SEXUAL ASSAULT
SAC student charged in on-campus incident with Middle College teen

RAVE ALERT
Homicide case closed campus but not everyone received the emergency notification

THE COOLLAB
DTSA open mic night gives voice to local creatives

DONS SOCCER
Both the men's and women's teams are off to a hot start.

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Being born and raised in the Bay Area made me feel like just because I live in California, a state with relatively strict gun laws, I am safe. I was wrong. I consider Santa Ana my second home after living here for a couple of years on my own.

Unfortunately, being a woman, I already have to keep my guard up when I walk out of my house from catcallers, stalkers, human traffickers and many other dangers.

Now, with recent events both on and off-campus, including the homicide in our parking lot, the mass shootings in schools and stores, the stabbing spree in Garden Grove, the shooting of a Santa Ana 18-year-old with no gang connections, and sexual assault cases across the news, I can’t let my guard down. Not even at school, which is supposed to be one of the places where I should feel safe.

As a student and individual, I would like to be able to come to class without worrying about my safety. How about you?

Santa Ana College, and Santa Ana in general, is a place with so much history and culture. Yet in the past few months, I have been questioning my safety.

We’re here to report on these crimes and look into what you need to know to feel safe and supported in your life.

Our inboxes are open. Don’t be afraid to reach out.
11TH ANNUAL STEM WEEK: OCT. 18-25

Explore the science behind zombies, crime scene investigation and medicine during the 11th Annual STEM Week 2019. Daily events like Biotech Science Theater 3000 presents a live scientific commentary of World War Z and SAC-CON: The Science and Law of Zombies will happen across campus from Friday, Oct. 18 through Friday, Oct. 25. Also providing scholarships and transfer information for those interested in a career in the STEM field, this event will be the largest STEM Week yet. / Ashley Ramynke

AROUND CAMPUS

THE CRUCIBLE AT PHILLIPS HALL

Immersing students in the Salem witch trials of the late 17th century comes the Tony-Award-winning play The Crucible to Phillips Hall. The play offers lessons on peer pressure, prejudice and individuality. Opening night is Friday, Oct. 11 at 7:30 p.m. and performances run each Friday and Saturday through Oct. 20. / Ashley Ramynke

Closed campus

Homicide suspect arrested and charged. Officials say the robbery and murder had no connection to students.

A Long Beach man was arrested and charged with murder and robbery in the fatal shooting and subsequent car crash that closed down the Santa Ana College campus Monday, Sept. 16.

Antonio Lamont Triplett, 49, was arrested on Sept. 17 and charged with the murder of Osvaldo Garcia, 29, as well as second-degree robbery and for firing a gun that resulted in death. Police say the crime was not gang-related and was not connected to SAC or any of its students.

“The campus is just basically a victim of circumstances,” Santa Ana Police Department’s Cpl. Anthony Bertagna said. “There’s nothing related to the homicide that has a nexus to the college campus in any way, shape, or form. We don’t want people to think |Santa Ana College| is not a safe place. This just happens to be where the |victim’s car| ended.”

On the day of the incident, two people of Carson were detained in connection to the crime, but both suspects were released without charges three days later. The investigation is ongoing.

“We believe it’s a robbery. There was some sort of altercation [between the suspect’s vehicle and the victim’s vehicle]. Eventually, the suspect’s vehicle struck the victim’s vehicle, which knocks it on to the campus. And then that’s when the shooting occurred,” Bertagna said.

SAPD officers responded to reports of a collision near 17th and Bristol streets around 1 a.m. Sept. 16. When officers arrived at the scene, they found Garcia in SAC parking lot six suffering from gunshot wounds.

On the day of the incident, district officials sent out an alert at 3:44 a.m. stating for students and faculty to not come onto campus and at 6:44 a.m. to remain away from the college because investigations were ongoing. Around 11:42 a.m., an alert was sent out that school would be open for evening classes to resume. The victim’s vehicle made no notable property or landscape damage for the campus.

Santa Ana has had a decreasing number of murder and homicide rates, according to Bertagna. Yet, armed robberies are increasing.

“Santa Ana has its issues,” Bertagna said. “We have a chief that has a strong strategy, which our goal is to take as many guns off the streets as possible. Fewer guns mean fewer shootings.”
A Santa Ana College student was arrested Monday, Sept. 23 and booked on multiple sexual assault charges stemming from a Valentine’s Day interaction with a Middle College High School student.

Kenji Kina, 20, admitted to “engaging in sex acts” with the unidentified 14-year-old victim, who he was aware was 14, Santa Ana Police Cpl. Anthony Bertagna said. The incident was first reported to Santa Ana Police Department in July.

“Once the detectives working with college campus Safety got the suspect identified, a warrant was issued for his arrest,” Bertagna said. “He was arrested, booked, and did bail out of jail.” Bertagna also confirmed that the District Attorney has filed charges, though according to the Orange County court website, no court date is currently scheduled.

“Kina first met the victim on campus in February. On the morning of Feb. 14, he allegedly told the unidentified 14-year-old female that he wanted to show her a “cool place” and took her to a secluded stairwell, Bertagna told reporters. Once there, Bertagna said, “Kina began ‘making out’ with the victim who said she was overcome with fear.” After that, “Kina sexually assaulted the victim.”

The California Penal Code 243.4 defines sexual battery (assault) as “touch[ing] an intimate part of another person while that person is unlawfully restrained by the accused or an accomplice, and if the touching is against the will of the person touched and is for the purpose of sexual arousal, sexual gratification, or sexual abuse.”

MCHS is a Santa Ana Unified School District campus located on the southwest corner of SAC’s main campus. Students at the high school are dual-enrolled at SAC and take online and in-person classes alongside adult students.

“We have armed officers here who patrol in SUV and golf carts, walk the campus and ride bikes,” said Safety and Security Lt. Scott Baker of SAC’s current safety measures. “We’re replacing our call boxes with the blue security phones that are easier to see.”

The district’s 2019 annual crime report shows no previous instances of sexual assault on or around the Santa Ana College campus in the last three years.

Campus Safety conducts safety seminars every semester to groups that request it. Students may report any incidents through the LiveSafe app.
When the campus was closed last Monday while police conducted a homicide investigation, more than 32,000 people were sent alerts through the district’s emergency notification system. But district officials say that not everyone received them and are urging campus community to double check if their correct information is on file with the school.

RAVE Mobile Safety is a mass notification system that sends text messages and emails to cell phone numbers and email addresses pulled directly from WebAdvisor. All current active students, faculty, and staff are automatically enrolled to receive RAVE alerts.

However, at about 8 a.m. on the morning of the incident, several students showed up for their classes unaware that the campus was closed and classes were canceled. Some said they did not get any text alert and did not know to check their email.

Phuong Nguyen was about to go to her Monday classes when a friend called to say that the campus is closed. She was surprised by the news since she didn’t receive a text message and didn’t think about checking her email before class.

“I believe it is better to be notified by text message because I don’t check my email that often,” Nguyen said. “Some people don’t have Wi-Fi or their mobile data is slow, so they can’t even check if they got anything. There is no such problem with messages.”

After returning to campus on Sept. 17, faculty and students also reported that they got only one form of notification. Some saw emergency emails but never got text messages, while others didn’t receive anything even though they said their info on WebAdvisor is up-to-date.

According to Interim Chief of District Safety and Security Michael Toledo, people are not receiving text alerts because they did not provide the correct cell phone number upon registering online. Toledo said that some may have accidentally put their home number as a mobile number, which would also prevent the alert from going through.

“RAVE Alert is our [security] mass notification system we rely on. That is the number one alert if a major incident happens,” Toledo said. “This is the quickest way we can communicate to students what happened on the campus.”

REAL SYSTEM FAILS TO NOTIFY ALL

District officials worry that students and employees are not updating their contact information

Words by Marta Konarska · Photos by Lesly Guzman

RECEIVE ALERTS

There are two kinds of notifications for the RAVE Alert system: text messaging and email. Both contact information is derived from the WebAdvisor.

WEBADVISOR

Under user account, click into “Change Contact Information.” Verify the phone number as your CELL number. From there you will automatically be enrolled for RAVE Alert texts.

OPT-IN

On a cell phone, text “DonsAlert” to any of the following codes: 226787, 67283, 78015, 81437, or 22911.

Once you receive the “Welcome to Dons Alert” message, your alerts are on.
Both teams started strong this fall, with the women undefeated in six games and allowing only one goal against. The men are on a roll with a 4-1 record and both are ready to take on the Orange Empire Conference later this week.

Frank Aguilar
Sophomore Goalkeeper
This season, Aguilar has six goals against with 19 saves and two shutouts. He’s one win shy of tying his win total from last season. Aguilar’s play on the field will be crucial for the Dons to get back to the playoffs. “I just feel like this season I already know coming in this had to be my year. I’m more mature and I feel (we) are in better shape, but since the beginning I knew I was gonna come in, do my thing, and it paid off right now,” Aguilar said.

Leyna Wood
Sophomore Forward
After an injury-filled season, Wood and the Dons are looking to have different results this year. In six games, Wood has helped SAC earn a 6-0 record while recording nine goals in the process. She has two assists and leads the team with 28 points. Wood is looking forward to getting the Dons into the playoffs. “Personally, I have improved because last season I dealt with an injury the whole season. I’m a bit ACL — so I got it repaired, fixed, rehab, and now I’m back,” Wood said.

Kevin Ruiz
Sophomore Forward
In five games for the Dons, Ruiz has three goals out of four shots on target, already matching his total goals from last season. His experience from the previous year will help him guide Santa Ana’s young forward for 2019. SAC will need him to continue his excellent play on the pitch if they want to make a deep run. “My goal is to help this team the best I can. Whatever coach needs from me, I want to help this team return to the playoffs and get further than we did last season,” Ruiz said.

Linda Gutierrez
Sophomore Forward
Over the first five games, Gutierrez scored eight goals and made three assists, including two game-winning goals. Her play on the field will be vital as she looks to propel the Dons to the playoffs.“Keep trying to play hard every game without mistakes”

Gilberto Garcia
Freshman Forward
Garcia has started four games for the Dons and scored in all four of them. He leads the team in goals with four out of six shots on goal. He’s looking to be a big part of the team’s success this season. “I want to play better and make my team better”
WRESTLING

SAC GOES 0-4 IN OPENING DUALS MEET

In the Dons’ first competition of the season, freshman Benjamin Navarrete went undefeated in the 157-pound class at the Mt. San Antonio College Duals. Navarrete was the only Don to win all four matches. SAC lost overall to Modesto College 45-3, Mt. SAC Maroon 42-10, East Los Angeles College 45-10, and to Rio Hondo College 47-18. The Dons next tournament is the Santa Ana Invitational on Oct. 5.

/ Oliver Rivero

FOOTBALL

DONS LOSE KEY TO THE COUNTY GAME

The Santa Ana Dons lost the 97th annual Key to the County game 59-13 against long-time rivals Fullerton College Hornets on Sept. 21.

Santa Ana’s offense could not get into a rhythm as they kept turning the ball over, allowing the Hornets to capitalize them into points. It is SAC’s third consecutive loss to the Hornets.

The Dons play against Victor Valley College Rams Saturday, Sept. 28, at 6 p.m.

/Rafael Valencia

SAC GOES 0-4 IN OPENING DUALS MEET

Santa Ana sophomore runner Giovanni Barajas won the Golden West College Invitational on a hot Friday afternoon, Sept. 20. Barajas covered the 3.96-mile course in a time of 21:03, shaving off 19 seconds from his previous best two weeks at the Palomar Invitational.

“I felt excellent. We executed the plan today to push my limits,” he said.

Barajas took the lead early into the course, and by mile two was well ahead. He created distance between himself and the field by accelerating up a steep uphill and gliding through an uneven, narrow path along a lake. While others struggled, he made it look effortless, gapping the other runners.

“We have been doing a lot of hill training, so that helped [me],” Barajas said.

By the end of the third mile, Barajas was dominating and no other runner could stay within minutes of him. Barajas’ primary focus during the race was staying calm and controlling his breath. He said he knew if his breathing wasn’t composed, he would waste energy needed to keep a fast, consistent pace throughout the race.

Despite his dominating performance, Barajas said that there’s still room for improvement.

“The last mile is where I declined. We’re still working on being able to dog it out and push through the pain,” he said.

Barajas now plans to move up the intensity of his training.

“We’ve been focusing on mileage. Now we’re going to transition to more power, which means more speed workouts, more tempo runs, and declining the mileage,” he said. “Hopefully, that is going to help me with the postseason and with the last mile of the race.”

Dons Cross Country Head Coach Miriam Mitzel said she was proud of not only Barajas’ win, but also the team’s overall performance. “They executed the way that they have been training,” Mitzel said.

The Dons next run is Oct. 4 at the Falcon Invitational at Don Knabe Regional Park in Cerritos.
Bad things don’t happen solely based on the actions of evil people. They also come from the negligence of good people. If ignorance is bliss, then negligence is euphoria and most humans are living in it.

A few weeks ago when a man was shot dead on campus, many classmates and professors of mine referred to the incident as an “impromptu holiday.” The fact that a man bleeding to death in our parking lot does not shock people, but instead makes them laugh, is worrying.

We have become desensitized to the tragedies around us and, in turn, choose to focus on our own selfish needs rather than the real issues at hand.

Perhaps, this is because of our environment. Growing up in a city where danger is always imminent can have an impact on a person. Sometimes we see so many disasters, tragedies and losses that we become immune to it, indifferent to the cruel injustices taking place because they happen every day.

Is this selfish mentality really necessary for survival or is it just an excuse to remain in our own bubble and ignore reality? It’s up to us to decide.

A CULTURE OF INDIFFERENCE

On Sept. 16, a man was killed on campus, having police close the school for investigations. As part of the protocol, Santa Ana College’s Safety and Security sent out RAVE Alerts to inform students, faculty, and staff about the incident. But not everyone received or was aware of these alerts.

As a college, there must be more responsibility from students and the district to ensure these messages get through. It’s unacceptable to walk to school without being aware of our surroundings. Students shouldn’t utilize the opt-out option to receive these alerts. These alerts are necessary to keep us safe from threats. The alerts are meant for us to be more aware of our surroundings, they are not the same annoying announcements sent by the school.

The school and the district also need to emphasize the importance of confirming and updating the contact information on WebAdvisor and not giving us the option to opt-out of the alert system. Those who are not signed up to receive alerts will put themselves in danger if they aren’t notified in the event of another emergency.

Although the system automatically signs everyone up for these alerts, RAVE Alerts remain unaware to some students that it exists.

The district should include a verification page when a new student, faculty or staff member provides their contact information during enrollment because this would not only raise more awareness about the alert system, but it also ensures that their information is accurate and up to date.

NOTHING TO RAVE ABOUT

Everyone must be on the campus alert system for their safety

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In the first art show of the semester, scenic watercolor paintings depict views of Mexico during the mid-20th century. From the collection of Diane and E. Gene Crain, thousands of pieces, spanning multiple artists, mediums, and decades reveal a tasteful assembly of viewing windows into the past.

What makes the Crain collection unique is the personal friendships between the patrons and the artists.

Comprised mainly of works by members of the California Water Color Society, they are representative of some of the earliest California scene style paintings. These representational works are vibrant and convey a rich, detailed view of Mexico’s natural beauty.

Featured artists, like well-known muralist Millard Sheets (1907-1989), Rex Brandt (1914-2000), Milford Zornes (1908-2008) and Academy Award-winner Emil J. Cosa Jr. (1903-1968), vacationed in Mexico from the 1930s through 90s as an exotic yet accessible locale.

The gallery is located in the C building and is open Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Thursday evenings from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. “Views of Mexico” is on display through Nov. 19. / Carrie Graham

TURNING THE TABLES

Vinyl sales are on the rise. In Santa Ana, the trend is a lifestyle with shops, DJ collectives and more.

WORDS BY KAREN RODRIGUEZ · PHOTO BY CARRIE GRAHAM

In this era of Soundcloud, Spotify, and other digital streaming services, music has become both more accessible and more disposable.

But in Santa Ana, one physical form of music is on the rise. It is not cassettes, and it’s definitely not CDs. Instead, it starts with a crackle — vinyl.

Vinyl sales are growing industry-wide, while other physical forms of music are stagnant or plummeting. According to the Recording Industry Association of America’s mid-year report, vinyl is now a $224 million industry, with a nearly 13% increase in sales during the first half of 2019 alone. The number of CD units sold was flat over the same period.

In Downtown Santa Ana, this trend can be seen at shops like Left of the Dial Records, Santa Ana Spin, and Charlie’s Tattoo Supply, all of which stock both new and used vinyl.

“The CD is not a joy to own. It has difficult-to-read, tiny lyrics and unimpressive small artwork,” owner of Left of the Dial Records, Bill Michelle said. “The 99-cent download made music almost disposable as you had nothing to show for your payment. Records often increase in value, so they are fun to collect and listen to.”

Buying records is not just about owning something for its future value, said Michelle. To many, vinyl is a lifestyle that crosses genres and generations.

“I’d say 50% of my customers are from ‘my generation,’ as it was part of our upbringing,” Michelle said. “I have dozens of customers who have introduced their 15- to 26-year-old kids to records and have passed along my knowledge to them.”

Over the last decade, Santa Ana has seen an influx of pop-up marketplaces like the Beat Swap Meet and In The Groove Record Swap, both of which host occasional events for the community. The city is also home to vinyl-focused collectives like Funk Freaks, members of which sell merch out of a storefront on Edinger and Grand and DJ exclusively on wax at venues like Original Mike’s, La Santa and The Observatory.

“I dumped 1,300 CDs from inventory about a year ago,” Michelle said. “I’d go entire weeks without anyone looking at them.”
It’s a Thursday night at the end of summer and the patio at 4th Street Market in Downtown Santa Ana is flooded in shades of blue and pink lights. Locals line long, wooden tables all the way to the back, eating food from inside and trying to catch a glimpse of the next performer from the sign-up list.

Children rush to the front to watch as the band’s drummer sets a beat. Teens sway to the bassist’s deep plucks. Groups of college-aged friends bob their heads in unison, entranced by a passionate female emcee. Frosty, a Santa Ana-based singer and rapper, holds the mic in one hand. With both eyes closed, she raises her left arm and sings: “Fist up in the air ‘cause I’m proud of being brown.” Frosty is one of the dozen-plus artists who showed up early enough to secure one of the coveted 5-minute sets at The Coollab Project, the city’s only weekly open mic night and an important place for young Orange County artists to express themselves.

Unlike the competitive atmosphere of other open mics, the 3-year-old Coollab fosters an uplifting environment that’s created a community rooted in supporting everything from poetry to hip hop to jazz, no matter where the creators are on their artistic journey.

Words by Kate G. Bustamante • Photos by Ashley Ramynke

REAL+INSPIRING

THE COOLLAB PROJECT IS SOMETHING SPECIAL: A WELCOMING SPACE FOR CREATIVES IN SANTA ANA
Frosty spent the last two years singing on this patio, working out the songs that would eventually become her first EP, a self-titled project released on Aug. 31. “It was a catalyst for my career,” she says.

In order to get one of the prized open mic slots, you have to be dedicated. Performers need to arrive at least an hour before the music begins and put their name into a notebook placed on a table at the front. Those who don’t make it in time still have an opportunity to showcase their abilities. Every Coollab starts with an open jam session, where house band Apollo Bebop invites musicians from the crowd to improvise alongside them. Singers freestyle to jazzy riffs, guitarists mold their notes around whatever beat speaks to them, and the sounds of various instruments somehow combine effortlessly, everything from violins to keyboards to horns.

“It’s like a playground really,” says Apollo Bebop bassist Chris Trimmer.

At 7:30 p.m., host Rocky Angelini starts the open mic portion of the evening with a couple of house rules. The most important one: Everybody gets love, regardless of their race, creed or color.

“It feels very genuine, it’s not like other open mics,” says Zaid Tabani, an Anaheim native and Berklee Boston College of Music alumni, who estimates he has attended more than 40 open mics around the country. “This is easily the best one,” he said.

Tabani now drives two hours from where he lives to perform at The Coollab. During a recent set, he confessed that it was the warmth of these evenings that got him through difficult times in his life.

“This is like a major community,” he says.

In the three years since the Coollab was founded by a group of local musicians and artists, the event has given Santa Ana youth a much-needed creative outlet in the heart of their city. Santa Ana is not only the city with the youngest population in Orange County, but also has some of the highest poverty rates in the region.

“Santa Ana itself is thriving in culture because of the people that live here. That’s their escape. It’s through art,” says Frosty after her performance.

“...Locals are fighting to have rights to their own land and 4th Street is seen as the face of gentrification. That’s why it’s cool to have an open mic and everyone who wants to come has a voice here and will be supported.”