

# THE KNIGHT TIMES

Issue 1- Volume V - Fall 2020 Digital Edition  
Sheman Oaks CES

## *In this Issue...*

SOCES students rally  
for Armenia

ASB President  
Maxwin Bhail

Election 2020 Results

## *also...*

Are SOCES  
students and  
teachers  
prepared  
for Distance  
Learning?



# THE KNIGHT TIMES

## Digital Edition

Volume V Issue 1 Fall 2020

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This issue is dedicated to the memory of Judith Hernandez,  
former principal of Sherman Oaks CES.

She will be remembered fondly by the entire  
SOCES community.

Judith Hernandez  
August 11, 1952 - October 29, 2020

# *The most unusual year of all time will be the one you'll always remember*

The SOCES Yearbook wants you to share your pictures from this incredible year!

## SHARE YOUR PICTURES! ✨

**Students, parents and teachers** can contribute content to the yearbook staff by uploading photos directly to our website for potential use in our book. You can eShare photos of field trips, sporting events, school and community activities or shots of you and your friends that otherwise might be missed by our staff photographers.

Please eShare your pictures quickly as we are constantly selecting images to meet deadlines. Provide as much detail as possible (including names and grades) for each photo, so we have all the information needed for accurate identification. **Start eSharing today!**



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**Portraits are due by December 4!**

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photo courtesy of amhat.com.edu



(photo courtesy of obcnex.com)



photo courtesy of kymati.com



## From the Editors

Hey SOCES community! My name is Auden Meyer and I'm this year's Journalism Editor-in-chief, as well as the editor of our temporary media website, [bit.ly/socesmedia](https://bit.ly/socesmedia). I'm super happy to be able to bring you digital newspaper issues like these and work with this year's talented staff. The COVID-19 pandemic has rudely interrupted the 2020-2021 school year, but don't freak out, media class is going to do our best to bring you all the news and updates regarding school and more.

Right now everything is super crazy, we're all feeling the fatigue and ennui. With this paper and the website and social media (@socesmedia on Instagram), you can count on some order in your life and even some fun. We've got a cocktail of world news, school news, entertainment, op-eds, and more. Because of COVID we've been forced to get creative, with lots of student and staff interviews and a larger focus on world news, using technology to our advantage.

As for myself, I have been in Journalism every year of high school, and I'm currently a junior. I like to write and believe it or not, I enjoy reading, too. I love watching hockey and hanging with dogs.

This year we get to have some fun and make the best out of a bad situation, and I have the pleasure of doing that for all of you! Please enjoy this paper, check out our other platforms (we put up a lot more articles on our website and Instagram, as well as broadcasting videos), and please email [socesnewspaper@gmail.com](mailto:socesnewspaper@gmail.com) if you have any questions, comments, or concerns about any of our articles or want to get involved yourself!





Hey everyone! We are happy to bring to you our first digital issue of this year. My name is Sabrina Guedalia and I'm a senior at SOCES. I have been at SOCES since 4th grade and I hope to make my last year as memorable as possible, even from a distance. Some of my hobbies include playing soccer, playing guitar, and singing. This is my 3rd year in Media Class and I am a Co-editor of New Media. I run our instagram page (@socesmedia) and help with article assignments and issues regarding the Journalism sector of our class. This year has been tough for all of us with the pandemic, but we hope to bring you all good content and keep up the SOCES spirit. Being online has posed several challenges to our class, but we are trying our best to promote our articles and keep the student population involved and aware of what is going on within our school community and beyond. Stay safe Knights and I'm looking forward to working with our class and producing more amazing content!

Hi! My name is Zoë Howes. I am a New Media Editor and Chief of our Broadcasting division. After 9 years at SOCES, I am finally a Senior.:(. I have been here since fourth grade and my goal is to make this year the best yet! My favorite things to do are reading, dancing, going to my clubs like BSU and Youth&Government, and watching T.V. with my mom. I write and direct the SOCES "Late Knight" Videos! (You can see them on @socesmedia!) I also write and edit articles for the "Knight Times." Everyday I look forward to this amazing class and it's awesome staff members. Our goal is to give you the best content ever to keep you updated during this time.

My dream job is to be a journalist! I want to work at MSNBC as an investigative reporter. In college I want to major in journalism with a minor in pre-law. This class has helped me improve and learn about my journalistic skills. I hope you know how much I love this class!

I can't wait for you to read all of our excellent articles and watch our fun videos. This year has been crazy, but journalism is the best thing to turn to at any time! So, please sit back and enjoy!



# Principal's Message

Dear Sherman Oaks CES Knights,

We want to wish you a safe and happy Thanksgiving break. You have worked so hard by participating in class and completing your assignments. We are grateful for your resilience while learning from home. Thank you for your contributions to slowing down the spread of COVID-19 virus. Our first priority is your safety. We take pride in our responsibility to provide our students with a quality education during school closure caused by the COVID-19 virus pandemic. Our Superintendent of School, Austin Beutner, provides us with weekly updates and Latest News for LA Unified. Please see his updates here: <https://achieve.lausd.net/>

Recently, our message has been focused on sharing our action plan to prepare for our return to campus. According to our superintendent, it is highly unlikely that we will return to campus anytime soon. In the meantime, we are in the process of creating a plan to facilitate safely providing in-person instruction *when it is safe* to implement. Please see these resources related to re-opening of schools. Please join us for our town hall on December 4, 2020 at 11:00 a.m. to learn the details of our plan. We will prerecord the presentation and post it to Schoology for your convenience on November 30, 2020 and keep it posted there.

## **Zoom Webinar: SOCES Town hall Re-opening of Campus Plan**

**When: Dec 4, 2020 11:00 AM Pacific Time**

**Topic: SOCES Town Hall Re-opening Campus Plans**

Please see the link below to join the webinar:

<https://lausd.zoom.us/j/86838869244>

## **Survey Family Preferences for In-person & Virtual Schooling**

<https://reopening.lausd.net/en/FamilySelection>

## **Resources for Families During School Closure: Grab & Go Meals, Family Handbook, Wellness Guide, and more**

<https://achieve.lausd.net/resources>

## **Feeling stressed or anxious about the COVID-19 pandemic? 211.org**

- <https://www.schoolcrisiscenter.org>
- <https://grievingstudents.org>

***Go, Knights!***

Sincerely,

Katie McGrath



# The War Between Armenia and Azerbaijan

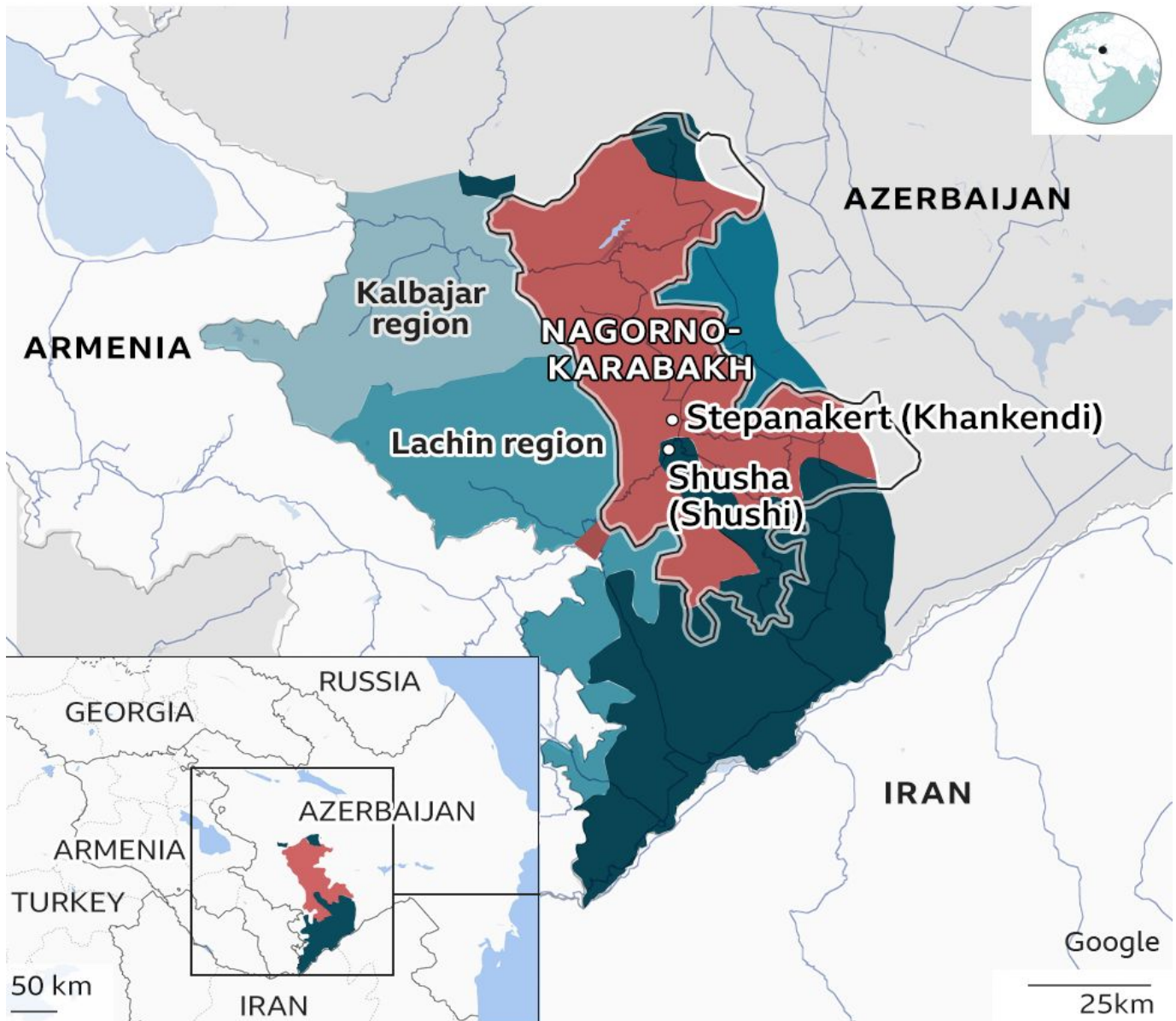
*By: Ani Matsoyan '22*

The war between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the ethnically Armenian frozen territory Artsakh, also known as Nagorno-Karabakh, recently flared up, leading to worldwide protests all over the world, including ones right at home in L.A. that were attended by Armenian Americans like SOCES seniors Vahagn Poghosyan and Hayk Davtyan.



## Armenia-Azerbaijan peace deal

- Armenian forces to withdraw by 15 Nov
- Armenian forces to withdraw by 20 Nov
- Armenian forces to withdraw by 1 Dec
- Areas regained by Azerbaijan in the war
- Area of deployment for Russian peacekeepers



Source: BBC Research, 10 November 2020.

**BBC**

**This past summer** saw protests, rallies and marches taking place across American cities as racial tensions once again divided a nation founded on the principle of equality. All this happened during the worst health crisis in 100 years and in the shadow of what would be the most contentious Presidential election in history.

With America's attention drawn inward, not many noticed in mid-July when, on the other side of the globe, a decades-long conflict over land, culture, religion, and race rekindled when the first shots of war were fired between the countries of Armenia and Azerbaijan. No one, that is, except for the small Armenian American population living in the United States, especially the ones living in the Los Angeles area. Of the nearly 400,000 Armenians that live in America, 40% live in and around LA County.

Over the next four months very little attention would be given to the Armenian - Azerbaijan war. For the 167,000 Armenian Americans living in the L.A. area, this was no longer acceptable, including to two SOCES seniors, Vahagn Poghosyan and Hayk Davtyan.

\*

In 1915 Turkey, controlled by the Ottoman Turks, began a religious persecution against Armenia and began the systematic slaughtering of the Armenian people. By the early 1920s about two million Armenians, Assyrians, and Greeks were murdered. The event would be recognized as the Armenian Genocide, but for over a hundred years, Turkey has denied the mass murders took place, they have not accepted that their great-grandparents committed genocide against the innocent Armenian people.

Armenia, Uruguay, Lebanon, Belgium, France, and many more nations have recognized the events as genocide, however, Turkey still refuses to accept it. This has triggered a strong dislike between Armenia and Turkey on both sides. Turkey's century-long aversion towards Armenia has caused them to intervene in the current Azerbaijani conflict and provide aid and protection within the shadows. With Turkey to the west of Armenia and Azerbaijan on the east, there is access to both sides of Armenia and potential attack from either side.

\*

As the suffering of the people from their homeland was ignored, Vahagn and Hayk, along with thousands of Armenian Americans, knew they had to do something to tell the world what was going on in Armenia. Perhaps taking a playbook out of the numerous acts of civil disobedience that took place during the summer, Armenian Americans realized the only way the national media would cover the war would be to hold their own acts of protests.

Vahagn and Hayk were there from the beginning and participated in every march, rally, and protest they could possibly attend, including the rally in front of the CNN building to get them to cover the conflict.

"In the beginning of the CNN protest, there were approximately 100 of us in front," said Hayk. "The first day we shouted and yelled until our throats ran dry, our voices were filled with sorrow and misery. The second day, more people showed up, it turned into thousands upon thousands. Our voices couldn't be silenced, we got what we wanted. The next day CNN announced that they would do a full coverage on what was happening in Artsakh."

"Hayk and I went to a lot of protests together since it started, walking in the front of the crowd and yelling "Peace for Armenia", "We Will Win," and "Artsakh Wants Peace Azerbaijan wants War," Vahagn said. "These are strong slogans coming from the Armenian people because we just want peace in the country. That is why all Armenians throughout the United States and around the globe have stood up and are marching down the streets, peacefully protesting to raise awareness in other countries for them to help out Armenia."

For both of these SOCES students, getting involved in the marches and protests was more than just supporting a cause. They both have a strong connection to Armenia. Both young men were born in Armenia and came to the United States when they were children. Vahagn was ten when he arrived in America and Hayk was only six. Both still have many relatives that live in Armenia.

"It has been very hard for me and my family to see the people we personally knew go and die in the war defending their people and their homeland," Vahagn said.

For Hayk, protesting was a way to help people in his birth country. "I started to protest to raise my voice and to raise awareness about what is going on in Artsakh. As I am here, the least I can do is to raise my voice and donate as much as I can to ArmeniaFund."

\*

For years there has been a continuous dispute between the two countries Armenia and Azerbaijan over the region of Artsakh, also known as Nagorno-Karabakh. Artsakh is an independent territory dating back to 900 BC. During the time of the USSR, Azerbaijan, which dates back to 1918 AD, tried to proclaim this independent land. The large majority of Artsakh was populated by indigenous Armenians. This meant that the language spoken there was, and to this day is, Armenian. The people that live in this region follow the Armenian traditions and culture which date back to 2400 BC. In response to Artsakh's independence, Azerbaijan along with Turkish forces attacked Artsakh starting in May of 1918. In August of 1919 Artsakh and Azerbaijan signed an agreement to discuss their issues at the Paris Peace Conference to prevent further conflict. Though the agreement was placed, Azerbaijan broke the agreement and continued to kill another 40,000 Armenians in March of 1920.



Joseph Stalin, ruler of the USSR during the mid-1920s, wished to resolve this conflict. With the lucrative incentive for Azerbaijani oil, Stalin handed the administration of Artsakh over to Azerbaijan. After the territory was claimed by Azeris they wanted to increase the population of their people living in this area. Though the number of Azeris increased, the majority of the residents living in this region were still Armenians and they requested to reunite with Armenia. In February of 1988 a parliament by the people living in this region suggested reunifying Artsakh with its homeland, Armenia, to both countries. The Azeris did not approve of this parliament and continued to organize mass killings and violence against Armenians. By 1992, Azerbaijan bombed and occupied half of Artsakh, resulting in 30,000 deaths on both sides. In May of 1994, a ceasefire was signed by Armenia and Azerbaijan, which had no end date and was relevant until a peace treaty was reached.

\*

“It’s horrible,” Vahagn lamented. “I have lost close people who I grew up with and so many others have too.”

Despite not being in Armenia during this most recent war, the stories of the violence are inescapable for Vahagn and Hayk. From their relatives and from social media, they hear about the bombings and they see images of dead Armenian soldiers.

The memories of loss are especially personal for Hayk, whose brother was killed in another war in a senseless death.

“I am marching for him and for others who lost their life to protect democracy,” declared Hayk. “To protect freedom and to protect our unalienable right of self-determination.”

Both of these seniors have done more than participate in the many marches and protests held across the city. Both have contributed to organizations and charities to raise awareness of the Armenian crisis to the American people and its government. And efforts of Armenian Americans like Vahagn and Hayk are working as the message is spreading.

“I feel like the Armenian community outside of Armenia has accomplished a lot,” said Vahagn, “because if we stayed quiet, I wouldn’t be giving this interview and the President and other government officials wouldn’t be talking about the war in Armenia. Celebrities wouldn’t be donating and posting their prayers to Armenia. We have accomplished getting a lot of attention on the topic of the war, but it is not enough. There is still a genocide happening in Armenia by Azerbaijan and Turkey.”

Hayk agrees that there is still a lot more work to do.

“As I have actively participated in the marches and protests, people have always asked me, ‘Why do you protest? It has been 100 years since the Genocide happened.’ My answer to that is to look at what is happening now. The same genocide is occurring by the descendants of the Ottoman Turks. We need to raise our voices to show that when 10 million Armenians worldwide unite, we seem like 500 million.”

\*

After many years of neither peace nor war, Azerbaijan once again attacked. In April of 2016 Azerbaijani military forces attacked Artsakh, once again breaking the cease-fire agreement. After a few years, Azerbaijan violated the ceasefire again in July of 2020. On September 27 conflict flared up again between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The two countries signed another ceasefire to collect the bodies of their fallen soldiers. This was set to start October 10 at 12 pm, but Azeri forces once again broke this agreement 5 minutes after it was enforced. They claimed that they were basing the ceasefire off of Moscow times, not the mutual time both countries shared. Another ceasefire was set to start October 18 at 00:00 (12 AM) local time. This was once again violated only about 4 minutes after it was set to start.

This war did not continue for too long but caused the deaths of many soldiers. There has been at least 1,000 Armenians that passed away, whilst on the Azerbaijan side no deaths of soldiers have been reported and only about 60 civilians have been reported dead. They do not report the downfalls of their society to seem as if they are in control but Armenian military forces have counted hundreds of deaths on the Azeri side. These dead soldiers remain unclaimed on Armenian land. Azerbaijan also closed down their borders so their people can’t leave and foreign journalists can’t go in and report anything the government does not want to be published. The only thing they publish is war propaganda. They forcefully take people and children off the streets to fight for their army.

On the other hand, Armenians all over the world have voluntarily signed up to fly to their homeland and fight for their country. You may have seen some of the protests where people collect donations and sign up to fight. At these protests Armenians come together and unify. Armenians protest for America to stop sending military aid to Azerbaijan. They protest so that everyone can know the truth. Armenians have had peaceful protests all over the world. There have been protests in Washington D.C, Montreal, Berlin, Vienna, Jerusalem, and much more. The purpose of these protests is peace.

For hundreds of years Armenia has been endangered and in war. Armenians want to live in peace. This is the purpose of our protests but news sources such as CBS report statements opposing Armenia. CBS recently reported on the topic and crew members who witnessed the peaceful protests wrote a report opposing Armenian forces. Some of the members of their crew later said hateful things towards Armenians including “I hope you all die and your country gets blown up” and “good thing you’re not Black Lives Matter ‘cuz I would run your a\*\* over.”

As an Armenian, I get hate all the time. Many people make assumptions of me and the type of person I am but these comments were on another level. They not only assumed what was going on, but said such disrespectful things to a small country most people don't know or care about. This caused the Armenian community in L.A. to protest in front of CBS. The employees that said these hateful words were later fired and George Cheeks, who is president and CEO of CBS, wrote an apology letter to Ambassador Armen Baiburtian and the Armenian community.

Other sources that have spread awareness about this topic include Fox 11 News, Vice News, ABC 7, and celebrities including the Kardashian sisters, Cher, and Michael B. Jordan. Some of the countries that state they are backing Armenia up include France, United Arab Emirates, Italy, Iran, and more.

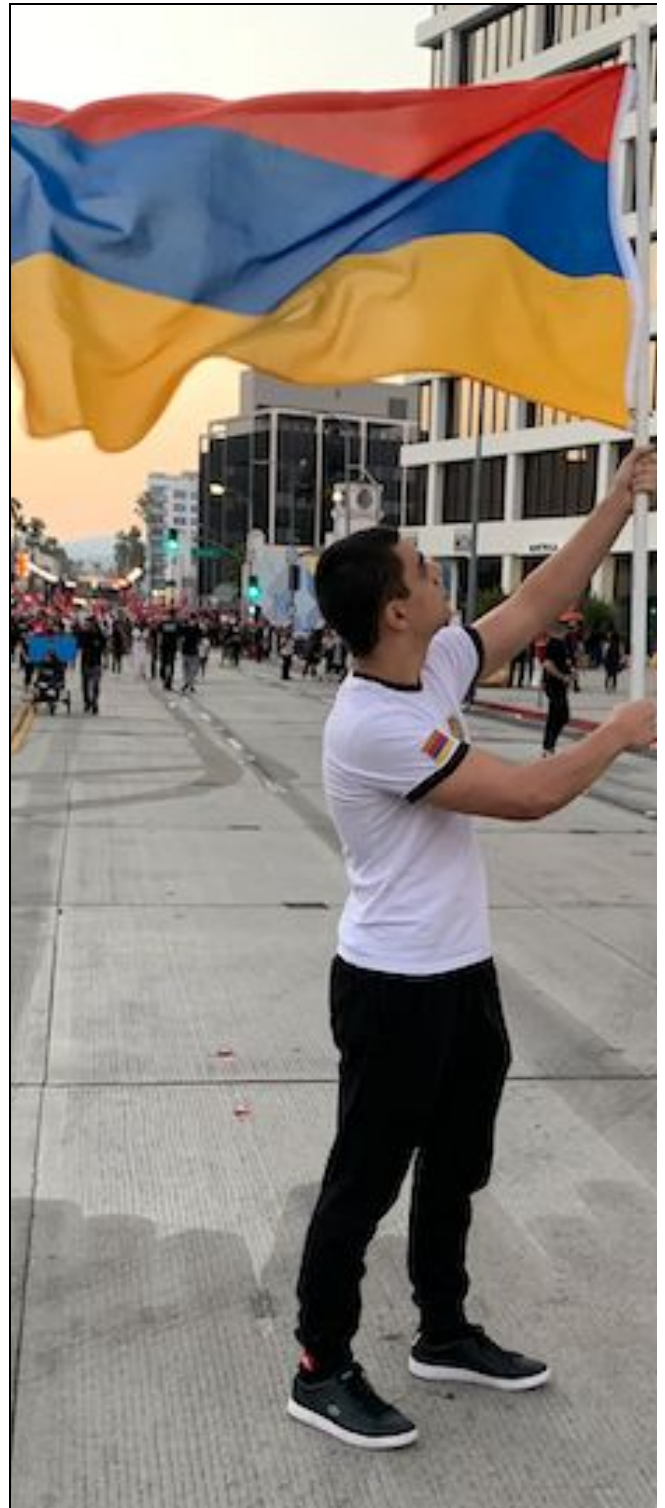
\*

Although Armenian Americans are thousands of miles away from the conflict waging in their homeland, the horrors of war touch them in their new homes. For seniors like Vahagn and Hayk, the war is one extra burden to think about during what should have been the most important year of any teenager's life - senior year. The war, along with a pandemic stealing all the pageantry of this right of passage of senior year, has become one of the most difficult years of their lives.

"Each and every Armenian voice is filled with sorrow and sadness. I smile in front of everyone because I don't want others to feel what I feel. I smile, but deep inside, my heart is broken in half," admitted Hayk. "I cannot enjoy my senior year, the year that I have dreamt of my entire life, because I cannot have fun when my brothers are dying on the front lines where I grew up."

I, too, am not immune to the tragedy this war has created. Like so many Armenian Americans, I also have relatives affected by the conflict. A cousin of mine who lives in Armenia was part of this ongoing war when he was only 20 years old. I asked him how fighting in this war changed his perspective on life. He replied, "Everything is different after seeing war with your own two eyes, standing on the front line with gunshots and explosions going off every minute. Having to witness the deaths of so many of your friends, the thought that you may be next and you might not return home to your family. Going into the army I felt like a kid, leaving I was a different person." He continued on to tell me how they tortured people dead or alive. People were skinned alive, beheaded, and burned.

After the deaths of many young soldiers through the years, a final ceasefire was brokered. A ceasefire by the OSCE Minsk Group was signed, ending the war and giving up part of the historical Armenian land to Azerbaijan. Armenia will withdraw its troops from areas around Artsakh in the coming weeks. This ceasefire will last 5 years until a final outcome is reached. Hopefully the neighboring countries can come to an agreement and someday live in peace with one another.





(photo courtesy of apnews.com)

## **March to Honor...And Finally a Day to Remember**

LAUSD's official recognition of Armenian Genocide Day brings awareness to the community even as the genocide is denied by Turkey and still not officially by the White House.

By: Talar Simonian '21

**“Go ahead, destroy Armenia... Send them into the desert without bread or water. Burn their homes and churches. Then see if they will not laugh, sing and pray again. For when two of them meet anywhere in the world, see if they will not create a new Armenia.”**

*- William Saroyan, Pulitzer Prize winning Armenian American author*



**The stories of my ancestors are written in their blood.**

We have never stopped hearing their cries. We have never forgotten their suffering. They became heroes to us because we live today for the suffering that took place during the Armenian Genocide 105 years ago.

The Armenian Genocide is remembered as a very dark time in Armenia, known as a “systematic mass murder”. The Turkish government had planned to erase all Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire, where Turkey stole and formed the land for themselves. Villages and cities were burned and they were thrown out of their homes and out to the desert without any food or water. Walking until they starved and collapsed. The ones that stopped to rest were shot. Turkey killed Armenian children or claimed them for their own before arresting and killing the childrens’ parents in front of their eyes. In total 1.5 million innocent Armenians were murdered.

**This year marked 105 years** since Turkey ruthlessly took the land from my people and made our ancestors suffer. Yet, to this day, the Turkish government is still denying the genocide ever happened. The importance of the Armenian Genocide consists of demanding Turkey to admit and recognize what they have done and getting the justice we Armenians deserve. Without recognition, Turkey continues to get away with this crime against humanity. It is important to recognize the genocide because it is a crucial matter that society needs to understand the history of.

While Turkey still refuses to acknowledge their role in this genocide and accept the blame for the pain they caused us for so long, Armenians have always shown the world the truth. Every year on April 24th, tens of thousands of Armenians march, and not just Armenians - allies from other countries all over the globe come out to support. We march for justice. We march to honor our ancestors. We march to tell the world to never forget who went on those death marches and had no choice but to in 1915.

This month the school board of LAUSD finally agreed to recognize the Armenian genocide by having a pupil-free day, which was probably influenced by the war between Azerbaijan and Armenia, making marching even more important.

**On the 24th of April**, students now have a greater opportunity to engage in the march with their family and friends to commemorate the innocent lives that were taken in 1915. This decision also came from the fact that it was unfair for Armenian students to miss school and have their attendance marked as “unexcused” when marching.

This day means so much to the Armenian community because it is our country that got taken over by the Turkish government. We would’ve had more ancestors and more of us if Turkey hadn’t been so selfish. Nearly all of the 2 million Armenians were forced out of the Ottoman Empire and killed. Turkey wanted to wipe out the entire Christian Armenian population until there would be no more. Well, Turkey failed to do so, because we are still here, stronger together than ever!

It's been 105 years of denial, and hopefully it won't be 106. LAUSD declaring to recognize the Armenian Genocide will mean that we will be one step closer for the truth to be told of what Turkey still denies today. This resolution is the start of official recognition and commemoration. The Armenian community will be able to have their voices heard around the world and be a united nation of power. We survived, we rebuilt, we advanced. Turkey tried but we tried harder! **“Baykar baykar mitchev vertch” ... “We’ll fight to the end!”**

**Givebutter**



# SOCES - Class of 2021

Please help us fund all our SOCES Class of 2021 Senior activities.

**Donate Class 2021**

1 week remaining

**Prodigies Class of 2021**

from **TEAM SOCES / PTSA** Fundraiser

**The PRODIGIES**



Created by  
Sherman Oaks Center for  
Enriched Studies PTSA



# Election Results 2020



**President-Elect Joe Biden  
&  
Vice-President-Elect Kamala Harris**

*photo courtesy of nydailynews.com*



## 2020 Election Results

By: Auden Meyer '22

As we all know, the 2020 election was a *bit* of a mess. What comes next?

If you recently learned the names John King or Steve Kornacki, or saw the livestream of the lone ballot counter in Nevada, or have names like Maricopa County, Arizona and Fulton County, Georgia burned in your mind, you were probably simultaneously freaking out and struggling to stay cool during the 2020 election. This election made history, and for many reasons, beginning with the sheer turnout of 152,000,000 voters (about 66.8% of Americans eligible to vote), the highest since 1900. Americans elected their oldest president, as Joe Biden will be 78 when he takes office. They also elected their first female vice president, Kamala Harris, who also happens to be their first vice president of African American descent and that of South Asian descent. But really, the most historical thing about this election is how impactful it will be.

If you paid attention to the election, you would know that the week after Election Day was largely impactful in itself. Sleep was lost and nerves were sky high. At first it looked like the incumbent president Donald J. Trump was in front, but at the end of the day of November 3rd, Joe Biden pulled ahead. Then there were a blurry few days in which Michigan and Wisconsin turned blue, and finally, after many passed the tense time by bashing Nevada (Nev-add-up-the-votes), Joe Biden was elected president on November



6th after Pennsylvania was called for him. Many were ecstatic, many were disappointed, some didn't even accept it, and still don't, so the divide in America is wide.

Currently the chasm in America is filled with an air of isolationism between citizens and between America and everyone else. Many Americans believe Trump's lies and misconceptions about the election being fraudulent. They see that cheating and lying *works* in even the highest office of the nation. Even the country's branches of government and the highest court have become fervently partisan, making it hard for either party to accomplish anything or create unity.

SOCES English teacher Mr. Lehr is concerned about what the division means for America. "This election proves how divided

America is," he said. "This division cuts through many paths: rural versus urban, college educated versus non-college educated, economic haves and have nots, white and people of color. However well-intentioned Joe Biden is when he talks about uniting the country, I don't see how anyone could bridge all of those divides in four years."

This election also showed how seismic U.S. elections have grown in the past 8 years. Many voters in this election were resolute about their choice for president and hopeful for wins in all areas of the election. However, with polls only slightly better than those for the 2016 election, all of the outcomes have proven to be unpredictable, tearing away from the expected results and leaving greater feelings of deflating dismay for all Americans.

“Four years ago, many people were excited about the prospect of electing the first female president, eight years after electing the first African American president,” said Mr. Lehr. “We were shocked when the country instead chose a president with no experience in governing who showed little interest in performing the serious duties required of a president. I think a lot of people saw this election as a way to undo the decision made by a minority of voters in 2016.”

Unfortunately for both sides, both parties lost in order to gain. Neither party was represented by a candidate that would bring them a lot of success. After campaigning vigorously, Republicans still lost states that were red in the 2016 election.

Democrats hoped for big wins in the Senate and House of Representatives, as well as a “blue wave” that didn’t occur.

Asked why he thought this was, Mr. Lehr said, “Like many people, I was surprised by the Democrats’ losses in the House and failure to pick up more seats in the Senate. I think those results show Trump’s ability to motivate his supporters to come out and vote. But that cut both ways. Abhorrence of Trump contributed to a record number of people voting for Biden.”

Enough of the depression, this election also produced some pretty cool lessons and outcomes, aside from Kamala Harris’ history-making election. Now Americans get to learn and rebuild. We get to heal racism, xenophobia,

classism, and focus on climate change and the pandemic response. We just need to fix the voting process and protect rights. Woo hoo!

Mr. Lehr is looking forward to “not having to read the newspaper with dread every day wondering what malarkey the president has committed”.

In all seriousness, we need to look for solutions that work for both sides, not just a right or left-leaning resolution, like how Florida, a red state that voted for Trump, also voted to raise the minimum wage, a typically liberal initiative. America’s image is being restored and we really got to see how *every voice matters*. That, and that politics would make the best reality TV show ever.



(photo courtesy of rollcall.com)





Journalism's own Zoe Howes reflects on her first time voting and her experience volunteering as a poll worker

DEMOCRACY STARTS HERE!



# FIRST TIME VOTING

By Zoe Howes '21

## The night I turned eighteen I was ecstatic.

And it wasn't because I could legally drink in Mexico and Europe. It was the fact that I could vote for the first time. When the clock struck midnight I ran to my phone to register to vote. The second the screen lit up with California's seal and blue embroidery, I knew I was ready for this. A few weeks later I was even more excited when my shining ballot came in the mail. It was official now!

I pried open that envelope with joy. I screamed for my family to come to our enormous brown oak table. We sat down for hours and hours researching each proposition and candidate. I filled each bubble with my gleaming black pen. Each scribble felt exhilarating and I could feel the pride heat up in my stomach. After I was done, I steadily drew my name in the ruby red box. I tapped it shut (because you know, COVID) as my final stamp of approval. I did it.

I know I can be dramatic from time to time, but voting wasn't always easy for people like me. I am a black woman. People don't care about us. Black women weren't really given the right to vote until 1965. That was only 55 years ago! Shocked? That means your history teacher lied to you. What's new? You see, voting

was always a right for white men. They will never get their rights taken away, they will never have to fear their lives, and they will never lose it all at the hands of a horrid president. Voting oppression has gone on for too long. My rights are important to keep intact. My life and that of many others are at stake. That's why you should vote if you have the privilege.



Look at the last four years. People decided that the 2016 election didn't matter and el diablo was elected president. Kids and families are still in cages because of this orange monster. Minorities are being shot in cold blood by police. Women are terrified of their rights getting taken away in a second. Climate change is chomping at us one by one. COVID has killed over millions of people. That should have ignited the fire for change. And it did. More people of all backgrounds, ethnicities, genders showed up and proved that their voice matters. We elected our first female black vice president for pete's sakes. This is a time for hope and change. We are ready.

If only my Haitian grandmother could see me today. I know she would probably hug me with her frail hands and tell me that I am her wildest dream. Let's take on the world, people!

# You Have More Power than just a Vote

By: Zoe Howes '21

## What do you do when our democracy is crumbling?

You turn to the young. These last four years have been a lot to say the least. Michelle Obama said it best. Donald Trump had four years to prove himself and he hasn't done it. He has further proven that he is racist, sexist, homophobic, xenophobic, anti-science, and selfish - all qualities that shouldn't be in a president. I knew with this upcoming election that I had to use my civic duty to make our world a better place. Cheesy but true. So, I signed up for pollwork.

Pollworking is where you count the votes and help run polling places. And let me just say it gets crazy. There are many poll places around each county. I was assigned to work at the Latin Paradise Banquet hall in the lovely city of Van Nuys, my hood. We were given three dates to work (along with the mandatory training session): Halloween, the day after Halloween, and Election Day. Each day we worked about 12 to 15 hours. This sounds crazy tiring, but it was actually pretty fun.

The first two days were very very slow. On these days we were able to build and bond as a team. On the first day I was shaking with nerves. I woke up at 6 a.m. and distracted myself on my phone until I had to leave. I masked up with two face masks, gloves, and a face shield. I felt like a superhero. Unfortunately my family likes to run on Caribbean time which means we are late to everything. I ran into the banquet hall while our team lead was giving a motivational speech. Everyone's eyes were on my skin. It was not the best start, but I was ready to take on the day.

Then came the big day, Election Day. I think the entire world felt scared on November 3rd. There was this unsaid tension in the air when I woke up at dawn on the day of. Whether you voted for Trump or Biden our society was in the fate of the peoples' hands.

When I arrived at our lovely polling place, it felt like I stepped into the middle of Wall Street. Everybody seemed to be running around and yelling orders at others. I took a deep breath in. Ahh, the sweet smell of



democracy! I rushed around sorting ballots, setting up the Ballot Marking Devices, and making sure our poll pads were up to sync. When we yelled "THE POLLS ARE NOW OPEN!" the line began to form around our hall. Excited voters ran in, ready to vote. The day was going smoothly until a man started threatening us because his ballot machine froze. Luckily, he decided to go somewhere else.

At the end of the day I was exhilarated. I think the craziest part of it all was trying to be safe during COVID. After each day my face had red marks from the mask and temple aches too, but it was totally worth it. I worked for the future. I worked for those at the bottom. I worked for minorities and equality. I worked for a better society. If you ever get the chance to pollwork you should. You are changing the world.



(photo courtesy of [hammer.ucla.edu](http://hammer.ucla.edu))

## California Ballot Propositions

*By: Arabella Vazquez '22*

Everyone has had their eyes glued to the 2020 Presidential Election results, but we must not forget there were other important ballot measures people voted on. California had 12 Propositions listed on the November ballot.

To sort things out, let's briefly explain what a proposition is. It is a ballot measure that introduces a proposal to be voted on. An eligible voter has the ability to agree or disagree with the proposed new state law or changes to an existing state law or statute. A proposition can land itself on a ballot by petition signatures collected or legislative referral. It passes when it receives the majority of votes by the people. This is done by either receiving 55% or two thirds vote.

Let's take a look at some important propositions that voters had their eyes on. Proposition 15 dealt with increasing property taxes on commercial properties. This was to help fund public schools, community colleges, and local government sources. This measure did not pass. Proposition 18 involved teens because it introduced the idea of 17 year olds being given the opportunity to vote. This measure also did not pass. Many people who utilize App services such as Uber and food delivery had concerns about Proposition 22. Basically it says that app based transportation and delivery companies as independent contractors, not employees. This measure passed. This means that individuals who work for these app based companies can work with flexibility in their schedule by determining when and where to work, but they won't get standard benefits, workers' compensation, unemployment insurance, family leave, or sick leave, and they won't be allowed to unionize.



Here is a closer look at additional Propositions:

Proposition:	Yes:	No:	Passed
Proposition 14 Bond to Continue Stem Cell Research	51%	49%	Yes
Proposition 15 Property Tax to Fund Schools, Government Services	48.1%	51.9%	No
Proposition 16 Affirmative Action in Government Decisions	43.5%	56.5%	No
Proposition 17 Restore Right to Vote After Prison Term	58.8%	41.2%	Yes
Proposition 18 17 year old Primary Voting Rights	44.5%	55.5%	No
Proposition 19 Changes Certain Property Tax Rules	51.2%	48.8%	Yes
Proposition 20 Parole Restrictions for Certain Offenses	37.9%	62.1%	No
Proposition 21 Expands Government's Authority to Rent Control	40.1%	59.9%	No
Proposition 22 App Based Drivers and Employee Benefits	58.6%	41.4%	Yes
Proposition 23 State Requirements for Kidney Dialysis Clinics	36%	64%	No
Proposition 24 Amends Consumer Privacy Laws	55.9%	44.1%	Yes
Proposition 25 Eliminates Money Bail System	44.1%	55.9%	No

<https://electionresults.sos.ca.gov> These results take time to become official. The State of California will certify these General Election results by December 11, 2020.



## **LEADING FROM A DISTANCE**

*By: Madeline Charlton '21*

ASB President Maxwin Bhail faces challenges no other Leadership president has encountered before. Leading a student body scattered across the valley, the pressure is on to create some sense of student community.

### **When the news about schools not reopening**

this year was announced during the summer, students couldn't help but ask, what does the lack of human interaction mean for SOCES? This drastic change has led to everything going virtual, and everyone now has to learn to adjust to this. Now, that may seem hard, but SOCES students are lucky enough to have our very own ASB class working hard to make sure everyone is adjusting well and enjoying school.

The ASB president Maxwin Bhail was able to tell us a couple of things about the plans they have for this school year. Currently, the ASB class has created a virtual spirit week that will be happening every other week. During spirit week, students can submit pictures of themselves, and at the end of the week, the most spirited students get an Amazon gift card and bragging rights! Virtual spirit week is made possible due to Woobox, an online platform for polls and contests that is easily accessible to everyone at SOCES. The ASB class had originally planned to use Instagram, but they decided to go with Woobox. This was because many students aren't allowed to have Instagram, and they could not have participated. As of right now, these spirit weeks are all that ASB has planned. However, ASB has more plans coming, so don't worry.

"We are trying to come up with more events like, if sports are happening, we want to do some sort of drive-through event cheering them on," said Maxwin.

The entire ASB class is trying their best to come up with ideas to make this school year enjoyable for all SOCES students, but it is still hard to get an "OK" for any school run events. This is because, at events such as drive-in movies, people stay in their cars and social distance while enjoying a movie, but there is still the risk of transmitting COVID 19. Unfortunately, these risks outweigh the benefits of fun events, which is why not many have been approved right now.

On top of struggling to get approval for events, there are also difficulties running ASB this year due to a lack of personal connection.

"When speaking to new and current students, they tend to stray away from turning on their cameras, and it is difficult to make a connection," the ASB president commented. "There's no warmth that you would usually get when in person. Especially for new students, getting to know people remotely is hard, and I think what makes it so hard is the barrier."

Regardless of the difficulties with running ASB this year, the class's president is still hopeful that by the end of the year, everything can go back to normal. The dynamic that the ASB class has is not the same over Zoom. They have lost the aspect of getting to plan events together, painting posters, and building lifelong relationships. Maxwin added, "Personally ASB is much better in person, but I ultimately understand that it's for the sake of our health. Leadership is about meeting new people and building lifelong relationships which is hard to do so over Zoom."

With all the difficulties that come from the virtual aspects of school, it is impressive that Maxwin and the rest of the class have remained positive. The students in ASB are role models for our school. It is important that as students, we do not forget that. They are here to help us. As the ASB president said, "Our emotional health is very vulnerable in these times and it is imperative to talk to people instead of bottling up your emotions, and here in Leadership we are here to help and not judge. So I can't stress this enough, please talk to us if you need anything!"



# Challenges the Class of 2021 is Facing

By: Melanie Medrano '21

This pandemic has impacted everyone in more ways than we can count, but as a senior in highschool and speaking for the class of 2021, I can say this is nothing like how we expected our senior year to be. It's hard to create those last year of highschool memories we hear about when we haven't even set foot on campus as seniors. We have nothing to look forward to. Instead of focusing on simple things such as prom, college visits, homecoming, winter formal and graduation, we have to worry about virtual learning and trying to stay safe from the virus. Now most of us will be turning into young adults, turning 18, voting in this year's election, etc, and we've realized how much we've taken for granted.

This year we haven't been able to see our teachers on campus to get their help with college essays or go over them in person. Being able to be with them is especially important since senior year is when we go into depth about how to create great college essays, learn more about our government system, and learn about money and time management. Having the time to talk to teachers one on one and in person is a lot more beneficial than speaking through a screen. Now it's more difficult to reach out for help because we spend so much time looking at a screen for school, homework, extra curricular activities, job interviews, college interviews and

so much more that having another meeting on Zoom with the only free time we have is beyond time consuming.

Something we are really missing out on is our last year of activities. Most seniors have been at SOCES for quite some time and we got to see senior classes before us enjoy their activities and have the senior year they wanted. They got their senior picnic, senior breakfast, prom, and graduation. It's awful that we are going to miss out on those key senior experiences, and many seniors are

everything going on, especially with the inability to learn normally."

Another senior Gema Zamora stated, "It's hard for me to keep the motivation I had to continue to do school work like I did in the beginning of quarantine. I'm a visual learner and not being able to be with my teachers face to face is so hard. Just overall not being able to spend my last year with my friends before we part ways to go to college makes me sad because most of us have been really good friends since the 4th grade. We grew up together and not having those last year memories is very disappointing."

Seniors have tried in the best and safest ways possible to create some good long lasting memories despite the pandemic, such as going to the beach with friends while social distancing and wearing masks or making our own memories individually. Even though this isn't the ideal situation us seniors had envisioned we still have hope that next semester we will be able to create those long lasting memories and have a great rest of our senior year.



feeling the depressing weight of this loss.

Sophia Banuelos, a senior who is also part of the senior cabinet said, "This year has been so difficult for so many reasons. We have little to no opportunities to fundraise for the senior class. The mental health of a lot of students isn't the best, and many are struggling to stay afloat with



## THE GREAT DIVIDE - Part 1 - Students

*By: Nicole Khait '22*

Forced into virtual learning, who among us are technologically ready for the new norm of distance education?

Earlier this year, students had to transfer their in-person classrooms to digital Zoom classes through a screen. Although this wasn't easy for most students, school online comes with its pros and cons, each student faces different challenges. Online learning doesn't only affect teachers and their agendas. Switching to an online classroom has been a difficult switch to get used to and has required many students to step up their technology game. Focusing online when you're in your home can be quite hard, but with the right tools, resources, and mindset, students can apply their technology skills and make the most out of learning virtually. In a student survey, around 47% stated that online educational apps have improved their quality of learning. Not only that, but around 83% of students said technology has helped them as a learner and a student. It's no secret that students in this day and age are far more experienced with using electronics, but a lot of them say it has benefited their learning when using those tools. Below is an interview with two students in 11th grade, one kept anonymous, to show different perspectives on what it's like being an online learner in this day and age.

**Q: How has technology impacted your learning online? Is it negative or positive?**

Jane Hartman: Technology has impacted my online learning in a negative way. I feel like it is much harder to grasp the material. I find it difficult to learn new topics through a screen.

Anonymous: Learning online has impacted my life negatively as well as positively. Negatively speaking, I feel like the interactions with teachers and my peers are definitely not the same. Getting to know a teacher in person makes school a lot easier. In addition, I don't feel as motivated to do work because it just doesn't feel like I'm learning sometimes. Positively speaking, I feel like it's been easier for me to relax and take time for myself which I think is really important.

**Q: Do you consider yourself a tech savvy or non tech savvy student?**

Jane Hartman: I can be both. It just depends on the assignment and the device.

Anonymous: I'm kind of in the middle. I am able to do basic things such as make presentations but I'm not really knowledgeable in making videos which my teachers have been assigning. With my personality I've always wanted to go above and beyond with my

projects so not being able to be confident in my work has been a struggle.

**Q: Has learning virtually been easier, harder, or a mix of both? Feel free to discuss why.**

Jane Hartman: Learning virtually has probably been a mix of both. It can be hard when assignments pile up or when I don't understand something. The pros of learning virtually are that I can wake up later and classes are shorter. This gives me more time to sleep and more time during the day to complete assignments

Anonymous: Learning virtually has been a mix of both because like I said before I have more time for myself. However, when I'm sitting in class it's really hard for me to not go on my phone. Personally, it's really hard for me to ask for help if I'm not completely comfortable with a teacher. Not being able to really build a connection with some of my teachers has made it harder to reach out if I'm struggling.

**Q: Do you find it difficult staying organized and keeping up with assignments?**

Jane Hartman: I think it is pretty easy to keep assignments organized because they are all online. Usually I get the same amount of work each week which makes it easy to plan my weeks accordingly.

Anonymous: The majority of my teachers are doing a good job in trying to interact with me and my peers. However, some teachers are doing the complete opposite. Sometimes they complain about online learning which I understand but they fail to understand that students are having difficulty as well.

**Q: What would you recommend to students and teachers regarding online learning?**

Jane Hartman: I think spending time/talking with friends can help you feel better and more social since we are all missing out on social interaction like we had at school.

Anonymous: I think teachers should try to learn about their students and not jump into work immediately. Personally, I get along with a teacher better when I have the opportunity to interact with them.

As you can see, each student faces different problems and issues that revolve around online learning. In a recent survey, students were asked if technology has improved their quality of learning. Surprisingly, around 37% of students stated that they are neutral with no opinion on it. Even though it has negative and/or positive qualities, each student experiences both at different times. It depends on the teacher and the assignment, but overall, the use of technology could be a difficult type of learning, regardless of their knowledge on using electronics. Some are having an incredibly unmotivating learning experience, and others are having a more positive experience. A student's environment, their workload, and not being able to interact with people impacts how they do in school. It's important to have an organized desk and a functioning computer to ensure you have the right tools and the right mindset to succeed as an online student.

Many students are going through the exact same emotions, challenges, and hardships from online learning, so it's important to remember you have a community and you are all in this together. Uplift each other, reach out and check in on students, and remember to try your best in order to make light in dark situations. Online learning is a new lifestyle and the only way to get through it is to let yourself get used to it.



## The Great Divide - Part 2 - Teachers

SOCES teachers and staff had to transfer to virtual learning as soon as the COVID-19 pandemic began. Too many teachers didn't have experience with the types of technology necessary to teach and were obligated to learn the system and create their agendas around online learning. In fact, 29% of teachers felt their lack of technology is a detriment to their teaching. However, there were a handful of teachers who already had previous experience with technology and were comfortably able to move forward with digital classrooms and online work. In a survey taken by a handful of teachers, over 35% said technology has improved their quality of teaching. Not only that, but around 53% stated they used technology in their classrooms pretty often. During in person classes, there's several systems of teaching that would've been better online. There are plenty of classroom quiz games like Kahoot and Quizizz. These programs can make a quiz seem more interactive rather than stressful. Also, when following along with a lecture, having the lecture slides on your own computer could make it easier to follow along to at your own pace. With that being said, below is an interview with two teachers, one kept anonymous, to show two different perspectives on teachers' experience with virtual learning.

**Q: How has technology impacted or changed the way you teach online in this day and age?**

Anonymous: It hasn't really changed other than needing to learn how to use Zoom to teach. It was easy to figure out how to utilize it.

Ms. White: I use Zoom for all of my classes and talking to extended family. If we didn't have technology today we could not have any distance learning and everyone would be even more socially isolated.

**Q: Do you consider yourself tech-savvy or not tech-savvy? Why?**

Anonymous: Tech-savvy. I do not know everything about technology, but I am comfortable using it. I generally can fix a technical issue by looking it up on the internet instead of relying on ITD.

Ms. White: I am an early adopter sometimes, but I do not use all the hottest apps. I think having grades kept up to date each day and week helps students know where they stand in my class.

**Q: Has virtual learning been easier for you or harder for you?**

Anonymous: Personally, it has been easier.

Ms. White: Virtual learning is generally harder. The planning, Zoom teaching and grading are much harder without access to all the materials which we could use in school. Some of the assignments have to be changed or simplified because we only have online access to sources and I think I can judge where students are in their understanding better when I can see body language and facial expressions.

**Q: Do you find it difficult staying organized and using your computer efficiently?**

Anonymous: Not at all. I have been asking students to submit their assignments online well before Schoology was mandated by the district.

Ms. White: The hardest thing for me is that I am using my own computer for school and everything else. I grade every day to keep up with my students' submissions but I lose hours every weekend to grading, planning, and making new assignments that I have never used before. Organization does help.

**Q: Lastly, do you enjoy teaching online?**

Anonymous: In terms of teaching, I do not like it. It has been more difficult trying to help students fix their technical problems because I can't see their screens right away or the students do not know how to use Zoom nor their computers. It is a lot easier for students to walk away from their computers and play video games instead.

Ms. White: I like that my days start later but I feel like the planning, grading, and emails go way later into nights and weekends. I wish we could go hybrid (half days at school and half online) as a test next semester.

Overall, every teacher has their own style of teaching and the systems they are comfortable using. Seeing different teachers' perspectives and opinions on social distance learning is eye opening to many students. Not only do students face challenges, but so do your teachers. Be patient with them and understand the circumstances they're facing daily!

# SOCES SPOTLIGHT

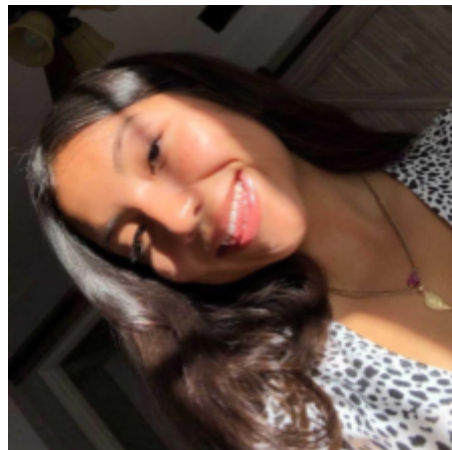
## Students and Social Media

*By: Madi Drago '22 and Auden Meyer '22*

When you think about the influence social media platforms have on youth in high school, your mind probably goes to the desire to have better style and looks. While these are true, something that many people don't think about is the effect it has on people's political views. Many people, such as juniors **Maddie Bushell**, **Emily Mulato**, and **Jane Hartman**, use social media to spread information and awareness about issues they are passionate about.



**Maddie Bushell**



**Emily Mulato**



**Jane Hartman**

*Why are you so active on social media? What inspired you?*

**MB:** So many teens and young adults today are on social media, and I feel like to be able to get across to them, we need to do it where others can see it. When I post about politics and problems in today's society, I hope that someone will see the post, read up on what's going on, and become more educated. **As a young person who isn't allowed to physically go out and vote, I felt inspired to become active on social media to try to promote change in other ways.**

**EM:** If it is a topic that is worth sharing I at least spread the message along to my followers who I feel will also find the information to be knowledgeable. I might not have a million followers or be insta famous but **it's the little things that can make a difference.**

**JH:** Many people my age don't know about a lot of the struggles going on around the world. I think that it's important to get involved in politics so that your views are expressed and you can **help fight for people that aren't having their voices heard.**

*What do you hope you are achieving by being so active?*

**MB:** I hope that others will be able to become more educated, as well as help make a change in our country. We are young, but we are also the future of America. **I feel like too many teenagers today shrug off politics as something "they don't know about", when really we should be engaged because we're not too far off from being adults ourselves.**

**EM:** I hope to inform others about the topics that are usually not talked about on the news or what we don't learn in school, I want them to understand and care about the problems that people face on a daily basis such as racism or issues regarding mental health. **I didn't know about a lot of these topics until I started seeing people talk about them.** It made me realize and acknowledge that I need to become more aware of my surroundings and become more empathetic towards these social issues.

*How do you filter out fake information?*

**MB:** I try to repost and follow news sources that I know aren't biased. If I see something that doesn't sound right, I research it, and make sure it is factual before I post it.

**EM:** I usually filter out fake information by checking out reliable sources. I will try to look up articles, my sister's college textbooks, or other activists I know are knowledgeable on the topic. It's not always easy but I try my best to make sure the information is accurate.

**JH:** There are a lot of unreliable sources on social media, which is why it's always important to **do your own research, think for yourself, and form your own opinions.** I think it's very easy to think that your views are correct and refuse to look into anything else. Many things get swept under the rug when dealing with politics.

*Do you consider yourself an activist?*

**MB:** I wouldn't consider myself a traditional sort of activist, but I would say I'm an activist in a more modern way. Because of the virus, I haven't been comfortable with physically protesting, but I would if it were safer. I think that there's a big difference between people who posted on their Instagram stories and considered themselves activists during the height of the BLM movement, and the people who still constantly try to spread information and facts. I try my best to do more than just repost, so in that way, I do believe that I am participating in a form of activism.

**EM:** Yes, even though certain topics can be very hard to talk about we must put the spotlight on those issues and fight for change in the world that we live in. I like to post on my socials what I fight for. Everyone thinks differently but **with discussing these topics we can then understand everyone's point of view and see how we can change them.** It takes time for a person to open their eyes to certain issues and acknowledge what is being said, but if at the end they don't want to hear it, move on to the next person who might want to make a change and is willing to listen.

*What would you say to people who are not super active in the same way on social media?*

**MB:** I would say that you don't have to be super active on social media to make change. But read others' posts, or read up on non-biased news sources, just so you can have a sense of what is going on in the world. If you see something that's concerning, maybe spread it. **Don't be totally blind to what's going on, but don't feel pressured to speak out if you aren't comfortable.**

**EM:** Like I said, everyone has a right to their own opinion. Maybe they're not active on social media but they might be active on the streets protesting. Maybe they just prefer to do it on their own time or maybe they aren't educated on the topic and prefer to stay quiet. Either way it doesn't take much to look up and become aware of social issues. **You can decide if you want to become another voice helping a movement or not.**



**What do you think about the idea that being active on social media is not enough to create change? Do you agree?**

**MB:** I think that a certain amount of activity on social media can create change. But I also think that it's a lot more than that. Sign petitions, go to protests if you can, contact your senators, donate time or money to organizations that help people, and talk to your friends or family members that are of age to vote. Voice your opinions instead of only reposting. **Change starts with being aware and educated, so I think being active on social media is a good first step.**

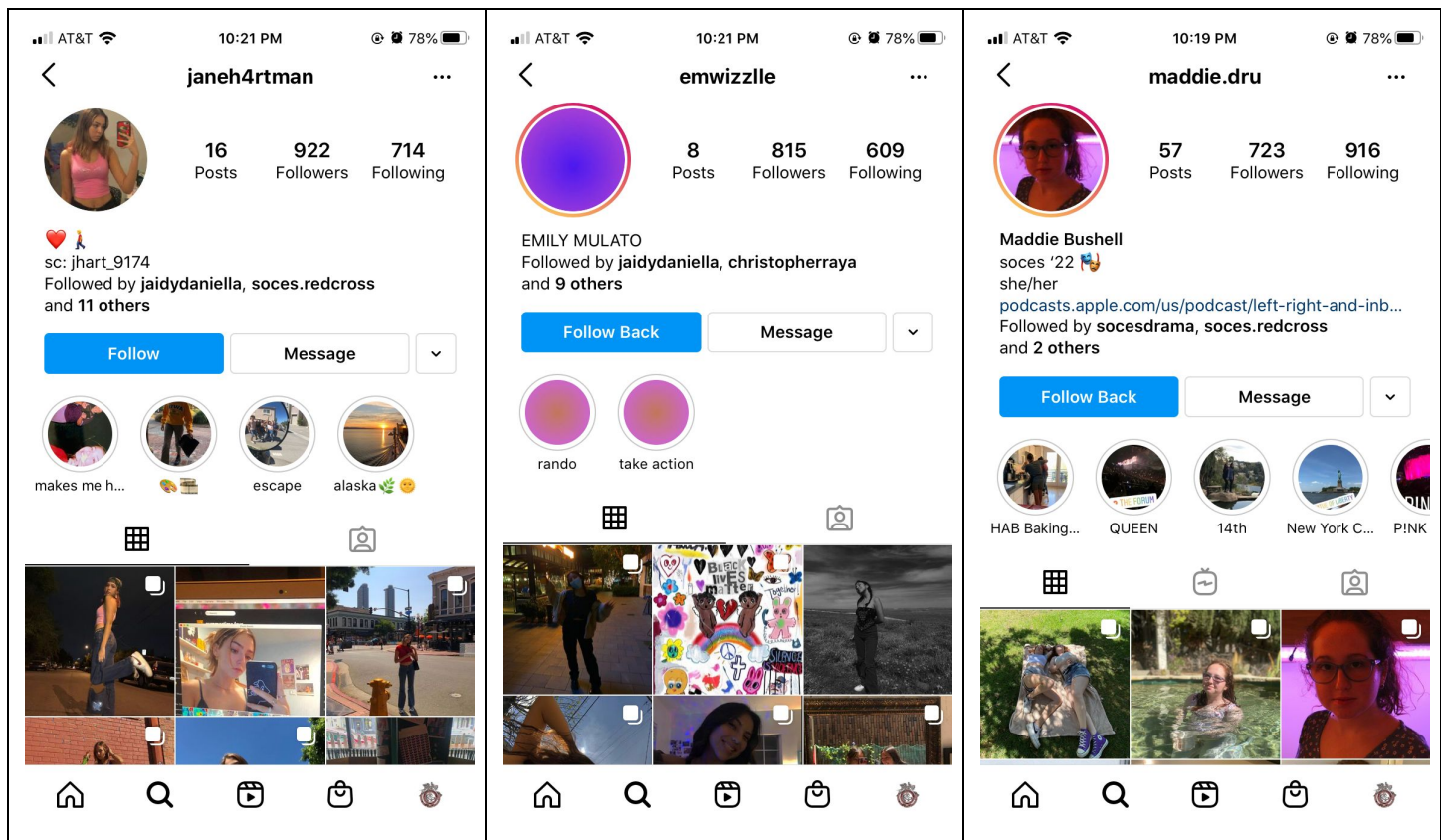
**EM:** It is enough to create change. You have many examples of people today becoming political on social media such as Bella Hadid, Ariana Grande, Snoop Dogg, Shaun King, etc. They each are vocal on their social issues that need change and support. I feel like people should at least do something to post and spread awareness about an issue, it has even come to the point where people create petitions or gofundme pages to help people get the justice they deserve. So many topics have been shared on social

media that it has changed the way people see/think about the world (positively). **Personally, the Black Lives Matter movement really touched me because as a person of color I know how difficult it is to face racism, so seeing posts about George Floyd in the media really made me want to fight and to put an end to systemic racism.**

**JH:** Social media is a great starting point to find your political views and learn about issues that are going on not only in the US, but also around the world. I think that the media has a positive influence because at the very least it helps spread information and bring help and change around the world.

**Anything to add?**

**EM:** In a couple of years we will be 18 and be able to vote. I urge everyone to please read about this country's history to be able to understand the roots behind all these historical movements. A lot of autobiographies can give you a better point of view on why certain leaders did what they did in those time periods. **History repeats itself if we don't learn from it so let's make sure we do our part to change that.**



# Empty Fields, Unfulfilled Dreams

## How the loss of sports is affecting SOCES Athletes

By: David Nalbandyan '21

**This year has taken a toll on everyone's lives.** It has gotten in the way of practically everything imaginable. For athletes, the loss of sports was something that hit hard. Professional sports were able to find a solution to the pandemic by organizing games in a bubble where all players and staff were isolated from the virus; however, this was not the case for high schoolers. They have had to deal with not being able to play the sports they love, not knowing when the time where they could would come. As of now, there is not much word about whether or not there will be a season this year and that is the most devastating thing about it all.

Ms. Tabares, SOCES' Athletic Director, said, "At this time the district has only approved voluntary conditioning. SOCES will only be participating in virtual training at this time for safety reasons." Ms. Tabares also knows a lot has to happen for there to be a sports season in the spring.

"There are schedules out in hope sports will begin, but seasons keep getting delayed. The number of positive COVID cases in Los Angeles has to go down so the county will allow for indoor gatherings and sports can take place.

Unfortunately, with the numbers going up, this becomes difficult."

Harrison Rich, a SOCES senior on the Boy's Volleyball team is

just one of many SOCES athletes feeling the loss of sports.

"It sucks that we aren't sure if there will be a season," said Harrison. "I was so ready to play in the new gym that's being built, but 2020 caught us all by surprise and spoiled all the fun. Of course it had to be during my senior year."

Seniors have definitely had it the worst, not being able to finish off their high school careers with the year that is the most important. All the memories that could've been made were taken from them. These memories include but are not limited to the Juniors vs Seniors events as well as recognition during senior night.

"It was not an easy thing to lose sports or any other activities on campus," agreed Ms. Tabares. "I know that many of us (meaning the adults) miss watching and supporting our students very much. Whether it be Performing Arts, Culinary Arts, Robotics, Speech and Debate, or any other program, we are all missing

out on special events. Last year we had many seniors lose out on their spring season. It is something out of our control."

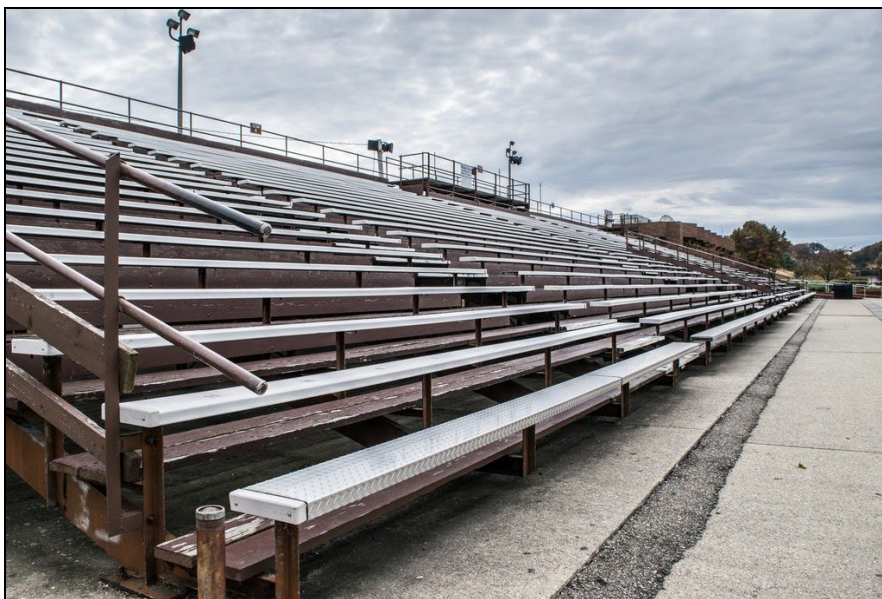
All SOCES athletes are very hurt by their sinking prospects of playing next semester, but they have still been prepping tirelessly in hopes of a late start to their sports seasons.

Edward Balayan, a SOCES senior on the Boy's Basketball team said, "I don't care what they say, to be honest. There is still a chance that there might be a season so I'm gonna hold on to it. I wake up early in the morning at least twice a week and go to Balboa Park with the rest of the team to get some shots up and condition. It is definitely tiring, especially since we have to be back home and ready to learn by 9, but we're dealing with the hand we've been dealt."

This is the mindset that is getting athletes past this nightmare. The slight chance that there might be a season is the best thing they can hear. Still, everyone must remember why it's necessary to

cope with this loss of sports.

In the words of Ms. Tabares, "While everyone has different ways of coping, I can only say this. There is a bigger picture here and keeping our SOCES family safe is the top priority, whether that is on the bus, in class, for sports or any other activity



# LEAGUE OF LEGENDS: WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP



*(photo courtesy of millennium.gg)*

*By: Brody Rosas '22*

League of Legends is a team based five versus five computer game, where you and your team attempt to destroy the enemies base and kill the nexus to win. The game is well-known among many people and is one of the most popular video games in the world. Once a year, professional league teams from around the world compete in a tournament called "Worlds." The tournament is hosted in a different part of the world every year, and this year it is taking place in China starting on October 31 to November 25th. The main regions who participate in the event are North America, Europe, South Korea, and China, who send their top three teams of the summer season to the tournament. Additionally, there are seven smaller regions that only send their best team to compete. These other regions are Japan, Turkey, Taiwan, Brazil, Russia, Latin America, and Oceania.

League of Legends is played very similar to an actual sport, where five players work together to kill the enemy team and destroy their base. Every player gets to pick a champion at the start of the match, with each one having a unique set of abilities and skills. The map consists of three different lanes (Top, Mid, and Bot) and a jungle in between them. Every player is assigned their "role" before the game,

which determines where they will be playing for the majority of the game. Additionally, minions will spawn from both teams bases, and grant gold and experience to players who kill them. Gold is used to buy items throughout the game, which help strengthen your champion. There are also objectives on the map such as dragon and baron which give your champion even more power. The way you win is by destroying the enemies towers up until you eventually reach their nexus, which will grant the team who destroys it as victorious.

The tournament is split into three parts called "Play-In's, Groups, and Knockout Stage". Before the tournament kicks off, the top three teams of each major region are placed in a randomly drawn bracket of four, called the "Groups Stage". However, the last spots in each bracket are left for the top two teams who come out of the "Play-In Stage."

The Play-In stage is where the smaller regions compete against the lower seeds of the main regions. The ten teams competing in the Play-In stage are split in half and placed into Brackets A and B. There they will play four games against one another, with the top two teams in each Bracket advancing onto the Groups Stage.



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Groups Stage is where the top three teams of each major region and the winners of the Play-In Stage (twelve teams) play six games against one another, with the top two teams advance to the Knockout Stage.

The Knockout Stage is the final part of the tournament where the remaining eight teams compete in best of five. The last team standing is crowned as the winner of Worlds 2020. The winners of worlds are granted a 70-pound Summoner's Cup Trophy, as well as a multi-million dollar prize.

The winners for this year's Worlds 2020 event went to Damwon Gaming, the number one seed of Korea. They beat Suning (China #3 seed) three games to one in the finals. The finals MVP went to "Canyon" of Damwon Gaming.

My prediction for the winner of Worlds this year was China's #1 seed, Top Esports. They have a top three player in every role, with a great head coach and organization. Science Academy Stem Magnet Junior Ryan Dowling believes that Fnatic had the best shot at winning Worlds, stating that they have two players in "Selfmade" and "Rekkles" who "are two of the best players in Europe", and "they will outperform every other opponent."

Although Worlds sounds confusing and overwhelming, the event is highly regarded as the most prestigious and watched video game tournament in the world.



League of Legends actual gameplay

*(photo courtesy of notagamer.net)*

# Holiday Gift Ideas



(photo courtesy of news.cuna.org)

By: Suzy Simonyan '21

## Gift ideas to give to the people you love this holiday season

It's coming up on holiday season! The weather is colder and it's time to get blankets, make hot chocolate, and watch holiday movies. Holiday season is also a time for giving and receiving gifts. Keep reading for some fun and creative gift ideas to give to your family and friends this year!

A really fun and cute gift idea to give to the ones you love would be **homemade jewelry**. Anything homemade is already the perfect gift, from earrings to bracelets, it's so creative to give the jewelry you made as a gift. Paintings are also a really nice gift idea, you could get so creative with this and make a painting of what the person you are giving it to likes and that makes your gift that much better and thoughtful.

A delicious gift is also the perfect gift as well. You could bake something! **Cookies, cakes, or muffins** are examples of what you could give to someone, you could even make them a cake with their favorite frosting. Wrap it up and decorate what you made really nice and make it special for the person you're giving it to. You could also give someone a cute decorative basket full of goodies

they love. This could go from food to gift cards! You could even put ingredients to make hot chocolate or peppermint flavored snacks. You could write them a cute card to put in the basket as well.

**Mugs** are a great gift to give to someone too! They're also perfect for the fall and winter for drinking hot chocolate. You could buy someone a cute frog mug or even teapots! Who doesn't love mugs? They're adorable and such a nice gift.

You could get so creative when it comes to gifts and there are so many cute gift ideas. From **homemade gifts** such as jewelry, paintings, or cookies and muffins. You could make someone a cute decorative basket full of goodies they love and mugs or teapots! Your family and friends will love these gifts and there are so many more gift ideas, these are just a few!

Overall, whatever gift you decide to give someone, it's perfect and they're absolutely going to love it because you gave it to them with love, and that's what giving a gift is all about.



**SOCES MEDIA IS THANKFUL FOR ALL THE  
FRONT LINE HEALTH CARE WORKERS WHO  
HAVE BEEN WORKING TIRELESSLY  
ALL YEAR SAVING LIVES.**





## What SOCES Students & Staff are Thankful For

I am thankful for being alive.  
Despite all of the horrible things  
that have happened this year, I am  
truly thankful for being alive.  
- Alissa Lara

I am thankful for my friends, who  
have made quarantine more  
tolerable.  
- Rowyn Lambert

I am thankful for having a place to  
stay especially during this  
pandemic when many others  
aren't as fortunate.  
- Sebastian Resendiz

I am thankful for my parents. They  
put me in a situation where even  
during lockdown, we are as  
comfortable as possible with  
enough food and water, as well  
as entertainment. I know that  
there are lots of other kids who  
are not as fortunate to be in the  
same situation as me, so I will  
always be grateful for my parents  
and all they do for my brother and  
me.  
- Alexander Kohm

I am so thankful for my family and  
friends, I'm also so thankful for  
Trader Joe's. Everything inside  
that store is so good, especially  
their snacks! I'm thankful for all  
the laughs and little things in life.  
- Suzy Simonyan

I am thankful for my friends  
because they have helped me  
maintain a positive attitude during  
a difficult time. They manage to  
always put a smile on my face  
and inspire me to hope for a  
better tomorrow.  
- Nayeli Martinez

I am grateful to be in SOCES, to have a family, and for the food I eat.

- Adam Sadozai

One thing I am thankful for is that I am alive and healthy. I love my family/friends and how they care for me. Even though I sometimes get really annoyed by the randomest things, I am still extremely thankful that I have a roof over my head, go to school, have clothes, and a family.

- Alina Danielian

I'm thankful for the shelter and food that my parents give me. My parents work so hard to make my siblings and I happy. Another thing I'm thankful for is my friends because we all laugh together and hanging out with them always makes me happy. I am also thankful for being able to live here with everybody I love. I am thankful for so much more!

- David Boussi

I am thankful for my family who is still here and thankful for always having food on my table.

- Krinal Prajapati

I am thankful for my family.  
I am thankful for the friends that have become family.  
I am thankful that no one close to me got covid.  
I am thankful that my parents are employed.

I am extremely thankful for my family and our good health. The pandemic has helped strengthen our family bond because we are spending more quality time together.

I am thankful for the roof over my head.  
I am thankful that I am alive.  
- Ani Matsoyan

- Arabella Vazquez

I am thankful for my family and that I'm with people during the pandemic, especially people I love. I am also grateful that my extended family always checks in on each other and lets one another know we're always here for them. Even though we can't be together we still make an effort to be together in other ways.  
- Auden Meyer

I am thankful that my friends and family are healthy and that we have grown closer during these scary times.  
- Sabrina Guedalia

This year has sucked, but I am still thankful for the friends that I've stayed close with and my family.  
- Madeline Charlton

I'm grateful for the friends I still have and that have stuck with me through this quarantine. I've realized that it is so easy for people to walk out of your life, but the ones who stay are everything you need. I feel you are only as good as your support system around you and although mine has dropped, I'm so appreciative of the people that love and care for me. Especially my family that loves me through everything, and I know how extremely lucky I am to have this many people that care for me.  
- Aja Johnson



I am thankful for the house I live in. I am thankful for it because it costs a lot of money. That is why I am thankful for our house.

- Channing Smith

I am thankful for having my pet cats. My cats changed my life by making me less stressed out when doing homework or practicing for a test. They also keep me happy and excited when being indoors which is important since lots of people want to interact outside.

- Rose Ortiz

I'm thankful for music. It has helped me get through bad times and never lets me down. Some of my favorite singers are Shishamo, BTS, The Weeknd, Billie Eilish, and Agust D. Their music helps me a lot, I love to just sit down and listen to their albums.

- Sophie Apolaya Diaz

I am thankful for good health. We have a new principal who is amazing and will be such an asset to our school. I am looking forward to seeing my parents down in Temecula for 4 days.

- Ms. Nelson

I am thankful for the challenges and hardships in all our lives, as they allow us to grow, connect, and become fully human. I am also thankful we take turns helping each other through these challenges and hardships.

-Dr. Pobanz

I am thankful for students who are ready and willing to make the most out of a bad situation. There are no other students that I would rather be zooming with. You guys amaze me every day.

- Ms. Gordon

# A SPECIAL THANKSGIVING WORD SEARCH

In this box of letters are hidden words about Thanksgiving. Or are there? Only one way to find out!

C	T	Z	X	C	V	B	N	M	E	P	I	C	G	R	F	O	O	D	E	F
R	W	U	M	G	K	F	E	A	S	T	U	R	L	E	E	R	S	E	W	A
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A	D	E	K	W	N	T	A	Z	L	S	P	A	H	H	I	Q	N	Y	U	O
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A	U	R	A	P	E	U	V	O	Y	S	Y	S	G	E	F	R	Y	B	V	J
S	T	E	D	O	W	I	W	P	F	T	U	L	B	E	R	Y	Z	I	B	K
X	R	S	Z	I	Q	P	E	P	W	N	I	Y	P	L	L	H	A	S	M	N
C	E	S	F	U	J	W	D	N	O	P	R	T	L	F	K	G	R	T	K	M
P	X	A	Y	G	O	B	B	L	E	Z	E	V	M	N	C	T	C	B	E	U
V	A	C	A	T	I	O	N	C	X	C	V	B	N	Y	H	A	M	E	R	T
K	H	A	B	R	A	H	A	M	L	I	N	C	O	L	N	H	N	S	T	U
K	I	J	F	J	K	L	I	T	Y	L	I	M	A	F	G	B	K	D	F	A