestral instruments (woodwinds, brass, percussion & strings) or who are interested in performing jazz.

Marching Band musicians are welcome to apply for an audition now and then join after marching band season ends.

To submit an audition application, visit: [www.sjys.org](http://www.sjys.org) to join one of SJYS's 12 orchestras and instrumental ensembles. Your audition will be scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. The symphony will do its best to accommodate your date preferences you list in the application.

The deadline for submitting applications is March 23, 20245

Questions? Reach out to [sjys@sjys.org](mailto:sjys@sjys.org)  
**About the San Jose Youth Symphony**

The San Jose Youth Symphony is one of the oldest and finest youth orchestras on the West Coast of the US. Founded over 70 years ago as part of the former San Jose Symphony\*, SJYS has a rich tradition of musical performance and education.

SJYS member musicians, of ages 8 to 20, are selected from more than 650 applicants through our annual spring General Auditions. SJYS comprises 12 distinct performing ensembles: two full orchestras; a chamber orchestra; two flute choirs; concert winds, saxophone, percussion, jazz and harp ensembles; and two string ensembles. Each group rehearses weekly from September to May or early June and performs a scheduled series of concerts each season. In addition, member musicians participate in a week-long summer camp and receive special coaching and participate in masterclasses from professional and renowned musicians in the Bay Area.

The premier group of SJYS is its Philharmonic Orchestra, led by SJYS Music Director and Conductor, Yair Samet. The orchestra performs its season subscription concerts at the historic and beautiful, California Theatre, in downtown San Jose. The orchestra also travels biannually on its International Concert Tours, and have performed in renowned concert halls in Japan, Italy, Austria, Germany, Spain, Hungary, Croatia, Czech Republic, Ireland, Argentina and Uruguay. The orchestra's last two-week concert tour in 2022, saw them traveling to the Baltics: Vilnius, Lithuania; Riga, Latvia; Parnu & Tallinn, Estonia; and Helsinki, Finland.

The orchestra will be touring again during the summer of 2025 to Poland and the Czech Republic!

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### Audition dates:

March 27 & April 3, 2025 (Thursday 4-9 pm)

March 28 & April 4, 2025 (Friday 4-9 pm)

March 29 & April 5, 2025 (Saturday all day)

**The deadline for submitting audition applications is:**  
Sunday, March 23, 2025

QUESTIONS? Reach out to [sjys@sjys.org](mailto:sjys@sjys.org).

SJYS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization (EIN 91-2166427) that has scholarships and financial aid offerings available based on a showing of need.

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## Bicycles

Continued from page 1

time in these programs, they were often, 'Hey I can't come in tomorrow; I've got to go to my other part-time job.' They needed two or three part-time jobs just to survive."

Bruce and Ahola decided to focus the nonprofit on bicycles because of his personal passion for bikes. It also gives people who can't afford a car more independence over their transportation options.

"The first and last mile are critical," Bruce said. "Just getting to a bus or train or things like that, bikes are one of the best ways to do it. And commuting less than 5 miles or so is pretty common around the San Jose area."

Community Cycles was able to fund its cohort members \$23 per hour for 40 hours of work in large part because of a grant from the Breaking Barriers to Employment Initiative, a California state program that awards money to help people who



face significant barriers to employment, such as those recently out of jail, get jobs.

Breaking Barriers has completed just one round of funding so far and is in the middle of its second round. In the first and second rounds, it has spent about \$27 million on 53 organizations, almost all of them commu-

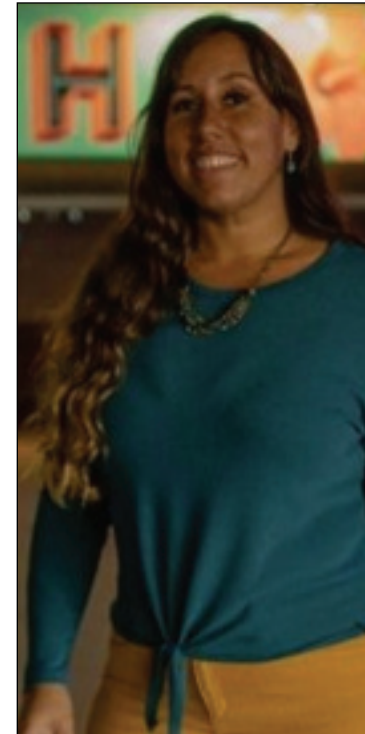
nity-based, according to Leti Shafer, a manager in the workforce development department of the Foundation for California Community Colleges, who administers the Breaking Barriers grant program.

Other examples of grantees include Homeward Bound of Marin and St. John's for Real Change, which assist

people without housing. These organizations offer support services for participants, such as childcare and job preparation. Homeward Bound also provides six months of employment in different types of businesses, such as how to make and sell dog treats.

Like all grant programs, Breaking Barriers is "as stable as the budget," Joelle Ball, deputy director of the California Workforce Development Board, said. The initiative "hardly got anything" this past year, for example. Ball said the budget operates on a 10-year cycle, and in years where the California Legislature has more pressing payments, there's not much money left over for grants.

"It's reliant on the Legislature putting that earmark for the program into the budget," Ball said. "This is how it is for all of our grant programs. 'We don't have any control over it. We can't lobby, we can't ask the Legislature for money, we can't do any of that. What we do advocate for is if you want to put money into workforce programs with us, put it into our programs that exist.'"



Aloha Fun Center owner **Liz Ruiz** said the San Jose roller rink, now set to close, had an incredible run at the mall after what was supposed to be just a short stint as a pop-up venue.



Evergreen Valley College students learn to play De'Von Truvel's board game, Black Wall Street.



## Aloha

Continued from page 1  
support each other."

Ruiz said she's been looking for a new spot for years, but identifying affordable buildings with the correct pillar spacing, along with other factors, has proven difficult.

"Everyone's asking where our future location is going to be," Ruiz told San José Spotlight. "I will say that I'm focusing my search on the South Bay. I hope by the time we actually close at the end of February that I have solidified enough things to put together a projected timeline. My goal is still to own a location at some point, I feel like owning the building is the only way to truly preserve skating for the community and it ensures we won't be priced out by a landlord."

Araceli Pina said her mom suggested she apply for a job at the Aloha when it reopened in 2018. Pina's six years on the job just ended as the roller rink comes to a close and she returns to school. She described the upcoming closure as a bittersweet moment, but said she hopes the Aloha finds a new place.

"The connections I've built with the regulars, the kids who've grown up here, their parents and especially my coworkers — they mean so much to me. It's not just a job," she told San José Spotlight. "The music, the lights and the sound of skates on the floor, it becomes part of your soul. It's a rhythm that you carry with you long after you leave."

Eileen Hansen, a fan of the roller rink, said San Jose needs more places where people can meet and do safe group activities.

"Not only is skating healthy for the body and improves balance, it also requires people to be aware of each other and stay in the moment," she told San José Spotlight. "Plus, it's fun."

# De'Von Truvel, creator of the board game Black Wall Street, speaks at Evergreen Valley College

By **William Bellou**  
Publisher

De'Von Truvel, the founder of the board game Black Wall Street, came to the Evergreen Valley College campus Feb. 11 not only to teach history but also to let students play his creation.

Black Wall Street was a Black-built, Black-owned community in Tulsa, Oklahoma, which was

destroyed in 1921. Thirty-five city blocks went up in flames in 1921.

Ebony Magazine wrote, "This 'modern, majestic, sophisticated, and unapologetically black' community boasted of 'banks, hotels, cafés, clothiers, movie theaters, and contemporary homes.' Not to mention luxuries, such as 'indoor plumbing and a remarkable school system that superiorly educated black children.'"

Damages from the destruction are estimated at \$24M in today's dollars in real estate destroyed and \$46M in unpaid insurance claims. The riot and fire left 9,000 Black residents homeless.

The game highlights the Black-owned businesses in Tulsa before the destruction. For every turn around the board, if you land on a business, you must either use that business or buy that business.

You can also build that business by accumulating all the businesses in that market (say restaurants). Every time you circle the board, you collect \$150. But beware, players who think it's Monopoly are quickly proven wrong.

In 2002, the game was given to every NBA player, a total of over 500.

You can find out more at [www.playblackwallstreet.com](http://www.playblackwallstreet.com).





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Times **Local News**

**Philharmonic Orchestra's 2024-25 Spring Concert, featuring 2024 Young Artist Competition winners to be held Saturday, March 8**

*The Philharmonic Orchestra Performs Strauss, Mendelssohn, Chopin, Sarasate and Suk*

The San Jose Youth Symphony's Philharmonic Orchestra, under the artistic leadership of Music Director and Conductor Yair Samet, presents its 2024-25 Spring Concert, Featuring Young Artist Competition Winners, to be held on Saturday, March 8, 2025, 2 pm, at the California Theatre, 345 S. 1st Street, San Jose, CA.

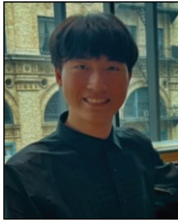
The orchestra will open with Johann Strauss's Die Fledermaus

Overture from his most famous operetta (meaning The Bat), along with Chopin's beautiful and sparkling Grand Valse Brillante, and close with Smetana's exciting Three Dances from The Bartered Bride.

This concert will also feature two winners from the 2024 Young Artists' Competition, proudly sponsored by the San Jose Symphony Foundation\*. Outstanding young soloists, Zijing (Zack) Zhang, pianist, and Joshua Kim, violinist, will perform Mendelssohn's Piano Concerto No. 1, and Sarasate's Zigeunerweisen for Violin and Orchestra, respectively. The orchestra will

close the concert with Czech composer Suk's memorable Scherzo Fantastique.

**Zijing (Zack) Zhang** is a high school senior at Saratoga High School and has been a violinist with the San Jose Youth Symphony since 2021 and is currently in his 4th year with the Philharmonic Orchestra. He traveled with the orchestra on their last International Tour to the Baltics in 2022.



**Joshua Kim** is also a senior, attending Valley Christian High School, and has been playing violin with the San Jose Youth Symphony since 2017, first joining the Prelude Ensemble. He has been a member of the Philharmonic Orchestra since 2021, and also traveled with the orchestra on their last International Tour to the Baltics in 2022.

The San Jose Youth Symphony (SJYS) is one of the oldest and finest



youth orchestras on the West Coast of the U.S. Founded over seven decades ago as part of the former San Jose Symphony, SJYS has a rich tradition of musical performance and education.

The musicians of SJYS, all school-age youth, are chosen from more than 650 applicants through our annual auditions. The SJYS comprises 13 distinct performing ensembles: two full orchestras, a chamber orchestra, two flute choirs, two string ensembles, as well as winds, brass, harp, saxophone, percussion, and jazz ensembles.

Ticket purchases now available online by visiting: <https://sjys.org/product-category/tickets>

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**Dhiraj Vaghani of Evergreen named to Iowa State University Deans List**

Dhiraj Vaghani of Evergreen Valley has been named to Iowa State University Deans List for the Fall 2024 semester. Vaghani is a senior, majoring in Finance.

Iowa State University students have been recognized for outstanding academic achievement by being named to the fall semester 2024 Dean's List.

Students named to the Dean's List must earn a grade point average of at least 3.50 on a 4.00 scale while carrying a minimum of 12 credit hours of graded course work.

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# Places of Worship

  
**LIVING HOPE APOSTOLIC MINISTRIES**  
<https://www.livinghopeam.org>  
2650 Aborn Rd. San Jose, CA 95135  
(408) 592-7562  
Pastor Shelia Sapp  
"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.

**EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN ALMADEN**  
6581 Camden Ave. San Jose, CA 95120.  
The Rev. Shelley Booth Denney, Rector  
Phone: 408-268-0243  
Web: [www.eca-sj.org](http://www.eca-sj.org)  
At the Episcopal Church in Almaden (ECA), we are joyful followers of Jesus Christ. Through worship, study, fellow-

ship 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.

  
**EVERGREEN ISLAMIC CENTER (EIC)**  
<http://www.eicsan-jose.org>  
2486 Ruby Ave, San Jose CA 95148.  
(408) 239-6668  
"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.

  
**GRACE CHURCH OF EVERGREEN**  
[www.GraceChurchEvergreen.Com](http://www.GraceChurchEvergreen.Com)  
408-274-1200  
See you on Facebook. 2650 Aborn Rd at Kettmann, across from the Public Library. Serving Evergreen for over 55 years. John Goldstein Pastor. [john@GraceChurchEvergreen.com](mailto:john@GraceChurchEvergreen.com). Christian worship every Sunday at 11am. Together we build better lives and a better community. Music Institute (408)791 7772. After School Piano, Violin, Other classical Instruments. PreSchool, Ages 2-6 Caring for your child with God's love and affection. Check our website for current activities.

**HOLY SPIRIT CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
Faith.Knowledge. Community - this is our

promise to our members. If you are looking for an active Christian faith community, we invite you to experience Holy Spirit Parish Community. All are welcome! We are located at 1200 Redmond Avenue, San Jose, CA 95120. Mass is celebrated at 8:30 a.m. Monday - Friday. Our weekend Mass schedule is Saturday 5 p.m., Sunday 8 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. Rite of Reconciliation is every Saturday at 4 p.m. or by appointment. Our Parish Office is open Monday - Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. and Friday 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Call 408-997-5100 for recorded information or 408-997-5101 to speak with someone in our parish office.

  
*God is One*  
**ੴ ਸਿਕ ਹੈ**  
**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.SanJoseGurdwara.org>

**ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
5111 San Felipe Rd., San Jose, CA 95135  
408-223-1770  
[www.sfoasj.com](http://www.sfoasj.com)  
We invite you to join our community of faith located in the Evergreen area of San Jose. We are an inclusive diverse community striving to serve as Disciples of Jesus Christ in the footsteps of St. Francis, offering prayerful and joyful liturgies, evangelization, fellowship, and service opportunities to the community. We offer spiritual opportunities for all ages, including children's liturgy, dynamic E.C.H.O Jr. High, I.G.N.I.T.E. High School, & North Star Young Adult Ministries, along with small faith communities and opportunities to help the poor and marginalized of San Jose. Our Chapel, Gathering

Hall, Parish Office, Mission Center, Parish Gift Shop, and Memorial Garden are all located at 5111 San Felipe Rd. Please come join us in worship at any of the following times in our Chapel: Weekdays (M-Sa) at 8:30 AM; Saturdays at 4:00 PM (English) and 5:30 PM (Vietnamese); Sundays at 8:00 AM (English), 10:00 AM (English), 12:00 PM (English), 4:00 PM (Vietnamese), and 6:00 PM Youth Mass (English). The Villages Gated Community also features a Mass on Sundays at 8:15 AM at the Cribari Auditorium. For more information, please call or visit us at the Parish Office 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!

  
**thepoint.church**  
**THE POINT CHURCH**  
3695 Rose Terrasse Cir San Jose, CA 95148  
(408) 270-7646  
English Service: Sundays at 9:30 & 11:00 AM  
Spanish Service: 11:00 AM  
Cambodian Service: 11:00 AM  
Cantonese Service: 11:00 AM  
Mandarin Service: 11:00AM  
Youth Extreme Point (7th-12th grade): Every Saturday at 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

  
**To place a worship listing, email**  
**times@timesmediainc.com**



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