



SPORTS: BASEBALL

VALLEY COLLEGE LOST 7-3 AGAINST BAKERSFIELD COLLEGE LAST SATURDAY.



The Independent Student Newspaper of Los Angeles Valley College



VALLEY LIFE: YARN CRAWL

THE 10TH ANNUAL YARN CRAWL EVENT WAS HELD ON MARCH 24-27.

Valley hosts late-start registration fair



VALLEY STAR | LUIS FLORES

REGISTRATION FAIR- Valley College's second late-start registration fair had sparse attendance for the second week in a row, as mostly empty tables covered the Student Services Plaza courtyard. Booth workers aimed to help students enroll in the second session of late-start classes, which start on April 11. Maricruz Velasquez of the Welcome Center booth hoped to "up enrollment for the second session," as enrollment continues to decline at Valley. This spring semester's student headcount remains 1,588 lower than last year. Velasquez also urged students to fulfill their Cleared4 requirements, as the college's pop-up vaccine clinic offered the two-dose sequence and booster shot nearby in Parking Lot A. At the four-hour event, Monarchs were encouraged to take advantage of the college's programs and grab a free Subway sandwich on their way out.

Homeless population struggles amidst cleanup efforts

With encampments being cleared and minimal housing options, California's homeless population awaits help.

EDWARD SEGAL
VALLEY LIFE EDITOR

The homeless community of Los Angeles continues to withstand a downturn of resources despite constant calls for help as governmental attention has swayed elsewhere.

The housing crisis that has ravaged the city has worsened over the past few years, but many are trying to bring attention back to unhoused individuals. While housing continues to be a problem for a large number of people, many encampments — such as the one in Little Tokyo — have been cleared out in an effort to clean up the city. With the city attempting to reach its goal of creating 25,000 housing units by 2025, other organizations have begun to offer housing to those in need, recognizing the steps needed to not lose focus on the city's biggest issue.

City councilman and mayoral candidate Kevin De Leon supported the clearance of the encampment downtown. Putting 106 people into temporary housing and removing trash from the streets, De Leon addressed the problem before being elected, despite the protests that the action disregarded those who preferred to stay out of shelters.

"We have more than 41,000 people living on the streets," De Leon told KTLA. "This is not an issue that's been around for years. This is an issue that's been around for decades, but we've had a lot of politicians at every level of government to federal, state, county and local government who have quite frankly ran circles on the issue, and people want action, and that means moving with a sense of urgency." The issue of a rising



VALLEY STAR | AVA ROSATE

HOMELESS SWEEP- "Avery," an unhoused individual from North Carolina, peers into Little Tokyo's Toriumi Plaza that served as a former encampment. Homeless since late February, "Avery" has been robbed multiple times, leaving him without identification, a car or a phone. The homeless man stated he "wasn't aware of any services" that could be offered to him. Security guards take down signs from the recent homeless sweep that occurred hours earlier.

unhoused population having no place to go has gotten to the point where encampments are being cleared, despite the lack of housing. According to NBC Los Angeles, the encampment in the Toriumi Plaza of Little Tokyo was dispersed to clean the streets and repair the plaza, but many protested on behalf of the unhoused individuals.

California's unhoused population has increased by about 50,000 from 2014 to 2020. According to Cal Matters, the number of homeless people in the state was about 161,000 the last time it was counted in 2020, with over 100,000 of them unsheltered.

Many organizations are doing what they can to tackle this issue.

UCLA began the "Bruin Shelter" in February 2021, giving unhoused students a place to stay. According to the website, the Bruin Shelter is the "third student-run shelter in the entire nation."

Project Roomkey focuses on those who have been infected by COVID-19, offering places for the homeless to recover from the virus and quarantine from the outside world.

Hope of the Valley is a San Fernando Valley based organization dedicated to providing housing, food, medical refer-

als and showers to those who need them. CEO Ken Craft decided to live in the streets for a week in December, experiencing for himself what it is like to be without a home.

"What we need is housing," said Craft. "We've got to get people indoors. I know first hand. I only spent a hundred hours on the street and I know how difficult it was, how it impacted me mentally, physically, emotionally, and I knew I was leaving the streets at the end of week. I also took a cognitive test before and after and there was definitely some mental slippage, and I'm convinced that the longer people are out on the

streets, the worse they become."

Although Mayor Eric Garcetti's proposition to provide funds for supportive housing passed in 2016, the first complex did not open until 2020.

"Imagine being an outreach worker in 2016 and saying, 'Man, have we got good news for you. We're going to be building permanent housing to bring you indoors. Just hang in there for the next four years,'" said Craft. "That's demoralizing, That's discouraging. That makes about as much sense as if I have hypothermia, telling me to wait in the snow until a doctor could see me."

New hybrid classroom on the horizon

CASSANDRA NAVA
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Hybrid-flexible courses known as HyFlex may soon become the norm in Valley College's ever-changing digital landscape.

The course model differs from the traditional hybrid course, in that classes are recorded and can be viewed by students live from their computers — or once the class has ended. Hyflex offers students a choice: attend class in-person, synchronous with live online instruction or log in completely online. Cameras and microphones will be installed in classrooms, in order to capture the essence of the in-person experience. This allows the instructor to maintain the normalcy of teaching to students in the physical classroom, while mirroring that effect for students online.

According to Valley President Barry Gribbons, the college outfitted a classroom in the Administration and Career Advancement building with technology needed for a HyFlex course late last year. Although Valley does not currently offer the hybrid learning model yet, staff and faculty have attended demonstrations.

However, some faculty members voiced their concerns in regards to the preparation required for the course model.

"I don't think you can just walk in and teach a face-to-face class and do this effectively," said music professor Chauncey Maddren in an Academic Senate meeting last week. "I think you need some specific training. To me, that means professional development and certification."

Pierce College has implemented HyFlex courses, using a Zoom compatible 360-degree camera, microphone and speaker device known as a "Meeting Owl."

"It works in conjunction with the teaching methods that many of us have been using during the pandemic," said Wendy Bass, Pierce's distance education coordinator, in a YouTube video explaining the hybrid learning system. "We would like a return to normalcy but we are not quite ready."

The program claims to be inclusive to students who do not physically attend class, offering closed captioning and online chat functions.

Valley is in the early stages of teaching professors the HyFlex ropes.

"We're looking forward to using the HyFlex classroom, and learning about how it can help promote student success," said Gribbons.

IMPORTANT DATES

March 31

The campus will be closed on Thursday, March 31 for Cesar Chavez day.

April 4-8

Valley's spring break will be from Monday, April 4 to Friday, April 8.

Follow up-to-date campus news and events on Twitter @ValleyStarNews

These features and more can be found in full @ www.thevalleystarnews.com

Valley to serve as satellite location for other colleges

With sparse traffic on campus, the push for educational partnership agreements gains traction.

ISAAC DEKTOR
MANAGING EDITOR

Valley College's campus may host bachelor's, master's and doctoral programs from outside universities as initial steps toward creating an educational partnership agreement are underway.

"I do have a lot of experience with these programs and university partners and I expect there will be a lot of interest."

- Barry Gribbons,
president of Valley College

National, Laverne and Pepperdine Universities were floated as potential renters, though no official offers have been made with the concept still in its early stages. Valley President Barry Gribbons asserted that, if such a partnership does come to fruition, it will

not be with a for-profit university. Educational partnerships are not without precedent as the University of Phoenix rented space for its Nursing program before the pandemic forced Valley to close its campus. Gribbons floated the idea of leasing vacant space on campus at the latest Academic Senate meeting and was met with positive feedback.

"I do have a lot of experience with these programs and university partners and I expect that there will be a lot of interest," said Gribbons. "We are likely a little ways away from the point where we will actually be offering classes of bachelors, masters and doctorate programs on campus, but the initial steps have been very positive."

Older, full-time working and other non-traditional students usually take advantage of partnerships with universities on campus, so enrollment will not likely be affected. Not only do educational partnerships increase access for students, but such a deal would create teaching opportunities for Valley's staff.

The goal is to fill facilities at night and on weekends, when many classrooms and offices are vacant. Generating more traffic on campus would likely have downstream effects, such as extend-



VALLEY STAR | GRIFFIN O'ROURKE
NIGHT CLASS- Room 1801 in the ACA is empty after a night class finishes and the students filter out.

ed hours for the Monarch Cafe.

Campus Center, which has been closed for nearly two-years, is expected to reopen this summer and is being eyed as potentially leasable space. The revenue generated through leases will be reinvested into facility maintenance and advertising. Gribbons said that some of the money would be earmarked to add more janitors to Valley's staff.

Community colleges are able to lease out unused space and reinvest the proceeds as stipulated in the Civic Center Act or through educational partnership agreements.

"It would not generate a ton of extra revenue - really the reason to do it would be to create access to higher education for more folks," said Gribbons. "So just another option for students

to pursue bachelor's, master's and doctorate's degrees. As long as a student meets the eligibility requirements they get in - unlike CSUN, UCLA and other places where it can be a bit stressful for students to worry about if they're going to be accepted into impacted programs."

Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson faces U.S. Senate

Democrats and Republicans clashed in the hearings, laying groundwork for the midterm elections.

MATTHEW ROYER
NEWS EDITOR

Ketanji Brown Jackson. A historical candidate. The first Black woman presented for confirmation to the land's highest court.

The hearings, however, made history in another way.

Earlier this year under a nation still very divided, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer announced his intent to retire, opening his seat on the bench. With three new jurists added to the court over the last administration, this soon-to-be vacancy allowed President Joe Biden to keep his campaign promise in nominating a Black woman to the top court that has swayed conservatively over the past four years.

The president's choice to replace the oldest court justice was Jackson, who had recently been confirmed to replace Attorney General Merrick Garland on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia District.

The Harvard graduate would become the first former public defender on the U.S. Supreme Court upon confirmation by the U.S. Senate, but confirmation is not the simple process it once was. The court has been politicized by special interests, like conservative thinktank The Federalist Society, according to The Examiner, has funneled campaign funds and donations to politicians to represent their train of thought.

On March 22, Jackson took the traditional oath in front of the Senate Judiciary Committee, and a line of questioning began from Republicans and Democrats alike.

In her opening statement, the 51-year-old delivered a message that was composed and important in acknowledging her forthcoming role on the court.

"I have been a judge for nearly a decade now, and I take



PHOTO COURTESY OF SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
OATH- Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson stands in front of the U.S. Senate as she prepares to face questioning.

that responsibility and my duty to be independent very seriously," said Jackson, according to CNN. "I decide cases from a neutral posture. I evaluate the facts, and I interpret and apply the law to the facts of the case before me, without fear or favor, consistent with my judicial oath."

While Jackson set a solemn tone for the hearings, Capitol Hill quickly erupted into chaos.

Republican committee members promptly turned the hearing into an opportunity to verbally attack their Democratic colleagues. Senators such as Lindsey Graham (R-SC), Ted Cruz (R-TX) and Mike Lee (R-UT) used their time to rehash the discussion of Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh's confirmation hearings of 2018 in which Democratic Senators focused on allegations of sexual assault and later

the lack of executive focus on the

"This country's getting better and better. And when that final vote happens, and you ascend onto the highest court in the land, I'm going to rejoice."

- Sen. Cory Booker
(D-New Jersey)

FBI's investigation into the claims.

On day two of the hearings, any hope for a civilized day was thrown down the steps of Capitol Hill. The court of appeals judge was vehemently asked questions that Jackson made sure to point out "doesn't come up in my work." These included opening wounds on 'critical-race theory' and her lack of a set philosophy in deciding cases, the former a focus of the Republican Party's culture war agenda entering the midterm elections in November.

Acknowledging her constraints as a judge, Biden's nominee set her beliefs straight in response to the questioning.

"I am acutely aware that as a judge in our system, I have limited power," said Jackson, according to CSPAN. "I am trying in every case to stay in my lane."

Democratic senators used

their allocated time during the four days to ask the nominee about her judicial and educational background, experiences as a mother and decisions in significant cases going in front of the court, such as capital punishment and abortion rights. However, judiciary committee members also used their time to defend Jackson against the "unfair" line of questioning.

Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Cory Booker (D-NJ) each took ample opportunity to praise the judge for her humility and effort during what could be described as a barrage or an ambush at times. On day three, Booker erupted in what The Atlantic has described as an "impassioned" defense of Jackson.

"You are my harbinger of hope," said Booker, noting the historical impact of the nomination. "This country's getting better and better. And when that final vote happens, and you ascend onto the highest court in the land, I'm going to rejoice. And I'm going to tell you right now, the greatest country in the world, the United States of America, will be better because of you."

The Senate Judiciary Committee will vote on April 4 to advance Jackson's nomination to the full chamber of the U.S. Senate, where, according to ABC Chicago, Senate Majority Whip Durbin feels "hopeful" his colleagues

THE FACTS
Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson will soon become the first Black woman to hold the position of Supreme Court Justice if confirmed on April 4.

New bill provides federal funds to the district

The recently passed omnibus bill promises funding to the LACCD and schools across California.

EMILY GRODIN
STAFF WRITER

President Joe Biden signed bill H.R. 2471 into law in mid-March. The \$1.5 trillion omnibus bill allocates a percentage of funding for community colleges' "crucial student services."

These services include student transportation, workforce development and basic needs. The funding looks to ensure access to colleges in the district and support for their students. Valley College and Mission College will receive \$1.3 million and \$400,000 to continue expanding on workforce development programs.

"We're grateful for the support LACCD has received via the Community Project Funding process," said Board of Trustee member Steven Veres. "The additional \$400,000 will help our future STEM workforce build the skills needed to thrive. In

addition, \$1 million for student transportation for all LACCD students was secured, expanding the Metro Fareless System Initiative Pilot Program to ensure that students have access to transportation to get to college and work."

Valley offers numerous degrees in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math. Many of the skills required for the future workers of the fields require special training, workshops, and hands on experience. The funding secured in the grant will be used for additional training to ensure that students have the skills needed in these fields to meet labor demands. Valley offers majors in anthropology, biology, chemistry, computer science and more. In addition to supplementing the stem program, funding will also go into expanding workforce development programs that offer training in specific vocations such as biotech and manufacturing.

The Metro Fareless System Initiative, or more recently known as the GoPass program, is designed to allow students to ride Metro operated buses and trains for free. The pilot is currently set to run through the end of this year. But funding received from the bill will allow for the program to launch in full, and will enable transportation to and from work, not just school.

At Los Angeles City College, nearly \$1 million dollars will go to the Basic Needs Project, which offers assistance with food, health services, housing and other essentials. With the funding they will also be able to help with test fees, course supplies, tutoring and more.



VALLEY STAR | JEREMY RUIZ
STEM- Students walk within the Allied Health and Sciences Building.

BRIEFS

ASU is accepting student council applicants

A total of 12 positions are open in the student council and four students are declared for the election.

All 12 positions are appointed by the board members. The positions include six officers and seven commissioners. The roles in the officers section include president, vice president, treasurer, ICC senate representative, parliamentary and secretary. Under the commissioners section, students can apply for Campus Environmental Affairs, Ethnic and Cultural Affairs, Fine Arts, Health and Wellness Affairs, Political Affairs, Publicity and Social Media Affairs and Student Life.

Currently there are two candidates running for president, including Lauren Lucas who is currently the ethnic and cultural affairs commissioner. One student has declared for commissioner of fine arts and one other has announced their run for treasurer.

To be eligible you must have completed a minimum of 12 units in the Los Angeles Community College District and a maximum of 80 transferable units within the Los Angeles Community College District. Students must also collect 30 student signatures before their application. To be eligible students must have a 2.0 GPA or higher.

For this term five people applied for the commissioners job but did not get appointed because they did not meet the requirements. Since no one else applied and the deadline was Feb. 27 the positions were left vacant. Starting April 25 to May 1 students will be able to vote on canvas in their student portal.

- ISABELLA VODOS
STAFF WRITER

Academic Senate returning in-person in April

Valley College's Academic Senate discussed a mandatory in-person meeting next month as California Gov. Gavin Newsom's extension to the state of emergency comes to an end on March 31.

Newsom signed an executive order in January extending the state of emergency he declared in March 2020. The order extended the state of emergency for teleconference meetings until March 31, giving the Brown Act more flexibility for the public to attend assemblies. This allowed public agencies to continue meeting online. Under the Brown Act, local governments have to conduct meetings open to the public. The Academic Senate's next meeting is on April 21, meaning the senate will have to meet in-person.

The main concern among the senate is meeting quorum. Over two-thirds of the members would have to show up for a meeting to proceed. Senate President Chauncey Maddren would like to have a virtual participation component, as he does not want senators to give up their right to vote.

The senate needs 15 of its members to meet quorum - with 67 percent willing to meet in person, the senate has barely enough of a majority to do so.

Maddren stated there is a push for meetings to be virtual, as it is more convenient and brings in more participation. Non-Brown Act meetings are continuing to meet online, while Brown Act assemblies - such as Academic Senate meetings - must begin to meet in-person once Newsom's executive order expires.

The senate will likely meet in-person for their April meeting, according to Maddren.

- NATALIE METCALF
STAFF WRITER

First graduation to take place in person in two years

Graduation will take place on June 7 at 9 a.m. in Monarch Stadium. Students who submitted a petition to graduate by March 11 will be able to participate in the ceremony. The Office of Student Life is currently holding auditions for student speakers. Aspiring speakers must prepare a three to five minute speech and call the office no later than April 12. The Black, Lavender and Mi Gente graduation celebrations will be held in person as well.

- ISAAC DEKTOR
MANAGING EDITOR

Yarn lovers celebrate ten years of the Los Angeles Yarn Crawl

After being canceled for two years due to the pandemic, the Yarn Crawl weaves its way back to the Valley.

NATALIE METCALF
STAFF WRITER

The Los Angeles Yarn Crawl battled the 80 degree heat as participants joined the event for the first time in three years.

The LA Yarn Crawl, hosted from March 24-27, is an annual event created for knitters to spend time with fellow yarn lovers. The crawl was open to knitters, crocheters, spinners, weavers and felters. Before the pandemic, 26 yarn stores around the city participated in the event. Only 15 small business yarn shops joined the festivities this year. The Altered Stitch entered their first yarn crawl, bringing in fiber enthusiasts from all over LA county. L'Atelier – a veteran of the event located in Encino – has participated in the crawl for nine out of the ten years.

"It's great to be able to support these shops," said L'Atelier customer Kim Stockemer. "The sad part is that there used to be a lot more knit-

ting shops around the area and they all closed down."

L'Atelier has two locations in California, both participating in the Yarn Crawl this year. The yarn shop was decked out with new colors of yarn, free patterns and a raffle for the celebration. The family owned business displayed a yarn-wrapped alpaca sitting in front of the store, holding Ukraine's national flower – the sunflower – in support of the warring nation.

"This is a friendly atmosphere and a workplace," said L'Atelier store manager Theresa Damskey.

L'Atelier is French for "the workplace." Customers can sit and practice knitting, work on projects or take a class in the store.

L'Atelier welcomes experienced knitters and beginners alike. According to Medaal, the yarn crawl brings in new customers, keeping art alive. Old and new crawlers shared their joy of knitting with the owners of L'Atelier by talking about current knitting and crochet projects.



VALLEY STAR | AVA ROSATE

CRAFT - Customers are encouraged to work on their stitching projects at the counter of L'Atelier. Patrons can buy stitching patterns at the store and receive one-on-one assistance with their art.

The group provides advice to excel in their knitting experience.

Most knitters who attended the crawl described knitting as "therapeutic" and "relaxing." According to Mental Health America, knitting can lower blood pressure and reduce stress,

anxiety, loneliness and isolation. Knitting can strengthen mental health as well, allowing knitters to give back to their community.

Stockemer and three of her yarn-loving friends knit for charity at St. Charles Borromeo, a church in North Hollywood.

David Lasher – a yarn community supporter – talked about women knitting socks, sweaters, and hats for soldiers in WWI.

The Altered Stitch, a store located in Valley Village, was founded in 2014 by Leah SK Davidson. Co-owners Dawn Stancarone and Sherrie Andrews took over the yarn store in 2019. The shop originally planned to participate in the crawl in 2020, but COVID-19 abruptly halted the yarn crawl.

Customers supported The Altered Stitch by purchasing gift cards to the store. In order to keep the store in business, Stancarone and Andrews both work day jobs. Andrews is an archaeologist and Stancarone is an HR director.

The store also allows opportunities for small online businesses to sell their yarn. Jessica Tallent is the owner of Purls and Postulates, an online yarn shop that arranges trunk shows at The Altered Stitch. The trunk show allows yarn lovers to see products that are not normal-

ly on display. In celebration of this year's Yarn Crawl, Purls and Postulates and The Altered Stitch created a brunch-themed yarn named Serotonin Sunrise.

"[My favorite part is] seeing all the crawlers, especially after not being able to do this for two years," said Maridee Dangcil, the President of the LA Yarn Crawl. "It's seeing all the people on the truck having them enjoy all the free yarn we have to offer. That's the most fun for me – all the people."

Dangcil was also the president of the organization before COVID-19 hit. This year she wanted to make sure that the annual crawl came back with "gusto." The Yarn Crawl President can knit and crochet, having been taught by her grandmother when she was younger. Dangcil describes herself as an active crafter.

"Every shop I've talked to is having a great year. All the crawlers are so exciting," said Dangcil. "I feel like I've done my job."

From accident to heightened ability, William Craig thrives with his handicap

President of the Valley College Abilities Club works to advocate for disabled individuals after coming back from the dead.

ISABELLA VODOS
STAFF WRITER

A bullet through the head, a stroke during surgery and a blood clot that went from his lungs to his heart could not stop William Craig.

Serving in the Air National Guard, Craig was aware of the danger of the job; however, his life-threatening incident happened after he was discharged from the service in 1986. Santa Monica's Kramer Motors hired Craig to work in finance. Craig, then in his mid-twenties, received a mission to repossess a vehicle for the company.

His day took a turn for the worse once he entered Lynwood and stumbled upon gang activity. As he drove through the neighborhood, a .45 caliber bullet broke through the windshield.

"I thought it was a car backfiring at something," said Craig, who is the president of the Abilities Club. "Next thing I knew we had a car chasing and shooting at us. It was like



VALLEY STAR | JOSE CALLEJAS

AUTHOR - William Craig, the president of the Abilities Club at Valley and profound advocate at all nine district colleges, sits in his wheelchair as he brandishes his book, "21st Century Proverbs of William Craig."

a movie. Bullets were breaking the windows. I told my partner to dive under the dashboard. I got flipped around driving backwards and leaned over the steering wheel, and a bullet came through the windshield and hit the top of my head."

Craig was rushed to Saint Frances hospital where he was

pronounced dead. But after six minutes, doctors were able to resuscitate him. Waking up from his coma after many complications during surgery, the veteran was left paralyzed from the waist down.

"It was a traumatizing situation," said Craig. "When I woke up, I saw all these medical

people saying 'welcome back.'"

To Craig, it was a miracle from God that he came back.

After the brain injury and subsequent stroke, Craig suffered from Tripletia – the paralysis of three of his limbs.

His right hand is the only part of his upper body that was not impaired and has full mobility. He restored 85 percent of movement to his right leg and acquired limited movement in his left leg. Through physical therapy, he also gained some control of his left arm.

The South Central Los Angeles native developed strong memory skills after his injury. He was able to memorize languages and taught himself Spanish – which he speaks fluently.

After the accident, Craig's daughter Courtney was born. He calls her a "miracle child," and that is why he gave her the name that means "court of God." The doctors didn't expect him to have children due to the paralysis.

As part of his rehabilitation, Craig visited clinics in Colorado, Los Angeles and

Arizona. He decided to settle in Arizona and build a house with his wife, who later left him.

"I felt like I was pushing my wife away," said Craig. "I was too dependent on her to help me with the activities of my daily life. She felt overwhelmed having our two kids to care for and an adult husband who couldn't care for himself."

In spite of all his obstacles, including prostate cancer, Craig became an accomplished writ-

er and poet. He released his book "21st Century Proverbs of William Craig" in 2016. The new

writer won a \$100 award from the Poetry Magazine Contest for his poem "Rhapsody." He also joined a writer's group called "Deep Well Writers," where they helped him publish his first book "Mirrors of the Heart."

"What encouraged me to write 'Mirrors of the Heart' was Proverb 29 in the Bible – 'As a face is reflected in water, so the heart of man reflects the man,'" said Craig.

Craig is the president of the Valley College Abilities Club, which meets Tuesday and Thursday in the North Gym. The club was designed to bring awareness to the disabled community and give a venue for members of the community to gather. The club is currently in the process of expanding to all nine LACCD campuses.

"Our club is fun, because we do events such as open mic nights and poetry," said Joe Hernandez, assistant faculty advisor of the club. "Right now, we have seven people in the abilities club and welcome more."

"I encourage disabled people to do what they can do. They have an ability that needs to be recognized."

- William Craig, President of Abilities Club

er and poet. He released his book "21st Century Proverbs of William Craig" in 2016. The new

the
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One Way or Another: One question, two opposing viewpoints

Second COVID-19 booster must not be mandated by the district

Making another vaccination mandatory is invasive and unnecessary.

ISABELLA VODOS
STAFF WRITER

Although COVID-19 vaccines protect people from serious infection and death, many fully vaccinated people still catch the virus. An additional jab comes with marginal risk and every person should be free to make decisions about their own health. A second booster should not be mandated by the district.

The LACCD currently requires students to be fully vaccinated—which includes the initial two-dose sequence followed by a booster shot—in order to use its facilities. However, the administration does not have access to aggregated data from Cleared4 check-ins, making it impossible to know if this is an effective policy. Through rigorous testing and public data throughout the country, it has been shown that California currently has higher transmission than Florida, even though the sunshine state has far less stringent vaccine mandates.

Although the vaccine provides antibodies, they don't last long.

According to NPR, while the fourth booster increases antibodies within the first month, protection against the virus drops by 50 percent three months later as people begin to lose antibodies.

Additionally, the second booster has shown that it inadequately stops transmission, due to the fact that the COVID-19 variant Omicron keeps mutating.

Not only does the booster provide short term protection, but it has additional risks.

The fourth vaccine can cause mild side effects such as headache, muscle pain, fever and nausea to sometimes severe allergic reactions. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention there were 11.1 cases of anaphylaxis per million doses administered. Anaphylaxis is a life threatening allergic reaction that occurs shortly after vaccination. There have also been some cases of Myocarditis, an inflammation of the heart muscle.

“The notion that we must ‘trade liberty for security’ is both false and dangerous.”

- ACLU attorneys

Omicron has mutated into a less dangerous variant as it only causes mild cold-like symptoms. According to the John Hopkins University of Medicine, death rates have plummeted from 2 percent to 0.5 percent since Omicron became the dominant variant. The reduction of this variant can be attributed to natural immunity in addition to high vaccination rates.

A recent study by Center of Disease and Control and Prevention found that those exposed to COVID-19 were able to shield the delta variant better than vaccinated individuals.

The American Civil Liberties Union issued a report by attorneys George J. Annas, Wendy K. Mariner and Wendy E. Parmein 2008 explaining that

individuals should not be obligated to inject themselves, as such a mandate violates civil liberties.

“The notion that we must ‘trade liberty for security’ is both false and dangerous,” wrote ACLU attorneys in the report. “It is false because coercive actions are seldom conducive to public health protection. It is dangerous because it provides a never-ending justification for the suppression of civil liberties while failing to safeguard public health.”

Their point proved that vaccinating is a threat to individuals as it forces them to take actions against their own will. Freedom should always come before security.

Both unvaccinated and vaccinated individuals should be aware of the health concerns. The new variant Omicron is easily transmittable and no district should mandate a vaccine that will provide low protection and restrict freedom. Not making another booster mandatory will allow the body to fight the virus naturally.

EDITORS NOTE

The views expressed on this page are solely those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the Valley Star, its instructors, editors, staff or those of Los Angeles Valley College, its administration, faculty, staff or students.

Fourth jab should be mandated if necessary

The district should prepare to require second booster.

MATTHEW ROYER
NEWS EDITOR

If a spring booster is necessary to protect against COVID-19, the LACCD should do everything in its power to mandate the shot across the district.

With cases at a pandemic low, mask mandates dropping across the country and a sense of freedom returning to Angelinos, COVID-19 has become endemic for many. But with new variants being found across the globe and the BA.2 version of omicron spreading rapidly across Oceania and Europe, another jab for vaccinated students will become more beneficial in protecting the campus from being ravaged by the virus once again.

Pfizer and Moderna will go in front of the FDA on April 6 to discuss the need for future boosters, according to Yahoo News. In the meantime, Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla is warning that with BA.2 infecting en masse across the Atlantic, a booster of more significant efficacy will be needed to protect the citizens of Earth.

“Many variants are coming,” said Bourla according to CBS News. “So, what we are trying to do... is to make not only a vaccine that will protect against all variants, including Omicron, but also something that can protect for at least a year.”

The LACCD has not wavered on mandating vaccinations for students and faculty over the past two years. Board Policy 2900, first adopted in August for the first two doses and later readopted on Jan. 22 for booster authorization, required students to receive the immunizations to take

classes on Valley College's campus. If a fourth booster is deemed imperative for the health and safety of students of the nine district campuses, the LACCD must take action and stamp approval on Board Policy 2900 once again.

Suppose a variant spreads quickly into April, possibly threatening a halt to the spring semester. In that case, the LACCD should take some of their own advice from past Board of Trustees President Steve Veres: “The health and safety of our employees and students remains the District's priority.”

While there is something to be celebrated with the drop in COVID-19 cases nationwide, forgetting how quickly variants spread can dampen recent successes. Whether it was the initial variant and delta of last summer or the overtaking of omicron during the holiday season, past strains of the virus have warranted a sense of preparedness.

As of Saturday, BA.2 already makes up 54.9 percent of cases in the United States. According to Harvard Epidemiologist Dr. Eric Feigl-Ding on Twitter, this variant shows repeated patterns of all tell-tale variants including increased strength and signs of a new driving force behind the virus.

“It is necessary, a fourth booster, right now,” said Bourla, Pfizer CEO. “The protection that we are getting from the third, it is good enough - actually, quite good for hospitalizations and deaths. It's not that good against infections, but it doesn't last very long. But we are just submitting those data to the FDA and then we're seeing what the experts also will say.”

The Academy needs to be slapped into shape

With chaos overshadowing historic firsts, the Oscars provided no solace for viewers at home.

MATTHEW ROYER
NEWS EDITOR

Leaving movie fans behind in hopes of the general public's adoration, this year's edition of cinema's grandest night fell short (and aired too long), cementing a mess of a show that should have been anything but.

On Sunday night, ‘The Slap Heard Around The World’ took the world by storm, as Will Smith rushed the stage to ambush presenter Chris Rock, slapping him in retaliation for a poorly written joke at Smith's wife, Jada Pinkett Smith's expense. For anybody not already watching, this gave viewers a reason to turn on their television sets and tune in for the final hour of the 94th annual awards ceremony.

Those viewers would not have noticed the feel-good stories of the event, the driving forces behind what made the Oscars a must-watch event year after year. These even include the award that Rock presented shortly after the battery. Amir ‘Questlove’ Thompson, frontman for hip-hop band The Roots,

had just been gifted the achievement of Best Documentary for his film ‘Summer of Soul.’ Eyes were instead glued to phones, browsing Twitter for the backstory and history between Rock and Smith and what led to the abrupt confrontation, rather than on Thompson as he accepted the award in a speech honoring his community.

What makes movies so great is the opportunity to escape into another world, getting to meet people and understand their experiences, even if just for a few hours. The supporting acting categories did just that. Troy Katsur and Ariana DeBose took home achievements in Supporting Actor and Supporting Actress categories, respectively. The former became the second-ever deaf actor to win an Academy Award after his ‘CODA’ co-star Marlee Matlin won for ‘Children of a Lesser God’ in 1986. DeBose, winning for her role as Anita in ‘West Side Story’ (2021), became the first Afro-Latina to win an Oscar, as well as being the first openly-queer person of color to take home an award for acting. Both acceptance speeches were high-

lights of the first hour but just like Thompson's win later in the show, they became drowned out by substandard pacing and segues to unnecessary montages.

Poor decisions by the Academy broadcast team were hard to miss throughout. Whether it was the focus on new popular-vote categories quickly taken over by online fandoms or anniversary segments for films that have already had their time to shine—oddly enough ‘Pulp Fiction’ was recognized for its 28th anniversary—the broadcast never took a moment to acknowledge the reason the ceremony is held in the first place: celebrating the achievements in film for the past year.

Running longer than last year's edition (which had the same eight categories cut for time), length was just one of the problems for the Academy.

The almost four-hour broadcast was riddled with moments that will soon be forgotten or live in infamy, no in-between. For example, an in-memoriam montage, usually a moment for remembering those lost in silence, was uprooted in favor of upbeat song and dance, with



GRAPHIC BY | MATTHEW ROYER

SLAPPED- Will Smith could have his ‘Best Actor’ award taken away.

messages of remembrance clipped in by actors of note. At another moment, one of the hosts, Amy Schumer, looked to clear the air with comedy after the room hit a low in enthusiasm due to Rock and Smith.

The only thing the ceremony cemented for viewers of the broadcast was the realization that the Oscars

need to be slapped into shape.

Reshaping the event for movie lovers, the individuals tuning in, the Academy should forget the need to appease an audience that will never enjoy a three-hour-plus celebration of movies they did not watch.

VALLEY VIEW | WHAT DID YOU THINK ABOUT WILL SMITH'S OUTBURST AT THE OSCARS?

TEXT BY NATALIE METCALF
PHOTOS BY JOSE CALLEJAS



“Violence is unacceptable. Even if someone hurts your feelings. We tell our kids that and we should follow the example. Accomplishments should not be taken away but there should be some learning opportunity.”

- STEVE PIERSON FIRST YEAR, UNDECIDED MAJOR



“I could just imagine how my lover would feel if she heard that. Long story short, the slap was well deserved. Chris Rock should not have made that joke.”

- KRISTOFER SHERRIEL FIRST YEAR, TRIPLE MAJOR



“If you watch carefully Will Smith did chuckle but once he turns around and sees his wife, that's when his mood changed. I wouldn't chuckle, I would just get generally upset and slap someone.”

-BRYANT GARCIA FIRST YEAR, GRAPHIC DESIGN AND ART HISTORY MAJOR



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GOT A LETTER TO THE EDITOR?

Letters to the editor can be submitted online at www.thevalleystarnews.com. Letters must be limited to 300 words and may be edited for content. Full name and contact information must be supplied in order for letters to be printed. Send by Thursday for the following week's issue.

The Monarchs' "mainly hurt" pitchers lead them astray in third straight loss

Defeated by double digits for the second consecutive game, Valley softball continued its losing ways as the Monarchs could not overcome their struggles on the mound.

EDWARD SEGAL
VALLEY LIFE EDITOR

Wild pitching and sloppy fundamentals resulted in another loss for the Monarchs as they could not keep the game under control, falling to the Eagles 11-1.

Dropping their last two affairs due to difficulties on the mound, Valley College softball (4-16, 0-4 WSC East) attempted to re-establish a pitching rhythm, but LA Mission College (15-9, 2-2 WSC East) handed the Monarchs another blowout loss instead.

"As of right now, our bullpen, we're mainly hurt," said sophomore reliever Sidney Hernandez. "I was out for two weeks, we have a pitcher whose arm hurts, all of us have tendonitis, so our bodies are kind of just giving out on us, but at the same time, it's mental. We work every week. Now it's just on us."

In the first inning, an Eagles' runner came home on a wild pitch from freshman pitcher Isabel Ward, showcasing the Monarchs' struggles on the mound. Another run was added in the second courtesy of an RBI single, placing Mission ahead 2-0.

In the bottom of the second, sophomore right fielder Caitlyn Pineda returned to the plate after a four-week absence due to a hamstring injury. She hit a double into the deep left corner, re-launching her season in dramatic fashion.

"It's nice to be back," said the third-year veteran. "I'm trying to be out there. This is my last year [at Valley]. I'm not playing at a four-year and I'm not going anywhere, so these last few games, I'm just trying to give it my all."

A pair of ground-outs ended the inning before the Monarchs could get on the board, and the Eagles' acrobatic catches and ability to get stops became the

theme of the next few innings.

With the score still at 2-0, the game remained close, but the fifth inning blew the game wide open.

Back-to-back base hits to start the frame gave Mission runners on the corners. Freshman righty Jessica Lopez relieved Ward and ended up loading the bases on a hit by pitch, allowing two runners to score on wild pitches as Mission's lead ballooned to four.

Freshman reliever Amber Basham added to the damage, bringing in three more runners on wild pitches.

"We had opportunities to tie the game up, and all of a sudden you go to the bullpen and all hell breaks loose."

- coach Greg Venger

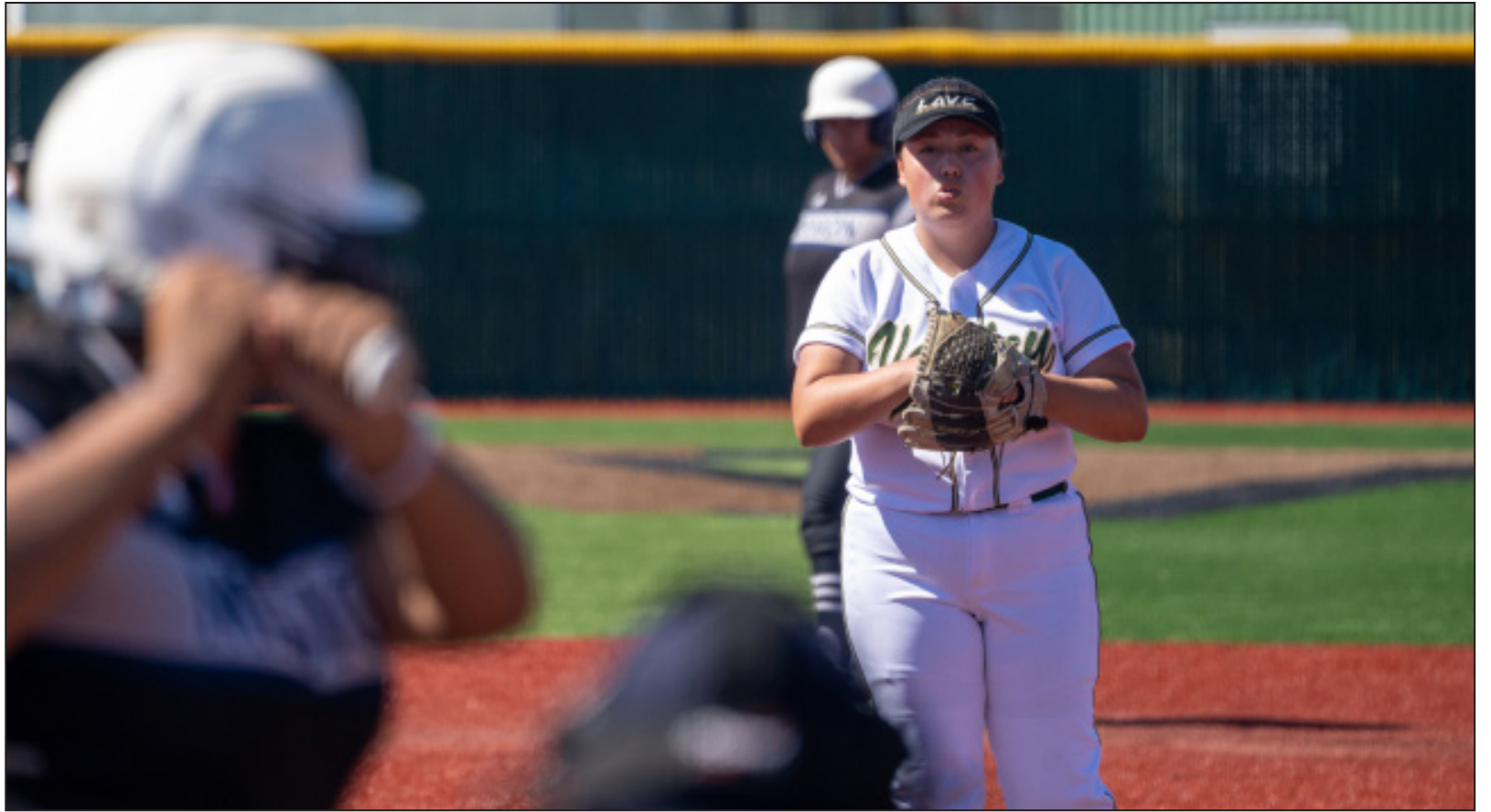
Hernandez - the pitcher who cleaned up against Citrus College after six runs were walked in - was then called on to pitch, and finally closed the inning after allowing one run.

Down 8-0, the Monarchs dug themselves in a hole they could not climb out of.

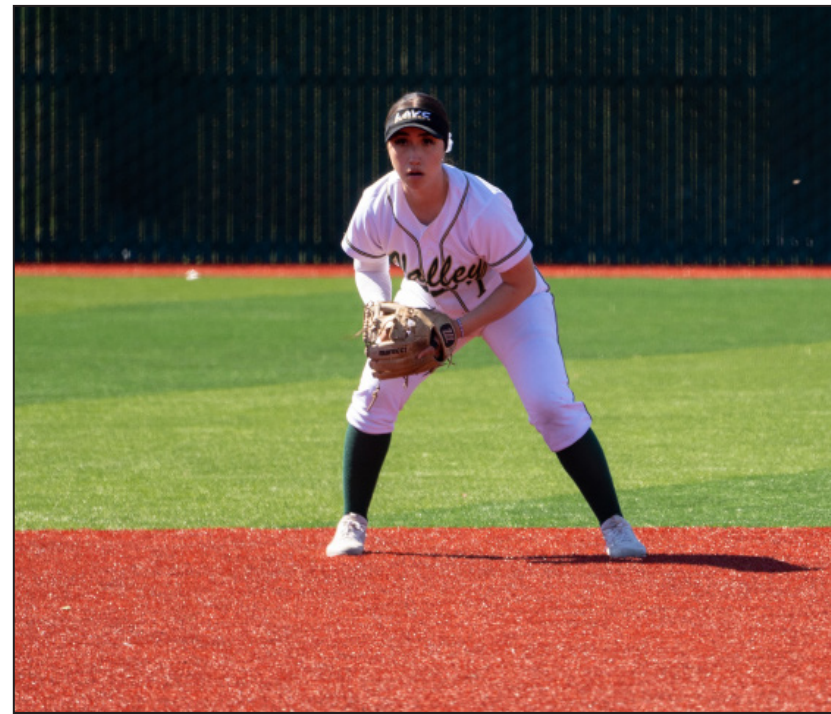
The Monarchs got one run back when freshman left fielder Lexus Freire scored on a wild pitch after reaching on a fielder's choice, but the Monarch's scoring ended there.

To cap off the blowout victory, the Eagles tacked on a couple of home runs by pitcher Lizbeth Mora and outfielder Faith Santa Cruz, giving Valley another double-digit loss.

"This has been the theme right now, that we can't get out at the back end of our bullpen, whether it's a walk, hit by pitch, a wild pitch or we're not blocking," said coach Greg



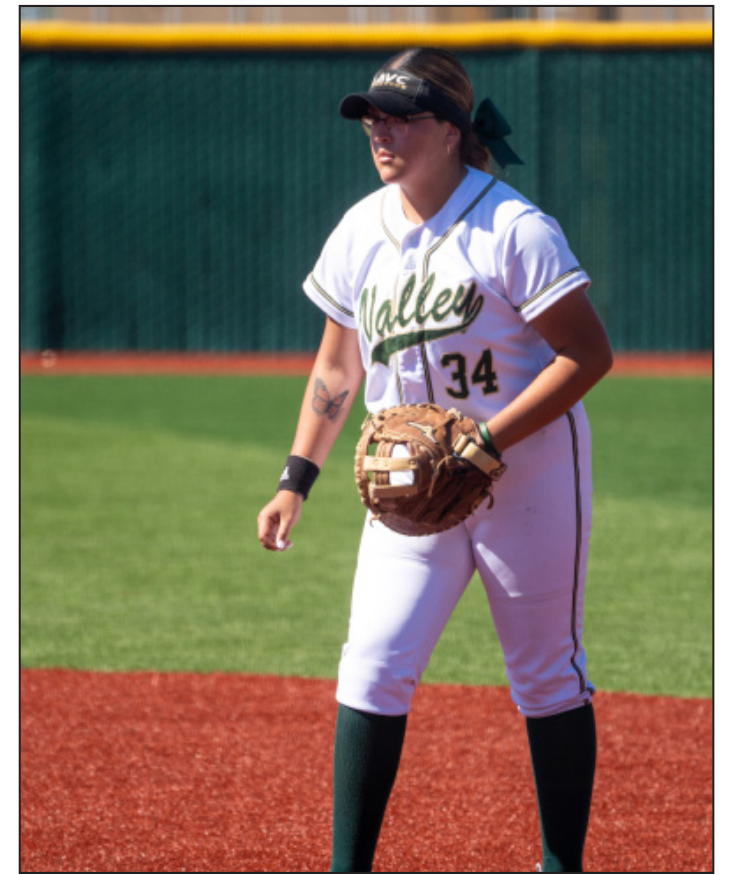
PREPARATION- Freshman pitcher Isabel Ward readies a pitch against LA Mission's designated hitter Lizbeth Mora in the Monarchs 11-1 loss to the Eagles. The righty allowed four earned runs on seven hits, while striking out two and walking three batters.



VALLEY STAR | JOSE CALLEJAS

CROUCH- Freshman shortstop Tea Carbajal bends down to prepare for a ball in play after the pitch is delivered against LA Mission. The right-handed hitter had one hit in three at-bats against the Eagles.

Venger. "I told them it was a good game going into the fifth inning. We had opportunities to tie the game up, and all of a sudden you go to the bull-



VALLEY STAR | JOSE CALLEJAS

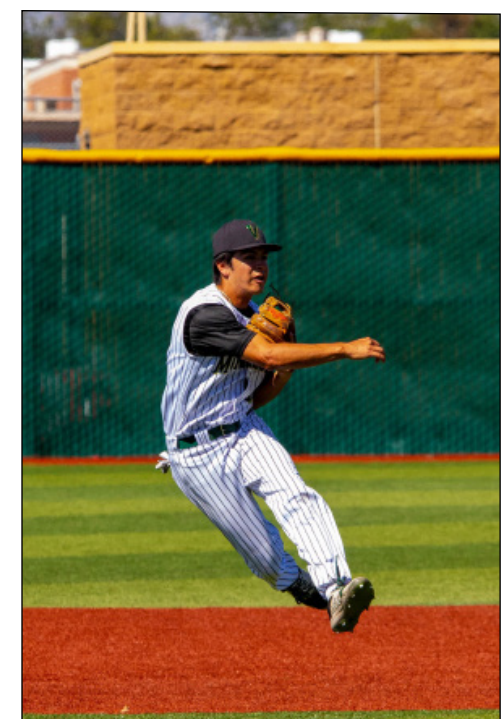
SCORE- Freshman infielder Melissa Orozco waits at first base against LA Mission. The right-handed hitter accumulate a hit, but walked twice against the Eagles.

Valley drops second straight contest against Bakersfield



VALLEY STAR | GRIFFIN O'ROURKE

CHANGE UP- Freshman right-handed starting pitcher Danny Veloz throws an off-speed pitch against Bakersfield. Veloz did not allow an earned run in 5.0 innings, striking out five batters and allowing two hits.



VALLEY STAR | ADRIAN RAMIREZ

TOSS- Freshman shortstop Maddox Latta throws a ball across his body to first base.



VALLEY STAR | GRIFFIN O'ROURKE

LAY IT DOWN- Freshman first baseman Tyler Olivas attempts a bunt against Bakersfield. Olivas had three hits in three at-bats, with one run and one RBI against the Renegades, as well as earning a walk in the contest.

Despite Danny Veloz pitching 5.0 innings without allowing an earned run, the Monarchs' bullpen could not keep the game within striking distance.

NICHOLAS OROZCO
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

In a quick offensive start to the game, Valley College fell behind in the first and attempted to take the lead throughout, but Bakersfield continued to add on damage, eventually taking the 7-3 victory.

Splitting the series heading into Saturday, the Monarchs (15-10, 4-5 WSC South) pushed themselves in an attempt to take game three and the series against the Renegades (7-19, 2-7 WSC South), but Valley couldn't crack the code against Bakerfield's pitching.

With seven pitchers called on in the first two legs, coach Dave Mallas called on freshman righthander Danny Veloz to start the third game. The starter earned the win on Mar. 18 against Citrus College after hurling 5.0 innings and tried to replicate his performance against the Renegades.

From the get-go, two infield errors and a balk allowed runners to get to second and third with no outs. Veloz walked the next runner to load the bases and Bakersfield proceeded to hit a double over freshman center fielder Yeonwon Jeong's head, scoring two runs. Another runner came home on a fielder's choice to second and Bakersfield grabbed an early 3-0 lead.

"I knew it was nothing special," said Veloz postgame. "They got one bunt hit or an error you can call it, then another error. I knew the game plan we had, we had to attack them."

Freshman second baseman Jack Coscolluela led off the bottom of the third inning with a four-pitch walk and subsequent-

ly stole second. A bullet hit into left field by freshman shortstop Maddox Latta put runners on first and third as the Monarchs looked to turn the game around.

"They played better than we did in two of the three games. It's very disappointing, but it's not the end of the world. We got to take the day off Sunday, come back Monday."

- coach Dave Mallas

Freshman first baseman Tyler Olivas followed up Latta with a bunt and reached safely, scoring Coscolluela from third. Freshman right fielder Joshua Wood kept the rally going later in the frame, bringing home Latta on a hit-by-pitch as the Monarchs cut the score to 3-2 before the fourth.

After Veloz' troublesome first inning, the righty went into cruise control - pitching four scoreless innings before being relieved by freshman left hander Josh Eigenbrodt in the top of the sixth. All three runs he allowed were unearned.

"My [gameplan] game was just to throw strikes, be efficient and let my defense play," said Veloz postgame. "It was a rough start but after that [outing] it felt pretty good."

After the Monarchs made it a one-run game, the Renegades stretched their lead in the top

of the sixth. Following an RBI single, the Renegades catcher Xabi Iparraguirre managed to steal second, reaching third and home on errors and expanding their lead to 5-2.

Freshman left-hander Andy Rodriguez entered in the top of the seventh and immediately hit Renegades' shortstop Guillermo Monje with a pitch. This came back to bite the reliever, as Monje advanced to second on a passed ball and took third on a perfectly-placed bunt.

Freshman catcher Robert Velasco attempted to pick off the runner stealing second, but threw the ball into center field, allowing Monje to come home.

A sacrifice fly brought home another run, making the score 7-2 as Bakersfield started to run away with the ballgame.

Down five runs, the Monarchs needed to string together a late rally.

Olivas led off the bottom of the eighth, hitting a single into center field. After Freshman third baseman Lee Brandzel was walked, Wood hit a sac fly to the center fielder, scoring Olivas and cutting the deficit to four.

But Valley could not tack on any more runs as they dropped their second-straight contest to Bakersfield.

"They played better than we did in two of the three games," said Mallas. "It's very disappointing, but it's not the end of the world. We got to take the day off Sunday, come back Monday. We got Mission. It's not going to get any easier, so we need to go win that series and play better, cleaner baseball."

The Monarchs will play next against LA Mission Thursday. Valley will host the contest with first pitch scheduled for 2:30 p.m.