

el

CHANGING DOWNTOWN

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Community speaks out on the gentrification of Calle Cuatro

SPECIAL SECTION PULLOUT



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ABOUT THE COVER



Continuing changes to 4th Street takes away a staple grocery store for locals.



→ **DANHA SANCHEZ**
LIFESTYLE EDITOR

FOR THE LOVE OF MOSHPITS

Hello! I am Danha Sanchez Martinez, your lifestyle editor. I am in charge of the *el Don's* coverage of stories about local shows, artists, music, food and more.

I was born and raised in Mexico City and I'm the second oldest but also the coolest sibling in my family. Growing up, my family and I often moved around the city; this gave me the opportunity to have lots of friends and never be scared of the unknown.

I like talking to people. It gives me lots of energy. During high school, I didn't know what to do, or where to go and what was right for me. I always knew I wanted to be a writer — I just never really figured out what type.

Once I enrolled at SAC, I reopened the door to the writing world when I took Professor Bennett's Visual Communications class. She mentioned how much potential she saw in me and how she would like to see more of my writing. In the spring of 2023, I enrolled in *el Don*, and I instantly knew this was what I wanted to do with my life. The *French Dispatch* had just come out and it became one of my favorite movies.

Being in the newsroom created lots of comfort. I like how fast-paced the environment is. I like being able to be direct with people, covering events, interviewing people, taking pictures and designing pages for our print.

I enjoy live music and being part of *el Don* gave me the opportunity to write about the punk bands I grew up seeing. I've made lots of connections and friends who have been slowly helping me share my work. I want to be able to share people's stories and, at some point, my own. My main goal is to write for a magazine like *Rolling Stone* magazine or *L.A. Record*.

Aside from writing for *el Don*, I am also a zine creator and aspire to someday run my own publication.

A piece of advice I would like to give is to always follow your gut because you never know how well it could turn out.

I'm glad I followed mine because I found myself.



SCAN HERE



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STAY UP TO DATE ON YOUR CAMPUS



PREPARED / Participants in the ULink and Promise programs get help transferring. Edgar Galvan / *el Don*

UCI BREAKS PROMISES

The nationally ranked public university is ending guaranteed admission for Santa Ana College students, an agreement that's been in place since 1999.

WORDS BY SOPHIA CORTEZ AND DANIELA DERRAMADERO

University of California, Irvine is phasing out its popular guaranteed transfer agreement with the college after more than two decades and thousands of successful transfers.

Since 1999, Santa Ana College students who participated in structured transfer preparedness programs were guaranteed admission to UCI if they maintained a 3.2 GPA and met other requirements.

If a student wanted to guarantee admission to another UC campus, they could apply for the separate Transfer Admission Guarantee, which has similar academic requirements but makes you pick one UC campus to "TAG" and asks for a higher GPA.

Now, all SAC students will be asked to apply to UCI through TAG if they want to guarantee admission to the nationally ranked public institution.

"The new GPA reflects the growing selectivity and demand at the UCI campus," said UCI's Director of Internal and Critical Communications Sheri Ledbetter.

Since 1984 SAC has been in partnership with UCI, the Santa Ana Unified School District, and Cal State Fullerton to encourage more local students to get degrees. UCI began offering guaranteed admission to SAC students in 1999 and the ULink program was created to provide them with the support services in order to transfer smoothly. The Promise Program started in 2011 to extend the guaranteed admission to all SAUSD high school graduates enrolled in SAC.

Irvine officials declined to renew the agreement for

both programs in late August, one month before the TAG application was due. An email from the dean of counseling on Aug. 31 created stress and confusion among sophomores who thought that guaranteed admission was canceled for them too.

"I was bummed out," said Luis Linares, a participant in SAC Promise, "That door closed on me."

SAC counselors rushed to help students navigate the changes, encouraging them to TAG UCI instead. Four days before the TAG deadline, UCI told SAC it would honor the guaranteed admission at the 3.2 GPA for all students participating in ULink and SAC Promise between fall 2019 and fall 2022.

"There was miscommunication at the administrative levels on behalf of UCI, and our interpretation that the guarantee admissions was over with rather than being phased out," said Transfer Center Counselor and SAC Promise Coordinator Leo Pastrana.

Pastrana and ULink coordinator Courtney Beirne emailed students who already tagged UCI to tell them to withdraw the TAG application.

"I ended up tagging UC Davis," said Linares. "Now I have two guaranteed admissions. Two options."

SAC officials said they had at least five meetings with their UCI counterparts since the summer.

"We too as a college were just as disappointed. We are continuing to work to develop a new agreement with UC Irvine," said Vice President of Student Services Vaniethia Hubbard.

CAMPUS

FILL UP AT NEW HYDRATION STATIONS



Santa Ana College installed 11 new water bottle refill stations over the summer, bringing the total number to 24 across campus. The installations are part of a 2016 measure outlined in the district's sustainability plan to address the ongoing drought and high amount of plastic waste at SAC and in the RSSCD. According to the district, plastic waste dropped by 32 tons between the 2019 and 2020 calendar year. The district's 2025 updated plan are continuing to focus on reducing the waste of plastic on campus as well as water waste. / **Caden Cooke**

GETTING TO KNOW

NEW LGBTQIA+ COUNSELOR



Assistant Professor Lisa Macafee (they/she) has been an adjunct counselor for four years, but as of Fall 2023 semester, is a full-time employee. They specialize in LGBTQIA+ minorities and neurodivergent student services. Neurodivergent studies focus on understanding how people's brains work differently as opposed to accepting what society deems as normal. She says she helps students navigate life with sheer communication. Macafee runs her own website dedicated to further advocating for equality. / **Maryanne Casas-Perez**



IMMIGRANT / An estimated 20% of Asian residents and about 40% of Santa Ana Latinos are not naturalized. Photo by Lizeth Martinez / *el Don*

GIVING NON-CITIZENS A VOTE

Residents will vote next November to allow their undocumented and refugee neighbors to cast ballots in municipal elections. If passed, Santa Ana will be the first city in SoCal to do so.

WORDS BY LUCERO GARCIA AND LIZETH MARTINEZ

An estimated one in four Santa Ana residents could cast a ballot in local elections for the first time if non-citizen voting is approved next fall.

Santa Ana City Council approved a ballot measure 4-3 on Sept. 19 to let residents decide if people who are undocumented, permanent residents, green card holders, asylum seekers and refugees should vote in municipal elections.

If passed in November 2024, Santa Ana will be the first city in Southern California to allow non-citizen voting.

Some residents are concerned

that the current proposal doesn't go far enough. The ballot resolution would be an advisory measure that says the city council "should" implement its directives. It does not mandate any changes to the city charter.

"What we are asking is for the language to say, 'The Santa Ana city council shall implement noncitizen voting,'" said Carlos Perea, a native of Mexico and a member of the community coalition Santa Ana Families For Fair Elections.

Mayor Valeria Amezcua and councilmembers Phil Bacerra and David Penaloza voted against the proposal, saying it can affect non-citizens who are trying to become

naturalized citizens.

The Application for Naturalization asks "Have you ever voted in a local, state or federal election?" If a non-citizen legally voted in a local election they would need to check "yes."

UndocuScholars Program Counselor Dahiana Crabill is concerned for the 132 SAC students that she works with and encourages scrutiny of the proposal.

"There's so many unknowns here. It's so much heavier than a yes or no question. If I have jeopardized my ability to become a U.S. citizen by voting in my state election, I would say no," said Crabill.

Champions of non-citizen voting

in Santa Ana are looking to San Francisco and other municipalities that have approved non-citizen voting for guidance.

In San Francisco, advocates say non-citizens who voted can request a letter from the department of elections which is signed, dated and would have the signature of the director of the department of elections. The letter explains that the person voted under the color of law legally and lawfully based on the local charter.

If voters approve the ballot resolution next November, it will still be a two-to three-year process before non-citizens are able to cast ballots.

TIMELINE OF U.S. VOTING RIGHTS

1870

15th Amendment gave African American men rights of citizenship

1915

Grandfather Clause removed. African American men exercise their right to vote

1920

19th Amendment granted women the right to vote

1971

26th Amendment lowered the voting age to 18 years-old

2018

San Francisco allowed non-citizens to vote on school board elections

MICRODOSING FOR MENTAL HEALTH

U.S. veterans are using psilocybin found in mushrooms as an alternative to medication

WORDS BY S.E. HEREDIA | ILLUSTRATION BY EDGAR GALVAN

Moliòn Kamauali, a computer science major, served in Iraq and was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder in 2016. Kamauali endured many stressors while in the military, including an ankle injury. After his discharge, the injury worsened causing him to have a piece of bone removed and a ligament reattached.

Back at home, Kamauali's mother was diagnosed with cardiomyopathy, a heart disease. He developed insomnia due to his PTSD, anxiety and then sleep apnea from poor health.

Some of the prescribed medications that Kamauali used helped him, but he wanted to go more holistic after not liking some of the side effects. After doing some research, he decided to self-medicate on psychedelic mushrooms.

"I'm happy with where I'm in my life now," Kamauali says of his experience with psychedelics. "I'm coping with my mental health. I've learned a lot about myself and accepted it and learned how to maintain and be mindful."

Kamauali is part of a growing number of veterans who have been self-medicating with psychedelics to help treat their mental health by using psilocybin, a chemical found in some mushrooms.

Microdosing on psychedelics involves taking a small amount of the drug to get some benefits but without the effects of hallucination. This is different from taking a so-called "heroic dose" which involves someone taking five grams or more of psilocybin mushrooms.

Many people who try this dosage may experience an out-of-body experience, a loss in sense of time, or stronger hallucinations. Those individuals say they microdose to have mental clarity that can't be achieved with regular antidepressants.

Recent studies conducted by the Veterans Affairs and at universities such as Cornell and Johns Hopkins University are showing early signs of the mental health benefits of psychedelic treatments for people with PTSD, anxiety and depression.

Studies conducted on mice at Cornell

showed the mice had growth in neural connections. People with depression are found to have a reduction in neural connections.

"The fact that this drug can allow for growth of new connections can maybe be one way that it works," said Dr. Alex Kwan, a lead researcher in psychedelics at Cornell University.

Taking antidepressants can be trial and error for many people before they find the right one.

"If that doesn't work along with therapy, then we might want to try the mushroom, the psilocybin, or something else," said Ellen Lee, a professor at California State University, Fullerton who taught a class called Drugs and Society in the Public Health Department.

Kamauali has since stopped microdosing on mushrooms because psilocybin mushrooms are considered a Schedule 1 drug—deemed to have a high potential for abuse and no medical benefit.

Oregon and the city of Oakland, CA, have both legalized psilocybin for therapeutic use, but in Australia, psilocybin has already been allowed to treat people with depression and PTSD. Here in the U.S. Veterans Affairs re-launched clinical trials with psychedelics last year after a 60-year hiatus; however, wider testing has been difficult due to their scheduling.

Before there can be any change in the scheduling of drugs and access to certain psychedelics, more research still needs to be conducted for the government to recognize the medical benefits. Researchers like Kwan hope to create a drug safe to treat people without the adverse effects of psychedelic drugs.

"I think there is a lot of room to improve and to engineer better chemicals based on what we know right now... but we need to learn more about the neurobiology that will give us rational ways to engineer manageable drugs," said Dr. Kwan.

Until then, vets like Kamauali who don't want to take antidepressants will have to wait for medical research and legal changes to catch up with their experiences of helpful psychedelics.





TASTING MY CHILDHOOD

Moving from Mexico City as a preteen was a huge cultural shock. At least Santa Ana's ¡Ah, Carbon Tacos! truck has great al pastor.

WORDS AND PHOTO BY DANHA SANCHEZ

Growing up in Mexico City I used to eat tacos al pastor in the middle of the night with my family, waiting in the car for *el cuñado* to take our order. Being able to eat *garnachas*— street food—any time of the day was truly the way to live.

As a preteen, moving to Temecula, was a huge cultural shock that wasn't easy to cope with. Everything was different, especially the food.

Santa Ana had better Mexican food, especially the tacos, but I couldn't find my Mexico City al pastor. What I was really missing was the feelings of childhood in my city.

On a recent trip to Downtown Santa Ana, my mother and I were searching for al pastor again. It was past 8:30 and the taqueros were out. The smoky flavor of cooked pork wafted through my window. The memories of home returned.

Hungry, we pulled over on 1st Street at a taco truck next to a tire shop. ¡Ah, Carbon Tacos! serves Tijuana-style tacos, but seeing the cooks slicing

the well-done pork on the little tortillas with a slice of pineapple on top made waiting in line to order feel like an eternity.

Eating this perfect taco al pastor, using a stool as a table and drinking a mango agua fresca, somehow made me feel like I was six years old sitting in the car with my family waiting for our tacos while sipping on a mango-flavored Boing.

The smoky flavor of the charcoal combined with the onions, cilantro, pineapple and spicy red salsa was a shocking explosion of flavors. Even though the salsas weren't exactly as I remembered, it was the closest replica of what my mom and I miss from Mexico City.

Trying to re-create childhood memories is hard enough, but at least ¡Ah, Carbon Tacos! gets close.

They have the comfort, the flavor— and the approval of two real Mexico City *garnacha* lovers.

¡Ah, Carbon Tacos! is located at 1201 E 1st St.

WHAT'S HOT

FOOD



La Doña latte
SAC Cafe

La Doña latte is the top choice on campus for pre-class caffeine. For only \$6, get this caramel, cinnamon flavored latte with salted caramel whipped cream and dulce de leche drizzle with your milk of choice. Offered both hot and iced, the balance of the bitter cold brew and the syrupy sweet milk complemented by the whipped cream makes La Doña a special morning drink or afternoon treat. SAC Cafe is close and affordable for students who enjoy the taste of freshly made coffee.

—Danha Sanchez

PLAYLIST



Spooky Season '23
el Don fam

Spooky-midterm season is here. Are you ready to party and eat lots of candy? We sure are! and we want to help you ease the school stress with this playlist our staff created with Halloween songs to spook the bad grades away. This feel-good playlist has genres for all kinds of ears. Listen to bands like AFI, Caifanes, Blink-182 and Alaska y Los Pagamoides while studying or chilling. *el Don* staff curated this playlist to keep the good vibes going while you're getting ready for Halloween.

—Danha Sanchez

MUSIC



Bewitched
Luafey

On Sept. 8, Icelandic singer, Laufey dropped her third album, *Bewitched* with over 200 million streams on Spotify. The 24-year-old artist wrote each of the 14 tracks. As a gifted musician, Laufey was able to combine jazz, oldies and pop. She plays cello throughout the album, including her twin sister who was playing the violin. Laufey's melodic voice turned *Bewitched* into something new perfect for the fall season. Male sure to check out track 13, "Letter to my 13 Year Old Self".

—Sophia Cortez

VIDEO GAME



Mortal Kombat 1
NetherRealm Studios

MK 1, the newest addition to one of the most popular video game series, takes place after *Mortal Kombat 11* and reboots the game's universe. Fan-favorite characters such as Scorpion, Sub Zero, Kenshi, Smoke, Reptile, Nitara, Reiko and others return for more gore. What makes this game stand out from others in the series is the addition of Kameo fighters. Great gameplay, stunning graphics, amazing characters, new and remastered fatalities, what's not to love? Round one: Fight!

—Marvin Espinoza



LA CUATRO AHORA

The OC Streetcar is set to open in 2025 and construction is changing the character of Downtown Santa Ana. Historic 4th Street, known as “La Cuatro,” was once a thriving commercial and cultural center for the neighboring Latino community. La Cuatro’s defining spots are leaving and locals are following.

This is the community’s last chance to tell their stories.

MEMORIAS DE LA CUATRO

4th Street was known for its blocks of small businesses. A changing downtown leaves long-standing storefronts coping with loss of community. We spoke with three who have persevered throughout construction and displacement.

REPORTING AND PHOTOS BY LIZETH MARTINEZ AND LUPITA CONTRERAS



TELAS FABRICS / 114 E. 4TH

Tell us about yourself and your business.

My name is Shawn Makhani, and I've owned this store on Calle Cuatro for 33 years now. I'm one of the people telling the city of Santa Ana that gentrification is happening on Calle Cuatro

How has business changed? I was planning to close last year but decided to stay another year but it's not getting better.



OWNER, SHAWN MAKHANI



EMPLOYEE, JARET VARGAR

ANGELS / 213 W 4TH

How has business been going?

People who haven't been here in a while come and look for stores that are no longer here. People don't come anymore. If the streetcar works and brings more people from outside as they think it will work, we're going to do well. Hopefully, this works out.

What has your business benefitted from?

The owner, Grace is that she has loyal customers. The owner has been in La Cuatro for over 20 years.



MR. DIABLITO / 4TH & BUSH ST

How do you feel about the OC Streetcar?

We hope that with the OC Streetcar, more people will come. Before the pandemic, there used to be a small trolley. It existed so people could get a ride through downtown and view 4th Street but very few would get on it despite it being free.

How long have you been on La Cuatro?

We've been here over 30 years. Up till now, the city hasn't complained about us. There are only four street vendors left. There used to be 11 of us over 20 years ago. With all this change, the other vendors have moved to plazas with more Latinos. But we persist.



STREET VENDOR, JOSE RODRIGUEZ

NORTHGATE MARKET

jya se fue!



DESTRUCTION / 99 residential units set to replace a decades old grocery store.

Losing a community staple

REPORTING BY LUCERO GARCIA | PHOTOS BY LIZETH MARTINEZ

The removal of the Northgate Gonzalez Market in Downtown Santa Ana is one of the many markers in gentrifying the neighboring Latino community.

The City of Santa Ana approved the demolition on Dec. 1, 2020. In early October, demolition of the market began in preparation for the construction of 99 market rate residential units.

Northgate, once located at 409 E. 4th St. in Downtown Santa Ana was a staple grocery store across the street from apartment complexes housing thousands of residents who depended on the store.

“Who knows if this will be a multigenerational neighborhood now because of how dense and unaffordable

housing has become. It may push families out,” said Councilmember Johnathan Ryan Hernandez who represents Ward 5.

Hernandez was one of two council members that voted against the demolition of Northgate, which sold authentic Mexican food and fresh produce that many residents in the area could buy. Northgate was a staple of the community. It was part of the culture where locals could buy warm tortillas, pan dulce and meats.

Now that the location no longer exists, many residents say it has created more disservices than services to them.

These are the voices of residents who have been affected by the removal of Northgate Gonzalez Market.

RESIDENT VOICES



Palmira Muñoz

“I am from Guanajuato, Mexico and I have lived here for 17 years. When Northgate was still here, I would quickly go every time I needed something. Now I have to dedicate two to three hours to go and come back to other stores and get all the food I need.”



William Edgardo

“I am from El Salvador and I have lived in these apartments for 5 years. I would just have to cross the street and the store was there. It’s difficult getting to another Northgate that is farther from me. Not only am I wasting time but also gas which, is more money.”

MORE THAN A RECORD LABEL

Happy Daps is building a community of local Latino-fronted indie bands by sharing songs and booking shows.

WORDS AND PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY GEOVANNI ESPARZA

Ten years ago, Ed Moreno was a teenager in the Inland Empire trying to get his band The High Curbs' foot in the door of the L.A. indie scene by playing house shows all over the region. Now Moreno is throwing his own shows, festival, promoting other Latino-fronted indie bands, and creating a community known as Happy Daps Records.

Israel Pinedo, the singer from Coachella-based Israel's Arcade, said, "The scene is and feels extremely inclusive right now ...there are quite a lot of people in the industry wanting to help up-and-coming Latino artists. There's even a lot of POC in the industry whose goal is to do just that."

Through Happy Daps, Moreno is using his experience to be the big brother to other Latino-fronted indie bands.

"Ed actually helped us dodge a fat bullet.

We were gonna work with these people who wanted to do stuff with Home View that sounded really nice," Joseph Silva, the singer for San Diego-based Home View said. "The High Curbs happened to have worked with them before, and Ed got on a call with me to share his experience, which I am eternally grateful for since he totally did not have to do that."

With a decade of experience under his belt, he understands how hard it is for a band to get shows, which Moreno said his band continues to struggle with as a Latino-fronted act trying to make it in the music industry.



make it all Latino-fronted bands to show all these promoters and the music industry that we're here, and there's no excuses, and what seemed like a gamble to a lot of people sold really well. We made it happen," he says.

Currently, Moreno is planning Happy Daps Fest 2, and as bittersweet as it is, the budget won't allow the lineup from the first fest because all the bands have all grown in the last six months.

Singer Mark Perez from San Antonio band Floats also played at Happy Daps Fest, and he spoke of his experience and how much the fest has helped the bands that played that night.

"Happy Daps has definitely shined even more awareness by providing and putting together an event showcasing Latino-fronted artists. To me and many others who see that, says and

shows that we're here and seen," said Perez.

Although Moreno and Happy Daps are doing so much on their own for the Latino indie community, he says the work also lies on fans to support their local scene and to promote bands they like.

"I guess there's nothing that's stopping them from doing the same thing; you can't expect to be part of something if you're not supporting that scene," said Moreno. "I think people need to really support their local scene and support one another and that's really the only way we can uplift everything and everyone."

Happy Daps is a promotional tool to help others, especially now that the scene and the music industry as a whole are becoming more inclusive.

"The music industry said, 'you're hard to market,' like okay, that's bullshit. There is a following, and they like what we're doing...now the hip thing to be is to be Latino, but also, we don't want to be a fucking trend that dies off, and the talent is undeniable, and there's still a lot of work to be done," Moreno said.

Moreno threw a 10-year anniversary celebration for The High Curbs on April 8, at the Observatory in Santa Ana. "I'm gonna try to

OPINION JESSICA AVILA

UNAFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECTS

Santa Ana and Orange County's housing programs say they've worked on affordable solutions to house its residents. New apartments are being built around the city I grew up in with "LEASING SOON" signs in front, but I still encounter barriers to rent one such as closed or excessively long waitlists, ineligible monthly income, and full units for these programs.

It's hard to consistently afford rent in Orange County as a college student.

Looking at the city's website resources page, over half of the housing developments under family assistance are currently listed as inaccessible.

One housing development, City Gardens on Bristol Street has an open waitlist, but requires someone to have an income of \$2,200 a month for an \$890 monthly studio and a one year wait. To make \$2,200 a month on \$15.50 per hour, which is the minimum wage in the state, I'd need to work multiple jobs to pay the rent, utilities and food.

This directly affects the wellbeing of college students or part-time workers who are living paycheck-to-paycheck.

I'm autistic and job stability is already a challenge. Balancing all aspects of life shouldn't be this hard. A common saying is "life is supposed to be hard and it always will be" but it doesn't always have to be.

With all the triumphs that the city has done towards building more housing, which is appreciated, I don't think the city has done enough to publicize the availability of its few affordable units.



→ STAFF EDITORIAL



UCI'S DECISION IS UNFAIR

Now students don't have two options when applying to UC campuses

For those who enrolled this year intending to transfer to the closest UC campus it feels like the rug was pulled from under our feet.

The University of California, Irvine backpedaled on a partnership this fall that promised transfer students guaranteed admission into their campus since 1999.

Incoming students who came on the pretense that they had a guaranteed spot at UCI are now standing in front of closed doors. Eradicating opportunities.

With the ban on affirmative action, schools no longer need to meet a diversity quota. The effects of the Supreme Court's hostile decision have left underrepresented students fighting for a place at the table once again picking up the scraps. The timing of this decision couldn't be any more perfect for them to eliminate this partnership.

Santa Ana College is majority Latino and has over 11,000 students who qualify for financial aid. We are a designated Hispanic-

Serving Institution and were recently designated an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution.

UCI's broken promise was intentional and abrupt, leaving hundreds scrambling for a second option on a tight deadline.

Irvine says that they are not canceling guaranteed admissions but instead, they are aligning with the state-wide Transfer Admission Guaranteed program. This created lots of panic among the students.

UCI is the nearest UC institution for first-generation students who aren't able to move out due to their family responsibilities and the lack of financial opportunity in an expensive environment such as SoCal.

This promise has drawn many students to SAC in hopes of having a guaranteed future at the nationally ranked university.

We hope that UCI revokes their unsympathetic decision or find another way to make their school more accessible to people of color.



SAUCED UP / Running back William Saucedo leads the team with 510 rushing yards and five touchdowns.

GRITTY, DOMINANT START

Dons football are winning comfortably off the backs of their physical defense and explosive offense, outscoring opponents by 26.4 points on average.

WORDS AND PHOTO BY NICHOLAS WIRE

With one minute left in a 7-3 battle, Santa Ana College dug their cleats in at their own 22-yard line to preserve the lead. Dons' supporters roared "Defense!" as the homecoming crowd became the loudest they had been all game. They just needed one more stop, and they got it.

Santa Ana College prevailed over Los Angeles Valley College in a 7-3 dogfight on Saturday, Sept. 30 that consisted of 13 punts, four interceptions and two lost fumbles.

The nail-biting victory over Los Angeles Southwest was indicative of their newfound success this season, but paced differently than they are used to playing.

For the majority of their wins this season, they aren't just winning—they're dominating. They've won games by four, 10, 25, 46, and 47 points.

They're now on pace for their best season since 2012, in which at that time the Dons were led by head coach Geoff Jones through the Southern Conference.

Now a part of the American Metro Conference, SAC has taken the league by storm. They are 5-1 overall with a 1-0 record in conference. They're also second in conference with a +112 net rating, behind Chaffey College (+203).

Many key contributors have led to their hot start. Quarterback Dallen Engemann has thrown for 1270 yards and 15 touchdowns while throwing nine interceptions. His two favorite targets are wide receiver Malachi Pierce and wide receiver Cannon King.

Pierce leads the team in yards (401) and touchdowns (8). King leads the team in receptions with 22, while tallying 337 yards and three touchdowns of his own.

Running back William Saucedo leads the team with 510 yards rushing, while also pitching in five touchdowns. His fellow running back Jackson Smith broke the previous 74-year-old record for longest rush in a game, with his 95-yard touchdown run against Santa Monica.

Defensively, the Dons are anchored by their defensive line. Edge rusher Zamir Richardson leads the team with 9.5 sacks and two forced fumbles, while reigning Defensive Player of the Year Blaze Iglesias has 6.5 sacks of his own.

Linebacker Cole Miller has 3.5 sacks and leads the team with 35 tackles, while defensive back Dudley Mesilien leads the team with three interceptions.

Santa Ana looks ahead to Saturday, Oct. 28, against West Los Angeles, with hopes of continuing their undefeated league play.

VOLLEYBALL

STRUGGLING FOR CONSISTENCY



With first-year Head Coach Myriah Kunipo-Aguirre at the helm, Santa Ana has struggled to maintain a fluid identity on the court. They've shown glimpses of competitive play against ranked teams such as Saddleback and Bakersfield, yet they haven't returned to last season's form. However, they hold a 4-11 record and sit at seventh in their conference. Sophomore outside hitter Camille Birrer leads the team in kills (99) and points (117.5). / **Nicholas Wire**

MENS SOCCER

RANKED AND PRIMED TO COMPETE



Holding a 6-5-3 record, Dons soccer ranks 17th and check in at fifth place in conference. Santa Ana has the third most goals scored (31) and the third most points (82). Freshman forward Paul Carrillo leads the team with eight goals, while sophomore midfielder Marck Rayo has six goals and nine assists, leading the team with 21 points. SAC is looking for their seventh straight appearance in the playoffs.

/ **Nicholas Wire**

**RECEPTION ROYALTY**

Cannon King leads the Dons receiving core in receptions with 22, despite this being his first year starting.

Words by Brandon Rowley · Portrait by Nicholas Wire

A King's Legacy

How media personality Larry King's son became an MLB draftee and ended up a leading wide receiver for the Dons

Star Santa Ana wide receiver Cannon King was never supposed to play football.

From a young age, Cannon's father, the late renowned media host Larry King, made sure he instilled a love of baseball into his sons. Cannon started playing at four years old.

"Being an avid 'bleed-blue' Dodger fan, my dad was at Jackie Robinson's first game, which to this day, still astonishes me. My dad's connection to that rich history made it inevitable that I would grow to love baseball."

Cannon made such an impression during his time playing baseball that he was drafted by the Chicago White Sox in the 2018 MLB draft. However, he would defer, instead choosing to serve a mission for his church.

During his mission, tragedy struck the King family.

"I received a call that my dad

was very sick," said King. "I came home after four months of being on my mission. The next few months consisted of a lot of internal battles, including deep anxiety, depression, confusion, and sadness. I was in a dark, dark place."

His father would pass away in 2021 from sepsis, and throughout that period of grief, Cannon leaned on his family.

"While I was home, my cousin Dallen was a literal life-saver, being there for me when I needed him and stepping in when things were at their hardest," said King.

The two grew up together, forming a brotherly bond.

"We were extremely close," said Engemann as he reminisced about the past. "We loved it when they came into town during Christmas break. Every year the break was filled with fun



BORN FOR THE DIAMOND

Cannon learned to love baseball thanks to his father.

times and competition."

"Our family is a big football family," continued Engemann, "Many of our relatives played football in college and some at the professional level. In fact, Cannon's older brother Danny was a quarterback who spent some time with the Oakland Raiders."

During lockdown, Engemann was recovering from an injury. "I needed somebody to catch for me as I made my way back to health. Cannon was that guy for me. Then, one day, out of the blue, he decided he was going to take a risk and try to play college football, which is not an easy thing to just jump into."

After he made that decision, Cannon worked tirelessly to achieve his dream. He reached out to ex-NFL player Bret Lockett, who helped him develop skills to play receiver.

"When I played flag football as a kid, I played most of those years as a quarterback," said King. "I knew pretty much nothing about playing receiver. The next few months consisted of throwing myself into the fire, running routes against Division I defensive backs, and soaking in all the information that I could."

All of his training paid off with him and Engemann earning roster spots on the College of the Canyons football team. Unfortunately, he would suffer stress fractures in both shins, ending his season

before it started.

"Dallen and I started filming our workouts and sending them to schools," Cannon said. "Santa Ana College was the only school that reached back out to us. Coach White responded quickly and positively. SAC was immediately an attractive landing spot."

"Cannon and Dallen reached out to me through social media," said Dons' Head Coach Anthony White. "They are from Utah and saw that I have huge Utah ties, being an Alumni of the University of Utah. To be able to come in late and have Dallen end the season as the starting Quarterback and Cannon an incredible contributor on offense, we're grateful and appreciative to have them," White said.

Dons offensive coordinator Geoff Jones offered his perception of King: "He is a rare and extremely interesting person. He is introspective and mature beyond his years. He is in tune with his body mechanics like I have never seen in an athlete. He's like a Ferrari that needs a special set of tools and attention and he is always working on it."

"Looking back, I must say it's pretty awesome that what we used to envision and pray about is happening, thanks to discipline, patience, and faith," says King.

King is a playmaking threat in Santa Ana's offense, making

diving touchdown catches in the back of the endzone against Santa Monica and using his legs to extend a ten-yard pass into a 50-yard play against Pasadena City. He currently has 337 yards receiving and three touchdowns to start the season.

"I've learned so many valuable lessons through experience. Throughout the journey to this point, when not many others believed in me, I held tight to the opinions of those who did believe in me and the opinion that I was developing of myself. I wanted to prove to myself how far I could go, and I'm still going."

"From playing two-hand touch football in the backyard as kids to connecting on passes at the Santa Ana Bowl. Playing college football together is an experience neither of us would've predicted when we were kids, but one we'll cherish forever."

As for his future: "I'm not certain exactly what I will do outside of football down the road, but I'm looking into studying more kinesiology, with hopes that I may have a positive impact on other athletes in the realm of personal training or physical therapy," continued King. "I'm also not opposed to getting into the entertainment industry. But who knows? Time will tell. As for right now, I'm focused on taking my body as far as it will let me go in this sport."



JUST LIKE HIS DAD

Cannon is "instrospective and mature beyond his years" according to defensive coordinator Geoff Jones, all qualities he mirrors from his father.



DYNASTIC DUO

Cannon King (right) and cousin Dallen Engemann (left) have formed an elite quarterback-wide receiver connection for the Dons.

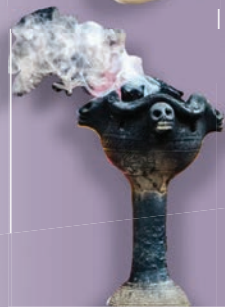
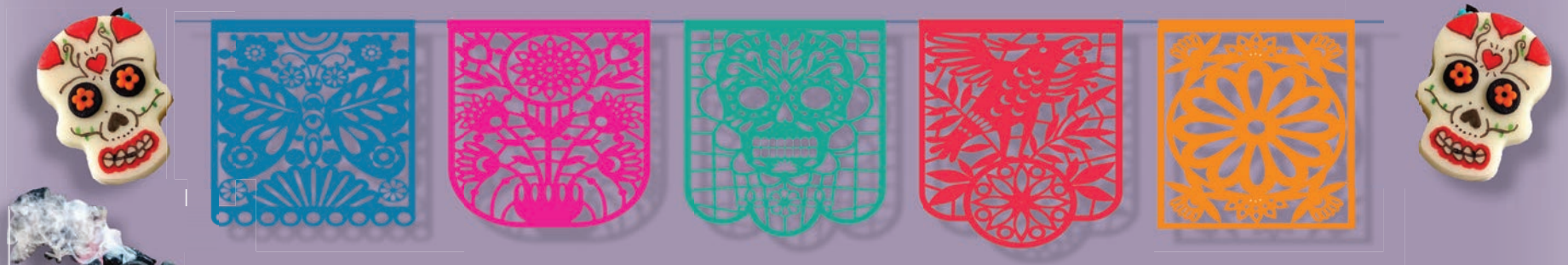


GLOVE TO HANDS

Prior to his debut as a wide receiver at SAC, Cannon King dominated the infield at his alma mater Beverly Hills High School.

WHO DO YOU REMEMBER THIS **DIA DE LOS MUERTOS?**

Reporter Daniela Derramadero asked SAC students about how they honor and celebrate their loved ones.



"The lives I will be remembering is some friends. It is very important because their spirits are still with us and alive."
- Omar Ortiz

"Whose life I will be remembering is my uncles. He died from Covid. We are remembering him because he played a big part in our family."
-Leonardo Ramirez

"My great grandma. She passed away because of a medical condition and she had amnesia. She was fine for a while but it got worse over time."
- Ivan Flores



"My dad. He is an important figure in my life. He passed away when I was younger. I will remember him always."
- Guadalupe Roman Sanchez

