

# Citan Tribune

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## Seventh Generation Rising At Fall Fest

By **Tristan Luu**

Reporter

On Oct. 24, as John F. Kennedy's Fall Fest was coming to an end, the sound of drums filled the air as the group Seventh Generation Rising, an indigenous organization, started their surprise performance. Seventh Generation Rising would show a series of dances t-

hat shared their unique culture, traditions, and prayers.

The organization was founded in 2011 by Guillermo Aranda, a well known muralist and educator on indigenous culture, who was even named 2021 Artist of the Year by Santa Cruz County. Aranda would pass

on the organization to Eric Oztuchane Walther, current Executive Director and Acting President of Seventh Generation Rising.

The organization does not only do ceremonial dances and rituals, but actively dedicate themselves to support the indigenous...

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Photo by Khanh Do

Many tuned in to watch the special guest performance by Seventh Generation Rising



Photo by Kelly Orozco Hernandez

Students and staffs dressed up for Halloween

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## Popular Halloween Costumes

By **Varsha Balamurugan**

Reporter

Halloween is a popular holiday that is celebrated every year on October 31 by upwards of 190 million people in the United States alone. Additionally, there are many other countries around the world that have their own versions of Halloween with different traditions and customs. In

the US, some of these traditions include trick or treating, parties and dressing up in fun costumes. In any given year, the most popular Halloween costumes are determined by many different factors including the aesthetics...

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# Korean Breast Cancer Awareness Event Did Not Follow Original Intent

By Monica Real

Reporter

W Korea is a fashion magazine that hosted a breast cancer awareness event called, "Love Your W." It was hosted at the Four Seasons Hotel in Jongno-gu, Seoul on Oct. 15. This year marks its 20-year anniversary and is also South Korea's biggest charity event. Luxury brands were sponsors and big actors and K-pop idols were invited to draw attention toward the charity.

W Korea began in 2005, merging fashion and fundraising to spread awareness of breast cancer. The charity is now facing backlash because of the recent event that was seen as a brand marketing rather than its intended purpose. The function was not seen to have pink ribbons or any display that represented any awareness. Some called it a "celebrity drinking party."

According to the Straits Times, "...there was no confirmed participation from patients or healthcare professionals at the W Korea event."

K-pop's biggest groups such as BTS, Aespa, Stray Kids and IVE were invited. Many idols were criticized. Jay Park, former member of the K-pop group 2PM, performed, "Mommae" intensified the backlash.

The song, "Mommae" is a sexually explicit song that talks about a woman's body and has provocative lyrics like, "I don't know what our relationship is, but I want to get introduced to the twin sisters hanging on your chest."

Park apologized for this situation. A day after the event, he said, "If any cancer patients felt uncomfortable or offended by my performance, I sincerely apologize."

W Korea's social media presence regarding the event included tagging brands, idols making TikToks and taking photos of the idols drinking alcohol. Many idols were criticized, such as a video of Giselle from Aespa who was seen swaying uneasily as she left the function, implying she got

drunk. Many female artists were denounced by online users known as "Netizens." In the K-pop context, Netizens are active internet users who engage online about the K-pop community. Netizens mocked the way the female idols dressed and brought up past photos to debrief on their plastic surgery.

Other Netizens thought this was taken too far...

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Photo from W Magazine

*Korean celebrities seen to treat an awareness event like any other ornate functions*

# Effects of Cuts To Department Of Education Ripples Through Nation

By Tristan Luu

Reporter

This summer, the federal government cut the Department of Education's (ED) staff by 50%, the budget by 87%, and its various grants, according to Reuters. These cuts are part of the Trump Administration's wider efforts to eliminate the ED, which has allegedly been "failing" students and families according to the executive order. and are impacting students nationwide.

Funding from the federal government and ED supports programs such as Title I, a program that is designed to help districts and schools with many low income families, including John F. Kennedy High School.

Dr. Ronaldo Fisher, principal of JFK, described how ED's operations cuts affect Title I, "There were a lot of changes in terms of what we could offer and programs that we could provide through Title I," explained Dr. Fisher.

"In the past, the flexibility and use of those funds were very open and loose. Now, it's very tight and restrictive."

Fisher further elaborated on the increased limitations of Title I funds due to these new restrictions: "In the past, through Title I, we could have provided funds for it [school sections], but now, what they did is they came in and said no more sections are going to be paid for through Title I and that we will have to take it out of our general allocation [budget], which is based on what the district provides to you on a year to year basis based on your enrollment numbers."

Although the cuts do impact the school, California's state education system protects schools from certain effects, as Aparna Badithe, government and economics teacher, pointed out.



Photo from Unsplash

*Department of Education falters for every additional day*

For the most part, I think that the cuts may take a little longer for them to affect public schools, depending on the state, and I think California is a little different because public schools are funded through something called the local control funding formula. Most of our funding comes from the state and from local taxes," said Badithe.

However, Ms. Badithe added that federally funded

programs would be drastically affected.

"There are things like FAFSA [financial aid] or special education funding that we rely on the federal government for, so I think those programs will see cuts," she said.

Enna Penglin, biology teacher, foresees more effects of the budget cuts in classrooms.

"Kids will no longer..."

[Want to read the rest of the article? Click here!](#)



## Prop 50 Aims To Redraw California's Congressional Districts

By Aarna Gupta Reporter

Election day is coming up and one of the most controversial proposals this year is Proposition 50. This proposition authorizes temporary changes to district maps, which supports redistricting commissions across the nation. The main goal of Prop 50 is to create a map that puts more Democrats in power. The proponents and opponents of this proposition both agree that the new map will keep cities and counties together, which will result in better representation and keep similar communities under the same congressperson.

If voters vote yes on Prop 50, the states would immediately use the new maps that were drawn by the legislature starting 2026. The new maps would be used until 2030, when the next Census will happen. Supporters of this proposition aim to rig the next election. They plan to do this to "counter" Trump's scheme to rig the next congressional election. Larry Lange, government teacher at Kennedy said, "It evens the playing field nationally, because again, Texas is already gerrymandering their maps, picking up potentially six seats. And so this is just supposed to be a counteraction to this". By voting for this, California will remain a Democratic state.

On the other hand, voting no would mean that the maps would stay the same until the 2030 U.S. Census...

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## U.S. Government Faced Its Longest Shutdown

By Harsevran Bhullar

Reporter

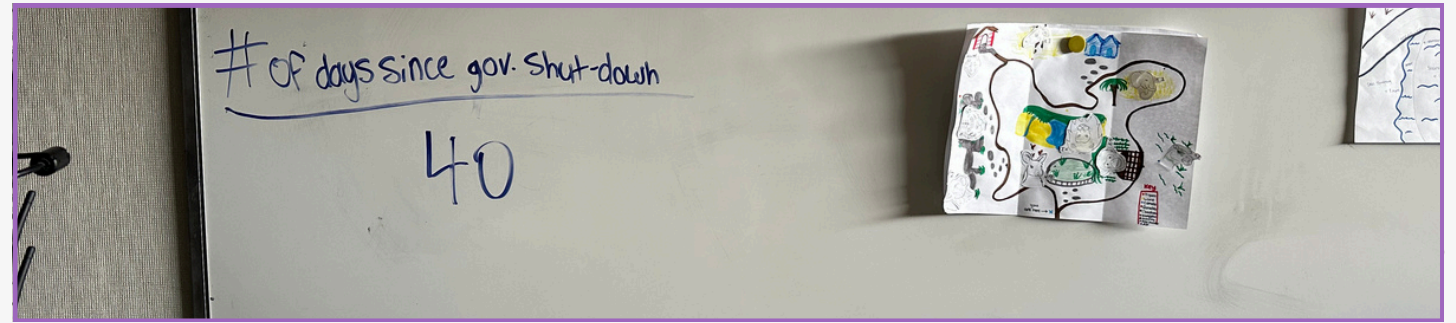


Photo by Khanh Do

As of Oct. 16, 2025, the federal government of the United States remains in a shutdown that began on October 1, following Congress's failure to pass the spending legislation needed for the new year. This Congressional stalemate has caused massive disruptions across the entire federal government.

Around 900,000 federal employees have been placed under temporary suspension,

or furloughed, while another 700,000 are forced to work unpaid. Essential services like the army continue to operate, although most employees are receiving minimal to no pay for their efforts. All non-essential services like national parks or museums are stopped for the time being. Disagreements between the Republicans and Democrats centered on federal expenditure, global aid, and the increase of

Ms. Badithe's students track days of shutdown

healthcare coverage under the Affordable Care Act. None of the spending bills, including the proposed \$852 billion defense budget, have been approved by the Senate due to a lack of bipartisan support.

The nation's reaction to the shutdown has been overwhelmingly negative; an October 9-13 AP-NORC survey determining that 89% of Americans view the shutdown as a problem with over half

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## Severe flooding In San Jose Displaces Thousands

By Sana Wahab

Reporter

Heavy rain in early October 2025 overfilled reservoirs and caused major flooding across San Jose, forcing thousands of residents to evacuate as water surged from Coyote Creek into surrounding neighborhoods. City officials declared a local emergency as rescue crews worked around the clock to protect lives and property.

The flooding began when days of intense rainfall filled Anderson Reservoir completely and released large volumes of water into Coyote Creek. The overflow quickly spread into residential areas near Rock Springs, Naglee Park, and South San Jose, leaving streets submerged and hundreds of homes damaged. More than 14,000 residents were under mandatory evacuation orders, with some wading through waist-deep water to reach safety.

"It was terrifying – the water came faster than anyone expected," said one



Photo by Khanh Do

resident who lives near Kelley Park.

According to city reports, the damage to both public infrastructure and private property has already surpassed \$70 million. While three homes were destroyed, nearly a thousand sustained minor damage, and hundreds more remain temporarily uninhabitable. Officials are now seeking state and federal disaster funds to support repairs and

Bay Area faced increased rain

recovery.

For students and families in the South Bay, the floods have disrupted daily routines, closed schools temporarily, and strained access to transportation. Teachers at local schools say the disaster has highlighted how quickly natural events can impact community safety and mental health.

The aftermath has left a visible mark on the city...

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# Fall Fest Brings Families A Night Of Festivities

By Tristan Luu



Photos by Gurtej Singh

Fall Fest is filled with carnival games, performances, and fun

On the evening of Oct. 24, students, staff, and their families gathered for the annual Fall Fest at John F. Kennedy High School. The event is known for its games, food, and performances, drawing large crowds.

The festival was organized by ASB, the Associated Student Body, to provide



opportunities for clubs to fundraise by running booths and bringing the school community together. Armando De Jesus Dominguez Martinez (12), is a member of ASB who helped organize the event.

"This is my first year coming here as a senior, and I think it's a very amazing place," remarked

Martinez. "I'm in ASB, so I was helping behind the scenes and just seeing it all come together and alive at the end, just really makes it a nice environment for everyone."

Each club had their own creative take on their booth's activity to fundraise, ranging from carnival games to food to jewelry.

Aarna Gupta, (11), from the Model UN Club described how she felt that Fall Fest was a perfect way to interact with the community and to help clubs bring in money.

"...people come out and support the clubs and the clubs are able to fundraise a lot. Everyone had a fun time while supporting..."

[Click here to read the rest](#)

Reporter

# Green Ventures Academy Gained Hydroponics Farm

By Jack Waller Reporter

This October, John F. Kennedy High School was selected as one of a handful of schools to gain access to a classroom hydroponics farm. To test the prospects of the application of this farming method in schools, Kennedy had one of these farms installed in the Culinary Arts classroom. Chef Moschetti, the instructor in charge of the agricultural device, plans to make use of this to the benefit of her class and the school at large.

Hydroponics introduces a new way to grow crops without using soil. Instead, hydroponics uses water-based nutrient sources to feed plants, allowing for a more efficient and green. Being one of the first schools given this equipment is a big honor.

The most eager to utilize the farm is Chef Mari Moschetti. She has commented that she has already made plans for her class, and plans with the school cafeteria, saying that "we are going to be using some of the produce in the Culinary 2 class – and the rest of the produce will be used to elevate student lunches." In addition to Moschetti, many students have displayed their eagerness...

[Click here to read more :\)](#)



Photo by Jack Waller  
Chef Moschetti is ready to utilize the farm

# Seventh Generation Rising Performed at Kennedy

By Tristan Luu

Reporter

**Cont.** ...community through connection and restoration of both land and culture. Walther describes Seventh Generation Rising's work as "improving the lives of urban indigenous youth and families".

Michelle Ruiz-Esparza, a JFK staff member, danced alongside the group, as she herself practices Danza Azteca, or traditional Aztec style of dance. She described what she hopes that the audience would take away from their performance.

"We definitely hope that there was some sort of connection with themselves, some thought of their ancestors, a connection with their culture in the terms of remembering who they are," explained Ruiz-Esparza.

During the ceremonial dances, a special incense was burned, called Copal, which is a specially harvested tree resin from a spiritually important



Photo by Gurtej Singh

species of tree in Mexico. The incorporating incense was integral to the performance, as both the dance and the incense tie together.

"What we believe is that when we have it in the sahumerio [incense holder] and light that fire, which a woman is supposed to carry because she is the caretaker of that fuego [fire], it is a very specific prayer and intention," said Walther.

Fall Fest ends with a special performance

"Because our danza is our prayers in motion, we are connecting with that altar and that fuego and smoke and sending our prayers and intentions up into the cosmos, into the universe, out into the atmosphere so that it benefits not just humanity, but all of creation."

Certain ceremonies can have dances that last for up to four to five hours, so dancers must maintain...

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# Dr. Tagami Earned His Doctorate After Years Of Work

By Kason Lai and Abhiram Garaye

Section Editors



Photo from Michail Tagami *Dr. Tagami's great achievement*

Recently, John F. Kennedy High School's English department has had an exciting staff development. Mr. Tagami, a longtime English teacher, is now Dr. Tagami.

According to Dr. Tagami, he has put in years of hard work for not one, but two doctorate degrees: "My doctorate program was a dual program, so I actually got a doctorate of education and doctorate of philosophy...it took me five years instead of the normal three or four."

Dr. Tagami continued, "It's always been a dream of mine to have the title 'doctor,' and since I was not able to

do that with medical school, graduate school seemed to be the more applicable way to get that title."

Even though obtaining a doctorate through graduate school was more feasible, Dr. Tagami's journey to earn his degrees was still not simple.

"You have a series of courses in your field...all those courses are meant to provide subject matter, competency, and start research on your dissertation," said Dr. Tagami. "Then you have a series of courses for your research, and the courses are laid out in steps so that you do research, then you do a study, then you do a review, a literary review of the research, and the study. We do a tie to the study and the research, and then you do your dissertation, which is, could be, for a doctorate of education, is three chapters, but for the doctor of philosophy is five."

Considering the difficulty of just obtaining a doctorate, fellow teachers and students appreciate Dr. Tagami's

balancing of this arduous process while also teaching classes.

"It's the highest achievement you can achieve, and he has achieved two, not one...he is a kind and a generous man, and I'm glad to have him as a friend and colleague," said Ms. Anderson. "He is in two percent of the US population that has a doctoral degree, and he is a man to look toward."

Danielle Thomas, biology teacher, also shared a similar perspective on the occasion: "It is well-deserved, and people don't get it to see how much he worked, but he put in a lot of effort and dedication into getting it."

Jack Waller (11), a student of Dr. Tagami's AP English Language and Composition class, said, "I think Dr. Tagami's achievement is truly inspiring. It takes a lot of effort and dedication to obtain a doctorate degree while still effectively teaching college level classes..."

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## Kennedy High School Host College Fair

By Tristan Luu

Reporter

On the night of Oct. 16, John F. Kennedy High School's gymnasium hosted a college fair open to students across the district. The event aimed to inform students about different opportunities after high school and give them the chance to speak with a wide range of college representatives, including state universities, Universities of California, trade schools, and community colleges.

Rows of tables with knowledgeable representatives spanning the gym greeted students and their families visiting the fair.

Carolyn Kelly, attending on behalf of the University of Oregon, commented on why she likes to speak at these types of events.

"I just enjoy talking to students. It's definitely my favorite part of what I do, helping them learn something new about the

school, or maybe something interesting about a program that they're interested in, or discover something they haven't thought about," explained Kelly.

Genesis Castillo, representative and alumnus of University of Texas at Dallas, loves representing her alma mater with her firsthand knowledge.

"I graduated from UT Dallas, so I feel like I can really speak about the actual institution itself from my previous student experience, but also from my working experience at the university," stated Castillo.

Kennedy students who attended the fair described the event as an opportunity to envision their futures.

Peter Grant (12) explained that he attended the fair to search for a college that might suit him well.

"I just wanted to look at the different colleges and see what would be the best



Photo by Tristan Luu *Families of prospective students wander around different college booths*

fit for me in my near future," said Grant.

Grant even remarked that going to the event changed his perspective on which institution he may want to attend.

"My college in mind was University of Florida, but since talking so much with the ASU instructors, they just persuaded me so much that I think ASU might be the right fit for me now," stated Grant. "I heard they have some good academic and

athletic programs so I'm excited to hopefully get accepted there."

Kabeer Dhillon (11) said that despite his firm dream to attend Stanford and study dermatology, the fair did open up his views.

"It's helping me take more colleges into consideration and know what they offer, which is something major for me, because I want to go somewhere where I can enjoy but also learn at..."

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## New Staff Member Joins Kennedy

By **Meerab Sadiqa** *Reporter*

Kennedy High School recently welcomed Melissa "Mel" Banuelos Velazquez, a new staff member who joined this fall to work closely with students in the Wellness Center. Velazquez brings both experience and enthusiasm, with the goal of supporting students academically and emotionally.

Velazquez explained that her decision to come to Kennedy was influenced by her passion for working with high school students and her Level One List Coach certification. "I saw that Kennedy has a Wellness Center, so I really wanted to be part of that," she said.

Her first month on campus has been, in her words, "really fun." She noted that while she has enjoyed meeting both staff and faculty, her favorite part so far has been connecting with Kennedy students. Outside of her professional role, she enjoys attending concerts and running marathons, two interests that keep her busy...

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Photo by Meerab Sadiqa

*Velazquez joins Wellness Center*

## Vandalism In Schools Increased In Severity

By **Rafa Akbarzadeh**

*Reporter*



Photo by Khanh Do

Vandalism in school has become increasingly normalized over the years, with students not even being aware that they're vandalizing property at times. This becomes an issue not only because of the lack of cleanliness but the effects educators have

*Gums lined the desks in classrooms*

to deal with.

"Graffiti and vandalism can cost a school a great deal of money in repairs," Intervention Central stated. They also may contribute to a perception that the school is not well-cared for and is an unsafe environment for

students and staff,"

To assess the frequency and relevance of vandalism at John. F. Kennedy Highschool, teachers and staff were interviewed about their experiences and concerns on the matter.

In the first interview with Melissa Dohm, the art teacher at JFK had to say "I've had items broken, I've had materials damaged ... I've had students write on the walls and desks," Dohm said. "I would say daily, I have at least some form of supply damage,"

She then further commented that there are students who break or misuse items by pure accident, but then there's also students who play around with supplies and...

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## Club Feature: Creators

By **Shanvi Gupta**

*Reporter*

Creators is one of Kennedy's performance clubs that participates in most, if not all of Kennedy's performances throughout the year. They started the year with a performance at Club Rush, and most recently a performance at Fall Fest (Oct. 24). The club focuses on hip-hop and performs during different rallies and showcases the skills and talents of its members. KCU boasts over 30 members, with this year's officers being: Jacob Myles Castro (11) (President), Audrey Vo (11) (Choreographer), Daniol Pineda (12) (Publicist), Valentina Quintero (10) (Treasurer), Nadia Danishimand (10) (Secretary), and Ellie Tan (10) (Honorary officer). Castro stated, "The reason I joined this club was because I've been dancing as a child, and I've had many hobbies growing up but the one thing I could always go back to was dancing. As president, I



Photo by Gurtej Singh

*Trump's new visa law could hurt international students*

hope to be able to show off what Kennedy students are truly capable of doing, and provide an insight into how creative we are not just through dancing but through various art styles too. I've had so many different memories through this club, but my favorite one was 2 years ago during Multi, when my friend (now graduated) did a backflip during our performance and everyone started freaking out."

Castro's experience showcases KCU's teamwork, expression, and confidence. Each performer spends hours perfecting routines supporting each other both on and off stage, and creating a vibrant community that celebrates creativity and style in all its forms.

Another member that embodies the spirit of Creators is Ellie Tan, this year's honorary officer...

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# Titan Up Replaces Advisory During Second Quarter

By Anika Phair

Section Editor



Photo by Khanh Do  
Admin enforces RTI sign ups

When John F. Kennedy entered the second quarter of the school year, on Oct. 6, RTI replaced advisory as the new system for flex time. RTI is a system where students choose where they want to go for thirty minutes a day. Before, advisory forced students to go to their first block on Monday, second block on Tuesday, third block on

Thursday, and fourth block on Friday during flex time. To prepare students for the transition from advisory to normal RTI, JFK administration mandated students sign up for and sign into their advisory sessions using the 5-Star app. The gradual phasing of RTI was intended to familiarize students with the 5-Star system and combat last year's RTI signups issue early.

JFK assistant principal Kimberly Martin commented, "We decided that we wanted to roll it out this way to try and get out any of the glitches to see if that was part of the issue of previous years."

Although only 50% of students had signed up for an RTI session by the start

of first block on Thursday, October 9, Martin mentioned that the percentage rose to above 80% in the following weeks, showing the rollout's benefit.

Martin continued, "This year, there's a new place in 5-Star that we did Titan Up and I believe once we roll [teachers] into the new system that they're going to see that it's a lot easier for them to set up."

Students feel mixed about the new process. On Kasar (12) commented, "I feel like it will make a little impact on getting some people to sign up, but I don't feel like it will last very long."

Keerthana Krithivasan (10) expressed a similar...  
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# Girls Tennis Formed New Dynamics

By Anika Phair Section Ed

The John F. Kennedy girls tennis team has had a very interesting season with new captains and new players. The season kicked off in September with practices starting at the beginning of the school year. For the past few months, the team members have been working hard to have a successful season. One of the team captains, Divya Sharmugam (11), said, "I feel like it's an adjustment because all three of us are first time captains so it's a little bit difficult to manage practice."

"As captain I have to make sure that the team is ready for games so I run drills, I teach everyone the rules and then sometimes I'll give people pep talks and also organize team bonding after games," stated Surya Sharmugam (11), another one of the captains. The captains have even more responsibilities on top of that. Divya Sharmugam mentioned that the captains' responsibilities also include running practices, choosing the line ups for games, announcing the line up, leading the pre-game chant and organizing snacks and rides for games...

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# Football Season Develops Growth For Players

By Iker Aparicio

Reporter

After the titans lost 55-14 the spirits were low, but instead of quitting the Titans turned their attention forward to finish their 2025 season strong. So far during the month of October, the Titans have been facing a lot of external pressures such as injuries and close defeats, which has forced the team to focus on their team culture and look for ways to improve.

After talking to Head Coach Brenton "BJ" Hagood he explains that the team's growth isn't just measured in points. "We've had tough games, but my players hold each other accountable and put in the work. That's the type of team that lasts," he said. Underclassmen players have also stepped up in taking responsibility and ownership during the game. Cash, a senior, has taken on the responsibility of being the quarterback on JV and has been calling out plays and providing



Photo by Anthony "AJ" Rice

motivation to all his teammates.

Varsity have also been putting in the work as they frequently work out together as a team to build up their strength and team bond. After speaking with several varsity players they all agreed that their workouts are crucial. Jai Boone, a junior on varsity says the the workouts have helped build up his endurance and stamina when going against difficult

opponents.

These changes to their team have helped the Titans improve and have led them to winning their 3 most recent games. 42-29 against Dougherty Valley, 26-20 against Saint Mary's and 13-3 against Newark Memorial High. Even though the beginning of the season challenged the Titans their resilience has shined through and led the team to success proving that when  
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Photo by Nicole Nomura

Girls Tennis engages in exciting season



# New Athletic Directors

By Andres Sandoval

On May 9, Kevin Lydon and John Byon became new athletic directors.

Their first year being athletic directors after McGaughey retired. Athletic directors are in charge of hiring coaches for a team, managing budget, ensuring rules and many more.

Lydon has been involved in sports since his high school and college years. Lydon went to Ohlone then got a scholarship to the University of New Mexico for baseball. Later on, he was offered this position by Mr. McGaughey and both Lydon and Byon agreed.

Their goal in the program is to make sports inviting and to make their program successful with students. What we can expect this year is things to be organized, fundraising, to be inclusive and for everyone to be active with sports.

What's been easy for them while in the program is when hanging out with students and talking to them. But when it comes to the harder part, it is when being realistic. Some students....

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Photo from Kennedy Yearbook Legend 2025

# Boys Basketball Stays Ready For Upcoming Season

By Matt De Guzman

Reporter

The end of fall sports are coming to a close which means that the winter season for sports at Kennedy is finally starting up. The John F. Kennedy Basketball team is ready to start the new season and have since been preparing. Every Monday and Wednesday, they have been in the weight room doing workouts and lifting weights, and Tuesdays and Thursdays have been conditioning and open gym. These conditioning workouts have took place before the open gyms, and involved high intensity activities such as sprints. The Titans have gotten well in shape, as they will play a more scrappy team style due to their now absence of height. Kennedy students w-

ho are interested in joining are free to join these sessions.

Last year, the Titans fell short of the playoffs by just one win. The late season collapse, only winning 1 of their last 5 games drastically slid the Titans down the rankings and out of the playoffs. With the lost of 7 seniors last year, Varsity coach Dave Domelle has to modify his team playing style and maybe look for a new one. Each training, he preaches work ethic, and that they aren't just working to get better, they are "working to beat the other teams in league". Coach Domelle has said that he feels this new group is more united...

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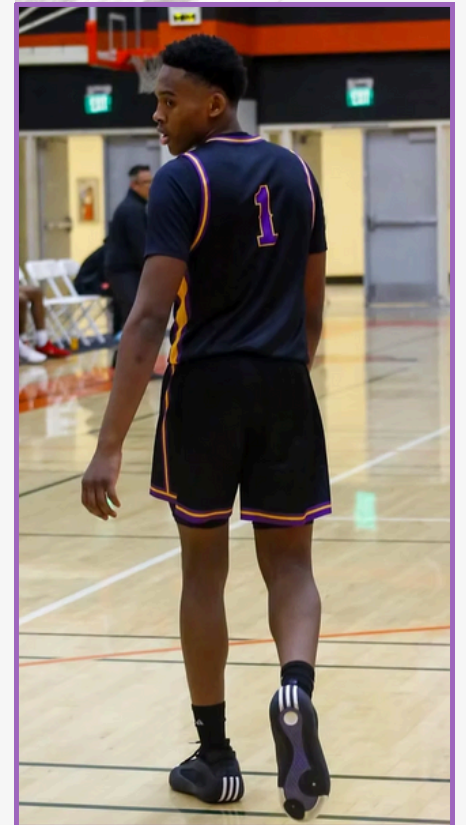


Photo by Anthony "AJ" Rice

*McDowell hopes to leave big impact in final year*

# Professional Badminton Player, Allison Lee, Also Handles College

By Harini Arugonda

Reporter

Allison Lee, a badminton player from Fremont, faces the unique challenge of competing internationally while also attending college at Santa Clara University. With training, traveling, and competing taking up much of her time, she has had to find ways to stay on top of her academic responsibilities.

"My biggest challenge is staying engaged with schoolwork during my free time, because after training, traveling, and competing, all I want to do is rest," Lee said. To make it work, she communicates openly with professors and classmates and tries to plan ahead as much as possible. She noted that adapting to sudden changes is an important part of managing both school and badminton.

Lee recently competed at the World Championships, one of the biggest stages in the sport. She said she did everything she could to



Photo from Allison Lee

prepare, but focused on enjoying the experience rather than just the results. "At the end of the day, I gave it my all and focused on enjoying the game because if you don't enjoy badminton, what's the point?" she explained. Despite the difficulties of balancing school with high-level competition, Lee finds motivation in the sport itself. "I enjoy the competitiveness and passion of badminton," she said.

*Allison Lee balances two big parts of her life*

sprepare, but focused on enjoying the experience rather than just the results. "At the end of the day, I gave it my all and focused on enjoying the game because if you don't enjoy badminton, what's the point?" she explained. Despite the difficulties of balancing school with high-level competition, Lee finds motivation in the sport itself. "I enjoy the competitiveness and...

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# JV Girls Volleyball Worked Together To Earn Victories

By Khanh Do & Luis Llanos

Reporter

The Junior Varsity Girls Volleyball team stepped up to win both pre-league and league wins this fall season. The girls earned a 2-0 victory against Concord in a non conference match. Kennedy dominated both sets, showing improved teamwork, communication, and serving. They also beat Irvington at both meetings.

"All the hard work we put in over the offseason finally paid off," Chloe Kunze (9) said, signaling a promising start for the team as they head into league play

Even before the season officially starts, the team had a consistent conditioning and open gyms schedule held by Head Coach Bryan Nguyen. Throughout the summer, two weekdays would be allotted into training these athletes into shape and hone their technical volleyball skills.

Coach Nguyen tried to design his coaching around the JV team to ensure everybody has the same opportunities to become great, and the environment

is more about having fun than intense competition. "In that aspect, it's more fun," Nguyen claimed.

Coach Nguyen would choose pre-league games, and these games tend to be less competitive than the MVAL league games. They geared towards more preparing the team with experience, and adjusting to mistakes made along the way.



Photo from Bryan Nguyen

JV Girls beat Irvington Vikings at away game

Jody Tran (10) joked, "He rigs them, so we win them all."

There is a majority of freshmen on the JV team, 11 to be specific, compared to the other four sophomores on the team. Nguyen commented that he is proud that the sophomores had really step it up and contribute to making the team as successful as it can be, as they had played last year.

"I really liked how when the freshmen came, they were all already, like, bonded, and then they included, like, the sophomores in, and it's just, like, everyone already had a bond, so then we're all friends," said Tran.

The team's performance did have a noticeable slip as Nguyen had to assume Head Coach position for both Varsity and JV halfway into the season. It was harder to navigate planning and executing two practices in the same day, and making sure it was efficient for both teams...

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# Filipino History Month Honors A Long Legacy Of Persistence

By Monica Real

Reporter

The United States Congress marked October as the official month for Filipino American History in 2009. October acknowledges the arrival and legacy of Filipinos in the US because it was when the Filipinos first arrived in California. The Filipino American National Historical Society (FANHS) then initiated it to become a month in 1991. FANHS was also very passionate about making it about history rather than "heritage." Heritage means culture and traditions while history means past events and experiences. A resolution organized by Senator Leland Yee to recognize the month was passed by the California State Assembly in 2009.

Filipinos arrived in the US on Oct. 18, 1587 on a Spanish ship that arrived in Morro Bay, California. Filipinos at that time were known as Indios Luzones, who are indigenous people

of the island Luzon. his date documents the first Asians who arrived in America. At this time, the Manila Galleon Trade, where Spain traveled to Mexico and the Philippines to trade goods, was happening. As they landed in Lake Morro, Pedro de Unamo, the commander, eight Indios Luzones and the rest of the crew claimed the land for Spain. On the third day upon landing, the crew met two Chumash Indians which ended up in a conflict, killing one Spaniard and one Filipino. After that, Unamos' crew ceased the exploration.

In 1763, Filipino immigrants settled in St. Malo, Louisiana. They are known as Manilamen. Manilamen were Filipino sailors who were mistreated by the Spanish, so they deserted the ships and landed on the shore of Lake Borgne. After arrival, Manilamen built Saint Malo, a fishing village that

that had harsh conditions but made it easier to hide from the Spanish. They introduced an ancient Chinese tradition called "dancing the shrimp", where they would stomp on dried shrimp in order to remove the shells. This technique revolutionized Louisiana's culinary history as it helped preserve dried shrimp before the invention of refrigerating. Another part of Louisiana history Filipinos took part in

was the Battle of New Orleans. This was when the British Empire wanted to separate Louisiana from the United States. Manilamen fought under Andrew Jackson which helped the US win against the British.

After the Spanish-American War in 1898, the US annexed the Philippines and soon-to-be US territories such as Puerto Rico, Guam, Hawaii and Wake Island...

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Photo by Monica Real

The iconic Philippines flag hangs with pride



# Hungry Ghost Festival Celebrates The Dead

By Ara Chow

Reporter



Photo from Chinese Culture Center

Hungry Ghost Festival celebrated at Chinatown

Many East and Southeast Asian countries celebrate the Hungry Ghost Festival, which falls on the fifteen-

th day of the lunar calendar's seventh month. It is unique and significant because it is celebrated in

Asian heritage to celebrate the lost souls and to worship the dead. This day is a time honored tradition in Buddhist and Taoist culture. This festival is the day where ghosts whose family has forgotten about them roam at night looking for food to eat. During this day, the ghosts are to be celebrated, and it is believed that wandering spirits (hungry ghosts) return to the world of the living. Communities return to harmony with the spiritual world, as believed in the Buddhist and Taoist traditions, by burning incense, offering food and honoring the spirits through traditional operas. This way, they also maintain human...

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# Hispanic Heritage Month Commemorate Rich Culture

By Luis Sanchez

Reporter

Hispanic Heritage Month, a celebration of Hispanic and Latino history and culture, begins Sept. 15 and runs through Oct. 15. During this time, recognition and contributions are made here in the United States to celebrate many aspects of Hispanic culture such as art, food and history.

Why celebration in the US? It gives the country an opportunity to explore the impact that Latinos have had on this country for generations. According to the National Museum of the American Latino website, the Latino presence has been an integral part of shaping our nation since the Revolutionary War.

There are also eight other countries that celebrate Hispanic Heritage month, but they celebrate it on varying dates. The countries that celebrate starting on Sept. 15 are the US, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala,



Photo by Gurtej Singh

Sol de Mexico showcases Mexican culture

Honduras and Nicaragua. The next day, on Sept. 16, it begins for Mexico. Then, on Sept. 18, the celebration commences in Chile. Finally, on Sept. 21, Belize starts their celebration.

Here at John F. Kennedy High School, it's important to recognise the impact of the Hispanic people around us. Kevin Hernandez (11) explained what people should understand about Hispanic culture.

"We're really good people," he stated. "We're not just hard workers but loving, caring people."

He also said that people like him care for one another and not just people who just do hard work.

Eli Emanuel (11) also expressed his thoughts about his culture. He mentioned how he is proud to be Hispanic, American and the person he is now.

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Titan Tribune

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# The Fall Spirit



Photo by Kelly Orozco Hernandez



Photo by Gurtej Singh



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Photo by Kelly Orozco Hernandez



Photo by Gurtej Singh

## Students Form "Sundale" Band Aim To Host Different Performances

By Jacob Myles Castro

Reporter

Student bands help students show off school spirit and creativity, and some students at John F. Kennedy High School are doing just that. A group of three friends decided to form a band and progress their music skills together. Their original band name was Citrus Heaven, but after realizing they shouldn't make their band name a 67 joke, they have decided to temporarily be called To Be Due. Their name represents that their band name will be due at some point.

Rhythm guitarist and vocalist Luis Sangil (12) has been playing the guitar for 3 years, the drums since his childhood and the bass for a couple of years. Sangil is the person who makes all of the music for the band, as well. He mentioned, "I get inspiration from bands such as Title Fight, Smashing Pumpkins, Sonic Youth." Sangil even has a modified

version of a Fender Stratocaster, which is a double humbucker stratocaster, to provide a more metal-like sound. Bassist Vincent Le (11) started playing the bass when Sangil wanted to start a band. Le said, "...Luis told me he wanted a band so I picked up the bass and my fingers naturally fit the strings."

Le mentioned that he got inspiration from, "... Jamiroquai funk, Red Hot Chili Peppers intricate bass lines [and] Kris Novoselic's grunge sound..."

Le also praised Sangil for his creativity as an artist. He stated, "Luis is amazing. Honestly, ... he could run a one man band if he could clone himself."

The band's drummer, Jacob Myles Castro (11), had also picked up drumming when Luis wanted to start a band. He doesn't get inspiration from many drummers but he said, "I only really want to have



Photo by Alessandria Maquilan

Sundale (previously To Be Due) performs at Fall Fest

the same energy as Dave Grohl when he plays the drums."

To Be Due had their very first performance at JFK's Fall Fest, performing "Harness Your Hopes" by Pavement and an original song they made called "3 triple four". Le said, "We missed a cue, but it was our first ever performance, so we can't really be mad." Castro stated, "I hit the

drums so hard during the performance, but overall I did good."

Fall Fest is just the beginning of To Be Due's journey. They hope to perform at coffee houses, house shows and small venues when the opportunity appears.

Editor's Note: As of Nov. 16, it appears this band has changed its name to "Sundale".



# Hollow Knight: Silksong

By Alexander Kennedy



Photo from Unsplash

*Team Cherry ultimately release the game*

On September 4, the independent development group Team Cherry released the sequel to their proclaimed video game Hollow Knight called Hollow Knight: Silksong. Two weeks before this, Team Cherry announced Silksong's release date and price (\$20) after roughly seven years of silence to their community.

This surprising announcement had caused multiple controversies with other independent developers who had planned to release their games around a similar time. For instance, multiple of these developers with smaller games had also initially priced their games at \$20, but due to Silksong's quality and its amount of content at the same price, they were led to believe that their game was no longer worth the price they were asking for. One of these developers proclaimed, "As a dev making a smaller Metroidvania than Silksong, which I originally thought would be fairly priced at 20 USD.. what should I price it now? ... it was made by one person with limited...

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# Booktok Largely Affects Literature Landscape

By Ridhima Kapoor

Reporter



Photo by Ridhima Kapoor

*Booktok influence literature landscape*

Over the past three years, TikTok's "BookTok" community has shifted from a niche corner of the internet to one of the largest influences affecting book sales worldwide. The platform has now become pivotal in influencing what young readers pick up.

Publishers and booksellers have noted dramatic spikes in demand whenever a title gains traction on BookTok.

According to data from Circana, sales of young adult and romance novels surged in 2023, largely fueled by TikTok recommendations. Some books, such as Colleen Hoover's "It Ends With Us", sold millions of copies years after its initial release thanks to the attention it got on TikTok. For students, BookTok also influences what genres and authors they choose to look into.

Romance, fantasy and contemporary young adult novels tend to dominate while classics and nonfiction titles fade in relevance. This shift has sparked conversations about whether BookTok makes reading more approachable or whether it narrows impressionable young readers towards a small set of viral books.

Despite this, some argue that reading in general...

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# Halloween Costumes Sees Many Different Trends

By Varsha Balamurugan

Reporter

**Cont.** ...durability, and trendiness of the costume.

According to "Halloween Statistics & Marketing Facts", an article that was published on a Sender blog by copywriter Vesta Oldenburg, last year alone, Americans spent over \$11.3 billion on Halloween. Another research page by Capitol One Shopping suggests that shoppers collectively spend over \$4.1 billion on costumes, which is more than 36% of the total amount spent on Halloween!

That same website says that the most popular costume for kids in 2024 was "Spiderman". This can be backed up by various other sources such as, "Halloween Statistics & Marketing Facts" by Vesta Oldenburg and "2025's top Halloween costumes are a mix of new and old" by Katherine Cullen, who is the vice president of industry and consumer insights at the National Retail Federation



Photo by Kelly Orozco Hernandez

*Students dressed up for Halloween*

(NRF).

In that same article by Katherine Cullen, it is reported that costumes from "Kpop Demon Hunters", the vastly popular Netflix movie from this summer, are in high demand for this year's Halloween season. In a survey conducted at here at John F. Kennedy High School this October, students were asked what they were going to dress up as for Halloween. The survey has gotten over

fifty responses from various grades. The results showed that the most common costumes at school this year were predominantly from the "Demon Slayer: Kimetsu No Yaiba" and "Wicked" franchises, most likely in excitement from the recent "Demon Slayer" movie and in anticipation of the upcoming "Wicked" movie. There are also many students plan on dressing up in group costumes...

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# Five Tips For Senior College Selection Guide

By Siddhi Yadav

Reporter

With college application season in full swing, seniors are rushing to get their college lists finalized. However, creating a well balanced list is quite the challenge and many students don't have the resources they need. College applications can be tricky, but here are

five factors to consider when making the perfect college list. **Factor 1: Distance** The first thing to solidify is whether one would rather live at home with family and commute or live away from home. The benefits to staying at home include a comfortable environment, little to no cost, family nearby and the ability to fulfill family responsibilities. The benefits of living away include independence, "the college experience" and a larger variety of choices. For those willing to live away from home, the next question to ask is whether they are willing to leave the state. Out-of-state colleges tend to be more competitive and often

charge more tuition, but can offer a nice change of scenery. It's important for one to understand their own boundaries when it comes to which colleges they choose to apply to. **Factor 2: Money** Another factor to consider is money. How much money has been set aside for application fees? How much for tuition? College can be very expensive, so these factors matter a lot. "There's only so much that you can pay after scholarships and financial aid, so the price of tuition matters," John F. Kennedy High School ACE club's co-president Sanjana Madishetti (12) said. Most students create an application fee budget...

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Photo by Siddhi Yadav

*Colleges send packages for promotion*

# Should There Be A Halloween Age Limit?

By Nicolas Perez

Reporter

Halloween does not necessarily have an age limit, but people often debate the age at which you start handing out candy instead of going door-to-door getting candy. Nationwide, about a quarter of Americans think that there is no age limit for trick-or-treating, while others say that around 16 to 18 years old is the right time to stop. Some even say that kids should stop at an even earlier age such as 14 years old. What realistically do you think is the cutoff for being "too old" to trick-or-treat?

"I think 18 is the last age to trick or treat," Josefina Hernandez (12) said. "You're leaving high school and at that point people are usually having parties or something like that for Halloween." Another student, Adrian Murillo (12), thinks that around 17 years old is the age of stopping



Photo from Unsplash

*Halloween have elements for both kids and adults*

door-to-door trick-or-treating. A lot of people end up boiling it down to common sense. Usually, the older kids end up staying out later than the younger kids, as well as having a reputation for being the "rowdy, rude, and noisy teen" stereotype, more focused on the amount of candy that they get than the younger kids are. Some people use that as validation to deny teenaged trick-or-treaters.

It often comes down to just having manners and letting everyone, especially the younger ones, have fun.

Even if you chose not to go trick-or-treating, there are many other fun ways to celebrate Halloween. Dressing up and making costumes is a large part of the appeal of the holiday, and there are many costume parties and other events [Click to read the rest of article](#)

# Brain Rot Real Affects

By Ariana Rahbar

Did you know that according to the Midwood Argus, the amount of kids who have brain rot has increased from 12% to 18%? The dictionary states that the definition of brain rot is the intellectual decline of someone as a result of spending too much time on the internet. It is normally caused by over consumption of mindless content from social media sites such as TikTok, Instagram and YouTube. In 2007, the phrase "brain rot" came from Twitter where a user used it to describe video games and hanging out online. The term was created to describe how the internet has lowered people's level of intelligence.

As stated in the National Institutes of Health, many people think that brain rot is ruining society and that intellectual standards are going down. According to Healthline, research has shown that brain rot can negatively affect people's health and lead to other issues like mental exhaustion, memory issues and social withdrawal. The Inspira Health Network website says, "Although brain rot isn't a formal medical diagnosis, it resonates with many as a way to describe digital overload and its toll on cognitive function." This shows that brain rot can cause people's brains to overload and get confused so that they are unable to think. Brain rot also ruins productivity because people focus too much on the internet. The website Psychology Today states, "The concept of 'brain rot' challenges [Click here to read the rest.](#)